Who am I? – A Journey toward Your Authentic Self

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College life – freedom and independence! Now finally you can be whoever you want to be – no restrictions, no outside limitations. These may have been some of your thoughts before starting college or even during the initial period of excitement and exploration.

Things may have started shifting for you though – slowly or even in an instant. Now all of a sudden the picture is not so clear and the freedom is not so limitless. Once you got used to living without the restrictions of your teen years, you may encounter new ones, such as tight finances, limited transportation, or lack of support.

You may also find it a daunting task to figure out how to use your new found freedom. After all, you have spent years pressing against those limitations, which took a lot of your energy and focus, and redirecting them can be a challenge.

Also, you may have gotten used to defining yourself by who you are not – the expectations you so disliked; the obligations you could not stand. Now the coin flipped and you got a fresh start; but how will you choose the things that are really true to who you are?

Here we are at the question we started with: who am I? You may answer this question by what you are passionate about; what you see yourself doing in the future. Or you may think it’s more about the people you surround yourself with.

You may notice though that there is some more space left somewhere in between. It can feel so intangible; so hard to pinpoint. But if you take some time out and are really honest with yourself, you know it is there. You know you are more than what you do or who you hang out with. You can sense that there is something unique about your way of being, thinking, and relating; something that is more than just the summary of these parts.

Take time to find this space within and to allow it to grow and show you different facets of your authentic self. Treat yourself with kindness and compassion so your unique identity can have a stable foundation from which to flourish. Be a loyal friend to yourself especially when challenges come along, the foundation gets shaky, and it is hard to tell up from down.

You are the one who has access to that special core even if it goes hidden. Tend to your precious foundation and trust that it will show you the way yet again about how to be your unique self in each situation that comes along in your personal and academic life.

If you think that it is too hard to access and stay true to your authenticity, consider sharing this journey with a supportive counselor. Our free services are a once in a lifetime opportunity for you to embrace.