

# Wake Up, You're Already There<sup>1</sup>

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*(From Fixation to Freedom)*

## My Journey

I have been exploring ways to get free of fixation since *before* I knew about fixation. I called it awakening or enlightenment and approached it through meditation, spiritual teachers and psychology.

I spent over 30 years trying every which way to shake the ego pattern. I tried becoming very aware of the patterning, accepting it, detaching from it, attacking it, surrendering to it, resolving it, and satisfying it – you name it. *None of it really worked.* I even tried accepting that there is nothing I can do.

Through this search there have been periods of great peace and bliss, intermixed with periods of great suffering.

In the last year I found myself tied in one of the tightest knots of fixation I can remember. Several extremely painful issues – to which I was most attached – came up at once. This forced me, once again, to try everything I knew to relieve the pressure.

Somehow, I found myself looking directly into the face of my ego structure or fixation; into the issues I have tried to resolve my whole life. I found myself realizing that this was the story of my life; that I was *wired* to go through this life with this story.

This was the most painful truth for me. Certainly, the thought of dying is terrifying; but dying *without* finding freedom from these issues is even more unbearable.

I couldn't think of anything else to do but surrender *completely* into the heart of this pattern, give up, let go, and just die into it. This was devastating at first; but as I let go, deeper and deeper, I *finally* fell through.

The *ego* that was looking for relief, the *separate identity* that wanted to be free, dissolved with the pattern. There were some interesting phenomena that don't happen for everyone, or need to.

*I had the odd sensation that the top of my head had blown off. There was just an open airy spaciousness with no physical structure containing it. I was flooded with energy, and the thoughts in my mind to a large extent stopped and slowed down.* After all this, I felt like I was in shock or felt emotionally flat.

After a few days I realized that I was not in shock or flat. I felt quite alive; it was just that the fixation was gone.

I couldn't find the issues that had been so devastatingly disturbing; the story was gone. It seemed to have never been true. My perception of the whole world and myself was transformed. I was in a completely different world; where the world of fixation didn't exist; where there were fewer thoughts, more radiance, energy, and a lightness of being. Yet, everything about my life was exactly the same.

*With this release several realizations that I had known before became clear on a deeper level.*

## Revelations and Realizations from Here

*There is nothing gained when we awaken, there is actually something missing, something is lost. The story and all the issues that go with that story were removed. What was left felt lighter, more buoyant, radiant, etc – this was really just the absence of the density of the fixation.*

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*You cannot solve a problem on the level of the problem, you must go beyond the problem, think outside the box. This is a dilemma when it comes to fixation, because everything we do is from fixation. I inadvertently found a way out when I fell through the middle of the pattern. When I came out the other side and saw that the issue didn't exist there, I understood more directly what going beyond fixation meant.*

*I could see that my whole world that revolved around my fixation truly was not real; it was an illusion or a dream. It was as much a dream as the ones that occur in sleep. It dissolved when I woke up from it, or fell through it.*

*I also understood in a very different way that the ego doesn't get anything when we wake up. It is not finally satisfied. The ego never gets to finally get what it has always desired; it doesn't even get to enjoy being free of its desire. The truest need of each human being is to be free, to wake up, and to know the truth.*

*We can say this in all sorts of ways. Life gives us all exactly what we need to wake up and know the truth. What we really need is not usually the same as what the ego thinks it needs or actually wants.*

*Since then, I have grabbed it back many times, and let it go again more and more easily.*

The story of my fixation, Two, is that of never getting its needs met. When I first noticed that the story was gone, there was the ludicrous fear that I could never get what I wanted if I remained free of the wanting. *Of course, this was another way for the ego to pout about not getting what it wants.*

When I looked at this *head on*, I couldn't help but laugh. So I have been moving back and forth between freedom, openness, and contracted attachment – with moments of laughter in between.

### **Assessment & Experimentation**

*So it occurred to me that this is probably true for others. Maybe humans are programmed to go through life living out a particular ego pattern or story, and when we get tired of it we can finally surrender to it and find freedom.*

However, it may also be true that we have to be *absolutely* done with wanting any more from the story. If there is any holding out, holding back, looking for guarantees, or early payment; there *won't* be a total surrender. *This readiness for surrender may not be discernable from the outside.*

*I am presenting a radical idea and approach to freedom. I believe that the story of fixation, the story of ego identity, is actually true – on the level of fixation. The story or the world in which fixation lives, the everyday un-awakened state of being in which we all reside until we wake up, is true, on that level.*

Therefore there is *nothing wrong* with it; it is *not* a mistake or error. *It is just not the whole truth.* There is a world beyond the world of fixation where that story does *not* exist. Where there is a much, *bigger truth.*

*So, if the story of fixation is true on the level of fixation is there a way to accept and surrender without getting lost and identified?*

There seems to be a point we all get to when we have done enough spiritual and/or psychological work; where we realized that the work we have done has failed.

We are still living within the story of our ego. It may have loosened, become less painful, but *it is still doing its dance.* At this moment there may be a feeling of hopelessness, exhaustion, devastation, but also there may be a deeper surrender.

*The Enneagram is a particularly good tool for looking at ego patterns. Each pattern has a basic story. We can find this story with other tools, but it is the same story.*

*Most of us spend our whole life either trying to get rid of the story, and/or striving to live our story in the best possible way.*

No matter what we do we are looking through the lens of our fixation, trying to fix the fixation with the fixation. What seems to be shockingly true is that *on the level of fixation or ego* the story of fixation is true.

*Only when we leave that dimension and go to a more expanded dimension is it an illusion.* Many of us, including myself, have taught that the story of fixation is a lie, an illusion.

This has led us to discard the story, or deny it, or try to prove that it is wrong. All of the methods that successfully get rid of the story in these ways act only as Band-Aids or temporary fixes.

*The story always comes back. It always comes back until we stop and look it directly in the face, and acknowledge its truth, its reality.*

We have to find a way to get beyond the ego for anything to shift. It may also be true that we have to get really sick of the whole process before we are ready to look at it head on. That we have to finally realize that there is no way out. We have to get to the place where we *no longer want* what the story is preventing us from attaining.

In my case as a Two there was always the hope that I would get my needs met. So, to surrender into the reality of the truth of that story can feel like death. I had to surrender to life facing the truth that I would *never* get my needs met.

Those of us who have spent nearly our entire adult lives looking for freedom or enlightenment have unconsciously or sometimes consciously believed that: if we surrendered, really let go, if we were willing to die for freedom, we would *finally get what we always wanted*. The story of fixation would finally be resolved. For me that would mean my needs would finally be met.

*When the core of the ego story dissolves, the central theme of being is gone.* It is like the center of identity has been removed. There is nothing for the fixation or ego to form around. There is no sense of resolution, of the issues, or the painful experience. It is just that the issues *no longer exist*. The basic core question no longer makes sense.

When we look at each fixation and subtype we see some basic story themes. *I began to wonder if people could find a way to surrender into the core belief that keeps them stuck, fixated, entranced, could they also find themselves on the other side of the fixation.*

There is a core belief that each fixation must surrender to, fall into, without resistance, without wanting to get rid of it, or release it, in order to rise above the fixation. *We cannot be released from the hold of the fixation by working on the level of the fixation.*

**To be beyond fixation is more than:**

- the One being looser, more spontaneous, not feeling responsible to fix what is wrong
- the Two knowing what their needs are and being direct in their expression
- the Three not having to be productive and being connected to their emotion
- the Four not being identified with their tragic story and feeling joyous
- the Five being involved in life and not feeling overwhelmed
- the Six having a quiet mind and trusting that they will be supported
- the Seven being able to be still and know that they have what they need
- the Eight not blaming and expressing innocence
- the Nine being engaged and willing to show up

These are all looser, clearer expression of fixation, but these expressions are not free or awakened. *Freedom is the absence of something; it is less of something, not more.* It is not something that the ego attains.

### **Revelations Shared: Testing & Validating**

The idea for a workshop called *Autobiographical Interviews* came up while I was in the mist of dealing with my personal issues and questioning my fixation.

During an Enneagram for Therapists monthly meeting, Karin Kratina (Nutritionist), one of the participants, made the suggestion that we invite one person from each fixation to the meeting and have the opportunity to ask questions about their lives. This developed into a workshop which is now available in DVD format.

While I was putting the questions together for each interview a question came up around the *core beliefs for each fixation*. This is the question that came to me when I was at the end of my rope.

*During this workshop there was one person from each fixation interviewed. They were asked a series of questions designed to help them tell their life stories. They were all given the core question ahead of time and were asked to work with it until the workshop, and then share with the group what effect it had.*

I picked people who are older and who had done a lot of work on themselves. When they talked about their *earlier lives* you could hear a *more fixated* expression of their pattern. However, as they told the story of their life you could hear the *evolution of their patterns* or fixations.

The people I selected had all *popped* out of fixation *from time to time*, and were able to share these moments of freedom as well as the frustrations of being trapped in their story or pattern.

Before, during, and after the workshop I *got feedback* from the interviewees about how the core belief question worked or didn't work for them. Many of them *fine tuned* their core belief and noted that as they fell through the belief deepened and deepened and the fixation *continued to unravel*.

*This process of finding your core belief is an alive and dynamic process.* The story of the fixation can guide you into an ever deepening self discovery. The bottom line is to find your *deepest attachment*, whatever it is, and surrender to that as the truth. By deepest attachment I mean that which would feel like death if you had to live life without it.

For instance, one person with the Six fixation worked with the question of trust and found that what was deeper was not trusting or believing that she was or could be loved.

When she surrendered to the belief described below she was brought to a deep place of openness, but she discovered that even deeper was the fear that she would never reach enlightenment. Another person with the Six fixation fine tuned loved, to "cared for." You can see the themes of trust, and self doubt inherent in the question of being loved or cared for, but to just surrender into trust and doubt was *not personal enough* to get to the core of the story.

Another example of the fine tuning of the core belief question can be seen when a person with the One fixation tried to work with the core belief as it appears below. The question itself brought about a contraction; however, when she fine tuned the core belief to include "not being loveable and the fear of being all alone in the world," she was able to let go more successfully.

*The process of surrender is also an alive, dynamic process.* There is no set formula of how this is done. Once you have found your belief or attachment, ask yourself if this is *something you could live without*.

The deepest attachments seem to be an intrinsic part of life itself – which feels like; *no one could live without this*. It seems that; of course, you must have someone who loves you, or you must have enough money to pay your bills, or you must be able to trust the people you love. When you don't have a particular attachment you can see that it is *not* actually a necessity.

## Guided Processing

*So, once you are face to face with this belief, feel it with your whole being, let your attention gently shift from thinking it to feeling it emotionally and energetically. Let it consume you, devour you, fall into it as if it is really happening right now.*

*If you really surrender, you will experience it as truly happening right now. There will be a life review to show you how this theme has been the underpinning of your whole life, how you have been struggling with this in one form or another forever. You will see that it has been the story of your life and that nothing you have done has ever brought you relief. Feel this through your whole body every cell, and let go. Be curious about what happens next.*

If the process doesn't happen quite like this, allow it to unfold in the way it wants to. Follow it, discover it. *You can't be wrong.* There are *no true answers* at the end. There is a not knowing, a mystery at the end. The end is just this moment as it is, so really *there is no end.*

*Below are the possible core beliefs for each fixation. As you work with them, let them refine so that they work for you in the deepest possible way.*

These questions may sound negative, or brutal. Our first reaction to them may be, "why would anyone want to accept this belief about their self?" They are *anti-affirmations*; and therefore, have the power to disassemble the ego structure and bring us to freedom.

### Story for the One Fixation:

*What happens when you surrender to the belief that you are inadequate; that you cannot prevent things from going wrong, that you cannot control yourself or the world? If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist. Where the world is fine & nothing needs to be fixed.*

A person with the One fixation described moments of freedom from fixation during a time when she was living in Germany. One day she was on the bus and she realized that only the moment mattered; another time she was so filled with love for everyone it was overwhelming; and recently when facing death during an illness from which she did recover, all her anxiety dissolved.

When she worked with the question above, she realized that her deepest fear was of not being loved or being worthy of love. So she has been working with this belief.

After the interview workshop she asked me to add the following to her description of being free of fixation.

"I feel that there is no time limit no anxiety – everything will be done in due time. I feel the connectivity of the universe, which I am part of. I feel that I am part of the whole, and the universe does not stay in action for the benefit of me or to cause harm – there is a much bigger purpose to sustain life. I feel the synchronicity of events as though one event prepares for the next."

### Story for the Two Fixation:

*What happens when you surrender to the belief that you will never get your needs met; that you cannot manipulate your world to get your needs met or to give you what you want?*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist. Where your needs are already getting met.*

As I described at the beginning of the article, a lot went into being able to surrender.

Really, I felt like I was backed into a corner, I had no where else to go. When the fixation dropped out, when the center of my identity was removed, what remained was – for a time – overwhelmingly energetic and alive.

I was connected to all of life; the top of my head was blown away; the energy of all of what is filled my being. This has settled down, even though my perception of myself and the world is totally transformed.

#### **Story for the Three Fixation:**

*What happens when you surrender to the belief that you don't matter, you are not important, and you are nobody? There is nothing you can do to matter; you cannot pretend to be someone to matter.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist – where your value is inherent.*

The person with the Three fixation gave a clear description of freedom when she described her moment of letting go, which for her was surrendering into anxiety. She found that nothing mattered, all is love, and time stood still. When she worked with the above question her experience was of finally stopping, and relaxing into peace.

She was expecting to feel a cauldron of fear and so missed seeing that peace and letting go were aspects of freedom as she approaches the release from fixation.

#### **Story for the Four Fixation:**

*What happens when you surrender to the belief that you are ordinary, your flaws are ordinary, your tragedy is ordinary; and therefore, you are not lovable? You cannot control your world to get love.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist – where there is loving & you know you are loved.*

A man with the Four fixation, when asked to describe what his response to surrendering into the above belief was, began laughing and said it collapsed into absurdity.

In that moment he was free. His laughter was so clearly free of fixated ego. Soon after, he began to talk about being a “real” person. This for him is deeper than authentic, which is how his fixation resurrects itself, certainly looser, and less entranced.

#### **Story for the Five Fixation:**

*What happens when you surrender to the belief that you are too fragile for the world, the world is too overwhelming for you? The thoughts in your mind cannot protect you from how overwhelming the world is.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist – where you can deal with any power in the world.*

When a person with the Five fixation was asked about the above question he began to explain nonattachment, which for him was about letting go of defenses and being willing to be vulnerable. His description is certainly approaching the release of fixation.

#### **Story for the Six Fixation:**

*What would happen if you surrender to the belief that you are unsupported and alone? You cannot believe that anyone would care for you, and no one can prove that they can be relied upon. You cannot control anything with your mind.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist – where you don't have to protect yourself & you can trust.*

When a woman with the Six fixation worked with the above question she found herself totally free. The issue of trust or being loved or supported didn't exist. She experienced a continuity which to her felt like her true nature was never born and would never die.

Since then, her identity resurrected itself and she became afraid that she didn't know who she really was. She has been working with this belief, and has now let go even deeper – where the question – who she is doesn't exist.

### **Story for the Seven Fixation:**

*What would happen if you surrender to the belief that you will always miss out, that you will never get enough? You cannot control life to get what you want.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist. Where you can relax into the flow of life, where there is no missing out.*

When talking about this question with a person with the Seven fixation he differentiated between moments of freedom from fixation and true transcendence. For him true transcendence is free of all concepts, where being is all there is.

### **Story for the Eight Fixation:**

*What would happen if you surrender to the belief that you are weak, that you do not have the power to fix what is wrong? You cannot control yourself and life with your strength.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist. Where there is nothing wrong & you can stop watching & relax.*

A person with the Eight fixation, in describing being free from fixation, reminisced about walking through the town of Battleberg after having done some energy work, when he felt like Buddha. He felt genuinely nice, and recognized that as being truly powerful. He felt clean and open and OK with being “whatever,” and everyone was OK being “whatever”. This is such a wonderful and simple description of being free, which includes the recognition that everyone else is free as well.

### **Story for the Nine Fixation:**

*What would happen if you surrender to the belief that you are inferior, that being nice will not make you good or deserve to exist? You cannot avoid the reality of this awful feeling by not engaging life.*

*If you can surrender to this belief you will find yourself beyond the fixation where this issue doesn't exist. Where your existence is an essential part of life & you can be as you are.*

When a woman with the Nine fixation began to work with the last question she described a feeling of lightness; of each molecule breathing; of feeling electrically alive; and that there was no time, and openness. This is another clear description of aspects of being free of fixation.

### **Conclusion**

Mostly in this article I wanted to share that there is a way out of the fixated story. We may *always* hold the energy of our Enneatype, people who know the Enneagram may always recognize us as having our particular fixation. But there truly is a way to be free of the limited separate identity.

Ultimately what I am trying to describe cannot be described in words, and cannot be understood by our minds.

*So one way to know if we are approaching freedom is when there is not any one thing we believe to be true, except maybe that we really don't know, and that who we are, and how the world works is a mystery.*

For more about these DVDs:

<http://www.enneagramofawakening.com/DVD-Intro.html> [lissafriedman@aol.com](mailto:lissafriedman@aol.com)