



*“Let the world know you as you are, not as you think you should be,
because sooner or later, if you are posing, you will forget the pose,
and then where are you?”*

- Fanny Brice

First Things First

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE that something brought you to this book. Whether prompts from self, soul, or some other source, divine or otherwise, something brought you and I together. From my perspective, this is no coincidence, as I believe that your story and my story are the same. That is, I believe the force that inspired me to write this book is the same force that inspired you to seek this book.

In this first chapter, we determine ‘where you are’ – mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. We do this so as to resolve an even more important inquiry – ‘where you want to be’? Because this is a book of truths, let me share an important truth with you. Through observing self and others, I have learned that when soul cannot wait any longer, that is, when the desire of soul to operate on the surface of life becomes too strong, and when self will no longer tolerate current condition, we

intervene. To be precise, self intervenes on behalf of soul. Why do we intervene? We intervene because we must. Not satisfied to operate in darkness, soul rises. Not wanting to live a diminished life, to live in quiet desperation, self acts (see Figure 1.1).

Now, because so few people stop their life to assess their life, because the act of descending within to alter without is so rare, we begin by discussing such intervention.

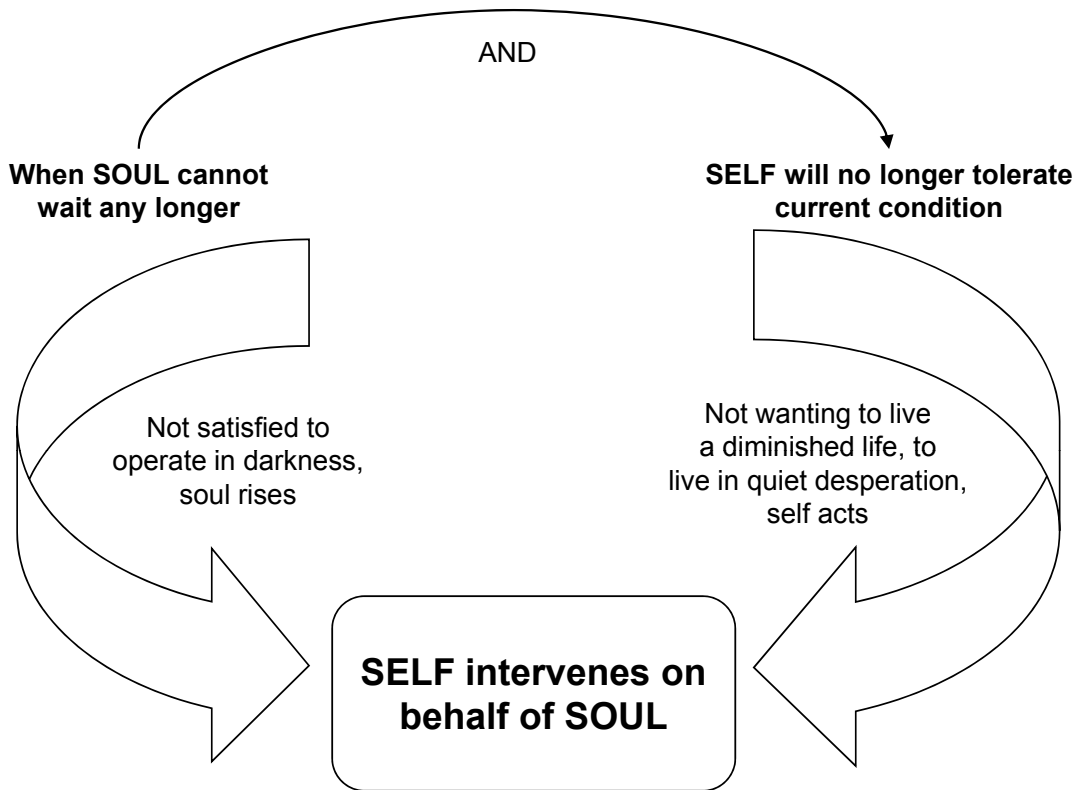


Figure 1.1

The Intervention

Today, few people deliberately ‘stop their life’ long enough to assess their life; that is, few people intervene. We are so busy ‘living life’ that we never pause to ‘work on’ our life. Part of the reason for this is that we were never educated in such matters. At no point did we learn the need for, or how to, stop one’s life with the intent of improving one’s life. What is more tragic is that even with such education, contemporary living offers few ‘breaks’, little reprieve, *to* stop one’s life as the pressures, stresses, workload of life continue to escalate; each of us reduced to *rat-in-cage*. This is not your story, however, as you did pause; you did intervene on behalf of soul. Thus, we continue this intervention by first asking these questions of self:

- How often do you stop your life to assess your life?
- How much time do you spend weekly, monthly, annually asking questions of self, to understand self, to transform self?
- Can you articulate the source of your frustrations with self, life?

How favorably did you respond? If you are like most people, not very well. Most people do not allocate time weekly, monthly, annually to assess their life with the intention of improving their life. That is where this book gains relevance. This book represents ‘pause’ in your life, to assess your life, *to hear what soul has to say*. It is an opportunity for you to step back, image your life from 100 ft view, and ask: “Am I getting what I want in life and from life at this point in my life?” As the reader, what you make of the ‘pause’ is up to you. Something brought you to this book. The question is whether you have resolve enough to rise up, dig in, and realize the emerging you. Do not be mistaken: what brought you to this book, to this point, is **loss**; feelings of wanting more, desiring more, living more. You have intervened on behalf of soul. Do not deny the emerging you from seeing light of day. Do not dismiss the opportunity before you. A new life awaits you. A new story is about to be written and **you** are the author. Thus, if committed to the effort, let us continue by assessing your-self.

Assessing Self

So, what does it mean to assess something? To assess means to evaluate, to know direction, or to estimate the quality of something. Therefore, to assess self, means to evaluate where one is at; to know direction of one's life. It also means to estimate or measure the quality of one's life. To 'know' such things is a prerequisite to reengineer one's life. Only by knowing 'where we are' can we know 'what to do' to get 'where we want to go'. Now, to assess one-self is to assess [The Self System]. What this entails is assessing not only self, but also self's interactions with soul, work, family, and nature. By doing this, we gain deeper awareness of *where we are* relative to *where we want to be*. At first, we gain a 1st order awareness from evaluating our interactions between self and soul and this provides context, gives rise to a 2nd order awareness from evaluating our interactions between self and work, self and family, and self and nature (see Figure 1.2). It is from evaluating our interactions that we learn of our interactions. Moreover, from evaluating our interactions we become aware of those areas of our life that are problematic, misaligned, *demand greatest attention*.

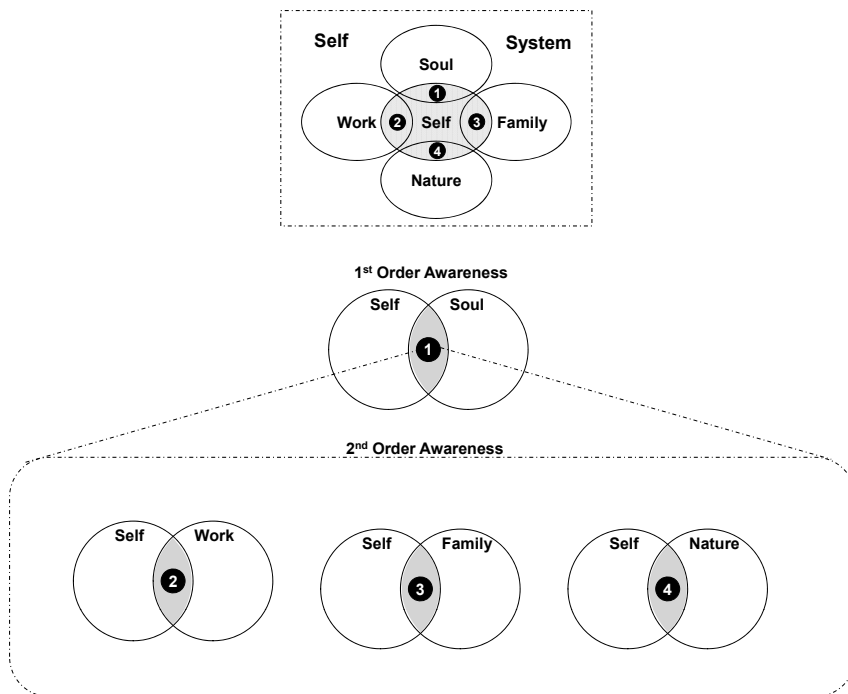


Figure 1.2

It is because few people take time to know self, to discover soul and the universe about them, that they are in the condition they are in; suffer ill condition. Consequently, our goal is to overcome poverty of soul, to rise above ill condition by knowing one-self, by discovering things about one-self; *from knowing soul*. With this as our context, we begin.

To assess your-self, it requires examining things both external and internal. That is, it requires examining that which is visible, on the surface of life, and that which is invisible, your world within, knowing that both realms represent the whole you (see Figure 1.3). To do this, we ask questions of self and then listen for the answer. We ask questions ranging from soul, to career, to health, to your relationship with nature.

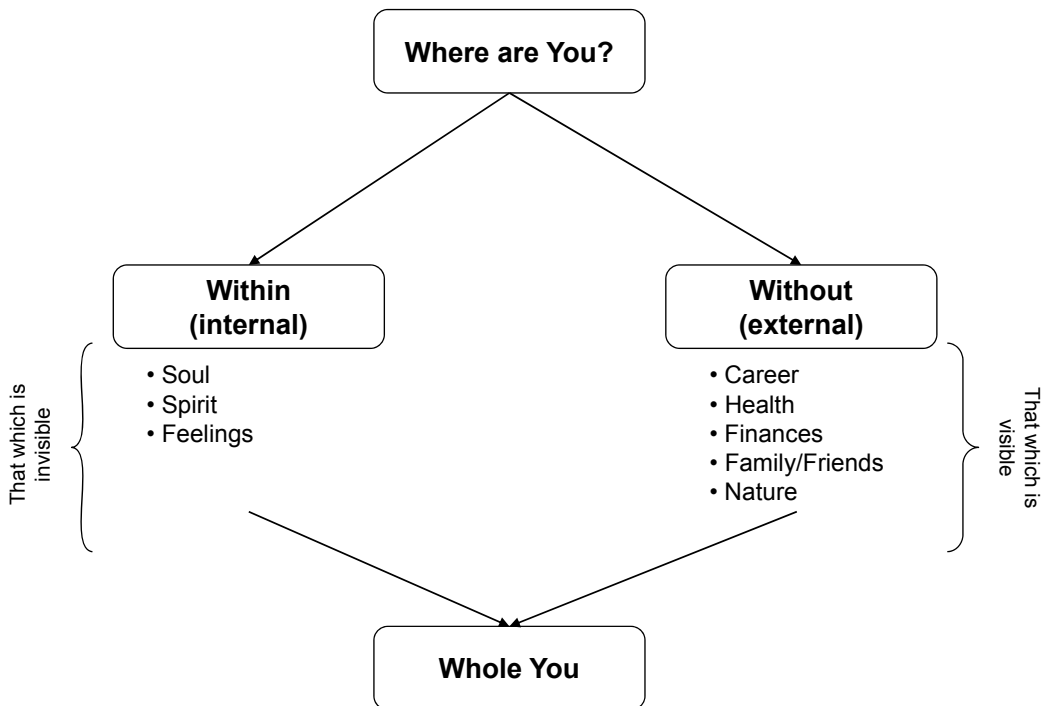


Figure 1.3

Now, as this chapter is about self-exploration, self-discovery, self-assessment, it is vital that you answer all questions honestly. You gain nothing from embellishing your answers, skirting reality, *as soul knows the truth*. Therefore, be truthful with your inquiries and, as the saying goes, the truth will set you free.

We approach by assessing that which lies within; almighty soul. To know soul means to know desires of soul but it also means to know condition of soul. In Chapter 3, we explore desires of soul as knowing one's inner soul goals represent the foundation of personal strategy, so, for now, we assess condition of soul.

Determine Inner Condition

To determine inner condition, we ask these questions of self:

*Note: Allow 30 minutes to consider these questions. **Listen** for the answers.*

Questions of Soul:

- What is the state of your soul?
- When alone, what does soul say?
- Are you doing what you want in life?
- Are you getting what you want from life?
- Is life meaningful, purposeful?
- Are you living an authentic life?
- Do you desire a new life story?
- Are you living as soul would live?

< Pause. >

What did you hear? What did soul have to say? For questions where you answered 'No', how do you know such condition exists? What are the signs? Depending on how you answered these questions, in addition to those above, indicates where are you.

Chapter 1—Where are You?

Questions of Spirit:

- What is the condition of your spirit?
- Is your spirit alive or sleeping somewhere cold?
- Are you living an inspired existence?
- Is life fragrant, vibrant, full of color?

< Pause. >

What did you hear? What did soul have to say? For questions where you answered ‘No’, how do you know such condition exists? What are the signs? Depending on how you answered these questions, in addition to those above, indicates where are you.

Questions of Feeling:

- What do you feel inside?
- How do you feel about life, living?
- Do you feel alive?
- Are you happy with where you are personally, professionally, financially?
- Are you happy with your current life story?
- Do you feel inner conflict between *where* you are and *where* you want to be?
- Do you feel inner conflict between *who* you are and *who* you want to be?
- Are you free?

< Pause. >

What did you hear? What did soul have to say? For questions where you answered ‘No’, how do you know such condition exists? What are the signs? Depending on how you answered these questions, in addition to those above, indicates where are you.

The questions asked of you thus far reveal inner condition – where you are on the inside of life. Now we assess outer condition – where you are on the surface of life (e.g. career, family, finances, health, relationship with nature).

Determine Outer Condition

To determine outer condition, we ask these questions of self:

*Note: Allow 30 minutes to consider these questions. **Listen** for the answers.*

- Are you working in the right profession/role? If not, how do you know? What are the signs?
- Are you with the right life partner? If not, how do you know? What are the signs?
- Are you living in the right location? If not, how do you know? What are the signs?

< Pause. >

What did you hear? What did soul have to say? If you answered ‘No’ to any of the questions above, disconnectedness is with you, debilitating you, diminishing all that is good in life. When misalignment exists between what we are doing relative to what we want to do, we suffer. Similarly, when misalignment exists between who we are relative to whom we are with, we suffer. Lastly, when misalignment exists between where we are relative to where we long to be, we suffer. Perhaps, in considering the questions above, you were not sure how to answer such questions. If so, consider the ‘signs of suffering’ in Figure 1.4 as indication of where are you.

Signs of Suffering

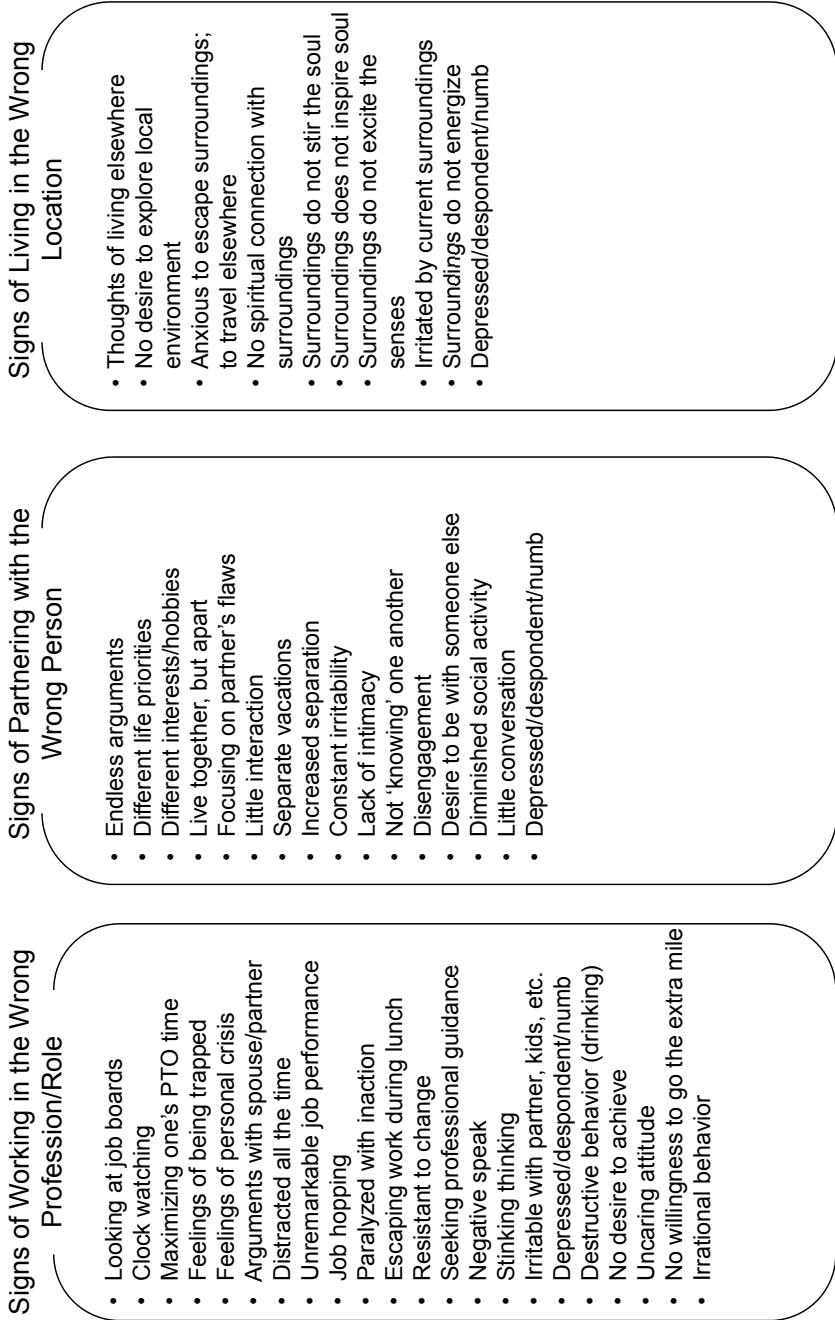


Figure 1.4

The stress, pain, and heartache that results from personal misalignment affects our health, finances, and relations with others (including nature). Consequently, we ask these questions of self:

*Note: Allow 30 minutes to consider these questions. **Listen** for the answers.*

- How is personal misalignment affecting your health?
- How is personal misalignment affecting your finances?
- How is personal misalignment affecting your relations with family?
- How is personal misalignment affecting your view of life; your relation with nature?

How you answer these questions also reveals where you are. When assessing self, it is important we ask questions about that which lies within and that which lies without, as external affects internal and vice versa. Said differently, where we are on the outside of life (self) affects where we are on the inside of life (soul); cycle repeating. Figure 1.5 illustrates this linkage, dependency between self and soul, between outer and inner.

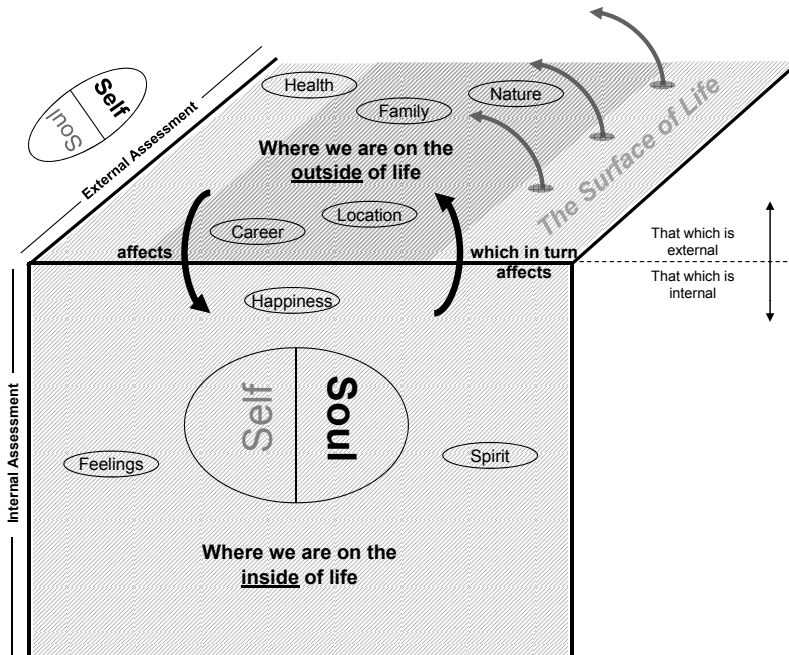


Figure 1.5

What Figure 1.5 indicates is that, if soul is suffering, the only way to change condition, resolve the suffering, is to change how we operate on the surface of life. As such, beginning in Chapter 3, and for the balance of this book, we discuss how to transform outer by designing, implementing, and managing a personal strategy for living.

Summary

In this chapter, we asked many questions of self. I hope that by asking/answering such questions, you were able to determine ‘where you are’. Asking questions of self helps find self, measure self, assess self. Now, although the questions asked of you are important, of value, in assessing self, what is more important, of greater value, is the questions **you** ask self. When lying in bed, when driving home, when alone, what questions do you ask self? What does soul tell you then? How you answer these questions also reveals where are you. Know this: *our current life story is the way it is not so much because of what we know (about self and soul), but what we do not know*. Because so few people stop their life, to know where they *are* in life, few people can articulate their source of discontent. And when one cannot articulate discontent, one cannot eliminate discontent. By understanding one’s internal and external structure, one can transform life in meaningful and effective ways. The insights we gain from interrogating self, from penetrating soul, from engaging in quiet conversation with soul, illuminate our path; indicate ‘where to go’.

Understanding ‘where one is’, is vital to transform one’s life; to reengineer one’s life; to ‘break free’. It is vital in that only by knowing (one’s) condition can we change condition. Before we do this, however, that is, before we reengineer self and life, we digress, momentarily, in a search for the truth.