Lightning Path
Workbook Three

Connection Framework

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A life is either all spiritual or not spiritual at all. No man can serve two masters. Your life is shaped by the end you live for. You are made in the image of what you desire.

— Thomas Merton
I believe in God, but not as one thing, not as an old man in the sky. I believe that what people call God is something in all of us. I believe that what Jesus and Mohammed and Buddha and all the rest said was right. It's just that the translations have gone wrong. — John Lennon
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Greetings and welcome to the Lightning Path (or just LP for short). The Lightning Path is a powerful, effective, grounded, logical, intuitive, modern, and authentic path of human development. It is a blend of authentic spirituality and connected science, a powerful representation of core human and spiritual truths that can help take you from disconnected and depressed to healthy, connected, and empowered in record time.

The workbook that you have in your hand is book three in the Lightning Path Workbook series. This book is preceded by *Lightning Path Workbook One: Introduction to Authentic Spirituality*, and *Lightning Path Workbook Two: Healing*. This book covers basic spiritual techniques and concepts designed to help you understand, prepare, and work towards for stronger connection to Consciousness.

It is important to remember, the book in your hand is not intended to stand alone. It is part of a larger LP curriculum designed to help move you forward and realize your full human potential. To access the full curriculum, visit the Lightning Path at [http://www.lightningpath.org/](http://www.lightningpath.org/)
Approaching Your Study

You can approach your Lightning Path study in one of three ways, informally as an interested seeker, formally as a registered student, or someone committed to deep understanding as a certified LP mentor. To approach your study informally, simply read the workbooks and other assigned LP readings, learn the key concepts, and answer the study questions for yourself. If you wish, you can organize workgroups to help you study. For suggestions on how to organize your workgroups, and for study questions that you can use to facilitate discussion, see the paragraphs on organizing your workgroup and study questions at this end of this book.

Second, you can approach your study as a formal LP student. For this, you need to register as a student on the LP site (http://www.lightningpath.org/register/). Once registered, you get access to additional books, materials, flashcards, quizzes, audio, forums, and video to support your learning. You also can get full access to all available LP books, including books available only to LP students, by visiting http://www.lightningpath.org/fast-path/.

Finally, you can approach your study with the intent of becoming an certified LP mentor or teacher. For this, you must register as a student and submit answers to all the end-of-unit study questions provided in the LP workbooks. To submit your answers, you must pay a one-time examination fee of your choosing for each of the Lighting Path Workbooks. Visit the LP certification page for details. https://www.lightningpath.org/certification/.
Workbook Goals

At the end of this book, you will:

• Understand the nature of Connection, and what you have to prepare and work towards it.

• Understand the six points of the Lightning Path Connection Framework and be able to use that framework to guide your healing and connection work.

• Recognize Awareness Reduction Mechanisms (ARMs) and other obstacles that might prevent you from making solid progress on awakening, alignment, accountability, atonement, activation, and ascension.

• Begin developing and putting into practice several basic spiritual practices including intent, visualization, and deep breathing.
Key Concepts

By the end of this book, you should be familiar with the following LP concepts. Test your knowledge of these concepts with online LP flashcards (https://quizlet.com/173069634).

- Agent of Consciousness
- Automobile Metaphor
- Awakening
- Alignment
- Awareness Reduction Mechanisms
- Awakening Mantras
- Big Questions
- Bodily Ego
- Boundary Visualizations
- Breathing
- Cognitive Wall
- Connection Event/Connection Experience
- Connection Supplements
- Consistent and persistent intent
- Disjuncture
- Ego Explosion
- Forced awakening
- Intent/Will
- Monad/Monadic Consciousness
- Nadir Experiences/Zenith Experiences
- Normal Consciousness
- Old World Spirituality / New World Spirituality
• Old Energy / New Energy
• Post-Consciousness Stress Disorder (PCSD)
• Aligned Action
• Rules of Alignment
• Self
• Self-stupefaction
• Spiritual Bypassing
• Spiritual Ego
• Spiritual Realization (or just Realization)
• Steering Emotions
• Toxic Socialization
• Visualization
• Wrong Thought
• Water Glass Visualization
Introduction

Greetings and welcome to Lightning Path Workbook Three: Connection Framework. If you are engaging with this book then you should have already read Lightning Path Workbook One: Basic Concepts and Lightning Path Workbook Two: Healing Framework. At this point, you should have a good idea about what spiritual awakening and connection is, you should have some idea of how to initiate it, and you should know a little bit about some of the traps and pitfalls that may slow or even halt your progress forward. You should also have a good idea of the nature of healing and how the LP conceives of that process. Also, you should have already made some progress on the healing front. If not, or if you feel you are not ready to work on connection, track down both LP Book One and LP Book Two and read (or reread) before proceeding.1

Once you read the previous books, and once you understand the basics of authentic spirituality and the Lightning Path, the next step is to familiarize yourself with some key LP concepts, ideas, and practices in this book. Some of these concepts and ideas will be new in this book, but some you will have already encountered. Here, and in subsequent volumes, we will continue to introduce key and core ideas, and continue to deepen our understanding of the concepts and ideas already introduced. Ultimately the goal is to develop and convey a sophisticated, satisfying, effective, and practical “spirituality that works” (i.e. that connects you to Consciousness, that helps you realize the truth, and that helps you ground your Highest Self (HS)2 in your physical body). This is not a small job; this all takes time and attention to develop. Do not be surprised, if you find us repeating important things from time to time or, as is equally likely, you find yourself going back to reread LP

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1 Look them up at http://press.lightningpath.org/path/ or https://www.lightningpath.org/workbooks/.

2 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Highest_Self.
materials as you deepen your understanding. Authentic spirituality is simple but complicated, easy and challenging all at the same time. Getting the big picture might be easy, but fleshing it out, filling in the details, and engaging in the necessary practice takes time and effort.

Before moving on, I want to remind the reader that there is an important practical aspect to all this. You can understand the ideas all you want, but if you do not engage in the practice as suggested, you will not move forward as expected. Understanding the ideas while ignoring the practice is like getting yourself situated on the road at the beginning of a journey, but never taking a step forward down the road. You may be satisfied with yourself standing still at the beginning of the road, but do not fool yourself. To the others moving forward, you look silly and stuck. Therefore, when you see practice ideas and suggestions, like admonishments to visualize or guidance on breathing or creating boundaries, or the things you can do to practice connection, take these seriously and incorporate them into your daily routines. Remember, if you are just thinking, you are not walking, and if you are not walking, you are not moving forward. Think all you want because thinking is a good thing, but do not forget to move. If you want to move forward, you cannot just stand there. If you want to heal and connect, if you want to walk the path, you have to do the practice. It is just common sense.

**LP Connection Framework**

Speaking of walking “the path,” as you should already know, the Lightning Path is a path of spiritual/human development. The point of following the Lightning Path, the point of following any authentic path of human development/human spirituality, is to develop a better connection to Consciousness, God, Spirit, or whatever you want to call it. Put another way,  

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and as noted in LP Workbook One, the point of authentic spirituality is to fill the glass of your physical unit with the water of your higher Consciousness.

How do you do that? How do you fill the glass with water? How do you connect?

As you should already understand, on the Lightning Path, we break the process down into two stages. Stage one is the healing stage. Stage two is the connection stage. We took a closer look at the healing stage in LP Workbook Two where we learned the LP HEALING Framework and how that framework can facilitate your healing process. In this book, LP Workbook Three, we will take a closer look at LP stage two, which is the connection stage. In particular, we will learn in a bit more detail about the Lightning Path Connection Framework, and the six points in that connection framework which are, *awakening*, *accountability*, *atonement*, *activation*, *alignment*, and *ascension*. Briefly,

1. **Awakening** is the process of seeing, realizing, and understanding the truths in your life.

2. **Accountability** is the process of accepting the fact that things aren’t as great as they seem, and that you’ve probably done some bad shit in your life that requires reparation.

3. **Atonement** is the process of making reparation for the bad shit you have done.

4. **Alignment** is the process of using your creative power and ability to bring your thoughts, actions, and environments into correspondence (i.e. alignment) with the nature and wishes of your own Highest Self.

5. **Activation** is the process of embracing your creative power to become an empowered change agent in the

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1. [https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Framework](https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Framework)
world.

6. **Ascension** is the actual process of merging your bodily ego with your spiritual ego, of becoming more of who you truly are, which is a divine light of powerful, immortal, consciousness.

Note, as always, this workbook cannot provide a comprehensive overview and guidebook on each of these stages, because there is simply too much information to convey and too much work involved in each. The goal of this workbook will simply be to help you familiarize yourself with the connection framework. Once you have a better understanding of the framework, you can access additional LP resources (articles, books, readings, videos) that provide support with each of these steps. To access, visit the LP site at http://www.lightningpath.org/register/.

We should note, before moving on, that the framework stages of healing and connection are not intended to be linear, but iterative one, like climbing a spiral out of the sickness and toxicity of disconnection. You might start with a single healing step, like addressing your toxic environment, but you will not stick there. For best effect, you will jump back and forth, doing a little healing work, then a little connection work, and then back to healing, and so on.

The best way to see this is as an iterative a climb out of darkness on an ascending spiral path of increasing well-being and connection. The iterative spiral climb out of the sickness and toxicity of disconnection is represented by the Triumph of Spirit *initiation* archetype. You can get a look at the archetype by visiting the link in the footnote.³

Our advice is simple. To make the fastest progress, go back and forth between the various steps as intuitively (or professionally) guided. In other words, explore!

³See also https://tosas.lightningpath.org/archetypes/initiation/
Do you want to read some materials on awakening? Then do that.

Do you want to practice some activation exercises? Then do that. Feel free to move forward and heal/grow/expand at your own pace, and in the direction you want. Other than that, trust yourself and your own intuition; there are no rules on which stage or step to tackle first. Simply set your intent, do whatever practices are recommended at whatever stage/step you are working on (i.e. visualizations, mantras, etc.) and move forward from there.

With that said, let us begin our examination of the Lightning Path Connection Framework by looking at the first point, awakening.
Awakening

As noted in the introduction to this booklet, the LP Connection Framework (LPCF) contains six points that, like electrical contact points, you need to complete before full time connection can process.

The first point in the LP Connection Framework, the first thing that you have to do when you begin your connection process, is engage in a bit of authentic spiritual awakening. If you have read LP Workbook One, you will know that spiritual awakening involves drawing Consciousness into the physical unit.

Recall from LP Workbook One that the Water Glass Metaphor represents spiritual awakening in a visual manner.

Conceptually, we can think of spiritual awakening like walking into a dark room and turning on a light, or waking up from a deep sleep to observe the room you have been sleeping in. You walk in, you turn on the light, and suddenly you see the entirety of the room. You are sleeping and oblivious to the realities of the room that surrounds you, but when you wake up you suddenly you see what is in the room. It is like that with spiritual awakening. When you draw Consciousness into the body, it is like turning a light on in a dark room, or waking up from a deep sleep.

As with everything that you do in your life, you initiate awakening with intent. When you wish to wake up, you intend to wake up. The awakening intent can be formulated into an awakening mantra, like this...

- I wish to wake up
- I wish to gain enlightenment
- I wish consciousness to descend into the vessel.
• I wish to move forward as fast and as safely as possible.
• I wish to only the highest information for collective good of all of creation.

Additional awakening mantras and visualizations can be found at the LP site by visiting the *Meditation and Mantras* page at https://www.lightningpath.org/meditations-and-mantras/

The concept of awakening to the realities around you by turning on the light of your higher Consciousness, and the actual initiation of that awakening through intention and a mantra, is simple; the experience of awakening itself is not simple at all, nor is it always a positive, light-filled, angels singing, crystal song sort of thing. It can be, at times, very positive; but awakening can cause a lot of emotional and psychological consternation as well, especially when combined with a powerful *connection event*. In rare cases, where there is a lot of damage to the *bodily ego*, lots of repressed guilt and shame, addiction, and mental illness, awakening can even tip you over the edge into despair, neurosis, and psychosis.

As you can probably gather, whether you experience awakening in a positive or negative fashion depends on two things. It depends, for one, on the condition of “the room” you are waking up in. It also depends on your own mental and emotional condition, and any damage you may have experienced while enduring the *Toxic Socialization* process we all go through. We shall briefly look at each of these factors in

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6 A connection event or connection experience is the LP term for a mystical experience or religious experience when one “connects” to a higher level of consciousness. For an advanced discussion of connection events, see Mike Sosteric, *A Neurologically Grounded Theory of Mystical/Spiritual Experience*, 2016, Available: https://athabascau.academia.edu/DrS. Also see http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Connection_Event/.

7 The bodily ego is the ego that emerges from the neuronal operations of the Default Mode Network of the physical brain. The Default Mode Network are the neural structures that make up our self-reflective sense of identity.

The bodily ego can be distinguished from the spiritual ego which is the individualized identity/sense of “I” that emerges as the result of an intensification in the Fabric. For more see Sosteric, *A Neurologically Grounded Theory of Mystical/Spiritual Experience*. Also http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Default_Mode_Network/.
turn, starting with the condition of the room.

Room condition

As regards the condition of the room, the best situation to wake up in is when the room is ordered, clean, and tidy. What does that mean? As we will see in more detail when we examine alignment and Aligned Environment, that means you are waking up in a healthy environment with minimal toxicity, abuse, ideology, resistance, neurosis, and pathology. When the room of your life is ordered, clean, and tidy, awakening is unproblematic. When you wake up in a clean and tidy room, you can get down to the business of atonement, alignment, activation and so on. If, on the other hand, the room you are waking up in is a mess, then things can get a little complicated, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. In fact, as already noted, in bad situations when the room is a toxic pile of ignorance, ideology, and abuse, there is even a chance of mental and emotional breakdown.

What happens when you wake up and find the room is a mess? There are a few things to watch out for. For example, when you start to awaken and you find your room is a big mess, your first response might be to turn off the light, go back to sleep, and try and forget what you saw. You might do this for several different reasons, including (but not limited to)

a. confusion, guilt, shame, or some other negative emotion that is triggered by what you see, or what you have done, in the room,

b. Resistance from family and friends who, even despite seeing the truth, don’t want to be made aware.

c. overwhelmment at the enormity of the mess.

Consider, for example, your own misaligned behaviours. Consider the guilt and shame you might experience if, when you wake up, you wake up to the fact that you have psychologically, emotionally, physically, sexually, or spiritually
abused your spouse, children, coworkers, etc. Imagine the horror you will feel as you realize the extent of the damage you have done. Imagine that in this situation, many might not want to face the truth because it is simply too painful to admit or too much work to fix and address. Instead, you may prefer to go back to sleep. Ignorance is bliss, as they say, and willful ignorance allows you to avoid the mess in the room, specifically your own bad behaviours.

Of course, waking up to your own bad behaviours is not the only thing that might challenge you and make you want to go back to sleep. Consider the situation where you wake up to the reality that in your family there exists a sexual predator, perhaps a pedophile. Unlike waking up to a family that is healthy and whole, waking up to that particular reality is unpleasant, especially if you or one of your children has been assaulted, or one of the adults who will have to deal with it. There is a gargantuan amount of work involved in stopping a sexual predator, correcting their behavior, making sure it never happens again, and healing victims from any trauma. Even if you personally are OK with the work, you may experience intense resistance from other members of your family who are more comfortable in somnambulistic avoidance. It is a big challenge and you, and your family, may prefer to go back to sleep rather than deal with the train wreck itself.

The amount of work required to correct your own misaligned behaviors and “fix the mess” in your own room, and the resistance you experience from others who prefer to ignore and pretend, are often enough to push you to go back to sleep. That can be overwhelming as it is. Unfortunately, that is not the end of the challenge. In addition to child abuse, domestic abuse, elder abuse, psychological and emotional damage from a violent family past, etc., there are the unfortunate and often toxic realities of school, church, workplace, state, economy, and society that have to be dealt with as well. As you wake up, you will also become more aware of toxicities and problems at your
workplace, in your society, and all across the planet. Depending on how deep your previous sleep was, the whole thing can be one long and disturbing shock to your system. It is unfortunate that it is like this, but it is what it is. Just like waking up in the morning forces you to confront the room you have been sleeping in, spiritually awakening forces you to confront the reality that you exist in. If the room is clean and tidy, if the reality is positive and aligned, no problem. But if it’s a massive mess, your awakening experience might be so unpleasant, and you may be so overwhelmed by the guilt, shame, work, and challenge, that you simply turn off the light and go back to sleep.

**Mental and emotional condition**

As noted, awakening can be a challenge when the room you are waking up in is a mess. Awakening can also be a challenge if you struggle with emotional and/or psychological damage caused by a violent, neglectful, and toxic socialization process. If you are mentally or emotionally damaged, and the truth is, all of us experience some damage because of the toxic socialization process we endure, the process of awakening (indeed all points in the connection process, like atonement, activation, etc.) becomes much more difficult, for lots of different reasons.

For example if your psychologically abusive parents have damaged your bodily ego, you may struggle with feelings of low self-esteem and self-worth. These feelings of low self-worth can cause you to cast doubt on your own abilities to heal and grow into a healthy and fully connected human being. Low self-worth will also make other points harder to accomplish, like being accountable, or activating and taking action align and clean the world. Without a certain degree of self-confidence, you might awaken and see a messy room, but not feel confident enough or strong enough to tackle the mess.

Low self-esteem caused by toxic environments is not the only psychological issue that can undermine your ability to awaken
to the realities around you. Years of living in toxic and oppressive home and workspaces may have left you feeling depressed, disempowered, and helpless. In this state of helplessness, you may not feel motivated to make necessary changes. You may be impotent and unmoving in the face of a huge mess in your room. That impotence will weigh on you and make it harder for you to take necessary actions. Put that together with lack of self-confidence and the guilt and shame that rises from unaligned actions (more on this in the next unit), and going back to sleep might seem like the best (and only) thing to do.

Low self-esteem and learned helplessness can stop your awakening and connection process before it ever gets started, but so can anger and mistrust. Years of being subject to mistreatment and abuse may have left you angry and distrustful of the world around you. Your anger and inability to trust may lead you to do things, or not do things, that undermine your ability to heal and connect. For example, we saw one individual who, after years of being abused by family, parents, and healing professions like psychiatrists and doctors, was so angry and mistrustful that they simply could not trust any advice, professional or not, nor make any positive healing decisions. They were stuck, spinning their wheels in the desperate negativity of anger and distrust.

What sort of mental and emotional damage might you have experienced as part of your toxic socialization? How might this damage impede your awakening and connection process? That is for you to determine and heal as you work through the healing and connection process. The point here is not to go into detail about that, we do that in the previous workbook, the point is to make you aware that psychological and emotional damage makes awakening a lot harder, especially at the beginning. Be hopeful though. As you progress on your healing journey, awakening (i.e. shining the light, seeing reality, accepting the truth, etc.), becomes easier as well. Similarly, as
you progress on your awakening journey, healing gets easier. Remember, this is an iterative process. You only fail when you stop trying.

**Hitting the snooze button**

If you are overwhelmed by the mess of the room, if you find that psychological and emotional damage makes moving forward with connection difficult, and if, as a result, you turn off the light and go back to sleep, you are engaged in a pathological repression of awareness and connection. If you do this, you are not waking up. If you do this, you are not collecting your points in the LP healing framework. There is no point in pretending otherwise. Suppressing your awareness and going back to sleep halts the connection process, period. Know that when this occurs, in you or in others, it is often a sign of deep pathology in the individual, their family, and possibly work and friendship environments.

**Awareness Reduction Mechanisms**

If you find you are doing this, if you find you are suppressing awareness or ignoring the damage and your need for help, recognize that there will be struggle and stop the somnambulistic avoidance. The best way to stop is to learn the various **Awareness Reduction Mechanisms (ARMs)**, like denial, rationalization, compartmentalization, distraction, or (in the worst cases, dissociation), that we all use to reduce our awareness when we just do not want to see the truth. Once you have learned the various ARMs, then it is easier to recognize when you are using them, and easier to halt the sleeping process.

For LP purposes, we break Awareness Reduction Mechanisms into two general categories, **External ARMs** and **Internal ARMs**.

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8 [https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Awareness_Reduction_Mechanisms](https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Awareness_Reduction_Mechanisms).
ARMs. *External ARM*s are *Defense Mechanisms* aimed at reducing awareness of things *external* to the individual, like the behaviour of others, conditions at work, bullying by students/teachers, etc. *Internal ARM*s are defense mechanisms aimed at reducing awareness of things *internal* to the individual, like disjunctive shame and guilt, or awareness of complicity, etc.

Recognizing your own use of ARMs can, of course, be a challenge. Sometimes we simply cannot see our own behaviours for what they truly are, and sometimes we resist because of emotional or psychological toxicity, or pain and damage we wish to ignore or discount. For assistance identifying your own use of ARMs, either show your friends and family the list of ARMs provided below and ask the help, or seek professional therapeutic guidance to identify any resistance and blockages that might prevent you from honest assessment.

Note that some ARMs, like diversion, may appear in both columns.

Below is a short list of external and internal ARMs which you can use to guide your analysis, or to show friends and family who know you for help.

For up to date information on ARMs, always consult the SpiritWiki page.9

**External ARMs**

- Compartmentalization - suppressing awareness by breaking your life and your cognitive/emotional processes into discrete spaces. When you come home at night, you block out exploitation and abuse you perpetrate at work. When you go to work in the morning, you block out violence in the home. When you go to Church, you do not think about the

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9 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Awareness_Reduction_Mechanisms.
hypocrisies in your daily life.

- Denial– simple refusal to accept reality “as it is.” My mom beat me with a wooden spoon and leather belts, but she denies it to this day. The equivalent external ARM is repression.

- Distortion – reshaping reality to avoid awareness of disjunctive realities. “What doesn’t kill you leaves a scar” justifications distort our understanding of violence and abuse and provide a justification for them.
  
  o **Humor** is a form of distortion. Using humor to change the “meaning” of reality. Making sexist, racist, homophobic jokes in an attempt to render the abusive behaviours acceptable, or gain social support.

  o **Intellectualization** – Not a defense mechanisms by itself, but a particular form of compartmentalization, dissociation, diversion, using the powers of the intellect

- Dissociation – detachment from reality. Disconnection, especially intellectual. Daydreaming through dissociative disorders and fugue.

- Diversion/Distraction – engaging in other activities, behaviours that draw attention away from issues in reality. For example, getting into a running club and spending all your time away from family in order to avoid the toxicities/issues at home. Buying crystal and using singing bowls to give the illusion of advanced spirituality even in the face of toxicity and dysfunction.

- Rationalization – “the justification of one’s behaviour and motivations by substituting “good” acceptable reasons for the actual motivations.”

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Internal ARMs

- Dissociation – detachment from reality. Disconnection, especially emotional.\textsuperscript{11} Daydreaming. Dissociative disorders. Typically used in an attempt to avoid stress/pain/conflict in the environment.

- Diversion/Distraction - engaging in other activities, behaviours that allow one draw attention away from feelings. For example, getting into a running club and spending your entire time running. Includes obsessions, compulsions, hypochondriasis, etc.

- Repression – forced submersion of thoughts (I am doing something wrong) and feelings, like guilt, shame, etc. For the equivalent internal ARM, see Denial.

- Regression – fall back to childhood states, allowing only simpler, childlike emotions and awareness.

- Projection – projecting guilt, shame, other negative emotions and thoughts onto others.

- Reaction formation – choreographing the opposite emotions. Denial.

The Cognitive Wall

One of first psychological obstacles you might face is what we might want to call a \textbf{cognitive wall}. A \textit{cognitive wall is an intellectual wall between you and an idea that prevents you from connecting with/understanding the idea}. You will know you have a cognitive wall if you pick up a book like this one and simply cannot access the meaning of the words on the page. You will see the words, you will read them, but you won’t be able to understand them, even when they are simple and straightforward. Cognitively, you will withdraw to another

\textsuperscript{11} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dissociation_(psychology)
space. As you drift away, the words will lose all meaning.\textsuperscript{12} If this happens to you, do not feel bad. We all have cognitive walls and we all use them from time to time to avoid things we do not want to think or talk about. It is the nature of the beast, so to speak. It is no big deal so long as you learn to recognize the ones you have them, and tear them down so they don’t block your progress. If you recognize that you have them, and you recognize when they come up, you can take steps to bring them down. Tearing them down is not altogether difficult. If there is a cognitive wall preventing you from connecting with some ideas, recognize it is there and power through it. It might take a bit of practice, and you may have to read the same passages over a few times before you have cleared the way through, but you can do it. It is simply a matter of identifying the wall and clawing your way through. Be persistent and patient and you will make it through.

A cognitive wall is often, though not always,\textsuperscript{13} the result of an unconscious desire to avoid. Cognitive walls arise especially prevalent when materials are challenging. You may cognitively withdraw from materials when you are asked to think about things or do things you don’t want to do, like admit to bad behaviors, stop exploiting people, etc. Cognitive walls may also exist because of ideology and indoctrination, i.e., when your consciousness has been deliberately turned away from consideration of certain things. The latter happens a lot with spiritual discourse, especially with those who have scientific training. Mention the word “God” or “angels” to a trained

\textsuperscript{12} Of course, you may not to admit to yourself that your mind is closed and you are glossing over the words, so you may choose to delude yourself into thinking you have heard, understood, and grounded the message even when you have not. Do not kid yourself. We all have cognitive walls. We learn them from our parents, our teachers, the media, the churches of this world, and so on. They are put there to prevent us from connecting, and they are powerful in the resistance they provide. They are also relatively easy to dispel if you are aware they are there. Don’t kid yourself and you’ll have no problem finding your way through.

\textsuperscript{13} Sometimes you can have problems connecting for other reasons, like for example low blood sugar or lack of sleep. If your brain does not have the energy/nutrition it needs to function, or if you are exhausted from lack of sleep, you’ll have trouble connecting with, grounding, and process information. Make sure you get lots of sleep.
materialist, for example, and their mind may wander and their eyes gloss over. Of course, materialists are not the only ones with cognitive walls that prevent them from having an open mind about certain things. Some Christians, for example, shut down if they see the word “tarot.” I could rehearse the various blockages here, but the point is not to draw out a long list of our cognitive biases, the point is to highlight the existence of these walls so that you can be aware they exist and on guard when they come up. If they do come up, put effort into working through them. If there is one thing you have to have when moving forward, it is an open mind. Consciousness is nothing but ideas. If you close your mind off to ideas, you close your mind to Consciousness. Of course, this does not mean you have to agree with all the ideas that you see on a page or that float through your head, but you do have to be open to consideration. If your mind is closed, you will never make a connection.

Study questions

1. The room you wake up in can impact whether your awakening experiences, whether all your spiritual experiences moving forward, will be positive, negative, or some combination of the two. Think about the condition of your “room” (i.e. your family, workplaces, friend spaces, etc.) Does anything about the condition of the room standout as something you might need to address as you begin to move forward towards connection? Write your thoughts in the margins and share with the group if you like.

2. Emotional and psychological damage can influence whether you have positive or negative experiences on the road to stronger connection. Think about any psychological, emotional, and physical abuse you might

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14 Or, they may react with intellectual or emotional violence as they try and put the idea down.
have experienced. Do you think this has damaged you in any way? What comes to your mind when you ask yourself the question, “Is there any damage I have to deal with before I can wake up and face the room?” Write your thoughts down and share with the group if you like.

3. Read over the list of internal and external ARMs. Think about your own life spaces. Do you use ARMs to reduce your awareness of “the mess” in your room, or your own internal emotional states? If so, which ones internal and external ARMs do you use most often? Write them down. Pick one ARM and come up with some things you can do to stop your use and reverse the reduction in awareness.
Accountability

Awakening, becoming more aware of the truths and realities that surround you and make up your life, is the first step on the connection path, the first point in the LP Connection Framework. The second point is accountability, specifically, accountability for your thoughts, your actions, and the things you have created in your life.

What do we mean by that?

Being accountable for the things in your life means, essentially, taking full responsibility for who you are and what you have done. Accountability is taking ownership and responsibility for all your thoughts, actions, and creations, whether they result in good things, bad things, or some combination in between. When we are accountable, we make an honest assessment of our actions and the impacts that these actions have had on others, and we own what we have done. When we are accountable, we do not make excuses, we do not pretend, and we do not dissemble. When we are accountable, we look at what we have done, and we say, “Yes, I did that, and I take responsibility.”

Accountability is something that becomes very important as you walk the path towards stronger connection, particularly as you awaken. Indeed, the requirement for accountability comes immediately upon the heels of awakening. When you wake up and see the mess in the room, you also wake up to the awareness that you have created some, though certainly not all, of the mess that surrounds you. For example, if you are an abusive spouse, when you wake up you will become aware of that abuse, and the mental health and physical consequences of that abuse. If you are a CEO that exploits employees and manipulates consumers, when you wake up you will become aware of that exploitation and manipulation, and the consequences of that exploitation. If you are a teacher that bullies the students, when you wake up you will become aware
of this fact. If you are a parent that has failed your children, well, you get the idea. If there is some mess in the room, and if you have contributed to that mess, when you wake up you will become aware and when you become aware, you will have to be accountable for your contribution to the mess.

Becoming aware of your contribution to the mess is a natural outcome of awakening. When you wake up, you see the room, period. When you see the room, you see your contribution. When you see your contribution, you are accountable for that, period.

Accountability is a natural, and also a necessary, step on the path to Connection. The reason for this isn’t so much moral as it is simply the nature of your Higher Self. As indicated in The Book of Light, your Consciousness, your highest self, is not evil or bad in any way. Your higher self, your soul, your monadic consciousness as we like to say, is an entity of intelligence, wisdom, power, responsibility, strength, compassion, and love. As a monadic intensification in the Fabric of Consciousness, your Highest Self is responsible for creation, particularly those aspects of creation with which it has interacted. When you connect, you connect with this Highest Self. When you connect, you bring this Highest Self forward into awareness. When you connect, you align with this Highest Self. When you connect, you become this Highest Self. When you become this Highest Self, as you do when you initiate and awaken, you look at the room, you look at the mess, and you do not ignore it or pretend it away—you assess and you take responsibility because that is what your Highest Self, which you are becoming when you practice connection, would do.

If you want, you can think of your Highest Self as the most responsible, loving, wise, intelligent, compassionate, and loving

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\[1\] Monadic consciousness is the single point of egoic awareness that arises as the result of an intensification of Consciousness. For more see http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Monadic_Consciousness. For a complete explanation see Michael Sharp, The Book of Light: The Nature of God, the Structure of Consciousness, and the Universe within You, vol. one -air, 4 vols. (St. Albert, Alberta: Lightning Path Press, 2006).
When your Highest Self peaks through and sees the mess, it assesses and takes immediate responsibility for whatever it has to be responsible for.

Or at least, that is what should happen.

Unfortunately, that is not always what does happen. As noted in the section on awakening, often what happens is that upon becoming aware of the mess in the room, your bodily ego reacts defensively and rejects awareness. This same thing happens with accountability, only more so. When your bodily ego, when your “little self,” wakes up and sees that it has acted badly, when it realizes it has contributed to the mess in the room, possibly hurting many others in the process, painful guilt and shame come bubbling to the surface. As a parent, when we realize we have harmed our kids, we feel guilt and shame. As a CEO exploiting child workers, when we realize we have harmed somebody else’s kids, we feel guilt and shame. As a sexual predator, as a mean co-worker, as an advertiser manipulating the masses, when awareness floods the vessel and we realize what we have done, we feel guilt and shame.

We have to say, this guilt and shame can be quite painful, indeed so painful that instead of taking responsibility, instead of being accountable, we use ARMs to shut things back down, consider and actually commit suicide if the pain of the guilt and shame are unavoidable and particularly bad.

For example, as parents, when we see what we have done to our children, when we realize our part in the damage, and when the guilt and shame rise up, instead of being accountable, we

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16 For your reference, Realization is an important archetype in the Lightning Path Triumph of Spirit Archetype System. Dealing with realizations, positive or negative, is an essential step on the path towards connection. See https://tosas.lightningpath.org/archetypes/realization/ for an analysis of the Realization archetype.

17 The Christian bible documents one example of two people actually dying of guilt and shame. When the unaligned actions of Ananias and his wife Sapphira are brought to light, they both drop dead. Presumably, this is a consequence of the guilt and shame that they had previously repressed, but that is suddenly brought into their consciousness. See the full story in Acts 5: 1-10. Of course, the story may be hyperbole, or not true at all. It is still an interesting thing to consider.
use ARMS to reduce awareness and avoid realization so we can sidestep and repress the guilt. We deny we ever did anything wrong. We distort reality, making jokes, and say “it wasn’t all that bad.” We tell ourselves that hitting and hurting our children “builds strength” or “prepares them for the ‘real’ world.” We say that struggle and strife “builds character.” “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger,” as the old energy saying goes. We disassociate during tough discussions. Through a simple act of mental and emotional will, we repress our guilt and shame away. In this way, we transform our thinking about our abusive actions towards our children, circumvent the guilt and shame, and make accountability unnecessary. After all, we tell ourselves and those around us, we have done nothing wrong!

Of course, telling yourself that your actions have positive benefit when they do not, repressing your awareness of the actions or willfully repressing the guilt and shame is not being accountable, it is the exact opposite. If you alter your perceptions, if you deny the truth, if you say “Ya I did that, but so what?” you are not accountable, you are engaged in childish avoidance. If you want to move forward towards connection, you have to be authentically accountable. You have to look at your thoughts and actions and say, this is bad, this is good, this is wrong, this is right. You have to do this because you cannot take the next steps forwards, e.g., atonement and activation, if you deny the reality of your actions. How do you atone and make amends for something you argue you didn’t do? How do you activate and change things you don’t think need to be changed? The answer is, you do not. If, when you realize that the things you have done have damaged others and brought pain, guilt and shame arise; if, instead of properly processing and responding to that guilt and shame you instead engage ARMs and deny accountability, your progress towards connection stops. If you are not being authentically accountable, you are not moving forward towards connection, period.
Processing and releasing guilt and shame

We should emphasize at this point that the emotions of guilt and shame are powerful obstacles to forward movement, especially when it comes to being aware and accountable. I would go so far as to say that guilt and shame are primary obstacles in the early stages of connection. If you do not process and release them properly, if you get defensive, reduce awareness, or repress them back down, there is no forward movement. If you want to move forward, you will have to learn to properly process and release any guilt and shame that comes up so that you don’t inadvertently shut down.

The best way to process guilt and shame is to learn a little bit about your emotions and what guilt and shame are all about. Regarding your emotions, you need to realize that your emotions are there for a reason. As noted in the *Great Awakening, Concepts and Techniques for Successful Spiritual Practice*,

18 emotions like guilt, shame, joy, satisfaction, are design features of the physical unit. They are features that your Highest Self, your spiritual ego,

19 may use to “steer” its physical unit, i.e. your body, when the bodily ego is still “asleep at the wheel,” i.e. still disconnected.

Under healthy conditions, your Highest Self would not need to use emotions this way. When you are connected, you are aligned and in constant communication when your Highest Self. When you are connected, you are your highest self, one hundred percent; when you are aligned, you easily know the difference between right and wrong just like you know your birth name. However, when you are disconnected, you are “driving blind,” so to speak. When you are disconnected, you do not know who your Highest Self is (i.e. you do not know

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19 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Spiritual_Ego.
who You are) and what your Highest Self wants. Therefore, when you are driving disconnected, your Highest Self uses the emotional mechanisms of the physical unit like a steering wheel. It uses positive emotions to indicate alignment and it uses negative emotions to indicate misalignment. Your Higher Self steers the vehicle by using emotions to guide the bodily ego’s thoughts and actions.

If you feel bad doing something, don’t do that, because this is You trying to tell you that your actions are out of alignment.

If something you are doing brings you joy and bliss, and isn’t harming others, do more of that because this is You telling you that your actions are in alignment.

The Highest Self communicates with the little self and guides thought and action by using steering emotions\textsuperscript{20} in a system of emotional semaphore.\textsuperscript{21} This communication system exist to help steer the body during evolutionary where brief periods of disconnection are required\textsuperscript{22} and to make life more pleasant and blissful during times when they are not.

In the context of steering the physical body, guilt and shame are very useful emotions. Guilt and shame are natural emotions that you should feel when you do something wrong.

Now that you know what emotions are for, i.e. that they are there to help your spiritual ego steer a disconnected vehicle, you also know how to process and clear these emotions. To process and clear guilt and shame 1) stop whatever actions and thoughts are causing guilt and shame and 2) and atone for any

\textsuperscript{20} Steering emotions are emotions triggered by the resident monadic consciousness in order to help guide a physical unit towards alignment. Steering emotions include emotions like guilt, shame, anxiety, pride, happiness, self-satisfaction, and so on. See http://www.thespiritwiki.com/index.php/Steering_Emotions/.

\textsuperscript{21} https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Emotional_Semaphore

\textsuperscript{22} For more on this, see Michael Sharp, The Book of Life: Ascension and the Divine World Order (St. Albert, AB: Lightning Path Press/Avatar Publications, 2003).
harm you have done. If you stop your out of alignment actions, and if you make amends and atone, the guilt and shame go away and you can move on and live life reasonably aligned, even though you are profoundly disconnected.

Seems simple, right?

The problem is, we don’t always do this, we don’t always properly process our guilt and shame. As a consequence, many suffer with perpetual guilt and shame, that possibly increases over time. The reason why is there are several obstacles in the way of the simple process of acknowledging the guilt and shame, stopping our out of aligned actions, and atoning for the harm we have done.

**One obstacle** is simple lack of understanding. Right now, emotional semaphore is not well understood. Right now, most people neither understand nor how to use the emotional communication system. They don’t know to stop their actions when they feel guilt and shame, and they don’t feel the responsibility to atone for all the bad things they have done. This is not their particularly fault. Parents, teachers, priests, and even professors never teach the true nature of your body’s emotions, or how to respond properly to the spiritual communication it entails. If you don’t understand your emotions and how to respond to them, you cannot take appropriate “steering” actions. If you don’t take appropriate steering actions, you cannot correct behaviour. If you cannot correct behaviour then, over time, guilt and shame build up, ARMs kick in to deal with the pain, and neurosis and emotional pathology are the inevitable result.

**A second obstacle** to processing guilt and shame is mental illness and addiction. The sad truth is, we all currently live on a toxic world and we are all damaged to one degree or another by the toxic socialization system we endure. The damage and suffering we all endure often leads to addiction and mental
illness. Without going into a lot of detail at this level, let us just say that addiction and mental illness closes us off, increases our defensiveness, confuses us, and makes it more difficult to process and release emotions like guilt and shame.

Consider one example, the gambling addict who dives into family funds. Stealing from the family is disjunctive, out of alignment, and will cause guilt and shame. However, a gambling addict is suffering a serious mental illness. Their addiction will corrupt their thinking and override their behaviour. The bottom line is, they will tell themselves anything, say anything, and do anything in order to feed their dopamine need. They will also, of course, engage ARMs and undertake herculean repression of guilt and shame just so that their addiction remains uninterrupted. It is a very toxic spiral and proper processing and release of guilt and shame are far from being a relevant concern.

There are lots of other issues that can arise when an individual is suffering a mental illness, which we won’t go into here. Here we will just say, if you feel like you suffer from a mental illness, you may need to take a step back from connection practice in order to accomplish some necessary healing. If you don’t, you’ll have trouble with awakening and accountability, and won’t be able to properly process contemporary or accumulated guilt and shame.

Finally, a third reason we can have difficulty processing guilt and shame is because our emotions have been weaponized against us. Without going into a lot of detail here, let us just say that people, our family, our friends, our employers, system agents, and System Enforces, use guilt and shame to ensure disconnection. They do this by confusing you about the nature of guilt and shame, and by making your experience of guilt and

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23 For more on the LP HEALING Framework, see Michael Sharp, Lightning Path Workbook Six - Initiation, Lightning Path Workbook Series, St. Albert, Alberta.

24 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/index.php/System_Agents
shame worse than it needs to be. They fan the flames of your shame until they burn hot as the fires of hell, so to speak. They create archetypes of judgment, they mercilessly judge and shame you, and they threaten (and even carry out) harsh punishment. As they do this, guilt and shame become like demons, tightly chaining your soul. They do this so they can control your behaviour, and because they are damaged by toxic socialization and filled with hate as a result.

An important note, just because someone points out that a behaviour of yours is misaligned doesn’t necessarily mean they are using your guilt and shame as a weapon. They might simply be helping you towards greater alignment.

Thankfully, the difference between someone who is helping and someone who is weaponizing your guilt and shame is easy to see. Someone who is helping you will downplay guilt and shame and help you process and release guilt and shame. Generally, if someone is trying to help you, you will generally feel better after talking with them. On the other hand, someone who is weaponizing will use overt and covert means to enhance your experience of guilt and shame (i.e., they will try and make you feel bad).

Assuming you now understand what steering emotions are and how you respond to them, the question becomes, what do you do if you find yourself challenged by addiction/mental illness or the weaponization of your emotions? How do you get beyond that stuff so you can properly process and release guilt and shame.

**Number one,** if you do feel guilt and shame, don’t repress, don’t avoid, and don’t pretend it is not there. Face it. Feel it. It is going to hurt, but acknowledging it is there is the first step towards dealing with and ending the pain.

**Number two,** exert boundaries and exclude any person who intentionally or unintentionally uses your emotions to make you feel bad and control your behaviour. Your best bet is to
waste no more energy and just bump them out of your life, but if you have some attachment to the person, point out what they are doing and ask them to stop. If they don’t stop and you still do not want to exclude them totally, put a strict emotional boundary up. Remain superficial and detached to minimize their negative impact.

**Number three**, remember the purpose of guilt and shame. These are not intended to build up over time and cause you horrible pain and suffering. They are meant to send you a message so you can tweak your behaviour and keep moving in an aligned direction. If you feel guilt and shame, don’t moralize about the unaligned actions that cause it, and don’t attack yourself for engaging in those unaligned actions. Recognize the purpose of steering emotions and respond appropriately. Stop doing what causes you guilt and shame and start doing what causes you bliss and joy. Simple.

If you’ve lived a life that is relatively aligned, processing and releasing guilt and shame is easy. However, if you have a lot to deal with, a **cleansing visualization** can help. Once you have corrected and realigned your actions, release excess guilt and shame using a cleansing visualization. To do a cleansing visualization, see your body covered with a thick coating of wet, gloppy, mud. This mud is guilt and shame. Assuming you have taken appropriate actions to halt unaligned behaviour, tell yourself that you no longer need to carry this guilt and shame. Stand up tall and strong and visualize your hands scarping the gloppy mess off. Start at your head and work down to your toes, scarping the black tar with your hands, and wiping it off your body. As you do this, you slowly begin to reveal a beautiful, white, glowing figure. When you have finished scarping the muck off your body, stand tall, strong, proud, powerful, and filled with the light of your own Highest Self. Smile, release, and repeat as necessary.

Finally, **number four**, if you do find yourself confronting large and previously unrecognized caches of guilt and shame, that is,
if you have done unaligned things in your past and if these things have remained out of awareness and unacknowledged, remember points one, two, and three (i.e., don’t repress it back down, exert boundaries, and don’t moralize and attack yourself), take a few deep breath, and begin to atone for the bad things you have done. As we’ll see in more detail in the next unit, after we have awakened to reality, and after we have acknowledged our contributions to the toxicity, atonement for our “sins” is the necessary next step, the next point on the LP Connection Framework. Atoning is a necessary precursor to alignment and it is the only thing that will help you clear guilt and shame so you can activate/empower and ascend.

We will talk in more detail about atonement in the next unit. In closing, we’ll just say two things. **The first thing to say is**, don’t bullshit yourself about your actions. Become aware of the things you have done, and be fully accountable for your contribution to the mess. Do not delude yourself about the reality of your actions, even if your actions attain epic levels of disjuncture. If you are an abusive spouse or parent, a CEO who exploits children, or even an authoritarian leader who robs his own people to enrich his own coffers, face the reality of the fact and take full responsibility for your actions and the suffering they have caused.

**The second thing to say is**, do not try and “balance” your disjunctive and harmful actions against the good you have done. Improving the life of millions while destroying the life of a few hundred children working in your factory does not balance your karmic account. That’s just a convenient self-delusion that the “brothers” and “sisters” tell themselves. Remember this truth. *It does not how much good you have done; if you have hurt other people, be accountable and atone for that hurt.*

**Study questions**

1. What are steering emotions? What are they used for?

Think about your own emotional responses now. Do
you feel guilt and shame? Do you feel joy and bliss? Around what actions, activities, or thoughts do you feel these emotions? Consider past and current thoughts and actions. If comfortable, share your self-discoveries with the group.

2. Mental illness and addiction, caused by our experience of toxic socialization, are obstacles that make understanding, processing, and releasing guilt and shame a major challenge. Think about your own situation. Do you have any addictions (shopping, alcohol, smoking, running, etc.) that might be interfering with your ability to understand, process, and release guilt and shame? Do you have any negative neurosis or pathologies that might be functioning and repressions and distractions? Share with the group.

3. As noted, people unintentionally and intentionally weaponize our guilt and shame. They do this to control our behaviour. Think about your family, friends, coworkers, and employers. Do any of them use guilt and shame to manipulate your behaviour? If so, what do they do? Think of some things that you do to stop that weaponization? Share.
Atonement

So far in this workbook we have looked at awakening and accountability as two important points in the LP Connection Framework. Once you have made progress on these first two points, once you wake up and see the true state of the room, and once you own up and take responsibility for your part in any of the messes that surround you, the next step in the process is to atone.

What is atonement? Basically, atonement is reparation for the harm you have caused to other people and other living beings. Atonement means making reparations for whatever damage you have done. It does not matter what that damage is, once you wake and acknowledge you have done damage, then you have to make efforts and atone.

Before you get all freaked out about atonement, let me say, this isn’t a judgmental or moralistic sort of thing. This is not about failure to follow somebody’s orders, or failure to follow the rules of some authoritarian system. This is simply about atoning for harm you have caused to another living being.

As regards atonement, a couple of comments are in order. **First of all**, all actions that harm another living being require atonement, even if you find you had good reason to harm. For example, you might think that hurting somebody in self-defence is an act that does not require atonement. You might think that you are justified in taking brutal actions or harming another to project yourself, and of course, you are. You have every right to protect yourself and your family. However, the fact that a harmful act may be justifiable does not mean you can simply harm another being and walk away, even if justified. When violence occurs, whether that violence is physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual, everybody involved in the act is harmed, and this harm must be addressed. The perpetrator engages in harmful acts against others because they are often hurt, damaged, angry, and desperate from toxic their
socialization experiences. Even though they have harmed others, nevertheless, they need help and healing, not further harm. Similarly, the victims of the assault are also harmed, not only by the attack itself but the violence they engage in to divert the attack. Even though the defence is justified, it still harms them when they engage in violence against others. If I have to harm another being because I am defending myself, I experience psychological and emotional harm, neurological changes, and other shifts that, unless addressed, can change me, cause disjuncture, and interfere with connection.

The requirement that all harmful acts require atonement may seem a little strange to many, especially in this modern world where we hide the brutal torture of animals from our awareness and ignore the exploitation of women and children in factories in other countries, so that we can eat meat and have lots of clothes and things. Nevertheless, it is true. When we engage in harmful acts, we must be aware of the damage, we must be accountable for its impact, and we must atone for the damage we have caused, even if we find ourselves justified (for defence, for survival) in the actions. It is like the notion that traditional natives thanked an animal or apologized for its sacrifice after they killed it in a hunt. It is an expression of an aligned respect for all creation, and it is the recognition that all violence, even when necessary for survival, is ultimately out of alignment and requires of us awareness, accountability, and atonement.

Second of all, and despite what we just said that all actions that harm another living being require atonement, it is important to understand, not all actions that harm another being are unaligned or require atonement. Perhaps this goes without saying, but it is important to be aware, it is possible to hurt others and not be out of alignment with higher consciousness. A doctor who stitches a wound, or a dentist who sticks a needle in your mouth to fill a rotten tooth, is hurting you; but the actions lead directly to healing and are therefore in alignment with Highest Self. Actions like these require no significant
atonement because there is positive/healing intent behind them, and ultimately they heal and repair. Of course, a connected doctor or dentist will do what they can to minimize pain, and you might even find them apologizing for the hurt they cause. I’ve seen doctors apologize and soothe children while they stitch up and repair. That’s great and indicates alignment, compassion, and connection, but it is not strictly necessary because the acts are not contributing to toxicity and decline.

To summarize, all harmful actions, whether justified or not, require atonement. The only exception to this is when the harmful action ultimately contributes to the health, healing, and well-being of the person.

**Atonement requirements**

Now that we understand the nature of atonement and under what conditions it is necessary, the question becomes, how to atone. **The first thing** to be aware of is that when you atone, and this really should go without saying, you first need to stop the actions that are causing harm. Apologizing and making amends, but then turning around and continuing to harm other beings, is not awareness, accountability, and atonement, it is hypocrisy, Self-delusion, and the sign of an underlying pathology of some sort, typically emotional or ideological damage to the bodily ego. If you do find yourself engaging in Self-delusions and hypocrisy, take a step back to the LP Healing path and work through those points again.

**The second thing** you need to be aware of is that whatever you have done, you need to atone in appropriate measure. This means that the more damage you have done, the more you have to make up for. If you have abused your children for two decades, an apology and a few dollars are not going to cut it. Similarly, if you have stolen $100 trillion from the people of this planet, a few hundred million in charity after you die isn't nearly enough. **Making it right and atoning means fixing the**
damage you have done in measure, and that will require more than just a few pennies, good intent, and a few choice words.

If you bristle at and resist what we are saying at this point, remember this; you need to do this not because we say you have to do it, not because “God” wants it that way, and not because karma is going to smack you down if you do not. You need to do it because the driver of the physical vehicle, your Highest Self, expects it that way. If you are a billionaire and you feel good about giving away a hundred bucks, if ten hours of volunteer work is enough, or if being a little nicer as a manager is what it takes to satisfy your Self, and make you feel good about yourself, then that is great. If your spine tingles as you read these words, if you get that niggling feeling that you should be doing more, or if you are trying to cope with rising feelings of guilt and shame, my advice is, do not make excuses, do not try and fool yourself, and do not pretend that you are not aware. Do what you know you need to do because you need to do it. Do what you need to do not until you get the message that your own Highest Self is satisfied.

The bottom line is simple, if you want to make progress forward towards stronger connection, you need to be aware, you need to be accountable, and you need to atone. Do anything other than that and you are wasting precious time.

When it comes to atonement, the third thing you need to be aware of is that you need to be honest with yourself about the nature of the damage and the extent of the atonement required. Do not try and kid your Self on this, because you cannot. Your Highest Self knows what you have done, what you need to atone for, and how much you need to do. To be aligned, you need to respond to the requirements of your Self. Unless you are dealing with profound emotional damage, if you are paying attention, it is not that hard. Your Highest Self will send you feelings of discomfort and make you anxious if there are things you need to be doing, and it will send you joy and good feelings if you are atoning in the right direction, and with right measure.
Speaking of paying attention to your Highest Self, the fourth thing you should be aware of in this regard is that nobody can tell you what atonement means for you. I can’t tell you what the right measure is, or what you should do to make things right, and neither can a judge, lawyer, priest, or a guru. Only you, ideally in connected consultation with You, can figure that out. You may ask for advice, that is true, but nobody can tell you what you need to do. This is something you need to figure out in consultation with your Highest Self. Trust your gut on this one. Figure out something to do that makes you feel good about yourself (remember emotional semaphore) and do it as long and as much as you need until you feel/intuit that you have done enough.

If this sounds a little complicated, or if you are struggling with confidence and self-esteem here (i.e. you doubt your ability to figure it out), relax. It is not as hard as you might think. In fact, chances are good that when you are ready to atone, opportunities will already be available for you. Pay attention to your life spaces and seize the opportunities when they arise.

Atoning in right measure and finding something appropriate are both important. It is also important, and this is the fifth and most important thing we would like to say, to have as much fun as you can while you atone. To be sure, you have to fix what you broke and you have to make amends for damage you have done, but you do not have to break rocks in a ditch while you do it, despite what you may have heard. A lot of people make out atonement to be all about punishment. They say “justice” demands isolation, deprivation, hard labour, and even hellfire; but, that is ridiculous. In fact, hurting another being because they have hurt another being just makes things worse. As Gandhi said, “An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind,” or as we might like to say, “Punishing people just causes more damage.”

Remember, this is all about healing and connection. Healing your body, aligning with your HS, activating your energy system,
ascending, and connecting require healthy bodies and healthy minds. If the goal is to stop the hurt and heal the body so we can connect, then how can engaging in an unaligned act towards another (i.e. harming them) be any more right than the original action? The answer is, it cannot be.

Just like all disjunctive and violent actions, punishment (which is always a violent act) harms you and it harms the victims. Punishment, whether punishing yourself with painful atonement, or punishing others with violence and pain, is the pinnacle of spiritual confusion and the height of global hypocrisy. Not only does it spread damage further by harming others, but it puts you out of alignment with your own higher consciousness. It makes it harder for all involved, and it pushes back graduation further and further. Stopping the hurt and healing the body means stopping the hurt and healing the body for all people, not just ones who you judge to be worthy.

“Punishment” just continues the harm and makes things worse. Therefore, listen carefully when I say here that atonement works best when it involves happy action and joyful contribution. It is just common sense. You will do a much better job making things right, make much better progress towards healing and connection, and be much less likely to hurt yourself and others, when you are happy and are having fun with the atonement that you do. This is critical advice. Make your atonement work, and the atonement work of others, fun, and embrace the good feelings that come. This is the best, and only, way forward to healing and stronger connection.

Finally, the last thing we want to say here is that you do not necessarily have to atone directly to the people you have harmed. It would be best if you could, that is true. If you have harmed your children, or your parents, your workers, or children in a factory, it is best if you make amends to them directly. However, doing that is not always possible. Sometimes the people you have harmed hate you and do not want to have anything to do with you. Sometimes they are far away and direct
atonement is not possible. Sometimes they are dead. Sometimes you need to atone for stuff you have done in a previous life. Whatever the reason is, sometimes direct atonement is just not possible. If this is you, try; however, if you cannot, for whatever reason, atone directly, make up for it by finding a way to help others, and then do that in the measure required., Just be honest with yourself, be in tune with your Highest Self, and find a joyful way to do it.

**Commitment and foundations**

At this point, we have said all there is to say about the requirement of atonement and the bottom awakening-accountability-atonement triangle. As you can see, it is fairly simple and straightforward. Be aware of the mess in the room, be accountable for the damage you have caused, and atone. If you do that you are “building the foundations” of connection.

Now, as simple as this all is, it is not always so easy to do. As much as we say it should be joyful, nevertheless, it can be hard work, getting out of your comfort zone, making fundamental changes, and even giving up certain things when those things harm other living beings. This can be quite difficult, especially when others resist the changes, and especially when the things you have to give up are either enjoyable, or you are addicted. I like a good hamburger for example, but I will no longer eat one because it is unnecessary, and because doing so harms another living being. Some people find gambling exciting, but addicts harm themselves and their families. At the end of the day who wouldn’t want more money. Is the world’s richest man really just going to give “his” wealth away by supporting taxation and redistribution? More than likely he’ll continue to sleep, avoid, and do harm just so that he can keep it.

It is a camel versus needle thing, meaning to say, it can be really, really hard. Nevertheless, moving forward requires sacrifice and life change always.
What can we say?

That is just the way it is.

If you find it hard remember, there is no moving forward to the top triangle of alignment, activating, and ascension until you’ve accomplished the bottom awakening, accountability, and atonement. It is not a moral thing or a judgment thing; it is simply not possible. It is like trying to drive a car when a) you can’t find it, b) the engine is broken, and c) it is stuck in the mud. If you cannot find it, you cannot get in and drive. Even if you can, by some miracle, find it and get in, the engine is broken and it won’t move because it is stuck in the mud.

It is exactly as absurd as that.

If you are not awake, you cannot see the mess. If you cannot see the mess, you cannot clean it up. If you cannot, or will not, clean it up, you won’t be able to move forward because you are lost, you are broken, and you are stuck. Which isn’t to say things are hopeless; It is just to say, there can be hard work, especially in the very early stages.

If you do find you are having trouble with awakening, accountability, and atonement, perhaps you have addictions or other issues (ego issues, for example) that prevent you from engaging and sticking with the process. If this is the case, perhaps you have not healed sufficiently. To avoid wasting energy and time, consider taking a step back to the healing stage. There is no point trying to push through when the healing foundations are not in place. This isn’t a race and no connected person is going to think poorly of you if you got some healing work to do. Be methodical about this and don’t skip steps. You are just wasting time if you do.

If this all seems a bit onerous, remember what we said at the outset. This is not a moral thing or an ethical thing. This isn’t about shaming you, judging you, or punishing you. This is about healing and connection, period. This is not even something you have to do. You can live an entire life
completely disconnected, and die relatively content at the end. If you don’t want to follow this path, if you do not want to heal and connect, you don’t have to. You can live your life in whatever state of Consciousness you choose, without any fear of externally imposed negative consequences.

Still, that doesn’t mean there won’t be natural consequences of your choice. If you eat nothing but junk food, you will get sick. Nobody is judging you or causing your sickness; it is simply a natural consequence of your choice. Similarly, if you choose to live disconnected from your Highest Self, you will, at best, live like a shadow of your true Self and potential. At worst, you’ll twist, distort, embitter, become increasingly uncomfortable in the ascending energies, and die much sooner than you had planned. It is not a question of judgment or punishment. It is just a natural consequence of your choices and actions. Do what you need to do to move forward, or not. The choice, as they say, is yours.

Study questions

1. What actions have you taken in your life that have harmed another human being? Include direct harm, like assaulting your children, excluding others, eating meat, etc., and indirect harm, like purchasing clothes made in sweatshops, unnecessarily cycling your smartphone, etc. Write these down, and do not shy or ashamed. We have all engaged in harmful acts. The points are not about shaming, judgment, and punishment; the point is awareness, accountability, and atonement.

2. Find yourself a safe and quiet place and consider, what actions do you need to undertake to stop hurting others and atone? Do you think you are in a position to undertake these actions or are there issues, additions, or resistances that you think might get in your way? Share with the group. Others may be able to offer help
and advice.

3. Keep in mind, you are not the only person on the planet going through this process. Others are in the process of awakening, atoning, and connecting. Thinking specifically of atonement, what can you do to help others in your life, or “out there,” take the actions necessary for atonement? Can you help educate? Can you resist judging? Are they willing to atone? Are you willing to let them? Are you willing to forgive? Remember, the sooner we can all heal and connect, the better of we will all be. Think of one thing that you can do to create safe spaces where friends, family, or people in general can awaken to accountability and atone.
Alignment

So far in this workbook we have looked at awakening, accountability, and atonement. These three points form the bottom triangle in the LP Connection Framework. In this unit we are going to continue our “connection training” by starting with the top triangle of alignment, activation, and ascension. We will start our exploration with the all-important concept of alignment.

To fully understand what alignment is and why it is so important, let us take a step backwards by first talking about the nature of spirituality. Let us also talk, briefly, about what it means to live a spiritual life and be a spiritual person. Specifically, let us define spirituality and get you thinking about the key components of a spiritual life. To kick off the discussion, let us ask you two questions, the answers to which fully define the nature of spirituality.

- What does it mean to be spiritual?
- What does it mean to lead an authentic spiritual life?

You already know, from LP Workbook One, that being spiritual means connecting and filling the water glass with Consciousness, i.e., filling the physical unit with the light of your own higher Consciousness.

You already know, from previous units in this workbook, that an authentic spiritual life is a life conducted in pursuit of better connection, which of course results in more water in the glass.

This is great as a general conceptualization and root for visualization, but it leaves many of the specifics out. To deepen our understanding of authentic spirituality and connection, and to answer the above questions more specifically, let us introduce the automobile metaphor. To use the automobile

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25 The automobile metaphor is a metaphor used to illustrate the relationship between spiritual ego as driver, and physical unit as vehicle. http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Automobile_Metaphor/.
metaphor, think of your body as a car and think of your Consciousness like the driver of that car. More technically correct, think of your body like a powerful red Ferrari and your Consciousness like the experienced driver of the red Ferrari. Using this visual, you can understand what it means to be spiritual, what it means to live a spiritual life, and what the full nature of spirituality is as nothing more or less than the processes involved in getting into the car (i.e. physical vehicle) and driving it around creation in an effective, sensible, safe, i.e., spiritually aligned, way.

That is all there is to it.

If you want to live a spiritual life, if you want to be a spiritual person, if you want to complete the spiritual awakening and connection process, then get your Self (capital “Y” You) fully into the car (your physical body) and drive it around in an aligned fashion.

Of course, the million-dollar question now is just what is an aligned use of the physical vehicle for immortal Consciousness? To answer that question, you first need to know what it means to be aligned. Using the automobile metaphor, that is easy to understand. If you think of the automobile as your physical unit and the driver of that car as higher Consciousness (higher Self, your soul, etc.), then alignment occurs when you get into the car and it drives exactly the way you want it to drive. If you press the gas, the car accelerates; if you hit the brakes, the car slows down; if you turn right, the car turns right; if you bank left, well, you get the idea. Your car is in alignment when it does what you, the driver, want it to do; it is out of alignment when it does not. If you are driving in your car on the highway and you hit the brakes to avoid an obstacle but the car accelerates, then the car is dangerously out of alignment with the will/intent of the driver. Similarly, if you turn the wheel left but the car turns

26 Self with a capital “S” refers to your Resident Monadic Consciousness (RMC) or spiritual ego. Self with a lower case “s” refers to your bodily ego. For more, see http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Self
right, it is out of alignment.

It is the same with your physical unit. Your physical unit is in alignment when it does what its Highest Self wants it to do. It is out of alignment when it does not. If your Higher Self wants its body to do a certain thing and it does it, it is aligned. If the body refuses to act in accordance with the intent of the Self, it is not aligned. Simple.

We can now return to our two questions concerning the nature of spirituality. Recall these questions:

- What does it mean to be spiritual?
- What does it mean to lead a spiritual life?

With the automobile metaphor and concept of alignment in mind, we can say that being spiritual means being aligned. We can also say that you are living a spiritual life when your physical unit is aligned with higher Consciousness. You are living an anti-spiritual life when your physical unit is out of alignment with your higher Consciousness. When you think and act in accordance with what your higher Self wants, you are in alignment. If you act discordant to the nature and wishes of your higher Self, you are out of alignment.

**How to be aligned?**

The billion-dollar question now is, how do you know what your higher Self (i.e. the owner of the vehicle) wants? If you are not aligned, how do you move in the direction of alignment?

On the one hand, determining what the Self wants to do with its vehicle can be easy. When you are in a state of awakened connection, when your Highest Self is fully in the vessel, “you” equals “You.” When you are in a state of awakened connection, little “y” you knows what capital “Y” You wants like you know your name. *When you are connected, you and You are one and the same.* The problem is, we all experience a toxic socialization processed designed to disconnect us and as a
consequence, we all start off more or less disconnected and confused about who we are, who our Highest Self is, and what it wants its body to do. When you are disconnected, damaged, and confused by a toxic socialization process, you do not know what You want, and it is much harder to achieve alignment.

It is a bit of a catch 22. You need to be connected to determine alignment easily, but you need to be aligned to get a better connection.

So what do you do?

If you want to move towards alignment while yet disconnected, there are two things you can do. You can either

a) Follow somebody else’s rules about how to be aligned,
   or

b) Listen to emotional semaphore and intuit it, infer it, or feel it for yourself.

Folllowing alignment rules

As for following somebody else’s rules, there is a long tradition of providing what we might call Alignment Rule Sets to the disconnected people of this planet to help them with alignment. Consider the Christian Ten Commandments, the Buddhist Eightfold Path,\(^{27}\) and even the LP admonishments to **aligned action**, **aligned thought**, and **aligned environment** (which we will cover in some detail in Appendix One below). These are all basically rule sets designed to facilitate bodily alignment, even when an individual is completely disconnected and toxic.

There is nothing particularly wrong with following rule sets. When you are not well connected to your Highest Self, interested in moving forward, but not sure how to begin the alignment process, then following predesigned rule sets is a

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A word of warning. If you are going to follow alignment rules, be careful. Listening to predesigned rule sets is great so long as the rule sets are accurate. Unfortunately, that’s not always the case. A lot of times sexism, morality, or even greed and addiction can filter into the rules and corrupt the guidance. When that happens, following the rules does not help with alignment, it harms it.

For example, there is nothing wrong with being a sex worker if a) it is something you like doing and b) it is something you would choose to do it even if you didn’t have to. If being a sex worker is what makes you aligned, then that’s great. Unfortunately, a lot of patriarchal nonsense, a lot of nonsense in general, gets pressed into alignment rule sets, and when that happens, following the rules will just make things harder. If you are here to be a sex worker, but somebody has filled your head with their guilt/shame nonsense rules and morality, this can make you feel uncomfortable, conflicted, confused, and even put you out of alignment. When following alignment rules sets therefore, be careful or, as we like to say, be discerning.²⁸ Do not follow bad advice. When it comes to alignment, following bad rules and guidance can be just as bad as following no guidance at all. Bad advice on spirituality, connection, and alignment can get you so far off track and lost so deeply in the woods that you will never find your way back to the Path.

Following alignment rule sets is a good way to get started on the alignment process, but the general rules these sets represent can only provide general guidance suitable to everybody. The rules, even if they have not been corrupted by sexism, racism, classism, etc., do not contain alignment specifics that might be appropriate for you. A rule that says “Thou shall not kill” is an

²⁸ In regards spirituality and spiritual discernment, we offer some advice on spiritual discernment in the books Rocket Scientists’ Guide to Spiritual Discernment and Rocket Scientists’ Guide to Authentic Spirituality. These give you the tools you need to discern for yourself, even in the early stages when your connection to your highest Self is nascent and weak.
important alignment rule that applies to everybody without exception. However, lots of other actions and ideas are relevant to alignment, but don’t always apply across the board. For example, I have an alignment rule that says “wake up and write every morning for a few hours.” I need this “rule” because I’m on this Earth to teach and write the Lightning Path, and in order to do that, in order to be aligned with the mission of my Highest Self, I have to be disciplined, focussed, and persistent when it comes to writing every day. When I get up and write every day, I am aligned with my Highest Self.

At this point you can see the issue. While getting up and writing every morning makes sense for me, it wouldn’t make any sense for many others whose mission and purpose don’t require that kind of activity. Others, like musicians, healers, empaths, parents, etc., need different alignment guidance. An alignment rule for parents might be, for example, don’t verbally, emotionally, or physically assault your kids. An alignment rule for a musician might be, practice three hours a day. An alignment rule for empaths might be, avoid toxic environments. These sorts of specific rules cannot be formulated into general alignment rule sets because they don’t make sense for everybody. So what do we do?

As with general alignment rule sets, we can also provide more specific alignment rule sets suitable for different groups of people. For example, I, Michael S., have a series of articles designed to help empaths create a safe and aligned life. These articles provide a focussed set of alignment rules designed specifically for empaths. Besides empaths, other alignment rule sets can be conceived. We could develop alignment rule sets for teachers, healers, doctors, and so on. In fact, we often do. The ethical guidelines that some disciplines formulate and that are intended to guide actions are, in essence, disciplinary alignment rules.

21 https://www.michaelsharp.org/what-is-an-empath/
Specific alignment rule sets are great and can be helpful; however, at times even these sorts of specifically focused rule sets may not be granular enough. While general alignment rule sets can point everybody in the right direction, and while specifically focussed alignment rule sets can help align and focus specific groups, it is important to remember, everybody, every empath, every healer, every leader, every musician, is different. The truth is, no rule set can ever provide perfect alignment guidance. If you want to be perfectly aligned, you have to connect with Highest Self and get your guidance directly from it.

**Listening to emotional semaphore**

Of course, that brings us back to the problem which is, if you are not already connected, how do you know what your Highest Self wants? This brings us to the second thing you can do to move towards alignment when you are not connected and that is, pay attention to emotional semaphore and use that to refine your direction. If an action or inaction makes you feel bad, if it makes you feel anxious, guilty, and shameful, then do not do it because it is certainly out of alignment. On the other hand, if an action or inaction makes you feel good, if you feel that something is the “right thing to do,” then do it. It is some. To gather the specifics of your alignment, do what makes you feel good about yourself and do not do things that make you feel bad. If you do that, you will be travelling a fast path towards greater alignment, even if you are profoundly disconnected from Consciousness. It is that simple.  

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30 We are all naturally born with emotional mechanisms that facilitate alignment. That is, we are all born with the ability to feel good or bad about things, and so we all have the ability to follow our emotions towards alignment, even when we are disconnected. This ability to feel/intuit our way to alignment can be broken. In fact, it is regularly broken in men who endure a toxic socialization process that teaches them to disconnect and suppress their emotions. If you are a boy then the chances are very high that growing up your parents and teachers actually discouraged you from having feelings! Of course, a question that must immediately arise at this point is, why would parents and teachers do such a thing? Why would we break the ability of our boys to feel? Answering that question in detail is way beyond the scope of this work, but let me just say, it has everything to do with the System under
To recap what we have said so far, we are aligned when our physical unit (your vehicle) responds like our Highest Self (i.e., the driver of the vehicle) wishes it to respond. We are out of alignment when it does not. As for figuring out how to achieve alignment, if we have a strong connection to Consciousness already, it is not an issue. If we have a strong connection, we simply know who we are and how to act. While we remain unconnected or weakly connected, following general or more specific rule sets can get us pointed in the right direction. Emotional semaphore can get us close to perfection.

**Why is alignment important?**

At this point you should have a good idea what alignment is and how to achieve it. The only question left to answer here is, why is alignment important? The answer is simple. You cannot go very far on any spiritual path if your body is not at least making progress towards better alignment with self.

**Why?**

Despite what you might think, it is not for moral reasons, it is for technical ones. You can’t connect unless aligned not because God or your Soul will punish you for being bad, but because it is technically impossible to do so.

It has to do with a “push-pull” that occurs between the bodily

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which we live. In the capitalist/accumulation system that rules this world, traditionally it is the men who go out and work, go off to war, and run the big corporations. In the world of work, war, and corporate domination, men are often required to do things that are out of alignment with higher consciousness (e.g. spend long periods away from family, pick up guns, make corporate decisions that exploit children, dump toxic waste to preserve profit margins, etc.). If an individual with an intact emotional structure engages in these actions, they will feel bad about themselves. If they continue to engage in these actions over the long term, their bad feelings will persist and get worse. Eventually, sooner rather than later usually, emotionally intact men would clue in and stop engaging in actions that made them feel bad, unless of course their ability to feel has been compromised. Thus, in order to preserve the System, in order to get men to do all the things that the System requires of them, a toxic socialization process is created that breaks the emotional structure of men thereby allowing them to engage in often horrifically disjunctive acts. We will talk more about the deleterious impact of the System on the emotional, psychological, and spiritual health of the individual in more advanced LP materials. For now, for more on toxic socialization, see Mike Sosteric, "Toxic Socialization," *Sociojourn* (2016).

31 Enter “The Kingdom of Heaven” as the Christians like to say, or attain anandasatva as the Vedics might say.
ego and Highest Self when things are out of alignment.

It is like being held in an uncomfortable embrace with another person.

You are uncomfortable, so you push the person away.

They are uncomfortable, so they pull away.

The end result, you disconnect from each other.

It is the same with bodily ego and spiritual ego. When things are out of alignment, the Highest Self and bodily ego pull push away. When that happens, you are left disconnected, with lower Consciousness Quotient (CQ), and in “darkness,” so to speak. When this happens, your Highest Self remains at a distance from the “reality interface” that is your daily existence.

So what causes the push-pull? That depends on whether you are talking about the bodily ego or the spiritual ego/Highest Self.

Spiritual Ego/Highest Self

As regards the spiritual ego, there are at least three reasons why capital “Y” Spiritual Ego, your Highest Self, might pull away from the vehicle when the vehicle is not aligned. HS might pull away because

a) It wants to avoid unnecessary pain and anguish to itself.

b) It wants to avoid unnecessary pain and anguish to its body.

c) It wants to “power down” its own body to reduce its negative impact on the world.

Let us look at each of these in turn.

The first reason your HS might pull away from its own body is

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\[CQ\] Consciousness Quotient (CQ) is a theoretical construct, a number from between zero (dead) and one hundred (full consciousness) designed to indicate the “level” of Consciousness in the body. For more see http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Consciousness_Quotient
because it doesn’t want to cause itself unnecessary pain and anguish. The truth is, being present in a body when the body is far out of alignment is painful to your HS. Your HS, is a being of love, light, compassion, empath, and soul. Your HS does not like negativity at all. It does not like violence. It does not like when its body is in pain. It does not like when its body participates in exploitation. It does not like when its body harms others. It does not like pain, suffering, exploitation, office cubicles, factory slavery, violence, war, self-delusion, or death at all.

Just to be clear, your HS does not find any salutatory benefit to struggle, pain, or suffering. In the awareness of your HS, pain and suffering of the body is not a “life lesson.” It is not a necessary feature of the “checkboard.” It is not something that “makes you stronger.” It is definitely not part of God’s plan. As far as your HS is concerned, pain and suffering is an unnecessary and avoidable “evil.” When the body acts out of alignment with its own HS, when the HS cannot change the behaviour of its physical unit, and when these disjunctive behaviours are chronic, the HS experiences chronic discomfort and pain. To avoid that chronic discomfort, the HS will withdraw, more or less, from being present in the reality of its own physical body.

Be clear about this.

Despite propaganda and self-delusion to the contrary, the old energy world “as it exists” with all its exploitation, self-delusion, hatred, anger, pain, suffering, and horror is literal hell to your Highest Self. Higher Self avoids the toxicity and nonsense of the old energy world like you avoid putting your hand into an open flame. It withdraws when the experience gets to be too painful because it cannot stand the toxic fires that surround it.  

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\[33\] Sometimes, when the hellish fires of old energy toxicity burn to hot, Consciousness may withdraw from reality altogether, either through disassociation or suicide. It does not necessarily want to abandon its
It gets as close as it needs to, but no more.

So far we have noted that the HS will pull away from its own physical unit to avoid its own discomfort. A second reason that the HS might pull away from an unaligned physical unit is to avoid causing the physical unit itself additional pain and suffering. As we have seen, when the physical unit is out of alignment, HS uses steering emotions to try and align the behaviour of its disconnected physical unit. Steering emotions are positive or negative emotions used to guide a disconnected physical unit. In an ideal situation, the physical unit will listen to the emotions and adjust its behaviour accordingly. Sometimes, for various reasons, the physical unit does not listen to emotional semaphore. Sometimes, because of ignorance, psychological/emotional pathology, self-defensive resistance, external resistance, or cussed stubbornness, the emotional messages either do not get through, or the body simply ignores them. When that happens, when the bodily ego does not respond to emotional semaphore, painful negative emotions can build up over time.

Sometimes, when the misalignment is not too bad, chronic accumulation of negative emotions is fine, and the body can live out its life “normally,” i.e. in the chronic low level disjunctive pain of misalignment. However, sometimes the misalignment can be quite severe and the cache of accumulated emotions

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physical vehicle because these are rare and precious, but it does seek to avoid the discomfort, and it will withdraw altogether if the suffering on both sides (i.e. its suffering and the suffering of its physical unit) gets to be too much. This may be unpleasant to consider, but serious mental disorders and suicide is a growing global epidemic. As long as this world is a world of exploitation, oppression, poverty, and inequality, until, in other words, we complete The Transition, withdrawal of Consciousness from the body, and even suicide, will continue to be a problem.

https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org//The_Transition
quite overwhelming. Over time, the negative feelings caused by disjunctive actions (depression, shame, guilt, etc.) can build up and become intolerable for the physical unit. In these situations, the HS can pull away from its own physical unit in an effort to reduce the existential pain.

This is a very important point, so let me repeat just to be sure you understand. In disjunctive and oppressive realities where the body will not or cannot make changes, Consciousness will withdraw to avoid causing unnecessary and ineffectual emotional pain. Withdrawing from the physical unit helps reduce pain because withdrawing lowers awareness. The less Consciousness in the body, the lower the CQ, the less aware and awake one is. The less aware and awake, the less sensitive one is to the pain.

It is like being poked with a pin while you are in a coma versus being poked with a pin when you are awake and alert. When you are in a coma, you do not feel the pain fully. When you are awake, you do. When you are awake, your suffering naturally increases.

When misalignment is severe and negative emotions accumulate to critical levels, the HS will withdraw from the physical vehicle to reduce its awareness of pain. The withdrawal is, in essence a **spiritual numbing**.\(^{34}\)

Note, there is one very important exception to the rule that Consciousness withdraws when the body is stuck in impotent toxicity and misalignment and that is during periods of **forced connection**.\(^{35}\) Forced connection (a.k.a. forced awakening) occurs when Consciousness pushes itself into a body whether the body is ready for Consciousness or not, even when the entry

\(^{34}\) [https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Spiritual_Numbing](https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Spiritual_Numbing).

causes considerable pain.

*Forced connections typically occur at times of personal, community, societal, or (now) global crises,* particularly when the survival of the physical unit, or the species, is in serious question—so called “rock bottom.” In cases when the only possibility of survival is increasing the level of Consciousness in the body so it can become aware, accountable, activate, and take action, Consciousness forces itself in.

Unfortunately, forced connection is not a pleasant process and it does not always work. By the time a person (or a planet, for that matter) hits rock bottom, they are so far gone that they could shade into oblivion after all. Also note, forced connection can be quite dangerous, both for the physical unit and for those that surround it. It is dangerous for the PU because it is hard, stressful, and comes at a time when the individual is at their most vulnerable and desperate. It is dangerous for others because sometimes the PU can snap under the emotional and psychological pressure brought about by forced awakening. When this occurs, and it will occur with increasing frequency as the planetary crises continues to

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36 At this point, you might think that hitting rock bottom is a good thing. You might think it is a necessary part of the process. Indeed, there is a common perception amongst the people of this world that “hitting rock bottom” is some kind of necessary rite of passage. We hear people say things like “I had to hit rock bottom before I could change.” Some even wear it as a badge of spiritual honor, but they should not. Just because some people are so sick and damaged that a death crisis is the only thing that shakes them awake, doesn’t make the thing necessary or even good. It is not. Having to hit rock bottom means the individual is embedded in a deep and serious pathology. As such, it should never be celebrated; instead, we should work to improve conditions to ensure that nobody ever has to “hit rock bottom” just to wake up and transform.

37 Global, environmental, political, social, psychological, and emotional conditions have now deteriorated to the point where the survival of not only the human species, but of all species on the planet, is in question. In this dire end-times situation we all find ourselves in, Consciousness has no choice but to push, push, push. For more on the current situation and what has caused it, see Mike Sosteric, *Rocket Scientists' Guide to Money and the Economy: Accumulation and Debt.* (St Albert, Alberta: Lightning Path Press., 2016). For a spiritual look at the underlying plan, see Sharp, *The Book of Life: Ascension and the Divine World Order.*
worsen, various forms of spiritual catastrophe\textsuperscript{38} will ensue.\textsuperscript{39}

Also note, despite the fact that it is sometimes necessary, forced awakening is never a good thing, nor is it necessary in the grander scheme of things. Many think that people must hit rock bottom if they are to change. Many believe that there is some kind of “cosmic plan” or divine lesson in the emotional and psychological crash that precedes and awakening push, but that is not true. There is nothing in the dark night of the soul that is salutatory. Forced awakening is just a last-ditch (and not always successful) intervention to save a body that is already nearing the end of the line. Rather than seeing it as something that is good, beneficial, or divine (i.e. part of “the plan”), we should see it for what it is, a symptom of the total failure of our familial, social, educational, and health care institutions. It does not just happen to people and it is not the result of personal weakness or failure. When somebody descends to the point where a forced awakening has to occur just to give the individual a chance at survival, it is an epic social, economic, and political failure. It is far more enlightened, aligned, and evolutionary sensible to aim at creating social and institutional conditions whereby everybody develops a full and empowered connection and nobody has to hit “rock bottom” just to change. As individuals and society, we will avoid a lot of unnecessary misery, and advance our evolutionary agenda far more

\textsuperscript{38} A “Spiritual Catastrophe” is any profoundly negative outcome that arises as a result of connection. If an individual self stupefies or commits suicide because they cannot handle the guilt and shame that arises when awareness increases, this is a spiritual catastrophe.

\textsuperscript{39} We need to emphasize here that spiritual catastrophe is not a necessary outcome of forced connection, but they are a possibility. The probability of catastrophic reaction increases and decreases depending on several key factors, including the level of guilt and shame, the state of the individual’s family life, the state of the community they live in, the state of the world that surrounds them, and so on. For example, an individual who is filled with guilt and shame and who suddenly becomes aware of painful caches and their sources may engage in suicidal actions to flee from the guilt and shame. Similarly, somebody who suddenly wakes up to the reality that they have been violently oppressed by society and/or those that surround may, if they suffer from mental illness, snap and lash out at others.

If we, as a society and a planet, want to reduce the incidence of catastrophe and violence as a result of forced connection, we have to work hard to provide increased levels of care, love, empathy, compassion, nurturing, care, and protective support.
efficiently\(^{40}\) once we shift over and begin helping all citizens of Earth to connect.

As noted, the HS can pull away from its physical unit, thereby lowering the CQ of its vehicle, a) to avoid its pain and discomfort and b) to reduce the pain and discomfort of its physical unit. A third reason that HS can pull away from its physical unit is when its physical unit is causing suffering to others. If the body is hurting others, the HS will pull away. This might seem a little strange to say at first, but when you think about it, it makes perfect sense. Recall the automobile metaphor here. Your higher Self is the owner of the physical unit like you are the owner of the motor vehicle you drive. When you get into a motor vehicle, you expect it to drive the way you want it to drive. If the car does not do what you want it to do, that is, if it is not aligned with your intent, if it accelerates when you brake, for example, and unexpectedly veers into pedestrians, you do what it takes to make sure that it does not harm anyone. You would reach up, flip off the ignition, and let the vehicle coast to the side of the road. You would then work to have it fixed If you cannot fix it, you would take it off the road and find another vehicle.

It is the same with Consciousness. As Consciousness enters the vehicle, it puts pressure on the vehicle to act in alignment. If the physical vehicle is healthy and functioning properly, and in particular if the bodily ego is transparent to, and in alignment with its HS, everything is OK. However if it is not, if it is acting badly and the HS can’t do anything about it (can’t get it to heal itself, can’t get it to align, atone, etc.), it will withdraw in an

\(^{40}\) Of course, at this point some of you are going to be scratching your heads in confusion here. Does not evolution equal strength? Does not evolution equal predation? Does not evolution equal domination? The answer to that question is only “yes” in the middle evolutionary stages. At the advanced stage, a stage that the human race is currently struggling to enter into to, evolution equals diversity! At an advanced stage, the more diverse a species is, the more it thrives. At an advanced stage, the more diverse a species is, the faster it evolves. In the advanced evolutionary stage, species advance fastest in conditions of maximum diversity, at all levels, biological, social, and political reality. Homophobes, xenophobes, and other “phobes” that react in a violent and suppressive way when they experiences diversity, please take note.
attempt to “power down” the physical unit, just like you get out of a car that is not working. For reasons we will not get into here, it will not withdraw completely, but it can power down and withdraw to avoid giving its misbehaving physical unit unnecessary power and support.  

Bodily Ego

As noted, when the body is not in alignment with Consciousness, Consciousness (i.e. your Highest Self) can pull away from the body, thereby lowering CQ, awareness, sensitivity, and power. The other side of this push-pull coin comes into effect when the bodily ego pushes its own Highest Self away. Just as the spiritual ego will pull away from an unaligned body for several reasons, the unaligned bodily ego will push Consciousness away for several reasons. The bodily will push HS away when

a) It is unhealthy and damaged by toxic socialization.

b) It is not properly prepared for the connection (breathing exercises, mental discipline archetypal training, etc.) and connection thus causes anxiety, fear, confusion, or even paranoia.

c) It, thoughts, its environment, its actions are out of alignment with the beauty and perfection of Highest Self.

Unfortunately, powering down does not always work because there are ways for the bodily ego to force connection if it decides it wants to. It can use connection supplements like cannabis or LSD, for example, or it can use symbols and engage in rituals designed to facilitate temporary connection. If it does that, even a misbehaving and badly damaged body can have access to the Fabric of Consciousness. The outcome of such forced connection can be quite negative, especially if the physical unit is extremely damaged. The individual that pops to mind here is Charles Manson. See http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Connection_Supplement/.
Damage

One of the first things that can cause the bodily ego to push Consciousness away is mental/emotional illness. The spiritual ego, the Highest Self, requires a strong and stable bodily ego. As we have seen in LP Workbook Two: Healing Framework, the bodily ego is weakened and damaged by toxic socialization experiences. Weakened and damaged egos struggle with the powerful light of higher Consciousness. When the bodily ego is weakened and damaged to the point of mental illness, it becomes incapable of smoothly handling even minimally higher levels of Consciousness.

Why does an ill bodily ego struggle with higher Consciousness? It is complicated, but in a nutshell, emotional, psychological, and intellectual distortions caused by the damage of toxic socialization, cause (and combine with) lack of trust, anxiety, fear, anger, hatred, paranoia to create a toxic psychological stew. This toxic stew undermines relationships and the integrity of normal life, but it is a particular problem during connection events. The toxic stew is triggered/heightened by connection. If you imagine a toxic stew on the stove and if you imagine turning up the burner too full until the stew is bubbling and boiling over, it is like that. The heat/fire of Consciousness causes the toxic stew to boil and this can cause emotional and psychological discombobulation and intense neurological distress. When the bodily ego experiences distress, it will use whatever defense mechanisms it has at its disposal to break the connection and reduce the distress. For example, it will use ARMs which we learned about early to reduce awareness and push Consciousness out, and it will engage Survival Responses like flight and flight, to escape the situation. Sometime this might mean physical flight, fight, or submission, but often it simply means using ARMs to shove Consciousness out of the

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42 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Defense_Mechanisms
Either way, when mental illness causes confusion and distress, the bodily ego breaks the connection to Consciousness.

A reminder, if you feel mental/emotional illness may be an issue, the LP offers the HEALING Framework. Consult LP Workbook Two: Healing Framework for guidance.

**Lack of Preparation**

Besides damage from toxic socialization, another thing that can cause the body’s ego to push Consciousness away, especially during a powerful connection event, is simple lack of preparation. It would be a bit of an understatement to say that Consciousness can be hard to handle, even under the best of circumstances (i.e. when you are healthy and fully prepared). Consciousness, real Consciousness, is nothing like the watered down version you get while operating in Normal Consciousness. Consciousness is bright like the sun and powerful like an atom bomb. If you want to be able to handle even a little bit of that Higher Consciousness, if you don’t want the bodily ego getting shocked back, knocked back, falling back, you have to prepare. If you don’t prepare, you’ll struggle, especially when the connection is intense. If you struggle, the bodily ego will, at some point shortly after the connection, push Consciousness away.

Speaking of preparation, you should know, lack of preparation leading to an unprepared connection can have consequences ranging from simple discomfort leading to rejection of Consciousness. When lack of preparation is combined with an

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44 Note, when this happens, when bodily ego “shoves” spiritual ego away, it is not a sign of weakness; it is a simple programmed defense mechanism.

ill bodily ego, ego pathologies\footnote{An ego pathology is a psychological/emotional disorder of the bodily ego. For more, see \url{https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Ego_Pathology}.} like egoic bloating\footnote{For more on ego bloating, see \url{https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Egoic_Bloating}.} or even full blown ego explosion\footnote{\url{https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Egoic_Explosion}. Also see Michael Sharp, "Ego Explosion," Michael Sharp (Sturgeon County: Lightning Path, 2014), vol.}.

It is a problem. If you are not prepared for the expansion of Consciousness into your body, if the connection event is intense,\footnote{FYI, a connection event may characterized along four axis, these being quality, intensity (see Consciousness Quotient), duration, and content. \url{https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Experience#Notes}} the blast can be dramatic, powerful, and discombobulating. For this reason, it is very important to prepare. Without proper preparation, you increase the chance of having a difficult experience.

Of course, the question now is, how do you prepare for connection? The answer is simple. Study and practice. Study an authentic spirituality and put into practice the guidance and advice. Learn concepts and ideas that help you understand, If the authentic spirituality tells you to practice breathing, do that. If this whole idea of preparation can you a little concerned, don’t be. If you’re reading these words, you’ve already done quite a bit to prepare yourself. Continue reading. For a general overview of the LP connection process, see \url{https://www.lightningpath.org/connection/steps/}

**Lack of Alignment**

Besides mental illness and lack of preparation, the third thing that can cause the bodily ego to push away Consciousness is lack of alignment in thought, action, and environment. We have already looked in some detail at alignment. Here we are going to refine our understanding by looking in more detail at unaligned environment, unaligned thought, and unaligned thought.
action, which we might colloquially refer to as wrong environment, wrong thought, and wrong action. When things are unaligned/wrong, when you live your life in an unaligned/wrong environment, when you engage in unaligned/wrong action, and when you fill your brain with unaligned/wrong thought, your bodily ego will end up pushing Consciousness away. Let us look at each of these in turn starting with unaligned environment.

Unaligned Environment

As you should know, unaligned/wrong environments are environments not aligned with the wishes and intent of your Highest Self. Since your Highest Self is an entity of light, life, love, compassion, empathy, and intelligence, generally, unaligned environments are threatening and violent environments that do not allow the expression of the love, compassion, empathy, and intelligence of Highest Self. Generally, unaligned environments are negative and violent environments. Unaligned environments are environments where you are subjected to emotional, psychological, spiritual, economic, or physical assault. Unaligned environments are environments where you cannot totally relax because you are not completely safe. Unaligned environments are environments where others manipulate and exploit you, or do not have your best interests at heart.

Anybody with a reasonable sense of reality will know that currently, most of our environments on Earth are unaligned, violent, and toxic. Most of us experience chronic threat, negativity, and violence in our home, work, social, and wider political/economic environments.

An important question to answer at this point is, “How does unaligned environment undermine connection?” It is quite simple. As we saw in Lightning Path Workbook Two, toxic violence and assault, constant threat and stress, is painful and damaging to the body. As we seen, higher levels of Consciousness in the body cause the pain to be more salient.
When you connect, when you bring Consciousness into the body, when you draw light into the room of your life, you become more aware of the toxicity and pain. When you become more aware, your pain and suffering naturally increases. It is like being poked with a pin while you are in a coma versus being poked with a pin when you are awake and alert. When you are in a coma, you do not feel the pain fully, if at all. When you are awake, you do. When you are awake, your suffering and the consequent damage naturally increases.

What does the bodily ego do when it wakes up and becomes more aware of the pain? It can either work to create aligned environment at home, work, and in society or, if for some reason it cannot do that, it can “accept” the toxic environment and find ways (i.e. use defense mechanisms) to push Consciousness out. We have already seen that it will use Awareness Reduction Mechanisms (ARMs) in order to do that. In very bad cases, Crown Stupifiers may even be used to push Consciousness out, decimate awareness, and damage the brain.

To avoid all that, strive for aligned environment. Guidance on aligned environment is provided in Appendix One of this Workbook.

Unaligned Action

In addition to unaligned environment, unaligned actions can

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50 If it works to create aligned environment, then it reduces disjuncture and establishes the environmental foundations for connection.

51 Why would a bodily ego not be able to work towards aligned environment at home, at work, our in society? Put another way, why would a bodily ego not be able to improve its life conditions? There are lots of different reasons for that. Perhaps it does not understand the importance of right environment. Perhaps it feels it “likes” or even thrives in the toxic stew (although if it feels that, likely its nothing more than a big bully). Perhaps it lives in an abusive household with a violent alcoholic. Perhaps it lives in a society where workplace slavery and even child labour is sanctioned. Perhaps its family is involved in crime. Perhaps lots of different things. The point is not to enumerate all the possibilities here. The point is just to bring your attention to the fact that a lot of different things can block a person from working on right environment. If you are a therapist or healer, determining the reason why is your job.

52 Crown Stupifiers are substances that, when ingested into the body, interfere with, block, distort, and even damage the subtle (and not so subtle) operations of the Crown Chakra (i.e. your brain). Crown stupifiers are dangerous and should be avoided. See https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Crown_Stupifiers
also interfere with your connection to Highest Self. *Unaligned action, as you should know by now, is any action that subverts and prevents connection.* More specifically, as we learned in earlier in this unit when we were speaking about alignment generally, unaligned action is action that is out of alignment with HS. If your HS wants its body to do one thing, and its body does another, then the body is engaged in unaligned action.

How does unaligned action lead to bodily ego pushing Consciousness way? As we have already seen, when actions are out of alignment with HS, the HS uses the emotions of guilt and shame to try and steer the body. The only way to stop guilt and shame is to recognize their meaning and stop acting in unaligned ways. Unfortunately, the bodily ego does not always understand the nature of these steering emotions, nor is it always capable, or even desirous, of responding. When the bodily ego does not respond appropriately to that guilt and shame, guilt and shame build up to painful levels. In order to avoid this pain, the bodily ego will, when its pain thresholds have been reached, push Consciousness away.

When it comes to unaligned action and the painful emotions that ensue as a result, there is really only one thing to do and that is establish aligned action. To get around the pain and disjuncture caused by unaligned action, to avoid having the bodily ego push consciousness away, engage in nothing but aligned right action. Guidance on achieving aligned right action is provided in Appendix One.

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35 *Why would the bodily ego be incapable of responding to steering emotions?* Sometimes it is “held hostage” by the societies it is situated in, the institutions within which it operates, and the people that it surrounds itself with. For example, if you are the CEO of a major technology company and your company exploits child labour in another country, you are going to be unable to make a change because, as per the capitalis maxim “profit über alles,” your board and your shareholders are not going to let you. They would force you to resign before they let you make a change like that.

*Why would the body ego not want to respond to steering emotions and act more in alignment with HS?* Greed, power, addiction, etc. HS would never want the body to abuse food or drugs, but addictions can override that. If you are addicted to heroin, no amount of guilt and shame is going to get you to stop. Even if you know it is unaligned, the addiction overpowers it all.
Unaligned/Wrong Thought

Finally, in addition to unaligned environment and unaligned action, unaligned thought\textsuperscript{14} can also cause the bodily ego to push Consciousness away. Unaligned thought is, of course, any thought that subverts and prevents connection. That’s easy enough to say, but in reality wrong thought is a pervasive problem. From the moment we are born, we are filled up with thoughts that disconnect us from our Highest Self. These thoughts make us doubt our own identity, doubt our motivation, and doubt our own perceptions. These thoughts seed misconceptions that confuse and misdirect us, and fear of higher spiritual realms that cause many of us to flee connection.

For example, unaligned thought can encourage ineffective practice. The common New Ager practice of “attraction,” for example, has nothing to do with connection at all, and contributes nothing towards the development of alignment and connection.

For example, unaligned thought can also encourage fear and even panic. For example, if you have been taught “Christian style” about demons, devils, and wrathful punishing patriarchs, then when you connect, you may experience discomfort, confusion, fear, even terror. These negative experiences will cause your bodily ego distress and in order to reduce that distress, your bodily ego will push Consciousness away.

And this is only two examples. Many, many more could be provided.

We have to say, wrong thought is the single biggest obstacle to connection there is. It is also the hardest obstacle to see, understand, and overcome, both because it is insidious and complicated, and because wrong thought is so pervasive and completely accepted it is often quite difficult to see If you want

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\textsuperscript{14} For more, see http://www.thespiritwiki.com/Unaligned_Thought.
to get a sense of the nature of the problem, imagine a fish bowl with a little fish swimming in water tinted with red dye. The fish is you. The tinted water is wrong thought. The tinted molecules of the water are all the notions, concepts, ideas, archetypes, theories, and unspoken assumptions that comprise wrong thought. Like the little fish in the little bowl, you swim and breathe in the tinted water. It is everywhere around you and you accept it as necessary, natural, and normal. Why would you not? It’s always been tinted this way. But it’s not normal. It’s actually a slow acting poison, a neurotoxin to be accurate, and the longer you swim and breathe in it, the more damaged you will become.\textsuperscript{55} You might start out all fresh and aware and progressive.

So what do you do to handle wrong thought? How do you clear the tinted water? It is actually very complicated. You can’t just pull the fish out and put it in a new bowl with clean water, because there is only the one bowl. You also cannot simply drain the water and refill it, because the fish has become entirely dependent on the chemicals in the red dye. If you just replaced all the water at one, there would be panic and painful withdrawal. Therefore, the only way to deal with it is by a slow drip, drip, drip of clean water and a careful filtering out of the red dye. Slowly introduce new concepts and ideas while clarifying and filtering out the old. Slow and measured won’t trigger fear, painful withdrawal, and panic. By the time the little fish realizes, the water will already be clear and the addiction already healed.

If you’ve been following along with the Lightning Path since Workbook One, the drip has been happening for a while. We’ve been introducing new concepts and ideas since workbook one and by now the water around you should be

\textsuperscript{55} If you want to know just how damaged, have a close look at people like Donald Trump or any of the other old, right, mostly white-men who breathe the thickest concentrations. The older you get, the close you are to the poison, the sicker you become. Spend enough time in it and it will make you a bona fide monster.
noticeably cleaner. Unfortunately, even now the water is still visibly tinted and there is a lot of filtration to do, so much so that there is way too much to handle in this short little unit. We’ll talk a bit more about aligned/right thought in Appendix One, but the real filtration starts when we take our next step forward with *Lighting Path Workbook Four: Archetypal Study.* In that book we introduce you to the *Triumph of Spirit Archetype System* (TOSAS) and show you how you can use that to purify and filter the water you swim in.

FYI, the TOSAS is a set of “archetype cards,” books, and eventually, videos that help filter and purify the archetypal water. If you like, you can preview the cards at [https://tosas.lightningpath.org/browse-archetypes/](https://tosas.lightningpath.org/browse-archetypes/). Then, when you are ready, visit the LP Study Guide and download the TOSAS books and cards to get started.

To summarize, in this unit we have noted that in order to be spiritual, one needs to live life in alignment with one’s own Highest Self, otherwise a “push/pull” struggle ensues that has, for various reasons, the bodily ego pushing and Consciousness pulling away. Thus you can understand, alignment is very important. Properly preparing yourself for connection by properly aligning your physical unit and your reality with Consciousness, conceptualized in this unit as the process of establishing aligned thought, aligned action, and aligned environment, is a prerequisite for connection. The truth is, if things aren’t aligned, you’ll never be able to make full connection. As we’ve noted, it is a difficult challenge and although you have been working on it since Workbook One, there is still considerable work left to do. When you are ready to begin the task of establishing aligned thought in earnest, pick up the Workbook Four and TOSAS and begin.

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56 [https://www.lightningpath.org/quick-start/](https://www.lightningpath.org/quick-start/)
As a final note, we just want to say, alignment is not something you do just on your personal self. Aligned thought, aligned action, and aligned environment are something you have to establish in ever widening spheres Spheres of Alignment. Start with your own individual thoughts and actions and then, as you become more confident and powerful, as you activate (see next section), work on your family, work, social environments, political, and cultural environments.

Finally, we just want to say, at some point you are going to look at your life and this world and realize just how big this job of alignment is really is, especially when it comes to establishing aligned thought. When that point comes, remember, it is only overwhelming if you believe that you are all alone in this process. The truth, however, is that you are not alone. As noted in The Book of Life: Ascension and the Divine World Order, everybody on the planet is going through the same process, whether they realize it or not. It will continue to be a struggle

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Spheres of your reality or, more properly Spheres of Alignment are the personal and collective life spaces within which you must achieve both internal and external alignment. See https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Spheres_of_Alignment.
for a few years yet, but as more and more people awaken, become accountable, atone, and begin the alignment, activation, and ascension process, it will get a lot easier. *We can already see clear cracks in the System, and the foundations are beginning to crumble. By 2024 we will see utopian elements begin to emerge.* Until then, just be disciplined and patient. Recite your mantras, do the work, and continue to walk forward on this path (or any path) of authentic spirituality and reconnection. I promise. Before you know it, we'll be there.

**Study Questions**

1. According to the text, *alignment* is the most important concept in the LP corpus. In your own words, describe why this concept is so important. How does the concept of alignment relate to LP concept of authentic spirituality? Do you feel that you are aligned? If not, identify misalignments. Share with the group.

2. What are the reasons the bodily ego can *push* consciousness, in general or during a connection event. Examine your own life and any connection events you might have had. Can you think of examples where you yourself have pushed awareness away? What were your reasons for doing that?

3. What are the three reasons provided in the text why Consciousness might push away from the physical unit? Once again, examine your life. Do you feel that there are areas in your life where Consciousness may have pulled away? Write them down and share.
**Activation**

So far in this workbook we have discussed awakening, accountability, atonement, and alignment as points in the LP Connection Framework. As we have seen, in order to progress towards connection, we must make progress on all these points. We must wake up, be accountable for our actions, atone for any harm we have done to others, and seek perfect alignment with our own HS. Doing all this allows the HS to avoid disjuncture and comfortably seat itself in its own physical unit. We do not have to be perfect on all points right out of the gate, nor do we have to pursue the points in linear fashion. We can awaken a bit, align a bit, become accountable here and there, awaken a bit more, etc. But to move forward towards connection we do have to make progress on each of the points.

Assuming at this point that you are working diligently to awaken, atone, align, etc., at some point you are going to begin to feel a push to activate. The push will be from your HS. At first, the push will be gentle, like a light tap on your shoulder telling you it is time to stand up and step forward. If you don’t respond, the push will become an insistent poking, making you feel “not right,” and bothering you throughout your day. Finally, if you steadfast refuse to activate, the push will turn into polite but uncomfortable shoving which won’t stop until you stand up and step forward into your purpose and full power, like you agreed to do before incarnation.

Of course, the question at this point is, what does it mean to activate? Activation is essentially stepping into your full power and purpose for incarnating on this Earth.

**As for your purpose** for being on this Earth and incarnating into a body, we cannot presume to tell you what that purpose is exactly. We can only say, “you have a purpose.” We can say generally that your purpose is to help. You are incarnated on this planet to help uplift humanity in order to complete **The**
Transition into this planet’s third and final evolutionary stage. How you help with that, your purpose essentially, is entirely up to you.

Maybe you’re a masseuse, touching people to help relieve their stress.

Maybe you’re a teacher, teaching the next generation.

Maybe you’re a doctor helping to heal physical illness.

Maybe you’re an empath helping to heal emotional pain.

Maybe you’re a farmer, bringing nutritious food to the world.

Maybe you’re a mother, raising a healthy and strong next generation.

Maybe you’re a writer offering people entertainment (nothing wrong with entertaining) or new ways to think.

Maybe you’re a musician sending messages of truth and love.

There’s a lot of ways to help and only you know why you’re here help.

We will say this though, whatever it is, it is not work; it is something that you love to do. If you love having sex all the time, maybe you are a sex worker. If you love the biology of the human body, then maybe you are a healer of some sort. If you love exercise and fitness, maybe you’re a personal trainer. If you love research, maybe you are a scientist. Do you love being around all sorts of people, then maybe you should be in retail. If you love children, maybe you are a parent. Maybe you are one of these things. Maybe you are more than one of these things. Who knows? The point is, when you activate, you need to stand up, push forward, and become whatever it is that you love to be.

And that’s activation, in regards to purpose. Activation is what happens when you wake up, atone, align, and finally become

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“The Transition” is a phrase that refers to the transitional period that occurs between evolutionary stages. https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/index.php/The_Transition
who you most want to be. Activation is embracing your purpose.

As noted, activation is also stepping into full power. The easiest way to think of this is visually. Imagine inside of you, right about in the center of your chest is a one hundred thousand watt energy source attached to a dimming switch located at the top of your head. Right now, there’s a trickle of energy and light coming out of that source, because it is dimmed way down low. Activation is what happens when you reach up and turn up the power. When you do that, energy crackles and the power inside begins to emanate from you real bright. When the power gets turned up like this, everything (and by that I mean brain, CNS, etc.) works better. When powered up, it becomes a lot easier to stand up and do whatever it is you came here to do.

[Activation is depicted in the Triumph of Spirit Archetype card Power, which you can get a picture of if you visit this link https://tosas.lightningpath.org/archetypes/power/. The Power card shows you the consequences of full activation, which is empowerment. The card also shows you the negative consequences on those that surround.]

We have to say activation, i.e., stepping into you power and purpose, is a big deal. It is also a major challenge for you, and, as indicated visually by the Power archetype in the Triumph of Spirit Archetype deck, it is a major challenge for those around you.

As regards the challenge for you, think of it like this. Imagine that your body is a powerful red sports car. A Ferrari, let’s say, with 600+ horsepower and a performance tuned system. Right now, you are sitting in that high performance vehicle with the engine on, but for some reason (you do not know where it is, you are afraid, etc.) you are not pressing the gas pedal because nobody has told you were that is. The car is idling. While idling, you are able to drive it around, but you cannot get anywhere
very fast. If you’re a little older, the car might even be a little (or a lot) damaged, perhaps because you haven’t been taking proper care of it, and perhaps because you deliberately expose it to damage.

Whatever.

One day, somebody comes along and, after a brief exchange of niceties, and a little “driver safety training” says, “Oh and by the way, if you want to go faster, press that pedal.” You do and all of a sudden the powerful engine wakes up and you go blasting forward. What happens when you press the gas pedal the first time depends on a lot of different things. Maybe you were paying close attention to all the advice and guidance on how to drive the vehicle safely, and nothing happens. Maybe, you hit the gas and comfortably go driving around on the roads of reality without any hiccups. That’s unlikely though. Chances are the first time you hit the gas you will be surprised as you go slamming forward.

Maybe you weren’t paying attention to the safety advice and maybe you hit the gas pedal a little too hard.

Maybe you lose control.

Maybe you smash into a tree, or another car.

Maybe, as is highly likely, you are so freaked out by the power of the vehicle that you reach up and turn off the ignition while you try and collect your wits.

Activation is like that.

When you activate, it is like slamming down on the gas pedal of a high performance vehicle. If you are not ready, if you are not careful, if you are not properly prepared, you are going to have a hard time controlling the power that suddenly becomes available to you. If you are not careful, you might be surprised at the things that happen as a result. If you are not careful, you might even hurt yourself and others.

This is the challenge to you. The challenge is handling the
awesome power of the high performance vehicle your HS has incarnated into. If this freaks you out a bit, chill. All the LP material you have read so far on healing and connection, all the advice on awakening, accountability, atonement, an alignment is all the “safety training” you to “step on the gas” and get moving under full power. If you have been paying attention and putting into practice the things we have been saying, you should be fine. If not, or if you think you have missed some stuff, go back and start again.

Of course, handling the power isn’t the only internal activation challenge you face. In addition to the problems associated with actually handling “the power,” you may, upon experiencing the awesome power, have a hard time believing the power is real. After all, you have probably never been told the truth about capital “Y” You or the power and light that is inside. On the contrary, you have been told lies. From day one, from birth, you have been told about your dirty, sinful, animal nature. You are a “reject from The Garden.” You are filled with original sin. You are nothing more than a chimpanzee. You are a violent, competitive, ape. You are not fit. You are just a weak female. You are just a pathetic loser. You are nothing more than dust, you can’t handle the power, and you’ll be lucky if you avoid the pit.

That is what you have heard.

Having been filled up with this putrid nonsense, when you press down on the gas pedal, you may be taken aback by the reality of the power that is revealed by the activation. You may deny. You may resist. You may doubt. Filled with religious and scientific superstition, afraid that you might not be worthy, and terrified that you may be unable to “handle” all that power, you may even succumb to fear.³⁰ If you doubt your worthiness, if

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³⁰ A lot of effort is put into sowing doubt and fear into your mind and consciousness. We mention some in the main text, but one old Hollywood movie is worth mentioning, and this movie is The Sphere. In this movie, actors find a “sphere” deep in the ocean. Contact with the sphere gives them incredible power, so much so that
you are terrified that you can't handle the power, if you succumb to fear, you'll take your foot of the gas and perhaps feel too unworthy or too scared to try again. If that happens, not only will you live your life in the chronic diminishment of “normal,” but you won’t be able to properly connect and express your HS. So don’t let that happen. If you are startled, if you are a little afraid of the power that’s unleashed, take a deep breath and remember these words, “you can do it.” Take your time, do the work, prepare, practice, and you will be just fine.

You get the picture.

Activating means confronting your awesome full power, and that can be a challenge for you. You can do it, however, if you just pay attention and prepare.

As noted above, activating can be a challenge. When you activate, you may experience internal activation challenges, which are fear, self-doubt, and simple inability to handle the awesome power that is unleashed. When you activate, there are also external activation challenges that you must deal with. The biggest external activation challenge is, quite simply, the people that surround you. Your activation is a challenge for those everything they think about comes true in reality around them. As it turns out, they cannot control their thoughts, they can’t control their feelings, and all their unconscious darkness blows up in the world around them. Slowly, this power destroys them. Eventually they realize just how stupid and incompetent they are. At the end of the movie, they are seen using the unlimited power of the sphere to “wish themselves” back to sleep. The sphere descends into the ocean and they go back to their “normal,” powerless existence. The moral, you cannot handle the power, so reject it and go back to sleep.

Should note, there is some truth in the movie. You do have to be careful with that kind of power, and of course, any unconscious fears, hatred, anxieties, misconceptions, and so on can bubble up and cause havoc. That’s why the next LP Workbook, *LP Workbook Four: Archetypal Study*, is so important. That workbook we take extended look at the ideas in your brain so that can help clear out fears, hatred, anxieties, and misconceptions that can a) blow things up or b) cause intense fear and anxiety.

Still, even though there is some truth in movie, and advice to caution is not true that you cannot handle the power. Just like learning to drive a powerful vehicle, you can prepare and learn to handle the power of the sphere. In fact, that is exactly what the LP does. It prepares you to handle the power. All the guidance on healing and connection is intended to help you connect and handle the power and light that is inside. Moving forward, keep this in mind. If you get a little startled when you step on the gas, take a deep breath and remember these words, “you can do it.” Take your time, do the work, prepare, practice, and you will be just fine.
around you, for a couple of different reasons. **For one**, as you’ll immediately understand, activation will have an impact on those around you. When you power up, people will notice. When they notice, depending on their past experiences, they may get a little confused, even scarred. If they’ve never seen anything like it in past, they may start out curious. But depending on what happens, that might turn to anxiety, fear, and even push back. Power up and go crashing through things, power up smash into things.

Power up and have a mental breakdown, and the people who love you are going to freak out and push back.

Power up and try to emancipate yourself, and the people who oppress you and exploit you are going to lash out and try and push you back down.

Even if you don’t have a mental breakdown, even if you don’t try to emancipate yourself, there still may be resistance. If you are successful in powerering up, you will be wanting to change things in your life. You’ll be wanting more perfect alignment, you’ll be wanting to teach others, you’ll be wanting to help out, you’ll be wanting to uplift, you’ll be wanting, in short, to change the status quo. Even in decent environments, even in relatively non-toxic situations, empowerment means fundamental, even revolutionary, transformation. When you start to push for that, it is going to freak a lot of people out.

With activation comes a deep desire to change things, and the power to make those changes happen.

People who are comfortable with the status quo aren’t going to like individual, much less **global activation**. They will do whatever they can to prevent that from happening.

Patriarchs, for example, will feel uncomfortable as their wives specifically, or women in general, advance forward into their power. They are going to push back, often resorting to physical, psychological, emotional, or sexual violence, against activation and the rising power. In some countries, women may even be
the targets of assassination, as for example Tara Fares, an Instagram model in Baghdad who was assassinated by drive by shooters on motorcycles while sitting the vehicle of her car.\footnote{Google \textit{Tara Fares} for news and analysis.}

Politicians who support the old energy System will, of course, also feel uncomfortable. As their citizens advance towards emancipation and full power, they are going to push back. Depending on what country you live in, in particular if you live with dictators, or in authoritarian regimes, that push back could become quite violent.

Just saying...

There will be resistance to your individual, or our collective, activation. People comfortable with the status quo, patriarchs who dominate, capitalists who exploit, dictators who rule, will feel a challenge, and they will lash out and try to keep you down.

So what to do?

Well, I’m certainly not telling you this to scare you and prevent you from activating. I’m just saying, don’t be stupid. The car you are driving is powerful and it is capable of many amazing acts of power, change, and transformation. When you activate, when you push down on gas pedal, you will get push back from spouses, family, friends, coworkers, and even government forces. Be careful, because you may be putting yourself at risk. Move forward, just do so with deliberation and care.

Now you know what activation is. Activation is stepping into your purpose and full power. Your purpose is what you came here to do, and it is what you love to do. Your power is raw, energetic, and capable of revolutionary challenge. Stepping into your power will bring both internal and external challenges, not to mention fundamental change. This doesn’t mean you should back off from activation, it just means you need to pay attention and be careful. Don’t just hit the gas and barrel forward. Think.
Pay attention. Be careful.

At this point I suppose that a lingering question is, how do you activate? I’m not going to go into the actual technical details in this book, because there is still preparatory work to do even after we finish this book. The preparation continues in LP Workbook Four: Archetypal Study where we go into detail about the archetypes and ideas that you have absorbed as part of the toxic socialization process we all endure, and how you can clear those ideas out. As we will see, purifying your thought processes, clearing out old energy ideas and archetypes and replacing them with new energy ideas and archetypes, i.e. establishing aligned thought, is a critical step on the path towards full connection. You definitely want to avoid stepping forward into full activation while harboring deeply seeded fear, anxieties, hatred, misconceptions, and so on. That’s a recipe for disaster. In Lightning Path Workbook Five we look at the actual activation process, which as you will see takes on a bit of an eastern flavour as we begin talking about chakra and kundalini activation.

In closing this unit our current advice is, keep reading. Finish this workbook and when you’re done, move on to LP Workbook Four and begin your archetypal study. When you feel you’re ready, move on to LP Workbook Five. It is there you’ll find instruction and guidance on how to fully activate. Do not be afraid of moving forward. Just prepare and be cautious. Except some challenges and hiccups. Do not succumb to fear, but trust your gut as well. If you feel you are not quite ready to move into activation, don’t. Don’t worry about getting left behind. Don’t worry about moving slow or being a loser. This is neither a race nor a test. Just take the time you need to prepare, be mindful of challenges and pitfalls, reach out for help if you need it (remember LP Workbook Two), and you’ll get through it just fine.
Study questions

1. In the unit we say activation is about purpose and power. As regards purpose, we don’t often know what our purpose is, because nobody has ever given us guidance on how to figure that out for ourselves. It is usually not that difficult to figure out your purpose if you just focus on what you love to do. Right now, spend some time thinking about what you love to do? Do you have love painting? Do you love gardening? Do you love teaching? Do you love research? Do you love working with your hands? Do you love sex? Right down your loves and, if you like, share them with the group.

2. There are many ways to actuate your purpose, some which are in alignment with your HS, and some which are not. If you love teaching, for example, you can teach truth or you can be involved in seeding ideology and misconception. Similarly if you love building things, you can be involved in building instruments of war or building houses for the poor. Are you currently “living your purpose” and if you are, are you aligned with HS? Write down your thoughts. If you are not living your purpose, and if you are not aligned with HS, what sorts of adjustments do you think you can make to bring your life work into better alignment with your own HS.

3. As noted in this unit, stepping into your power can be a challenging process. There are internal challenges as well as external challenges. Although we engage in formal activation in LP Workbook Five, chances are you’ve already experienced obstacles and resistance to empowerment. Think back on your life now. Have you experienced internal activation challenges, like self-doubt, surprise at your own power. self-doubt, etc. How about external obstacles? Have you tried to stand up and empower only to be pushed back down? Share with the group.
Ascension

At this point, we have discussed five points on the LP Connection Framework, awakening, accountability, atonement, alignment, and activation. As noted already, these points do not represent a linear connection sequence. Work on each as you are drawn to each. If you feel you need to awaken a bit, do that. If you have some atonement to do, do that. If your life is out of alignment, make adjustments as necessary. Throughout this process, follow your gut. Do what feels right when it feels right to do it and you’ll make progress forward. With that said, in this unit we are going to complete our run down of the LP Connection Framework by looking at the final point, ascension. The question before us now is, “What is ascension?”

At its most basic level, which is the level we will be concerned with in this workbook, ascension is just another word for connection. When you ascend, your bodily ego rises above the delusion, illusion, maya, misalignment, and disjuncture of your normal, disconnected existence and connects with/merges with your own higher Consciousness. If you like, you can also use the concept of descent here, as in higher Consciousness descends into the vessel and connects with the bodily ego. Ascension thus becomes “filling the vessel” with the water of Consciousness, as in LP Workbook One, or the descent of the Holy Spirit, as in Christian terminology. For example, Luke 3: 20-25 notes the baptism/initiation of Jesus involved the descent of the Holy Spirit, “like a dove.” Similarly,

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63 If you like poetry, the poem “I Am/We Are” attempts to capture a “moment” of ascension. The poem is written from the perspective of capital “Y” You speaking to a bodily ego that has just recognized it is “not alone.” Notably, the poem speaks about unity and blending together to form one unit, and not destruction of the bodily ego.
Jesus is able to initiate connection in others, i.e., the descent of the Holy Spirit, by his very presence.

“Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

Similarly to ascent of the bodily ego, or descent of the higher spiritual ego, the Vedic term yoga actually means *union* with your HS. Pantanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* are “union stitches” designed to help stitch your spiritual ego together with your bodily ego. Yoga as properly practiced is thus not merely a physical exercise regime, it is a technology of union with Consciousness, an ancient technology of ascension.


**First**, get your body/mind, physical unit ready for higher consciousness. You do that by following a spiritual path that provides authentic connection guidance. **Second**, when you are ready, you make a connection and practice keeping it strong and pure.

As for preparation, if you are reading these words, you are already deep into the process of preparation. Everything you’ve learned about enlightenment, healing, and connection so far has been about preparing you for ascension. All the spiritual techniques we’ve introduce, like breathing, visualization, intent, etc., are all about preparation for making connection. What’s more, everything you learn moving forward on this LP of healing and connection will be about preparation for connection, including what I say next, which is this: when it comes to ascension, **structure and discipline are key.**
Structure

As for structure, we must impress upon you the importance of life structure and discipline. Moving forward towards connection, it is a good idea to have a structured life system. If you have not got a structured life system, then it is good to develop one.

What do we mean by life structure? By life structure we basically mean life routines. Life should consist mostly of routines, doing the thing at the same time every day. As for myself, Michael, I get up about the same time every day, write about the same time, eat, exercise, Netflix with the family, watch news, and go to bed at about same time every day. I’m not totally rigid about it; there is room for flexibility; but, by and large, I, and indeed our entire nuclear family, have the same routines every day.

Why are life routines, why is life structure, important to connection? Actually, life structure is important to all aspects of your life, from the most mundane to the most spiritual, from the most boring to most exalted and sacred. Life structure is important for lots of different reasons, only a few of which we can get into briefly here, all which we cannot get into here.

For one, life structure brings efficiency. Having a structured day reduces time and energy usage and increases focus and productivity in everything you do, not just connection. If you do not have to figure things out every day anew, if you can settle in to easy routines, you will save time and energy. If you do this, you are more likely to get what needs to be done, done. It is like having a place for your tools, art supplies, kitchen implements, etc., and always putting your tools back in their place when you are done. When you do that, you don’t waste time and energy looking for your tools when you need them. You know where they are. You grab them. You get the job done. It is the same thing when structuring your day. When your day has structure, you spend less mundane time and
energy seeking about trying to figure things out, less time on the job, and more time for everything else.

**For two**, structure helps you develop connection because structure encourages and supports discipline. Having a solid life structure gives you the space, time, and routine to practice regular things, like connection, or an instrument, every day. The routines you build are like train tracks that keep your energy and actions focused along the same lines every day. If you have routines, if every day you sit down after supper and practice connection, or an instrument, or whatever, the tracks you lay make it easier to sit down every day to practice connection. It is a question of simple habit. Develop the habit, lay the tracks, create the structure, and things flow in regular and controlled directions.

Speaking of controlling direction, **the third reason** for having strong life structure is that having solid life structure helps improve control of your connection by *reducing complexity and uncertainty*. Reducing complexity and uncertainty are important because reducing complexity and uncertainty allows you to reduce mental and emotional distraction and distress, and focus energy in on controlling the expansion/acceleration of consciousness/thought that occurs when you make strong connections.

It works like this. If every day is a different day, if every day you are exposed to new things, new people, and new intellectual/emotional/spiritual influences, you add complexity and uncertainty to your life. This complexity and uncertainty can bleed into your connection practice and make control a lot easier to establish. This is especially true if the influences/experience that come through in your unstructured life are not conducive to, or even hostile towards, connection. The sad truth is, many people on this planet are either confused about spirituality or actually hostile to your expanding connection. Those that are confused, confuse you unintentionally. Those that are hostile work deliberately to sow
doubt, fear, hatred, and panic. Exposing yourself to these confused, chaotic, and hostile influences undermines your connection practice, especially at the beginning. Having solid life structure makes it a lot easier to avoid negative influences. It limits your exposure to “new things” and give you excuses for skipping out of the toxic show. “I can’t talk/hang because I have to practice.” It is important. Avoiding negative influences makes processing and establishing control of your expanding connection a lot easier because it keeps confusing and toxifying complications away, at least at the beginning, while you’re still a neophyte getting a handle on your powerful connection.

So have we have noted that life structure helps with connecting practice because it frees energy, encourages discipline, and helps control your exposure to confusion and chaos “out there.” The fourth reason structure helps with connection practice is that structuring your life helps establish strong boundaries that allow you to keep people away for your private, connection spaces. It really is a question of boundaries. Having life structure helps you create boundaries, and these boundaries help you reduce the frequency and unpredictability of what we might call Negative Energy Insertions (NEIs).64

It is like the front door of your house, if you are privileged enough to have a house. 65

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64 Negative Energy Insertions are insertions of negative energy into your life space. When somebody freaks out at you in a road rage incident, when your boss at work yells at you, when your spouse lies to you, when somebody tries to feed you negative spiritual ideology (e.g., tall tales of hell and damnation), when you watch a super violent Hollywood movie, when your political leaders incite hatred and violence, etc., negative energy is inserted into your life space. NEIs are anathema to the health, wellbeing, and connection of your physical unit. NEIs disconnect you if have already established a nascent connection. NEIs even cause physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual damage. For these reasons, it is important to reduce the frequency and unpredictability of negative energy insertions.

Reducing NEIs helps with connection, reduces damage, and frees up energy otherwise wasted in perpetual defense. Reducing, and preferably limiting, NEIs also makes it easier to defend the integrity and purity of your intellectual and life spaces, and to put your energy where it is needed most, which is on controlling The Flow that comes with connection.

65 The sad reality of our world is that even though we have the technology and the capability to house every single person on this planet in comfort, we do not. https://homelessworldcup.org/homelessness-statistics/
Your house is a structure and the walls and doors of the structure are the boundaries of that structure. Ideally, these structures keep the negativity of the outside world away. The front door is a building structure that helps protect you and your family against NEIs. A front door on your house prevents random strangers from walking into your home. A front door keeps animals and bugs out. *A front door is a structural component of your home that reduces chaos and blocks against the entry of negativity, if you use it properly.* Of course, if you just throw your front doors open and let anything come inside, it won’t protect you or your family from anything. If you’re going to benefit from the structure and boundary of your home, you have to be sensible about who you open the door to. The structure of your home won’t help an iota if you don’t sensibly enforce the boundaries.

Anyway, like the structure of your house creates a boundary that can help you keep negativity out, life structure can, if you design it and use it properly, help you create NEIs out. If you sit down at the same time and in the same place every day to practice connection, it’s a lot easier to say no to the demands of others, and a lot easier to tell people to stay away during that time. If your connection time is 9:00pm every night, others in your life come to expect that. If they show proper respect, they will give you the space and time you need and not bother you during your practice. Even if they do, the fact that there is a structure already in place gives you additional power to push back. If somebody enters your space you can say, “I’m practicing/meditating and I’m almost done. I’ll be with you in just a short bit.”

As you can see, when it comes to connection practice, life structure is really very important. It frees and channels energy, allows you to externally caused complexity, uncertainty, and toxicity, and helps you create boundaries and safe places where you control against NEIs. There is, of course, a lot more we
could say about life structure and how important it is to developing a strong connection, but it all comes down to this. Over the long term, life structure helps you a) increase the energy devoted to connection practice and b) reduce the energy needed to defend, heal from damage, handle NEIs, and maintain safe Connection Spaces. Put another way we might say that bringing structure to your life is about

a) cleaning up the chaos at all levels of your life (emotional, psychological, intellectual, spiritual, physical, economic, etc.) and

b) bringing calm order so you can

c) quit wasting your as yet still limited supply of life energy and

d) focus enough attention and energy on controlling, expanding, and purifying your nascent spiritual connection.

If you like, you can think of it in Eastern terms. Bringing structure to your life is like a deep, calm, morning aum setting the energy and flow straight for your day. For your information, this is the “hidden lesson” in the beautiful structure represented in all mandala drawings, even the transitory sand mandalas of ancient Buddhist traditions.

Anyway, you get the message I suspect. Structure is of critical importance. If you don’t have life structure, endeavor to get some. Even baby steps forward here will help.

Of course, don’t be ridged, because that is just as bad. There is nothing wrong with structure, because structure helps us build the divine beauty we are capable of. But structure is the house that keeps the family safe and warm, not the family itself. Just like the Tibetan Monk blows away the structure they just spent days painstakingly completing, so the family changes their

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A connection space is a space devoted to connection practice. It can be your bedroom, a special room in the house, a quiet and safe walking path, etc., Connection spaces are generally quiet, peaceful, and well organized, with established and consistent boundaries that make you relatively certain you will not be disturbed.

home when they have outgrown the structure of their house, so you should be open to changing your life structure, your disciplined practice, your daily routines, as necessary to help you strengthen connection (what others might call “grow and evolve.”). You need to be totally safe as possible in the beginning. This might mean structural isolation, home school, work out of the home, avoid social contact, cocoon. But, the stronger your connection gets and the better you are at handling and channeling the Flow, the more you’ll be able to loosen the boundaries and step out. Have structure, but be flexible and, when you’ve outgrown it, don’t be married to the structure. Do like the Tibetan Buddhist Monks do. When the structure itself no longer serves its purpose, which in this case is to help you grow and strengthen your connection, blow the structure away, and start all over again.

**Disciplined Connection Practice**

When we started this unit discussion we said that structure and discipline where key to connection. At this point you should have a decent idea of why structure is important. If your life is lacking in structure, you should be motivated to impose some sensibly as required. At this point the question is, what about discipline?

Understanding discipline’s role in your spiritual connection process is much easier than understanding the importance of structure. Understanding the importance of discipline is as simple as understanding why a musician, an artist, a writer, an editor, a carpenter, an engineer, or a doctor, *practises* every day. People practise with discipline every day because, disciplined daily practice makes perfect. If you want to get good at something, if you want to perfect something, you have to practise daily. That’s just the way it is. It like this for playing an instrument, carpentering wood, or healing bodies. It is like this with spiritual connection. Spiritual connection takes practice. It takes practise to initiate and, more important, it takes practise
to control and perfect.

Understanding the importance of practice is one thing. If you are a musician, you know you practice to develop a supportive neurology and musculature. If you are a doctor, you know you practice to improve your diagnostic and practical healing skills and, if you are a surgeon, perhaps you fine motor skills. When it comes to connection however, the question “why do you practice” is a little harder to answer. For sure, you practice connection just like you practice language or anything else that’s real, which is to develop a supporting neurology. But the reasons for disciplined connection practice go beyond neurological development. You practice connection to develop supportive neurology, but also to a) unblock, b) purify, and c) handle the powerful stream, once the Flow is purified and unblocked.

**Unblocking and Purifying the Flow**

As for unblocking and purification, the truth is, the Flow that occurs when you connect is a corrupted and polluted flow. To make a longer story short, your Flow, *like the Flow of most others*, is full of negative emotions (like fear, hatred, shame) and negative Old Energy Archetypes, Gunk as we call it. The gunk arises from thousands of years of System operation. The Gunk is always there, of course, even under conditions of normal consciousness, because we’re always a little bit connected; however, under conditions of normal consciousness, the gunk does not overwhelm, it just undermines and corrupts over time. When you connect, the Flow increases and the gunk can easily overwhelm, especially if you are mentally ill.

So what do you do?

Simple...

68 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Gunk.
In order to clear out all the Gunk, you practice a **Connection Technique** called **Flow Purification** until the Stream can flow free and pure again. For your information, flow purification involves **Archetypal Cleansing** and **Emotional Amelioration**.

**Archetypal cleansing** is a type of ideological janitorial work. Archetypal cleansing involves identifying and removing **Old Energy Archetypes** which corrupt and block the flow, and replace these old energy archetypes with clean and pure **New Energy Archetypes**.

**Emotional amelioration** is, essentially, healing work, but at a higher level. Emotional amelioration involves removing all negative emotions like hatred, fear, anxiety, and shame that not only block and corrupt the flow of Consciousness, but that block and corrupt all energy flows in your body.

If Flow Purification sounds like a lot of work, it is because it is. There is a lot of work involved in archetypal cleansing and emotional amelioration, so much so that the LP devotes two whole workbooks to each. In *Lightning Path Workbook Four* we walk you through the process of **archetypal cleansing**. In *Lightning Path Workbook Five* we look at emotional amelioration in the context of chakra activation. When you are done this book, you can begin the process of flow purification by reading LP Workbook Four. Find out how to access by visiting https://press.lightningpath.org/path/.

**Learning to Handle the Flow**

Recall now the discussion in this section. In this chapter, we are talking about ascension, which is the outcome of sustained connection. In part one of this unit we noted the importance of structure to the ascension process. In part two of this unit, we are discussing the importance of disciplined practice. As noted so far, you need disciplined practice if you want to clean out the Flow. At this point we should note that once you have cleaned out the Flow, you will lean heavily on disciplined practice as you learn to handle the powerful Stream of Consciousness that
is released when you successfully unblock and purify the Flow. To be clear...

The more you purify and unblock, the stronger the Flow will become. The stronger the Flow becomes, the more challenging the Flow is going to be.

Think of it like this.

Purifying and unblocking your connection is like standing in an open field with a huge fire hose in your hand. You’re standing there with the hose in your hand, but the flow of water has been turned off since shortly after you were born. Currently, you have only the simplest idea what the hose is, or how fast the water can flow when cranked open to full There’s a handle that will turn the Flow on, and you (the whole planet, really) are increasingly free to yank on it whenever you want. Before you do that though, before you turn on the flow, you need to prepare yourself and learn to handle the Flow, otherwise you will get knocked on your ass. Good news, you have already been engaged in preparation. The healing work you have been doing as well as the awakening, acknowledgement, atonement, alignment, and activation steps provided in this connection framework are all preparatory steps that get you ready to handle the Flow, but that’s not enough. To really learn about the Flow, to really learn how to handle the Flow, you have to turn the Flow on and practice handling the Flow.

It is like the difference between learning how to drive a car by reading a book and learning how to drive a car by actually driving the car. The only way to really learn is to actually drive the car. In the context of connection, the only way to handle the Flow is to turn on the Flow and work with it in real life.

The question before us now is, how do you do that? How do you turn on the flow and how do you work with it in real life?

As for turning on the Flow, you do that by **opening a connection**. To open a connection, use suitable Connection
Techniques and any Connection Appliances or Connection Supplements that you choose. For your information, connection techniques are a broad category of things you can do to open, expand, and get control of your connection. Connection techniques include things like meditation, deep breathing, relaxation, mindfulness, body posture, and stress release techniques aimed at relaxing, slowing down your chatty mind, and enabling a stronger more focused Flow. Connection techniques also include things aimed at enhancing the flow, like the establishment of a Connection Cocoon where you can practice, and the practice of Thought Control.

A connection appliance is any technology that can facilitate/enhance your basic connection. Connection technologies include things like Tibetan singing bowls, music/musical tones, prayer beads, and so on.

A connection supplement is a supplement like cannabis or psilocybin, or a substance like LSD or MDMA, that forcibly opens a connection. Folks use connection supplements in situations where a) emotional and psychological damage is so severe that technique and appliances are ineffective or b) one wishes to accelerate the practice/process of ascension. Warning, connection supplements are powerful and must be used with caution, especially if there is emotional/psychological spiritual damage or mental illness. Low and slow is the perfect advice. Start with low doses and increase slowly. If you like, if you need help, the LP offers a Connection Guidance service where you can connect with an LP mentor who can help you with connection advice and guidance.

Note, the goal of this meditative slowdown is not to eliminate thoughts and experience “pure conscious” which, presumably, is a state of pure awareness devoid of thought, the goal is to slow the chatter in your “stream of consciousness” down enough so you can become more aware of your thoughts as they flow through the stream in your brain. Certainly, you can empty your body of thoughts and, while empty of thoughts, you can perceive the world without thought, with only awareness. However, “pure consciousness” devoid of thought is an artificial state that has no natural existence. Consciousness has never been devoid of thought. Not even when Consciousness existed as a single self-aware monadic spark, not even before that, when Consciousness existed only as non-self-aware awareness, was Consciousness ever devoid of thought. Thought is to Consciousness like water is to the ocean. To suggest that pure consciousness is actually a thing is to conceive of an ocean of water, without the water.

A Connection Cocoon is a protective space you establish where you can relax, de-stress, meditate, and engage in Connection Practice. Putting yourself into a connection cocoon when you practice helps reduce the probably of Negative Energy Insertions NEI. An NEI is an insertion into your life space/consciousness space of negativity. NEIs, especially when chronic, undermine health, wellbeing, and connection.

By “thought control I mean techniques that help you control your thoughts, not techniques that help you control somebody else’s. Trying to control somebody else’s thoughts is not in alignment with HS.
and, as already noted, Flow Purification. Finally, connection technique can, and should, include the use of a **Connection Journal**. A connection journal is a journal you keep with you while you practice connection. To use a connection journal, just write down whatever thoughts and feelings come up while you are connected. Then, when you are no longer so strongly connected, go over your thoughts and feelings and analyze, process, ground, release, and act on whatever thoughts came up, as appropriate. If you need help understanding, processing, grounding, and acting upon your connection, the LP offers [https://www.lightningpath.org/service/connection-guidance/](https://www.lightningpath.org/service/connection-guidance/). It is very helpful to have a connection journal when perusing this guide.

To summarize, this unit is about ascension, or about the connection that leads forward towards a beautiful union merge of bodily ego and spiritual ego. At this point, you know that you have been preparing for this union ever since you stepped onto this Path. Every step forward towards better awakening, every atonement you have made, every improvement of alignment you have achieved, has helped strengthen the **Foundations of Connection**. At this point, you also know, you are not done with your individual connection work. You still have to unblock and purify the flow (LP Workbook Four and LP Workbook Five) and you still have to practice real connection so you can learn how to handle the Flow (LP Workbook Six). If you feel you are ready, you can start both of those right now.

First, pick up a copy of Lightning Path Workbook Four and a copy of the supplemental tools that go with it, and read through those at least once. Then, begin to practice connection using

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25 [https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Journal](https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Journal)

26 The “Foundations of Connection” are awakening, accountability, atonement, alignment, activation, and ascension, with is union with HS. As you know, the Foundations of Connection are represented in the LP Connection Framework. [https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Framework](https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/Connection_Framework).
whatever technique, appliance, or supplement you choose. Don’t be afraid. Don’t get paranoid. Be systematic and disciplined in next forward steps, be careful, go low and slow as you move forward, and you will be just fine.

**Study Questions**

1. As noted, structure and discipline are key. List the five ways structure are important to your connection practice. Examine structure and discipline in your life. Do you have enough structure and discipline? If not, what can you do to get some more structure?

2. What is gunk? Why do you think it is important to clear out the gunk? How do you clear the gunk out (two ways)? Share your thoughts with the group.

3. What are three things you can use to open a connection? What do you think is the most powerful method for opening a connection? What do you do if you have trouble with connection?
Conclusion

In this workbook we have looked at the Lightning Path Connection Framework. This framework provides a set of six points or foundational activities which you pursue to prepare yourself for connection. These points are awakening, accountability, atonement, alignment, activation, and ascension. To prepare for connection, awaken to reality, become accountable for the damage you have caused, atone (make things right) if you have done other life forms harm, align with your HS, and practice so you can ascend (i.e. merge) and attain a full connection with your bright consciousness. We won’t kid you, it’s a fair amount of work. Even though “the path” is clearly laid out for you, there are significant challenges. Even simply awakening to truth can be a major challenge, especially if you come from toxic family backgrounds. Still, you have to do it. Attaining a stronger connection with your own HS is the Holy Grail of authentic human spirituality. It is the point and purpose of being incarnated in a human body.

So, what’s next?

As already noted in this workbook, what’s next is a) actual connection practice and b) disciplined flow purification. To move forward you have to actually practice connection and, as your connection grows, you have to practice flow purification. Therefore, moving forward, that is what we are going to do.

*Lightning Path Workbook Four* helps you with flow purification by guiding you through a process of archetypal cleansing. Using the powerful Triumph of Spirit Archetype System, which was introduced to you in *Lightning Path Workbook Two: Healing*, we will take you step by step through a process of mental purification that will you clean out the mental gunk that blocks and corrupts so you can attain strong and pure flow.

*Lightning Path Workbook Five* helps you with emotional amelioration. Using the framework of your body’s chakra
system, we walk you through a process of emotional cleansing that helps you identify, process, and release anger, fear, anxiety, and so on. Once you identify, process, and release all your stored up negative emotions, you can fully empower, fully connect, and enjoy pristine and powerful flow.

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October 11, 2018
Organizing Your Workgroup

As mentioned in the introduction to this book, this workbook is designed to facilitate individual study and classroom based exploration. If you are interested in doing spiritual workgroups, you can easily manage the group using the tools and techniques provided here. My suggestion is that you get members to read a single chapter before the group meets. When the group meets the class can discuss the individual questions and key concepts.

If your workgroup or classroom is small, say less than eight people, you can discuss the questions and concepts as a whole. If your group is larger than eight, consider breaking up the larger group into smaller groups of no more than six people. Do not expect each group to deal with all the questions. Break the question and concepts up and assign one or more (as necessary) to each individual or group.

If this is a formal classroom situation, the individual groups should pick a transcriber, someone who will write the group’s thoughts down. The transcriber is responsible for accurately representing what the group is thinking. The group also needs to pick a representative, i.e. one who will stand in front of the larger group or class and share the group’s discussion. The representative can use the notes of the transcriber, or they can use their own notes so long as they are complete.

As a workgroup facilitator, your job is to walk amongst the groups, listen to what they are saying, and help move their discussion along. Contribute ideas and corrections as necessary. Pay attention to group dynamics. Are some monopolizing the conversation? Do some seem too shy to contribute? Address these issues with compassion and concern. The goal is to create workgroups where everybody is comfortable to speak. To do that you may have to be supportive and encouraging, and you may have to engage in a little psychotherapy.

When it comes to selecting a representative, encourage the
group members to be thoughtful. First, individuals should volunteer. If more than one person expresses an interest in representing the group, rotate them. Encourage the group to discuss with the representatives what makes a good representative. For myself, I believe a good representative should be calm, fair (so that all viewpoints are represented), a good speaker, and capable of accepting criticism. Encourage the group to give the representatives positive feedback after each presentation. Criticism is acceptable if given with the intent to strengthen and uplift. Criticism intended to undermine and destroy has no place in a functioning spiritual workgroup (or any workgroup for that matter).

Teaching Supports

This workbook comes with various teaching supports, like a twitter feed of ideas and quotes from the book, and quizlets that allow you to study vocabulary and other LP concepts efficiently. For a complete list of available supports, and an overview of LP curriculum, see http://www.lightningpath.org/fast-path/.
Appendix One: LP Alignment
Rule Set

As noted in the *LP Workbook Three* section on alignment, alignment is important. As we saw there, the best way to attain perfect alignment is to connect with and ascend to union/identity with your Highest Self (HS). If you already have a strong connection to your own Highest Self, if HS can express through your physical unit with purity and strength, you are going to be alignment. Of course, the catch twenty-two here is that to be strongly connected you need to attain perfect alignment, and that can be very difficult, especially when struggling in the confusion, disease, and disorder of your average “normal” life.

If an individual, that’s you, does not have a strong connection, then the next best thing you can do to move yourself in the right direction is to pay attention to steering emotions. As explained in more detail in *The Great Awakening: Concepts and Techniques for Successful Spiritual Practice*, and also in *Lightning Path Workbook Three: Connection*, steering emotions are positive feelings and negative feeling that indicate whether you are on the right track or not. Positive feelings like bliss, joy, love, little tingly sensations, etc., give you an indication that thoughts and actions are in alignment with your Highest Self. Negative feeling like guilt, shame, etc., indicate thoughts and actions are not in alignment. It is simple. Assuming your emotional systems are not damaged to the point of sociopathy, if you have good feelings about something, you’re on the right track. If you’re feeling ugly, guilty, or shameful, you’re moving in the wrong direction.

Steering emotions are the next best thing to actual aligned connection. They allow a disconnected individual to guide themselves towards greater alignment and stronger connection;
however sometimes, for various reasons, an individual cannot follow their steering emotions. If, for whatever reasons, an individual cannot respond properly to steering emotions, perhaps because their emotional apparatus is damaged or corrupted in some fashion, perhaps because they are filled with wrong thought, or perhaps because they have surrounded themselves with enablers (see LP Workbook Two), the next best thing an individual can do is follow an Alignment Rule Set. An alignment rule set is a set of rules that, if they are properly designed, and if you follow them closely, will put you in relatively close alignment with your HS, even if you have no idea or clue who you are, or what you are doing.

The idea of an alignment rule set, a set of rules that allows you to step towards alignment and make a stronger connection even when you are so disconnected, damaged, and confused you cannot (or will not) listen to steering emotions is not new. Alignment rule sets have been around for thousands of years, just under different names. The Christian Ten Commandments or the Buddhist Eight Fold Path are two well known, but quite ancient, Alignment Rule Sets. Other sets exist as well. The well-known Cloud of Unknowing, for example, is a Connection Manual that contains an alignment rule set.

Ancient ARSs like the Ten Commandments do contain legitimate alignment advice, but they a) may be confused and poorly specified, b) may be written in language and concepts that are hard for modern ears to understand, d) may come, especially the ancient ones, with cultural, political, economic, gender, etc., biases, and c) do not apply one hundred percent to our modern and rapidly transforming planet. Also, even when ARSs contain some valid advice, the advice can only be general advice applicable to everybody. More specific guidance

80 https://spiritwiki.lightningpath.org/index.php/Alignment_Rule_Set
appropriate to you specifically is not possible. This is because a) alignment requirements change throughout a lifetime and b) we’re all different.

On the notion of lifetime changes, understand, people are different. People differ on growth, development, exposure to toxic environments, the amount of support they receive(d), and so on. In this context, what is aligned for someone dealing with developmental issues may not be aligned for people dealing with something else. People also differ by age. What is aligned for a child’s body may not be aligned for an adult body. Similarly, what is aligned for an adult will not always be aligned for a child.

On the notion of individual differences, understand, cultures are different, bodies are different, souls are different, etc. We’re all individuals. We’ve all got histories that extend far beyond the confines of the as yet still limited Earthling lifespan. We’ve all got our own reasons for being here. We’ve all got our own preferences and talents to express. No matter how clearly specified and sensible an Alignment Rule Set might be, because of all the individual variation, an Alignment Rule Set will only ever be able to get you “close enough” to engage in fruitful connection practice. Even though some “overstep” and try to provide very specific advice, they can only provide general advice. At a certain point in your healing and connection process, you’ll have to move beyond general statements in an alignment set and figure out the final refinements for yourself.

Still, despite the limitations noted, Alignment Rules sets are useful. To avoid the problems associated with dated Alignment Rule Sets, and to avoid the “overstepping” that sometimes occurs, the Lightning Path has its own alignment rule set designed specifically with clarity, transparency, modern sensibilities and modern economic and cultural contexts in mind. The Lightning Path Alignment Rule Set (LPARS) is quite simple, containing only a single general statement.
To move forward towards alignment with Highest Self, establish **Right Environment**, engage in **Right Action**, and think only with **Right Thought**.

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**Right Environment**

One of the first rules you need to follow if you want to approximate alignment with your Highest Self is the rule to create an aligned environment. This is an easy rule to understand, but can be a hard rule to follow. Basically, an aligned environment is a non-violent, non-threatening, non-toxic, non-stressful environment, period. Aligned environments are safe environments. We speak about the reasons why aligned, non-violent environments are important elsewhere, in particular, *Lighting Path Workbook Two: Healing*. Here we will simply say, safe environments are important because safety allows your bodily ego to recover, relax, reflect, and *let go*. It is only when your **bodily ego** is safe and fully relaxed that it can let go and let the Flow come pouring through. If you’re constantly stressed out by toxicity, assault, and negativity, the bodily ego stays in control, and you’ll never be able to connect. Similarly, if you are engaged in toxicity, assault, and negativity, you will never be able to connect.

Note that non-violent safety is not just about physical safety. Non-violence extends to the emotional, psychological, and spiritual realms as well. Aligned environment is a safe, calm, non-violent environment where an individual has zero fear of assault or attack of any kind. In our home, we have a no violence rule. In our home, there is zero tolerance for violence and negativity of any kind.  

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81 Of course, zero toxicity is an ideal we do not always achieve. Sometimes, for various reasons, negativity, toxicity, and conflict occur. When it does occur, we deal with it by time outs, negotiation, and so on. We never dwell and we try never to return violence with violence. Put another way, when we fuck up, we address it, fix it, let go, and move on.
It should be noted that aligned environments go beyond simply lack of violence. Aligned environments are also nurturing and supportive environments where *all* your human needs are met. For a complete rundown of the human needs that need to be met if aligned environment is to be achieved, see the article “The Seven Essential Needs.”

If you read the article “The Seven Essential Needs,” and you look at the violence in your own life, you may come away with the impression that achieving a fully aligned environment is impossible. Unfortunately, we have to say, in our current realities, for most people, it is impossible. This doesn’t mean you cannot take useful steps forward. If you are lucky, and if you can get your family on board, you may be able to achieve aligned environment at home. At the minimum, try to carve yourself a safe space or cocoon. When it comes to achieving aligned environment at work, in your wider family, in politics, in economics, and so on, there’s a lot of to do. That’s ok. Don’t be overwhelmed. If all you can do in this moment is create a nonviolent and self-nurturing cocoon, do that. Work your way out both as you gain strength, and as the world around you continues to transform.

**Right Action**

The second alignment rule that you have to follow if you can’t achieve a nascent connection, and if you can’t respond to steering emotions, is the rule to engage only in aligned/right action. This rule is an extension of the first rule to establish right environment. Right actions are non-violent, non-threatening, nurturing actions that do not harm other living beings.

And note, non-violent and nurturing right action is about more than just physical nonviolence. As already noted, nonviolence extends to the emotional, psychological, and spiritual realms as

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52 https://www.lightningpath.org/healing/seven-essential-needs/
well. In addition, and if followed to perfection, non-violent right actions extend to all living beings. And yes, in the current day and age, this includes animals. Killing animals for food was, at one time, a requirement of human survival. Now, it is not. On a planet with the capacity and capability to feed everyone on a non-violent vegetarian diet, vegetarianism and ethical treatment of animals becomes an important alignment rule.\(^{83}\)

Of course, the admonishment to right action does not mean you have to love and help everyone.\(^{84}\) You do not have to be a social butterfly “getting up in everybody’s business,” even when they ask. If you don’t like someone, that’s fine. If you don’t feel like helping some, that’s fine too. As the Buddhist say, just do no harm. Don’t harm/avoid the people you don’t like; help and nurture the people you do, or are responsible for, like your children, or your ageing parents. If you do that, you will be well on your way to establishing right action, and a long way towards making stronger connections.

**Right Thought**

The admonishment to work towards right environment and right action are important first steps. The more you achieve a safe and aligned environment, the more you avoid violence towards others, and the more you help those help and nurture those you care about and are responsible for, the more aligned you will be with HS, and easier connection will be. The truth is, you’re only going to be able to go so far towards strong and pure connection via the establishment or right environment and right action alone. If you want to “go all the way,” so to speak,

\(^{83}\) As an alignment rule, we stipulate a vegetarian diet. However, if you are not ready for that, as a consumer of animal flesh, it is time to take responsibility and force accountability, to demand a better safer, more humane, and less violent meat production.

\(^{84}\) If you do feel you need to do this (i.e., help everyone), and if you do this at the expense of your primary relationships (e.g., your spouse, children, etc.), you need to either a) examine your ideas and thinking, b) examine your motivations, or c) examine both. Anybody that sacrifices their responsibilities to their spouse, children, and so on just so they can get help others doesn’t understand the true nature of right action.
you are going to have to work hard on establishing right thought. This is very important. You are not going to be able to achieve a strong, safe, pure, and consistent connection if you do not establish right thought.

For your information, there are three levels to the establishment of right/aligned thought.

**Level One Right Thought** that is thought that is non-violent and non-threatening to others and self. Level one right thought includes the elimination of all negative thought patterns, including and especially “judge and punish” thought patterns that encourage and provide excuses for harming others. Understand, we all make mistakes, especially while blindfolded. The goal is to help others learn from and heal from their mistakes, not to perpetuate violence with excuses and self-delusion.

Moving beyond basic level one right thought, **level two right thought** is thought that accurately reflect reality and truth (even Truth with a capital “T”). If you think with lies you won’t be aligned and you won’t be able to connect with HS, basically because HS always insists on the truth. This might sound weird to some, but your own HS will not “talk to you,” i.e. will not connect, if you do not accept basic truths. The thought that there is “no such thing as racism/sexism” is an unaligned thought because racism/sexism most certainly exist. The thought that “God” is a punishing patriarch is not only a violent thought, but an inaccurate and unaligned thought as well, because God is not a violent patriarch.

Finally, the most advanced level of right thought is **level three right thought.** Level three right thought, in addition to being free of violence and exclusively truth based is also a) free of old energy archetypes and b) filled with uplifting, empowering,

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85 Read Allegory of the Blindfold, https://www.michaelsharp.org/allegory-of-the-blindfold/
and connecting **new energy archetypes**. As explained in more detail in Lightning Path Workbook Four and on the Triumph of Spirit Archetype System (TOSAS) website, archetypes are ideas that answer big questions. Old energy archetypes are archetypes that answer big questions in a negative and diminishing fashion, and which disconnect you from HS, while new energy archetypes answer big questions in a positive and uplifting fashion, and help connect you with HS.

We have to say, achieving aligned thought is the single biggest challenge of any spiritual aspirant. This is because we are literally poisoned and putrefied by a chronic tsunami of *unaligned/wrong thought* coming at us from every direction, every moment of your waking existence. It takes a lot of effort just to become aware of the poison; it takes even more effort to cleanse that poison away, it takes herculean determination to “reprogram” with new energy archetypes. Achieving right thought is a big challenge, but the LP can help with that. The Lightning Path offers the *Triumph of Spirit Archetype System (TOSAS)* which you can use to cleanse, reprogram, and achieve aligned/right thought. When you’re ready to begin working on right thought, pick up a copy of the *Triumph of Spirit Archetype Cards*, visit the Triumph of Spirit Website, and begin your archetypal study.

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88 https://tosas.lightningpath.org/

89 https://tosas.lightningpath.org/
About the Lightning Path

The Lightning Path (or simply LP for short) is an intellectual, emotional, psychological, and spiritual system of awakening and empowerment (a “mystery school” if you like, but without all the useless mystery) designed to help you get off the sinking ship of the old world and make “the shift” into an awakened, activated, and ascended state of existence. It is sophisticated, powerful, logical, grounded, rational, intellectually and metaphorically rigorous, politically sophisticated, empirically verifiable, authentic, effective, and accessible to everyone regardless of race, class, or gender. No requirements are set for entry and no judgments are made in passage. For more information visit http://www.lightningpath.org/.
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