

AWAKENING TO PRESENCE

with Michael Fleming

Greetings and blessings to you!

I will be offering a formal training program in Awakening to Presence beginning in March, 2008.

I would like to personally invite you to join us, and am writing this letter to let you know the basic details, so you can determine whether or not you would like to participate.

Purpose:

The primary purpose of this training program is to support the individual awakening and evolution of each student. Each student will be supported in waking up to their true nature as Presence, and thereby help free them to know and live their true purpose in life.

In addition, those students who feel the inner calling to formally support the awakening of others will learn how to competently do so, and, upon successful mastery of the program skills, receive a professional certification.

Definitions:

Awakening ---awakening is the process of deeply understanding our identification with the conditioned patterns of our mind and body that limit and constrain us, and waking up to our true essential nature on the level of Being. It is an experiential journey that sets free the creative energies, awareness, and presence that are our divine birthright.

Presence---presence is the individuated awareness of Being that permeates our experiences of form (mind, body, and energy) but which is also beyond them, in the formless realm of Being.

Essence---essence is a term used to refer to pure Being itself, as well as the various aspects and qualities of Being that arise in our experience. Nearly all problems and suffering can be traced to beliefs related to a disconnection from some aspect of divine essence.

Curriculum:

The curriculum is going to be extensive, multi-dimensional, and highly experiential. There will be many skills and principles that each student will learn, such as grounding, contact, boundaries, energy and body reading, conscious movement, how to “be with” people, and many more. It will take several years to learn and understand them in depth. Our main “textbooks” will be the study and investigation of ourselves and each other, the members of the group. In general:

1. We are going to study the mind.
2. We are going to study the body.
3. We are going to study “energy”.
4. We are going to experience and understand essence and presence.
5. We are going to integrate all of these.

To elaborate briefly:

1. We are going to study how the mind develops and operates thru an experiential and integrated investigation of the following principles:
 - a. Attachment Theory
 - b. Object Relations Theory
 - c. The biological development of the brain in early childhood

- d. The phenomena of ego, superego, transference and projection
 - e. Identification and dis-identification with the mind
 - f. Relationship boundaries and dynamics
 - g. Healing the Inner Judge
 - h. Effective, proven methods of Inquiry such as:
 - 1. The Work of Byron Katie
 - 2. The Artist's Way
 - 3. and more
 - i. Personal and group process
2. We are going to study the body thru an experiential and integrated investigation of the following principles:
- a. Anatomy and physiology
 - b. Character pattern and body reading (how beliefs and emotions are stored and held in the body)
 - c. Physical and emotional unwinding and release
 - d. Presence oriented bodywork
 - e. Conscious movement and body exploration practices, including:
 - 1. Chi Kung/Taoist circle walking meditation
 - 2. Developmental sequence and bioenergetic exercise
 - 3. Continuum principles
 - f. Presence-oriented Focusing (a body centered form of meditative inquiry)
 - g. Personal and group process
3. We are going to study "energy" (and it's relation to the mind and body) thru an experiential and integrated investigation of the following principles:
- a. Energy awareness training (how to perceive energy)
 - 1. Opening and releasing energy blocks
 - 2. Grounding
 - 3. Contact
 - b. Human energy field dynamics
 - 1. within one's own energy system
 - 2. in one's relationships
 - 3. in groups
 - c. Chi Kung (Internal energy cultivation and development, basic energy meridian theory)
 - d. Hands-on energy work
 - e. Remote energy work
 - f. Personal and group process
4. We are going to understand Essence and Presence thru an experiential investigation of:
- a. Presence-oriented "Grounding" and "Contact"
 - b. Theory of holes and aspects of Essence
 - c. Presence-oriented inquiry
 - 1. Thru the doorway of the mind as described above.
 - 2. Thru the doorway of the body as described above.
 - 3. Thru the doorway of energy as described above.
 - d. How to be present with others.
 - e. How to be present with groups
 - f. Personal and group process and experience

Put simply, the entire curriculum will be oriented towards the investigation, experience, and understanding of Presence. By investigating Presence thru the mind, body, and energy field, we will arrive at a highly integrated and embodied understanding, where we are aware of our true nature as Presence on the level of Being, in a natural harmony and integration with our mind, body, and energy system.

The intention is not only to experientially know the Oneness of Being, but to embody it fully.

In my perspective, one can not awaken through conceptual knowledge alone, and one can not support or help others awaken if one's understanding is only academic and technique oriented. The awakening must be both authentic and deep. It must be embodied and integrated with our physical and energetic system. We must BE the awakening.

Therefore, while the academic aspect of the program is designed to be completed in an average of 5-7 years, (depending on the readiness, capacity, and sincere commitment of the student), I can not guarantee how long the program will take for you. Awakening is not a fixed, academic subject or conceptual technique. It is a journey of actual experience and growth, and the process takes however long it takes for each individual.

In general, this will be an ongoing program, with each person making a fresh, one year commitment each year. Therefore, at the end of each year, each student will decide for themselves whether the group experience is supporting them in a useful and helpful way.

Commitment and the Value of Group Support:

For those of you are new to the idea, let me share a little about commitment and the value of group support:

First, most people are almost completely identified with their conditioned mind, stuck in reflexive mental and emotional patterns which are oriented around seeking pleasure and gratification outside themselves, while trying to avoid pain. This orientation is the basic problem and trap that keeps us stuck in duality and child consciousness. This is a very strong habit for the average person.

Therefore, if you truly want to be free of the conditioned patterns of your life; if you truly want to wake up to your true nature and discover the true purpose for your life, it will take a sincere commitment from you. Your orientation needs to change. You must learn to want and value truth more than you want pleasure and gratification. You have to sincerely want to question, investigate, and know yourself and make the commitment to live your life in a way that supports this intention. It can not be approached as a part-time hobby (if you truly want to be free).

Once you make this whole-hearted commitment to know yourself and the Truth, the universe will rush to support you in your awakening.

One does not need to do this alone. There are very powerful and synergistic effects that occur when working in a closed, committed group, led by a trained, experienced, and committed teacher. which include but is not limited to the following:

1. By requiring a long term commitment, the group will naturally be comprised of people with a more sincere attitude and intention.
2. With a closed group, there is momentum gained by the continuity of teaching. The learning of each class can build on the learning of the class before, without having to repeat basic material each time.
3. There is the power and momentum of the group energy effect. It is far easier to perceive and experience a particular principle if everyone is focused on it together at the same time.
4. There is a momentum of true, practical faith gained by witnessing the organic unfolding of the other members of the group. When you witness real changes in each person over the course of time, it gives you first-hand knowledge of what awakening and transformation is possible for people, and this greatly increases your own faith and trust in the value and potential benefit of the process for yourself.
5. By witnessing the work of a variety of others over time, you learn thru example and energetic transmission how to support others in an attuned way.

6. There is a nourishing sense of true community that develops. This provides you with community support, as well as learning valuable principles which can then be integrated into your family, social, and professional communities in which you live your daily lives.

7. Finally, it is a LOT of fun and adventure to share the journey with like-minded others!

Of course, ultimately, you must go within to find your true nature. It is not outside of you. The true path is within. Regardless of the path you choose, in the end, your awakening is totally up to you. It is therefore your choice whether you want to try this alone, or with occasional help, or with a lot of help. How much do you want awakening?

One effective choice is to choose to walk the journey with the formal support and community of others until you are standing on your own two feet, open and awakened to your true nature as Presence.

It is by far the most interesting and fulfilling adventure of all!

Now, on to some logistical details and information:

Class Size:

I am planning for an initial class size of 24 students. Once the class is full, or once the first class begins, it will be closed. Therefore, early registration is encouraged if you wish to reserve a space.

Schedule:

Over time, the training program will be offered in variety of formats which will be adjusted each year to best meet the needs of the group as a whole. Generally, the intention is to have 20-21 days of residential training each year, in one of the following formats:

1. Four 5 day intensives
2. Three 7 day intensives
3. Two 10 day intensives

This first year it will be offered in two 10 day intensives . The proposed dates for the 2008 intensives are: March 18-27, 2008 and November 11-20, 2008

(If you are highly interested in this program but can not attend these dates, or the extended format would not work for you, please contact me regarding other options. I want to hear from you.)

Homework Requirement/Commitments:

There will be homework assignments in-between classes that will be administered via the internet. Therefore, you will need to arrange internet access to be a student in this program.

Homework will include conscious movement and self-investigation/meditation practices, reading assignments, written assignments, as well as skill practice sessions.

Homework assignments will be designed to take the average student 5 hours per week to complete, with written homework reports required to be translated into English, if necessary, and submitted by email by specific due dates in order to continue participation in the group.

Tuition:

Tuition will be \$2500 for this first year, which covers two 10 day intensives and homework related communication between classes. It does not include travel costs, lodging, or meals, or other costs such as textbooks, postage, internet service, written homework translation services, private sessions, and other such costs.

Students will be required to make a one year commitment and pay the full year's tuition in advance, with no refunds.

Location:

The March and November intensives will be held at the Franciscan Retreat Center in the beautiful foothills of the Pike's Peak range in Colorado Springs.

Lodging is currently \$50 per night for a single room, \$33 per night for a shared room.

For retreat center info: www.franciscanretreatcenter.org

Enrolling in this program:

There are 2 steps you must take to enroll in this program:

- 1) Write and send me a letter of intent.
- 2) Complete the application and payment of tuition.

Step 1: Letter of Intent

If you are interested in enrolling in this program, you must inform me of your intention and commitment to join, in writing, by **February 24, 2008**.

Please send your letter of intention to: mjfsacred3@mac.com

Include the following items in your letter of intent:

1. Your full name, sex, and age.
2. Your intention and commitment to join the program. Please tell me why you want to participate.
3. Your current email address. (You will need to arrange internet access in order to be a student in this program.)

Step 2: Complete the application and pay the tuition

Once I have reviewed your letter of intent, I will then send you an application packet with further information for you regarding the payment of tuition and preparations for the first class.

I hope this letter has given you a good general idea of what is being offered. For more information on Michael Fleming or his services, please visit www.awakeningtopresence.com

Best wishes and blessings to you and your loved ones!

Love and presence,

Michael Fleming