

FROM THE ACCESS CONSCIOUSNESS BLOG:

TEN MISCONCEPTIONS THAT CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

1. Your past is relevant.

Do you function from your past? So many of us are taught that we are the sum total of our past experiences. If we buy that as true and real, than it becomes impossible to create anything that does not match our past. If you came from a family that values it's ethnic or religious background, it will be difficult for you to see what's really true for you, beyond those beliefs and values. What if you could be and create anything you chose regardless of your past? How fun and expansive could that be? A great exercise to do, if you are interested in moving beyond your past, is to take trips, or go to places you are unknown, and pretend to be someone entirely different. If you come from an Italian catholic family from the east coast of the United States, you could choose to be an atheist from California, or even Australia. (You don't have an accent because you studies in Iowa). How much fun and freedom could you have if you were willing to change your past, even temporarily? What might you discover about yourself?

2. You are your given roles and identities.

While you may technically be a mother or a father, a daughter, a brother or a nephew, is that actually who you are or are you far more than that? Do you identify with your career? I'm a lawyer or a carpenter or a housewife? What if these were just roles you played when necessary, but were aware that none of this needed to define you. Every time we latch onto an identity as defining who we are, we limit ourselves enormously. This is part of what creates so much difficulty for people when they retire, or get a divorce, or the kids leave home. If you believe you are what you do, than you have to loose part of yourself when your circumstance change. What if you were actually in infinite being that could change at any time and actually recreate themselves at will and choice. That might sound frightening, but how much easier might your life be if you could play the roles you've chosen but not be defined by this?

3. You should always consult the experts and follow their advice.

What if you could know what was true for you, beyond what anyone else told you? Why would a stranger know more about you than you? This is not about getting someone to repair your car or computer when that's required, or going to the doctor when you're sick. It's about always checking in with what you know to be true and not making anyone else's answer more right or valuable than your awareness. We deny ourselves and often get into trouble when we take a doctor's, or lawyer's, or therapist's or elder's or diet "expert's" opinion as absolutely true and the last word without asking questions about it. Why would you impose any kind of health or medical regime on your body just because

someone told you that that is what you needed? What if you were willing to tap into what you know to be true for you and take anyone else's answers as something interesting. Many people suffer unnecessarily when they fail to ask questions and honor what they know to be true for them. The losses can be through unexamined financial investments, unquestioned medical diagnoses and procedures and any number of other areas when we automatically make someone else the "expert" and follow their advice blindly.

Many people express a concern that they don't know what is actually true for them. When you were a child did you have your knowing invalidated? Were you told that you couldn't know something that you did know, or that you were wrong for knowing or speaking what you knew or spoke? Many of us did know what was true for us, but had it bred, beaten or ridiculed out of us. What if you were willing to reclaim that capacity? Instead of being the effect of others, what if you could reclaim your inner knowing and trust that when you were faced with difficult issues? What would your life be like if you never made anyone the "expert" about your life again?

4. You are responsible for fulfilling other people's needs.

How much of your life do you spend meeting other people's needs? Have you, in fact, made that your life purpose?

What would your life be like if you gave that up? Would you have to judge yourself as selfish and uncaring? What if saying "no" to other people's needs could be a contribution to all involved? What if it created a space for everyone to have choice and be more honest with themselves?

Most of us are conditioned to fulfill other people's needs. We're taught that this is the "right" thing to do and the "kind" thing to do, and we tend to assume that the other person's needs are real and valid. Does this ring true for you? Can you think of people in your life that assume you will be there to fulfill their needs? Here are some "needs" that are commonly voiced: I "need" you to go to the store for me, I "need" you to be more emotionally available, I "need" you to stop drinking, I "need" you to behave. I "need" you to call/visit more often. What's the common theme here? The person with the "need" is actually the one who is being selfish and uncaring! They are asking another person to honor what they have decided is important, (themselves), with absolutely no regard for their partner's inclinations, choices or desires. Let's take a look at one example. Many women ask their male partners to "be more emotionally available". How is that honoring of the other person? It's actually a request for the other person to bend, fold and staple themselves into something they are not, in order for the first person to be fulfilled in a way that they have decided is necessary for their well-being. Where is the allowance here? This does not mean that we can't ask for what's going to work for us, and, if a person has a strong "need" for lots of emotional interaction, they may choose to move on to another person. There's a big difference between asking for what's going to work for

you and requiring another to give it to you, as well as making them responsible for your well-being.

When we validate another person's "needs" as real, we give them power over us. Many people use their "needs" to manipulate and control others. There are many variations of this, including things like: If you love me you would do this for me, or I work so hard, (have so many pressures, am depressed, etc.) that you "need" to help me out by doing _____ for me.

There is one caveat here, as there is such a thing as "true need". True need is not about asking someone to change for us. It's about a circumstance where acting in a certain way can create a huge change and where the action is truly required. Coming upon a car accident or fire and helping someone who is trapped is an example of true need. Children have true needs for care, interaction, affection as well as the basics of food, clothing and shelter and a non-abusive environment.

True needs are not about manipulating others or power over. They exist where a person truly requires our action or intervention. This is very different from someone asking you to do something for them that they either don't have the right to assume that it's your duty to fulfill it, and/or it's something they can do for themselves. Most of what we call "needs", is actually just a creation. There's an old phrase that says: "Poor planning on your part does not constitute a crisis on my part."

Of course you can always choose to meet a particular need. It may be fun for you to go to the store for someone or you may choose to help care for someone who's very ill. The point is that it should be a choice.

If you do choose to not meet other people's "needs" you will probably be met with resistance. People love to think that others are obligated to them, but the bottom line is that you are not! How much of your life, energy and time could you free up if you were willing to give up meeting other people's needs?

So much of meeting other people's needs is a result of conclusions and assumptions. Do you really have to go to a vegetarian restaurant just because your bother in law turned vegan last week? Does the family have to go out together? Are there other possibilities? Asking questions can open the door to different possibilities.

Once we see that "needs" are just a creation, it becomes much more easy to choose if you are going to do what the other is asking or not. Please remember, you are here to be the greatness of you, not to live your life for another.

5. Consistency is a virtue.

Have you ever felt pressured to be consistent? Have others intimidated that frequently changing jobs or friends or residences or lovers was the mark of someone who's immature? Have you tried to be consistent only to find yourself frustrated by the marriage that isn't working or the job that is so boring you want to die! Consistency is not a measure of anything except perhaps a lack of imagination. Life is always changing, and presenting us with new possibilities. Why would you not take advantage of them? Let's look at some silly examples. Suppose a child starts drawing with only tree colors: red, green and blue. She makes twenty drawings with these colors. Suddenly she discovers that there's purple, turquoise, orange, yellow and many more colors, and she starts adding these to her drawings. Can you imagine a parent or a culture that says: How dare you be inconsistent, you need to go back to only using red, green and blue! Have you ever experienced anything like that in your life? The real reason people desire others to be consistent is that it makes them controllable and easily put in a box, all nicely labeled and forgotten. Most people function on autopilot so consistency in others allows them to not have to be present and deal with what is. Consistency also embraces the idea that a mature person has a "stable self", in other words, a mature person is one who has stopped growing and changing. Doesn't that sound a bit like death? Can you imagine yourself not growing and changing? Consistency might be something to appreciate in our computers and vacuum cleaners, but it has little to nothing to do with anyone who's actually living. Would you be willing to add more inconsistency to your life?

6. Your thoughts, feelings and emotions are significant.

Have you ever been asked: How do you FEEL about this? As if that were an indicator of something truly important? Did you learn to make your thoughts, feelings and emotions important clues as to the kind of person you were and what mattered to you? Did you ever "feel" there was something wrong with you because you didn't understand the trauma/drama or grief that so many people seemed to embrace? What if all of your thoughts feelings and emotions were more like the clouds in the sky? What if they just floated through you, (they really belonged to someone else), and you just noticed them the way you might notice a change in the weather? When we identify with our thoughts, feelings and emotions, we set ourselves up for being hurt, being blamed, blaming others, demanding and giving countless reasons and justifications, analyzing everything to death and generally not being present. How fun is that? Not only do thoughts, feelings and emotions keep us from being present, they actually cut off our awareness which makes it very difficult to know and be present with what actually is.

Thoughts, feelings and emotions are actually the lower harmonics of perceiving, knowing and being. When we are willing to function from perceiving, knowing and being, we can be present for all that the universe would like to gift to us!

7. You should always keep score.

That means that anytime anyone gives you something, say a present worth \$40.00, you need to give them a gift of equal equivalency. And anytime someone does something nice for you, you need to return the favor. Does this sound familiar to you? Did you get the typical family lectures about “as you are given so you should give?” This is a lot of score keeping, and, it also runs to the negative side of thing, though this gets a little more complicated. Say that someone does something mean to you. You can either justify doing something mean back, or you can “take the high road”, which means not doing something mean back, except holding yourself out as being totally superior to them, since you refused to “stoop as low” as they went. One of the things the “score” system sets up is you or me as the effect of everyone and everything else. If you require yourself to keep score, then you are always in the reaction mode, never in the create mode. Can you see how this erodes your freedom of choice? What if you made the choice to not keep score? What if you could just receive a gift from another and know that your receiving, in and of itself, was also a gift? This is what Access Consciousness calls the simultaneity of gifting and receiving. There is no obligation, no tit for tat, only an acknowledgment of the greatness of each person and the moment. Not reciprocating can also apply to instances when someone judges you harshly or is in some other way mean. What if you just acknowledged it with something like: “Wow, that person is really mean”, didn’t take it personally, and just went about your business? How much ease could that contribute to your life and living?

8. You are always at the effect of others and circumstances.

It can be so tempting to act as if everything “just happens” to us. Others are always to blame! This seems like a good idea, because it implies that the “bad” things that happen to us are not our fault and certainly not our creation! The good news, or bad news, depending on your point of view, is that this is not true. We do create our lives through our choices and our questions and what energies we choose to be. Generally, if something “bad happens”, it’s an indication that we have willingly cut off our awareness of what actually is. Have you ever operated from a belief that wasn’t true, and wondered why things did not work out? Most of us have. It’s natural to desire to believe that a “friend” is honest or has our back, when in fact, if we had been willing we be aware, we might have spared ourselves the pain of being blindsided. The great thing about being willing to acknowledge that we are the creators of our lives, is that it takes us out of the victim role and puts us in charge. While it may seem more comforting to believe that we are not responsible for life’s occurrences, this leaves us like a beach ball bounding on the waves of a storm – a rather pathetic sight! How much better to know that you can create the life you desire, that you do not have to be the victim of circumstances?

This concept is a helpful one to remember when someone is mean or judgmental of you. It's so easy to go into: "They hurt my feelings!", but is that actually true? What if you choose to respond, if even just to yourself, with "Wow, that person's mean! I know it's about who they are and really has nothing to do with me!" How much more freeing could it be to choose how you respond, rather than go into predictable automatic responses?

Being willing to acknowledge that we create our lives gives us all the ability and opportunity to begin to actually create the life we desire, and the knowledge that we never have to wallow in the victim role again!

9. Your body is unconsciousness and an object that should be manipulated and made to do what you want it to do.

Our bodies are actually conscious beings with their own preferences and capacities. Have you ever felt like you were fighting with your body, almost as if it was another being? Well, you probably were! Most of us have been taught that the body is nothing more than a mechanical type object that the "experts" can tell us how to change it and get it to run the way we want it to, almost like a computer or a car. How well has that worked for you? If you're like most of us, not so well! The good news is that by becoming aware that your body is actually consciousness, you can begin to get to know it, make friends with it, and begin a much more cooperative relationship where your body doesn't feel like such an alien! YOU actually can know more about your body, what's going on with it, and what it requires than any expert can. Experts do "one size fits all", and no two bodies are actually the same. That doesn't mean that you don't consult experts, but that you always trust what you know to be true first and foremost. So how do you begin a relationship with your body? First of all, since you have probably been ignoring its messages for years, don't be surprised if it takes a little while. If you had treated your dog or cat the way you, if you're like most of us, have treated your body, would it be happy to see you or would it likely run away? A great way to start is to ask it questions. What's going on with you? Are you hungry? Tired? Would you like something to drink? Would you like to do some kind of movement? Walking? Dance? After asking the questions, allow yourself to become aware of the energy that's brought up. When we ask our bodies questions, we generally don't get the kind of answer that you might get from another person. Often the response is more subtle, but if you are willing to be more aware, your body will speak volumes to you. Some people find that muscle testing works well for communicating with their bodies. There are a number of techniques, and if that works for you, that's wonderful!

Once we are more in touch with our bodies, they are generally happy to let us know what's going on; however, if we don't listen, the body will escalate its attempts to let us know that it has information to impart, and it can feel like being hit on the head with a hammer! When you do notice a "pain" or an intensity with your body, it's helpful to ask: "Body, what awareness are you trying to give me here?" This can save a lot of trouble down the line. The more you are willing to listen to your body, the more it will let

you know what it requires and desires, and the easier life becomes! How much more ease and fun could you have in your life if your body became your best friend? After all, it's with you all the time!

10. Most things in life are not changeable.

What if you knew you could change anything about yourself and your life? Would that be exhilarating? Scary? Challenging? Most of us have been taught that we "are who we are", that we have some kind of fundamental and solid nature or self that can be tweaked a bit, but not actually changed. What if that wasn't true? Wow! What would you like to change about yourself? The truth is, most of what we have decided is unchangeable about us is actually the result of decisions, judgments and conclusions we have made about ourselves or taken on from other people. Get rid of the decisions, judgments and conclusion, and almost everything can change! For example, maybe you were told as a child that you were the pretty one, (or handsome one), and your sister or your brother was the "smart" one. Because our points of view create our realities, (one of many useful tools from Access Consciousness), you may have spent your life acting as though you weren't smart! Consider this another way. If you tell a child over and over again that they are stupid, they will begin to believe it, and create events that prove it. If you really believe that you are stupid, can you ever do well in school? As we grow up, we are defined over and over again by our families, our educational institutions, or religions, our governments and our cultures. "You are such and such, but you are not such and such". Would you be willing to examine all of the definitions you have of yourself and ask yourself if you would like to change them? How much freedom could you have if you were willing to destroy and uncreate all of the decisions, judgments and conclusions you have about who your are and who you are not? What if you could be good with numbers, or be organized, or do well financially, or not be shy?

One reason others desire to define us is that it makes their life easier. If we can be put in a box, then others can relate to us on automatic pilot and they don't have to be present with us. Have you ever had the experience of going home (to your parent's house) as an adult and being treated and/or reverting to childhood patterns and roles? That's an example of stepping back into an old "box" of who you are.

Another lie that most of us are told about what can and cannot change, is that we can and should try to change others. Many women, and occasionally men, take on partners as fixer uppers or projects. Have you noticed how this rarely works? How the "project" generally becomes irritated and eventually leaves? Making someone into a project can only be done from a position of superiority, which adds nothing to a relationship. The crazy thing is, that if the person desiring the other to change, would change themselves, say by having less judgment and fixed points of view, and more allowance, The other person might actually change? How does that work? Here's a bit of information you may

not have. When we come from a space of no judgment and total allowance of another it actually gives them the space to change, to be greater, to blossom. All judgment, in any of its many forms, actually shuts down this process. Gandhi said: "Be the change you wish to see in the world". It's amazing, but by changing ourselves we actually create a space where others can choose to change with ease.

Changing ourselves is part of creating ourselves. We are not set in stone. Who would you like to be? What would you like to create? What would make that possible? The reality functions on solutions and answers. If you would like to lose weight, go on this diet. If you would like to "be a better person", (notice the judgment here), follow this self-help plan. Real change comes not from applying another's solution, but rather from question, choice, possibilities and contribution. A great question to begin with is: What can I be or do different? This can be applied to any area of your life. What can I be or do different about money, my relationship, my body, etc. Asking this question, and then being willing to wait for whatever awarenesses show up, can take you out of your current paradigm with its limited menu of answers and into something totally different.

You can make changes, in fact you can change pretty much anything about yourself that you would like to change! The trick is to first destroy and uncreate any decisions, judgments, and conclusions you have about yourself in a particular area, then ask open ended questions like: What's possible here beyond anything I ever thought possible?, and what energy, space and consciousness can I be that would change _____ with total ease? It's helpful to remember that the only thing/one you can actually change is yourself. But by changing YOU, you actually create a space where others can change too! How does it get any better than that?

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