

149. Transcending Self (-as-Content): True Belonging from the Inside Out



Debbie Sorensen, PhD and Meg McKelvie, PhD



Housekeeping

Disclosures + disclaimers:

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Overview

This workshop is experiential:

- You'll need: A pen and paper for writing
- There will be small group work – care for yourself by setting your own limits/ boundaries
- Protect each other's privacy
- Take care of your body

Consent for Experiential Exercises

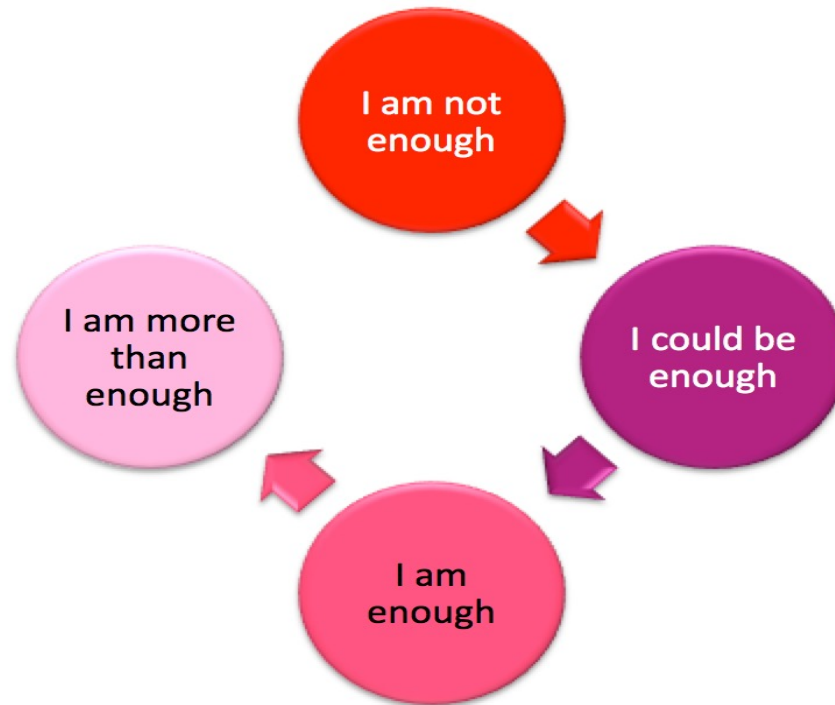


The Self-Esteem Trap

Self-Esteem Seeking Culture

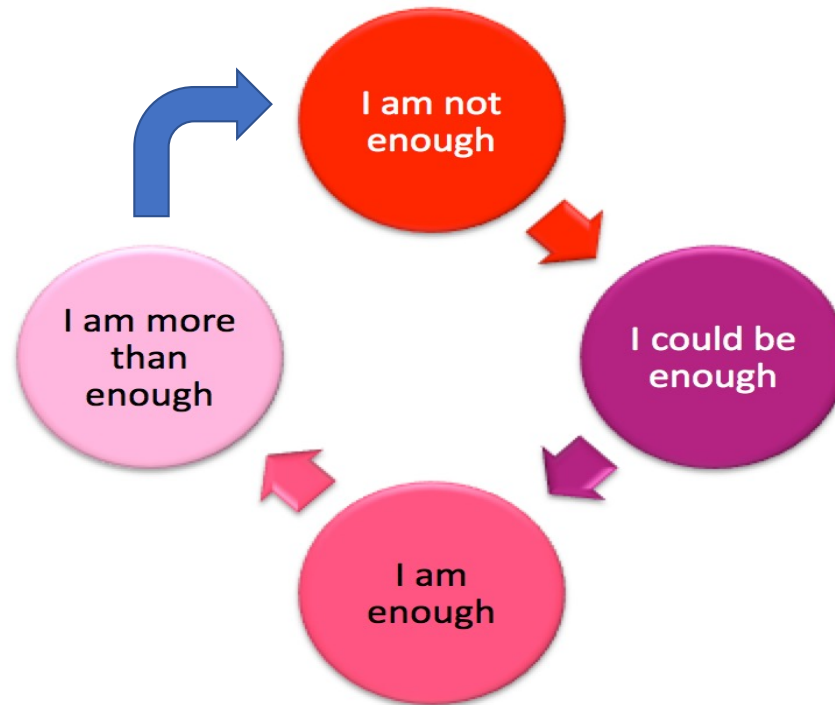


The Self Acceptance Path



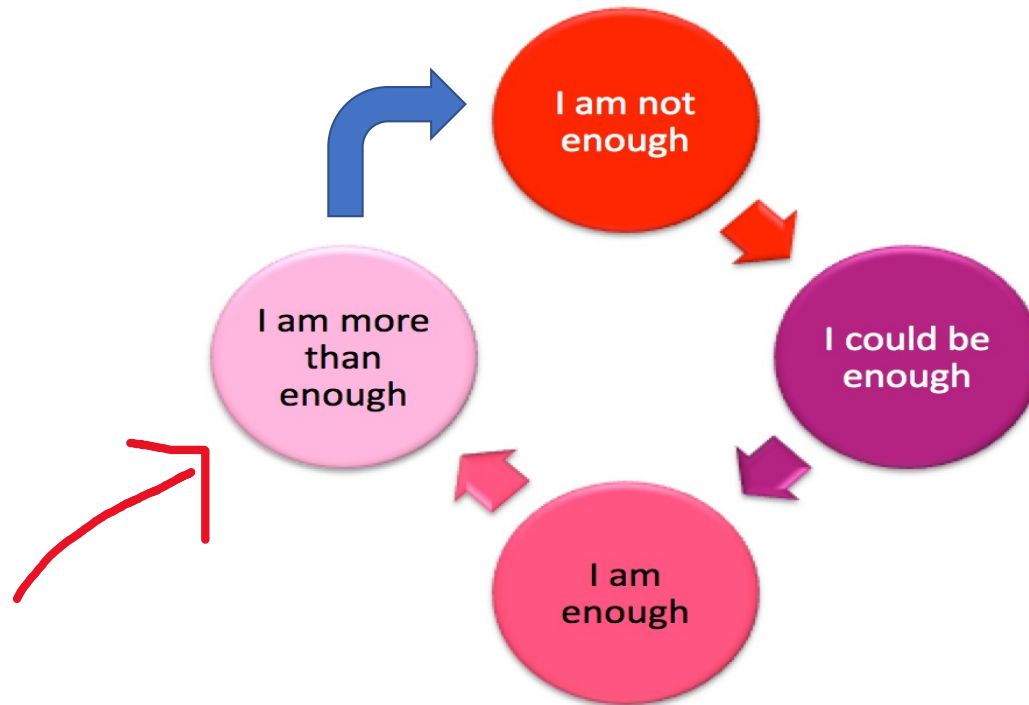
The Self Acceptance Path ~~Trap~~

Trap
∞



The Self Acceptance Path ~~Trap~~

Trap
∞

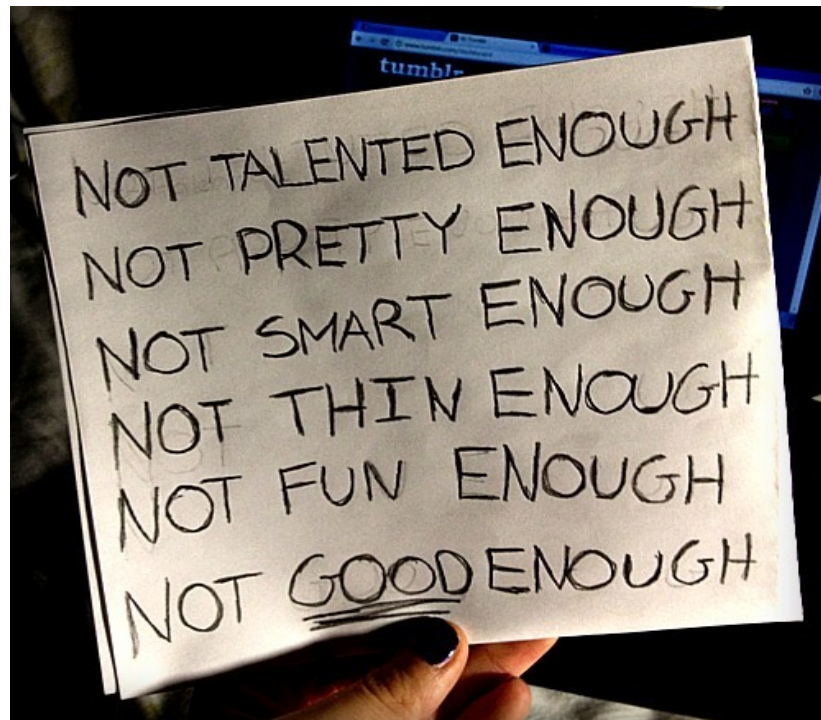


The Eternal Debate: Am I Good or Am I Bad?



Clinging to Positive and Negative Self-Stories

you are
kind
you are
SMART
you are
important



Self-as-Content

Fusion with the
Conceptualized Self

Self-as-Context



The Origin of Self-Stories



Limiting Perspectives



We Get Stuck Focusing on Ourselves



How Do We Find Ourselves Here?



Yearning to Belong and Be Special is a Natural Part of Our Evolutionary History



The Yearning Itself is Healthy and Important



“Human beings yearn to be seen, cared for, and included as members of a group... While this yearning is healthy, many of the ways our minds try to satisfy it cause us psychic pain...”

- Steven Hayes, *A Liberated Mind*

Belonging in Context: External Barriers



The Problem...



High Self Esteem (Does Not Equal) a Vital Life



The Cost of Building and Protecting Self Esteem



Burnout, Loneliness, Isolation



e.g. Therapist Positive Self-Stories



One Truthful Conversation at a Time

“Another good way to begin to let go of your self-story is to practice being yourself more fully and openly with another person... The point is to open the door to places that are hard - insecurity, inadequacy, fear of rejection, and so on.... Carving out more space for you to be you, with those feelings, more genuinely connected to others...”

- Steven Hayes, *A Liberated Mind*

Brief Meditation: Resting in the Ground of Being



Transcending Self (-as-Content): One Truthful Conversation



Break into groups of 2

“Speak from the heart” for 3 mins

Prompts:

- What is it that you really long for?
- And what would that get you?

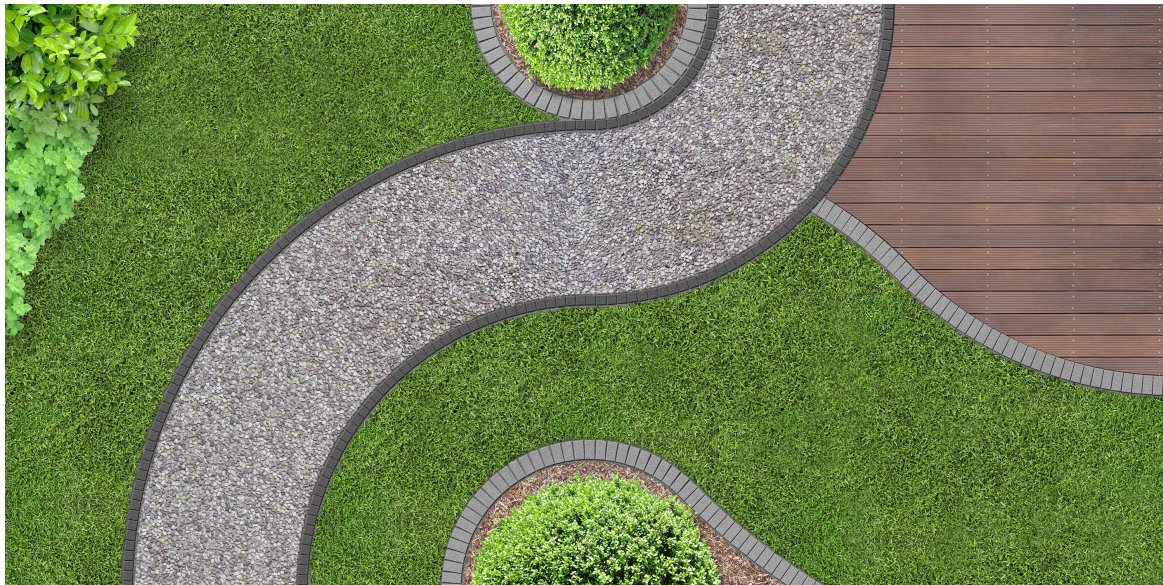
Listener: Do not speak. Simply listen, with all your heart

We will prompt you to switch after 3 minutes



Trying To Earn Our Way
Into Love and Belonging

The Self-Improvement Path



We work harder at it



Misdirected Yearning to Belong: We Become the Problem to be Solved



Perpetual Seeking

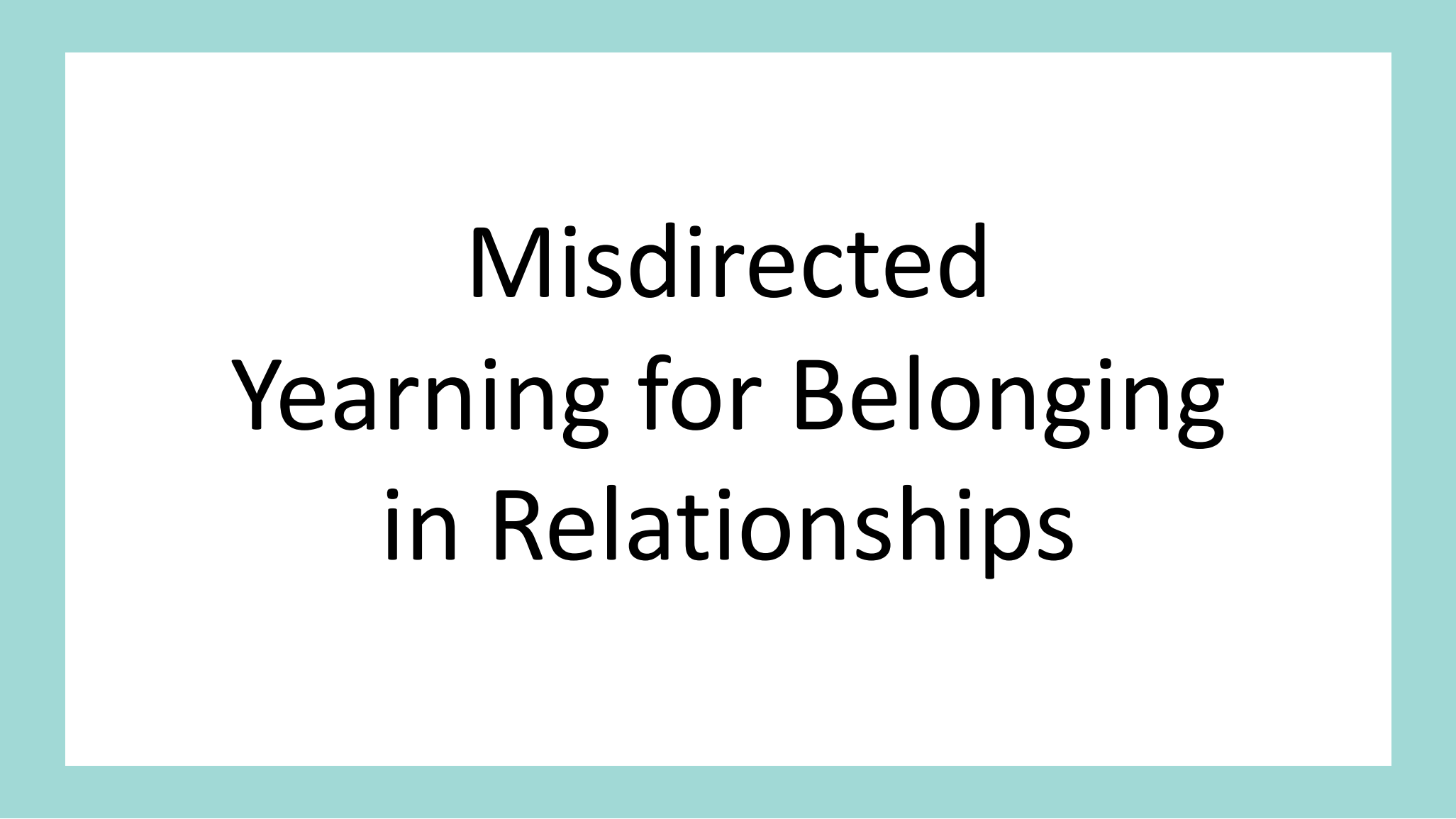


Constant Striving



Driven by Need to be Special



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Misdirected Yearning for Belonging in Relationships

We believe that to belong we need something
(acceptance, love) from other people



People Pleasing



Interpersonal Perfectionism



Competition



Belong-Related Self-Stories: Examples

“I’m in need of great care.”

“I’m special.”

“I’m uniquely messed up.”

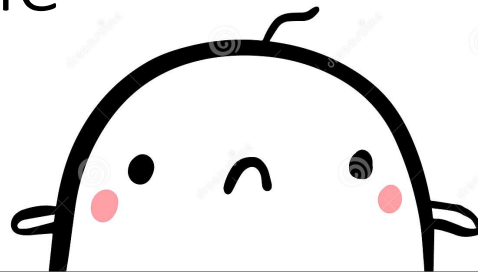
“I’m fragile.”

*nobody
understands
me*

“I can’t handle that
because I’m _____.”

“I’m the only one”

“I’m a victim”

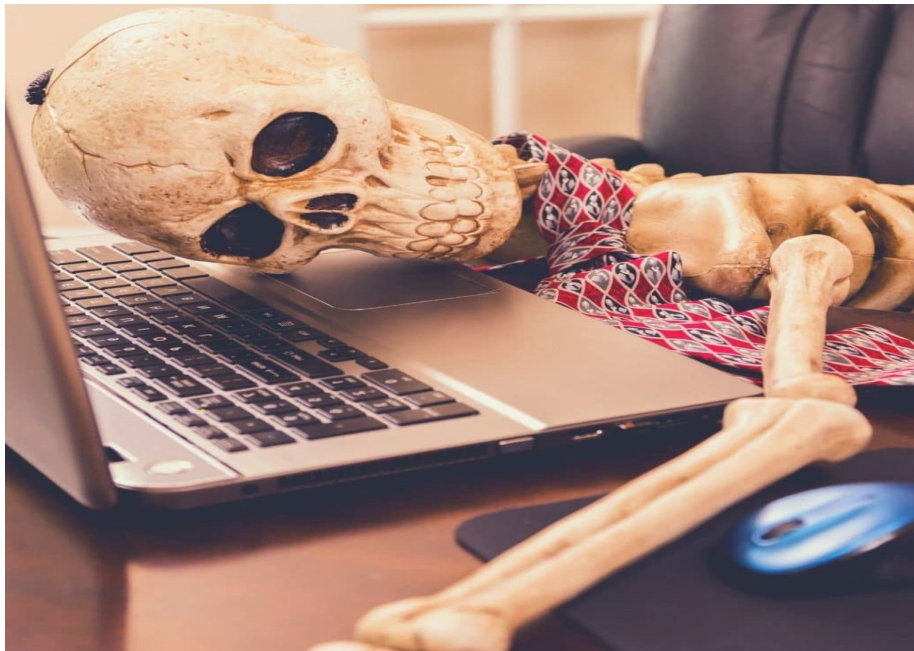


“I have to be the best.”

Consequences of Misdirected Yearning to Belong: Psychic Pain



Disconnection from Ourselves and Others



Clinical Signs of Misdirected Yearning to Belong



True-Self-Esteem:
Getting Out of the
Conceptualized Self

What can be learned from our longing for high self-esteem and belonging?

How can we channel it in a way that is life-enhancing, not limiting?

Social Skills Alone Can Fall Short



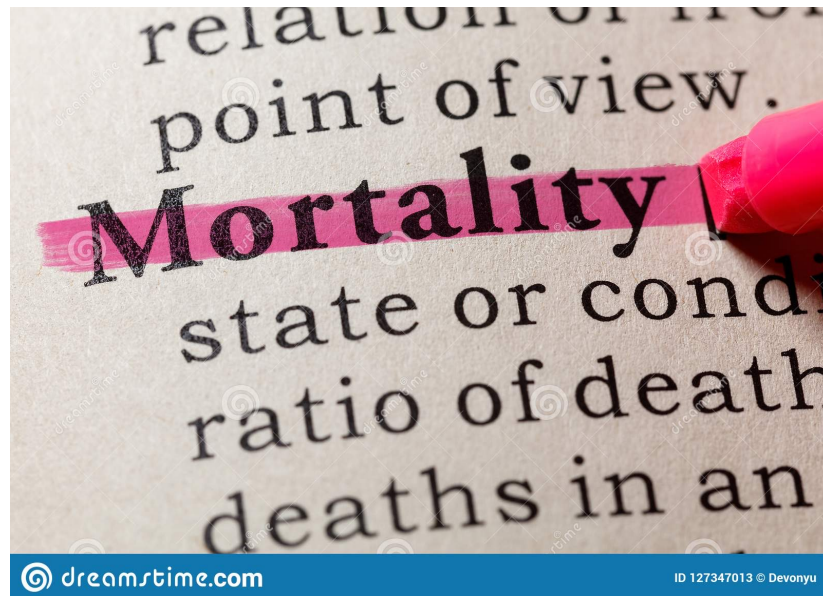
Because Some of the Work is Internal



Zoom Out



Accept Your Mortality



Pure Awareness



Tapping into Belonging as a Birthright



A New Way to Nurture Us All



Being Fully Seen by Others



Contact, Accept, and Air Out Your Dark Side

When you finally learn to accept your shadow self



Transcending Self (-as-Content): Writing Exercise



Please Call Me by My True Names

First, break into same groups of 2. Listen and then write.

Writing Prompts:

- I am
- AND I am

(Be specific)

Transcending Self (-as-Content): One Truthful Conversation



And now... in our groups of 2

“Speak from the heart” for 3 mins:

- Share your writing (if you feel comfortable)
- Talk about your experience writing.

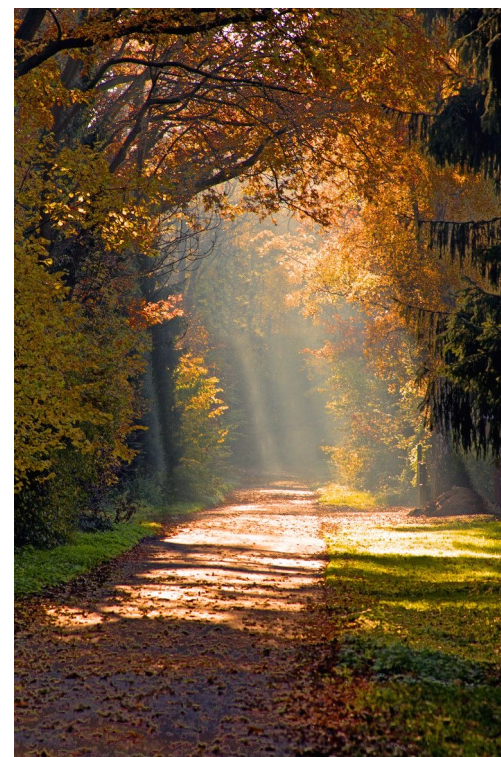
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Parting Questions:

- What have you learned about your longing for high self-esteem and belonging?
- How can you channel it in a way that is life-enhancing, not limiting?
- How does positive (and negative) self story get in your way?
- What does misdirected belonging cost you?
- What is more important to you?
- How might you use this framework with clients?



We want to hear from you! Please send thoughts, ponderings and questions to:
debbiesorensen@gmail.com and drmegmckelvie@gmail.com

THANK YOU!

Debbie Sorensen, PhD

drdebbiesorensen.com

debbie@impactpsychcolorado.com

Meg McKelvie, PhD

drmegmckelvie.com

meg@impactpsychcolorado.com

www.impactpsychcolorado.com