

# Identifying & Transforming Your False Self



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All the great traditions tell us about two selves. A true self and a false or fallen self.

Whenever someone realizes their true self they are realizing that they are part of the larger one. The overall number of true selves is one.

Your personalized expression of true self is your Unique Self.

The realization that true self shows up differently through every pair of eyes is the realization of Unique Self. In the old enlightenment, true self was understood to erase all distinctions. In the new enlightenment, you realize that your enlightenment has a perspective. Your perspective.

Your gift to God is to allow God to look through your unique set of eyes. To love other is to see through God's eyes. To love God is to let God see through your eyes. To do so, you must cleanse the doors of perception that distort your vision.

You must remove any obstacle or hindrance to your clear vision. All distorting prisms must be clarified. The distorting prism is called the false self. The nature of reality is that a false self develops. This is not bad or tragic or traumatic. It is very clearly the spiritual plan of the Uni-verse, core to the plot of your story.

Life is the recovery of memory. Not only the memory of the past but the memory of the future. In this precise sense, hope is a memory of the future. In the teachings of the old masters, the first act the initiate does upon awakening in the morning is "to remember the future world." You are born with a glimmering taste of essence. {Yes, tastes do glimmer.} You are not born good, or loving, or enlightened. You evolve up from Eden. The initial taste of essence that is the very ground and goal of your being is forgotten. It is both the memory of your past and the memory of your future. It is displaced into unconsciousness when you enter the world. You believe that your false self is your true identity. You get lost in the now, forgetting both your past and your future.

In the original Hebrew the very word world, Olam, means hidden. World is the place where essence is hidden until we do the work of memory. Recovering the memory of the future. Your authentic Unique Self.

Recovering the future memory of your Unique Self is the realization of the evolutionary potential of your personalized essence.

The key is to remember. Judgment day in one of the great old religions is called the day you “remember all that was forgotten.” The most tragic forgetting is to you forgot that you have forgotten. That is what it means to lose your connection to Eros. To be in Eros is to participate in the yearning force of being. To be in Eros is to remember your yearning.

An old sacred text reads, “Hastir Astir Panay,” I will hide, I will hide, my face. Why hide twice? The esoteric masters re-read the text. “I will hide the fact that I am hidden.” When your face is hidden you can find it. When the hiding is hidden you forget that you are lost. So you never search and you never find. Sometimes I feel what God feels. God feels like she set up the world as a great hide and seek game. The problem is that God hides and we forget to seek. Then I think that we need to ask God to hide less well.

One Unique Self master told this story about identifying your false self and remembering your Unique Self.

*The King was very wise. He loved his people very much. The grain in his kingdom was poisoned. But there was nothing else to eat. You would not die if you ate the grain. You would simply go mad. As people's food supplies ran out they were faced with a choice. To starve or eat the food and go mad. They chose to eat the food. Finally only the King and his advisor were left. The King still had much food left in his storage that was not poisoned. But he said. I love my*

*people. How can I rule over them if they are mad and I am sane. We too should eat the food. His loyal advisor agreed. But what we must do, said the advisor, is make a mark on our foreheads. When we see the mark, it will remind us that we are mad. Our memory will guide us home.*

Your Unique Self is who you really are. It is the unique expression of your enlightenment. The problem is that you have gotten so used to living and reacting from your false self, that you have forgotten that it is not your true self. You live inside of your false self but you have forgotten that this is so.

The act of remembering is to make your false self visible. It is to identify the hidden chains that will not allow you to soar. You only soar with your own wings. You Unique Self. Most of what is damaging and destructive in your life is rooted in the distortion of self in which you live. You are living inside all of the limiting and distorting prisms of your false self. Step out of the distortion, up-level your consciousness, and step into your life. This is the memory of your future. **You cannot be anything you are not willing to become.**

### The Transformation of Identity: Identifying and Getting Free of Your Sentence

Perhaps the most overused cliché in spiritual teaching contexts is transformation. But it is not a bad word. It is a good word. A cliché becomes a cliché because it touches something that is deep and true. The reason it is cliché is because it seeks to evoke depth feeling or truth without really doing the work. Genuine transformation is truly the journey of a lifetime. I do not suggest to you that the practice and dharma in this essay will be the beginning and end of your transformation. What I will promise you is that this is where you need to begin.

You want to transform. To transform you need to transcend. To trance-end. To end the trance you are in which is keeping you down. Once you are no longer inside the trance state you are free to realize your full aliveness and potential. To trans-form you need to re-form. To reform your inner sense of who you are which was de-formed early in your life. It was not de-formed because some terrible trauma happened which might have been avoided.

Not at all. Rather it is the way of spirit to demand the evolution of your identity. You are given the great privilege of self-creation. An essential part of that process is to know that your authentic spirit can only be in-formed by your Unique Self.

There are two steps in the de-formation of your Unique Self. The first is in the shock of entry into the world. By this I do not refer to physical birth but to the separation from your mother when you emerge as an apparently separate self. In the process of separating something in your essence is mis-in-formed.

The second de-formation happens early and perhaps again later in the process of your being educated and raised into the world.

Now let's jump in – right in the middle to the transformation of your identity.

Unless you live from your Unique Self as Source you will be creating a lot of messes in your life. You will never fulfill your deepest desire. Worse you will not ever really know what your deepest desires are. There is an invisible glass ceiling to who you are and what's possible in your life. This remains true until you begin to see yourself as Source. Unique Source. You need to be able to say with complete confidence, "I am Source. I am the Source guiding my life. My Source is one with all that is even as it manifests uniquely in the incarnation that is me."

What prevents you from living from Source is virtually always something that needs to be cleared out between you and Source. One of the truly important contributions to the evolution of consciousness in this regard came from the dazzling insight of Oscar Ichazo. Ichazo is the person who shared with us the idea of fixation. Fixation means that your attention gets fixed in a particular way as a result of your early experience of entry into the world.

The shock of separation from mother created in its wake what I call a pain trance. A trance simply means a narrowing of attention in which your focus is exclusively directed through a particular lens.

This painfully narrowed lens is exactly what Ichazo called your fixation. Ichazo identified a series of basic patterns of fixations. He applied these in two ways. The first way of identifying your fixation pattern is through his fairly well known system, called the *Enneagram*. Ichazo is the father of the Enneagram. The second and more simple set of fixation patterns he developed might be called, *Identifying your Sentences*.

Knowing your particularly pattern of fixation is vital in identifying your Unique Self.

Not because you are your fixation. Quite the contrary. On one level you might even say that your fixation tells you who you are not. Who you are is a unique expression of consciousness who is both distinct and indivisible from the larger God field of awareness.

Your fixation is the prism through which you see the world because your attention fixated early in your life into a very particular pattern. This is the particular pattern of your ego. It is the particular form of your separate self.

While your fixation usually fits in to some very general patterns, the details and quality of your fixation is ultimately unique. Of course this is so because your

fixation prefigures your Unique Self. Your fixation is what drives you before you are able to dispel the illusion of your separate self and identify the specially textured contours of your Unique Self.

To walk towards your enlightenment you must stop your fixation from running your life.

By identifying your fixation you break its hold on you and cleanse your doors of perception. At the same time there is a reason that your attention fixated in the particular pattern that it did. There is a gift in your particular pattern of fixation, which you need to access and deploy in the world. But that can only be done effectively after you have broken the unconscious hold the fixation has on your life. Identify and purify your fixation through direct contact with your true self and you will have some of the key components of your Unique Self.

### Identifying Your Sentence

Your sentence is your **False Core**. You live inside of your **Sentence**. Your false core is the invisible organizing principle of your life. You need to step outside of your Sentence in order to step into your Unique Self as Source.

When you step outside of your sentence you are making your false core visible.

Your Sentence or your False Core is your idolatry. The Hebrew word for idolatry is Avodah Zarah, literally, Strange Worship. “Strangers are we, errant at the gates of our own psyche” wrote George Steiner years ago. When you are trapped in your **Sentence** you live and serve through the heart, mind, and body of the stranger that lives in you. Unless and until you step outside your sentence you cannot be free.

The god spark in you is your Unique Self. It is the possibility of possibility.

As long as you are the stranger, trapped in your sentence you close off the authentic possibility of your life.

The bad news is that your sentence is hidden. Not only however is your sentence hidden, the hidden nature of your sentence is itself hidden. You have not only forgotten your sentence. You have forgotten that you have forgotten. The good news is that by deploying spiritual practice with clear intention, pure intent, and skillful means you have every prospect of a full recovery of memory. You can step outside of your false sentence and begin to live from your Unique Source statement.

Gifts of Your sentence: The key to finding your way from your false core sentence to your Unique self is by identifying the special gifts of your sentence.

As much as it generates a negative reality in your life, your sentence also has precious gifts.

These precious gifts form the core of your Unique Self.

By exposing and dissolving the fixation which is your false core you can remove the negative generation while retaining the precious gifts.

The entries below are drawn directly on the work of Oscar Ichazo and later Stephen Wolinsky. I also have a good friend, Katharine Woodward Thomas, who is a gifted practitioner and teacher of her version of this core work. She tells me that when people come to her and say “I am so scared,” she responds, “I would be sacred too if I was living in your consciousness.” Then with a lot of love and skill she guides people to the identification of their false sentence. From there, she initiates the process of reclaiming their Unique Source Self. Katherine’s work as a highly skilled practitioner made Ichazo’s teaching come alive for me. I am

happy to acknowledge Katherine's and Stephen's direct influence in the following entry.

## False Self Sentences

There are any number of sentences that you might choose as your false core. Here is a very partial list of some of the more common sentences that people choose.

*I am in pain.*

*I will never make it.*

*I have bad luck {karma}.*

*I am alone.*

*I am powerless.*

*I am invisible.*

*I am not safe.*

*I am weak.*

*I am depressing to be around.*

*I am a burden.*

*I am too much.*

*I'm unlovable.*

*I am not enough.*

*I don't deserve more.*

*I am not wanted.*

*I am wrong.*

*I am unworthy.*

These are just a few of the leading examples.

Although these sound very similar to each other, each one has a very distinctive quality. They are not interchangeable.

Every person usually has a primary sentence and one or two secondary sentences.

An example: Your primary sentence might be I am not safe and your secondary sentence might be I am bad. Or the reverse with I am bad as the primary and the I'm not safe as the secondary.

The work is very precise and self-confirming.

When you guide people through this work you are not following a logical process. Rather you are feeling into the subtle energy field of the person in order to guide them towards identifying their sentence. When you hit the sentence that reflects something deep in their false core you can literally feel their subtle energy leap towards the sentence. The more you practice the more skilled you become at identifying the specific constellation of yours or someone else's false core sentence.

The false core is not merely one sentence. Just like the divine appears in first, second, and third person so too your false core appears in first, second, and third person. These three sentences are your holy trinity. They are, as Oscar Ichazo reminded us, the three faces of your false core.

*For example: Your first person sentence might be, "I am not enough."*

Your second person sentence might be "People do not see me as being worthy of their love." Or. "people do not love me or value me."

Your third person sentence might be, "The world is good but there is no home for

me in the world.” Or “I will never receive from the world dignity, prosperity, and success.”

So you have a first person self-statement, a second person relationship-statement, and a third person world-statement.

*A second example: I am not safe. First Person.*

The World Threatens Me. Second Person.

People are Dangerous: Third Person.

Let's dive deeper with a third example.

*I am invisible:*

Lets say that your false core is, I'm invisible. That is your first person statement about yourself. That will create in its wake a second person statement about your relations to others or their relationship to you. Your second person statement might be, “People do not care about me.” Your third Person statement will be an objective statement about the nature of things. So that might be something like, “It's dangerous to be seen.”

Let's stay with this example and unpack more deeply how this sentence might show up in your life.

First person False Core Sentence: “I'm invisible”: You may find that you are disconnected from your own authentic needs and desires. *Since you feel invisible to others you begin to feel invisible to yourself. When you are not reflected back in the face of a loving other you begin to disappear in your own eyes.* When you go to a party you may get a constricted feeling in your chest. It is more than just the surface question which bothers you – Will I know anyone at this party?

Rather the surface question triggers your false core. *The feeling of being invisible at the party triggers the original wounds, which created your false core sentence: I'm invisible.*

You might find yourself as the perpetual volunteer. You work absurdly beyond the call of duty or your genuine commitment to give. *In doing so you are both trying to become visible without standing out too much and at the same time you are perpetuating your self-sentence of I'm invisible because that is what feels comfortable/normal to you.* You bail on relationships without explaining or giving prior notice. *Since you were invisible to start with no one will notice much or care much if you are gone.*

#### *Second Person False Core Sentence:*

“Others do not care about me”: You may find that you are virtually always skipped over or ignored. People do not spend the time necessary to listen to you in order to discern your needs. *Since you think that you are invisible you do not feel that the voicing of your needs will really make a difference. You get used to not being taken seriously, not being listened to or received and not being honored in the way that you deserve.* People are hurt when you suddenly bail on commitments or relationships. Although you think you are invisible there are people who see you and love you. *You cannot receive their love because you think you are invisible so it cannot be that they really see you.*

#### *Third Person False Core Sentence:*

It is dangerous to be seen: You do everything you can not to stand out. You do not offer your opinion even when you have something valuable to contribute. You take jobs that do not match your talents.

Everything you do generates the false core sentence of *I am Invisible*.

Once you identify your sentence – you begin to realize to what very large extent – you unconsciously generate your sentence in your life. If your false core is, I am invisible, you generally act it out in one of two ways.

1) Your false core becomes the place you feel most comfortable in. Not a genuine comfort but rather the pseudo-comfort generated by some combination of spiritual laziness and fear. Invisibility becomes your strategy to stay safe. You never develop the core capacities necessary to have a different experience, so you remain inside of your invisibility.

For example you may never presence your needs because that is how you are sourcing your safety. You might notice that you are also directing the conversation so the spotlight never falls on you. You might spend a good deal of your life waiting passively for someone to discover you. You might create relationships where the hidden contract is that only one of the partners truly gets to shine and it is not you.

2) You might become hurt or angry when you are not immediately seen and therefore withdraw from the engagement only adding to your disappeared self<sup>1</sup>.

This sentence carries with it however special gifts as well. From a place of being invisible you hear and see an enormous amount that would be hidden from

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<sup>1</sup> Mirror Neurons and the old Hindu Vedanta teachings explain part of how this all works. In the Vedanta teaching you carry inside of you a movie projector of consciousness. The movie that you are playing about your life inside – even if it is unconscious – will have a lot to do with the movie that shows up on the screen of your life. That does not mean that you are the sole creator of your reality. You are not. There are other people in the world, other forces of economics, social change, physics, karma and more which all interact with your life. Then there are this world and past world karmas. At the same time it needs to be said you are also doing quite a lot to generate that reality of your sentence in your life.

visible people. You develop very refined and penetrating insight. You have a special gifts as a guide, resource, consultant, and advisor.

Once you identify your sentence there are several steps that you can take, within the framework of your healthy ego personality, to step out of your sentence.

Once you have identified your sentence you must step out of it.

If your Sentence is “I am invisible” you must now become visible. You must stand for your visibility in the world. You can and should write new sentences, which powerfully affirm this shift in your self-sense.

[At this point you need to work with a skilled practitioner and go backwards in time to the earliest moment you can access, when you took on – or re-enforced your false core. You almost always take on your sentence in the context of a relationship. Since the de-formation took place in relationship, the trans-formation needs to take place in relationship. You need to re-form your core beliefs.]

## Recognizing Your False Core

### *I am Alone:*

I have a close friend whose sentence is I am alone. Her Second Person sentence is: Other people do not like being with me. Her Third Person sentence: The world is a cold and unfeeling place. It will not take care of me when I need help.

If this is your sentence you might experience a fairly constant emotional sadness in your life. You have given up hope of ever being deeply connected to others. You do not ask for the support you need. You rarely feel like you are with “your people.” You do not feel like you can actualize your full gifts in the world.

Other people may find you're unapproachable or have a hard time finding ways to support you. You rarely join groups. While you may be a public figure you live in relative isolation. You never really believe that people genuinely miss you and want your presence independent of your unique skill set.

This sentence carries with it, as do all sentences, a unique set of gifts. You are unusually competent and highly resourceful. You are very independent. You are passionately loyal and committed to your friends. You have a great gift for deep heart-centered relationship both as a teacher and friend.

### *I am not Safe:*

Your first person sentence might be the sentence: I am not safe. Your second person sentence would be something like "other people have ill intent towards me." Your third person sentence might be, "Life is unpredictable and dangerous."

In all of these examples the person unconsciously acts to generate their false core sentence in the world. If your core feeling is that you are not safe then several results might likely follow. First, you will paradoxically take unnecessary risks. Because you view the world as a fundamentally unsafe place in any event, the gravity of the risks is not appropriately calculated in your mind. Second, you might tend to idealize people who actually are in some sense threatening to you. You idealize people in order to generate a feeling of safety, which you desperately if unconsciously seek. This will prevent you from seeing looming threats. You will be hurt because you did not protect yourself and thereby generate the validation of your thesis that you are not safe in the world. Since lack of safety is not only your false core but also your core trauma you may not want to see that the idealized person is not safe for you. That would be too painful for you to bear.

Third, you might generate enemies whose job it will be to validate your false core sentence, by assuring that you are not safe in the world. Fourth, you may be unreasonably suspicious of people who do not threaten your safety because you see the world as inherently not safe. You will therefore tend to interpret situations accordingly. Fifth, you may tend to confuse physical intimacy with safety. Seeking safety, you might be moved to seek out physical intimacy more than is actually safe.

*I am too much:*

I met Jamie who was about to get married on a plane back to the city where we were both living. Jamie and her husband had worked for a company I ran for a short time. I had much affection for both of them but did not know either of them well. She was nervous before her wedding. On the one hand, she was very much in love with her husband. On the other hand, she was not sure he could meet her core needs for passion, spontaneity, and the powerful thrust of masculine penetration which would ravish her open to God. He was good, stable, and very contained. We decided that since we met by chance at the airport and were sitting next to each other on the plane, the Universe wanted us to do some work.

I explained to her the false core sentence teaching. She is a trained mediator and corporate coach so she picked up the essentials quickly. I asked her to locate a time in her life when things were not going well. Perhaps something went wrong at work. Or you are angry with your partner. You feel bad after a fight with your mother. We gently moved from scenario to scenario until she found one where she was able to locate herself. I asked her to drop as deeply into the feeling as she could. She went inside and found herself deep in the feeling. Now give it words, Jamie. I offered her a list of possible false core sentences, which might give voice to the feeling. We went down that list, one after the other. It is crucial to keep the rhythm going so that neither of you fall into discursive thought.

The invitation here is to first feel your way into identifying your false core sentence. When I said, “I’m too much,” it was like the airplane stopped. Her entire subtle energy shifted. Yes that’s it. I’m too much. That is my false core. That is the sentence I live inside. Tell me more, I said. What does it mean to be too much? I prodded. “I spill over the sides.” “I’m uncontainable.” Ahh. You are uncontainable. That is dangerous. Yes, of course it is dangerous, she interrupted me. I’m too much! At the same moment it hit us both. I said it out loud. So Ms. I’m too much who is dangerous and uncontainable went out and attracted to her Mr. Container whom she is about to marry. Of course.

Let’s go deeper into this particular false core sentence where Jamie unconsciously lived. It was from within this place that Jamie was unconsciously creating her reality and relationships.

Your first person false core sentence is “I’m too much.” Your second person relationships sentence is “People are overwhelmed by me.” Your third person sentence about the world is “The world rejects people like me.”

You may be vivacious and talkative. Maybe you are big or a very big presence. You are virtually always outflowing and do not always have an easy time receiving.

Others both enjoy being around you and at the same time feel dominated, overshadowed by you. They feel that you take up too much space even though they never tell you this to your face.

You feel that you will never be loved by someone who can really meet you. You feel that you will not be taken care of in the world because people will not want to take you on.

Since this false core sentence is unconscious, you are constantly doing things to generate it in the world. You might create relationships with people that cannot handle you. Or you might constantly limit your expression and keep yourself small for fear of overwhelming people. You may avoid creating the structures in your life which would allow all of you to emerge in full glory. So you always remain hidden because you will not hurt people from that place. More than that however, people will not feel overpowered by you and therefore will not reject you.