



WHAT'S THE TRUTH AND HOW DO I GET THERE?

By Ross Bishop

Are you ever confused about what you feel or what you should do? It affects everyone from time to time, and it's a subject I get a lot of questions about. For many people, conditioned not to feel, or more likely overwhelmed by the confusing and conflicting myriad feelings that pass through them, identifying what they really feel can present a difficult dilemma.

Confusion is an important side road in the path of spiritual development. It's not a fatal flaw; it simply means that you do not feel safe in a certain kind of situation and that the ego is doing its job to protect you. God's truth is pretty straightforward but once you step into the world of man and close your heart, things can get pretty confusing.

It is likely that in the past it was not acceptable for you to express what you felt. This is the result of a dysfunctional control used by some parents who feel incapable of dealing with or are threatened by, their children's emotions. In that sort of environment, children learn not to express their feelings and are chastised or criticized when they do feel. A child has limited coping skills and powerful emotions, and matters are made worse when there is no one there to help the child. It leaves many children feeling alone and emotionally abandoned. They learn confusion or to go numb in order to cope.

However it happened, it wasn't acceptable for you to feel. It may have even been dangerous. Today an old wad of tension sits in the pit of your gut. And, because you have been hurt, your ego views parts of your present life as threatening. It creates a smokescreen of confusion to keep you from venturing out so you will stay "safe." After all, that is how you survived childhood. By the way, the ego is pretty good at its job. It can weave an almost impenetrable web of conflicting thoughts and subtle confusion that even the fabled Sherlock Holmes would have a difficult time untangling.

This confusion exists within you. That is why it is sometimes so difficult for partners or friends to understand what you struggle with. They look at the situation and it seems pretty straightforward. And, from an objective perspective, it is. But, objectivity doesn't mean much here, because we are dealing with a scared and hurt inner child.

This brings us to the other problem with confusion: many people consciously or not, simply do not want to go to the truth. They have built a house on untruth to shelter them from their fear, and moving to truth means tearing that house down, standing naked before God and being judged for their inadequacies.

Letting go of the lie they have been living can be very threatening. It can generate an enormous resistance to letting go. People will destroy relationships, decimate careers and lose their friends rather than give up the lies they have been living. And, it can be very difficult to get them to accept what they are doing. If going inside frightens you, you might want to get some good professional help. If you are not sure, I would suggest that you assume the worst.

So, even though you now understand the theory, what can you do when you are confused? As with any emotional difficulty, if you wait for the beast to rear its ugly head to work on the problem, you're going to have a tough uphill battle. The secret is to recognize what happens and why, and then work with the causes when things are calm and you're not being triggered. The most important thing is to recognize that when you get confused, your built-in self defense mechanisms are operating. Otherwise you might for example, be afraid, but you would not be confused.

Secondly, you are anxious about what this situation represents – not about what it is, but what it represents. What is driving the confusion is your inner unresolved woundedness, and that has little to do with the present situation or the other person. Your inner child still thinks that the world is like it was when she was 4 or 6 or 8. She was powerless then and it was not safe for her to feel. She fears a repeat of that painful past. The present situation and your old emotions are related only by the contamination that is occurring from one situation to the other. Otherwise, your feelings would be clear and you could then act on them. Situations have feelings, hurt inner children have emotions. It would help you to work with her emotions. The shamanic journey process taught in *Healing The Shadow* or on the *Journey CD* is an excellent method for doing this.

Third, the real thing that you fear is loss. This is most likely a loss of love, but could also be about a loss of freedom. You could also go to the flip side, into the unworthiness issues and fear condemnation or criticism. Note your focus on the external world as a source of love or acceptance. This is very slippery ground. And, this is why it is so essential that your inner child know that you are there for her. If she knows that she will be loved no matter what happens, her fear of loss from the experience will be considerably lessened. She's still not going to like the situation, but it won't terrify her.

If you get caught, and you feel that familiar grey cloud of confusion slipping over you, get out of the situation. Take a time out, take a break, and tell them that you'll get back to them. Even in a difficult situation, you can always take a time-out to go to the bathroom. Splash cold water on your face, connect with your inner kid, and let her know that you'll be there to take care of her. Remind her that this is not the past and that you will not let anyone hurt her. She needs to know that she has an ally in you.

Now, if you haven't worked on this issue in your quiet time, I don't know how helpful doing this will be, but try it. If you have worked with her, it should help quite a bit.

It is essential for you to hold on to the thought that no one can do anything to you that is of any real consequence. Remember, you can still pray while they are burning you at the stake, and if they can't take that away

from you, the rest of the stuff you worry about is not all that important. It is only the stuff of this world. Since you are going to get another life anyway, let go. Look into the mirror and say, "I am not afraid of this situation. I may not like it, but I will not be afraid because I know that I cannot be harmed."

You have a great deal more power than you did when you were a child. By the way, if you feel fear for your physical well being in any way, get out of the situation. I don't care if you have to call a friend or the police, do not expose yourself to potential physical harm.

Another tool for dealing with situations of this kind is to consider how the Christ or Buddha would have responded. Since they practiced the Universal Rule (Love Everything), using them as a guide will help you to move closer to your center.