

What is Enlightenment?

Deep Spiritual Practice for Western Culture

ISSUE 1



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The Enlightenment Intensive

During the Enlightenment Intensive you are asked to set aside all distractions and engage in a monastic lifestyle in order to free your energy and attention for the practice at hand. Your practice is to contemplate a question such as 'Who am I?' and communicate to a partner what has occurred. You choose a new partner for each 40-minute period.

Throughout the day you have breaks for walks, rest, meals, and lectures. Other questions you may work on are, "What am I?", "What is Life?", and "What is Another?" This journey of exploration, healing and awakening reveals that our deepest truths may be found within ourselves and through our honest interaction with others.

First developed in 1968, hundreds of thousands of people world-wide have participated in this honorable, heart-to-heart format for awakening to who we are, what life is and what others are.

What does it do for people?

"After the Enlightenment Intensive I felt full up for the first time in my life. I kept remembering the Biblical saying, "My cup runneth over" because that fit exactly how I felt. I'd never felt that before. I had always had a hollow, empty feeling that I tried to fill with relationships, cigarettes, food, anything, and for the first time I didn't feel the need to fill myself up with anything. I was full. And some part of that feeling has never gone away."

Partner Assisted Meditation

The Enlightenment Intensive work is done in dyad; meaning "the power of two." This adds the energy of another person to your meditation. Anyone who has had a Mastermind Group recognizes the power of adding the intention of others to your energy. In this process, adding the intention of your dyad partner helps the participant breakthrough in a way that they most likely could not on their own. In some Buddhist Monasteries they found that having meditators sit facing one another significantly increased the amount of breakthroughs they had. By adding modern communications techniques to the meditation, breakthroughs can happen in a weekend Intensive rather than 20 years of meditation.

More about Enlightenment Intensives

For Those Who want their Spiritual Growth Quick

If you're like most people, you live what you might call an "indirect" experience of yourself every day... It's that familiar skating over your real self. The public face you put on for your families. For your colleagues. Even for your lover. We all do it... We all want to get along, to make the people around us happy. But what happens over time is that you get so good at putting on your public face -- the politeness, the shields and defenses, the little white lies and accommodations -- that suddenly you can no longer tell the difference between your public face and your true self. And you lose touch, at the most profound levels, with who you really are. With what you are. With why you are alive and with what you truly want to experience during the precious little time you have on this Earth. You begin to feel dissociated, false and frustrated.

You're not alone. It's part of the process of being socialized. Your dissociated self seems to serve the group on one level, but the personal price can be very, very steep. It is the cost of feeling that you are living your life only half-lived. That you are loving only half-heartedly. That something in you has gone numb. And the worst part about this is that, inside, you KNOW that you can live with so much more energy and groundedness. That you can love more honestly, thoroughly. That you can live more awake, present, energetic and alive.

You know it. But maybe you just don't know how to reconnect with what is real.

The Enlightenment Intensive will give you five days of a simple practice that will allow you to peel away everything that is not authentically you, to drop away all your invisible barriers to enlightenment, and

perhaps, as many do, to experience a pure, direct realization of the deep Truth of who you are. The practice is startlingly and beautifully simple. You don't have to have any meditation experience. You don't have to "believe" anything or know anything beforehand. You could be a first-timer or an advanced master. This practice works with any philosophy, spiritual path or lack of spiritual path. It's that easy. And that profound. You only have to participate. And you will find yourself stepping into a vast, inner adventure.

At the Enlightenment Intensive, you will...

- Gain a new, stable foothold in your Highest Self and your highest priorities
- Experience the elation of living from your own truth, rather than the "truths" of your parents, partners or social circles.
- Find ecstatic release from the limiting traps and beliefs your ego-mind (fear) has constructed, thinking they are good for you (hint: they are not).
- Unburden your heart of its unneeded armor, and feel love pouring forth without limit.
- Learn to feel, know and speak your authentic self so that you will be seen, felt and loved for who you actually are!
- Experience divinity, infinity and profound unity with all that is.
- Open new gateways to love through profound acceptance of yourself and others.
- Accelerate your passion, purpose and awaken from whatever blocks have been holding you back.



Benefits of the Enlightenment Intensive

- You will naturally understand others and feel their depth, having mastered the process of authentic listening.
- You will naturally embody a new alertness, attentiveness, centeredness, and genuine undistracted compassion.
- You will inspire more trust of yourself in others.
- You will connect meaningfully with everyone you know and love and inspire them to connect from their most authentic core back with you.
- You will live with greater and vivid mental clarity and be able to recognize and dismiss all the false-self thoughts and habits that present themselves -- as they arise.
- You will exhibit peace and a buoyancy of character born of a new, natural and healthy detachment from "the small stuff" that used to seem so urgent.
- Your friendships and intimate loving will bond more deeply and irreversibly because they derive from who you really are.
- You will possess an unassailable spiritual practice of self-acceptance.
- You will feel at ease with yourself and with others as they are -- and communicate with a new honesty and fearlessness.
- You will naturally continue to evolve -- because you will be freed from all the baggage and limiting mind-habits and beliefs that have blocked you in the past.
- You will naturally know what is right -- for you. Your best, your highest path will become gently clear, and when it isn't, you will have the tools to awaken what is true and what is right for you -- anytime, anywhere.



Birth of the Enlightenment Intensive

People have been searching into their true nature for thousands of years some of them succeeding and leaving behind methods and teachings for those of us who come later.

But the Enlightenment Intensive is not simply an old system in a new package. It is inspired by known methods from the past, especially Rinzai Zen, but it also contains the new element of the dyad form of communication. How this method came into being reveals a lot about what the Enlightenment Intensive is, how it works and who the kind of people are who will invest themselves in the challenge of trying to directly experience the truth itself.

In early 1968, the conceptual kernel of what became the Enlightenment Intensive was born in an instant of insight to a man named Charles Berner. At the time, he and his wife were running a healing and growth center in Costa Mesa. They were offering classes in health mind studies, and communications training. From working in session with clients Charles had seen again and again that honest communication was one of the key elements for helping people resolve personal problems and realize their hidden potential. He had thus been concentrating his efforts on helping others become more able to express themselves truthfully and appropriately, as well as learn to be good listeners.

One of the new formats for improving communication that emerged from their work was the dyad. A dyad is two people seated facing each other, each taking turns listening while the other speaks. People liked dyads because in them they had the opportunity to freely express themselves on important issues without being interrupted.

Charles began to see more clearly that no matter what therapeutic technique or helping approach he used the people who had a clear inner sense of who they are tended to benefit rapidly. But the people who were confused or unconscious as to what they are, tended to have a difficult time progressing no matter what the approach was.

Charles was also exposed to Eastern ideas and influence was the book "Three Pillars of Zen." Charles became a container for these two very different orientations.

It seemed to Charles that more people would get a lot more out of any self-improvement or spiritual technique if they could only have a primary, direct experience of who and what they actually are. With this basic consciousness from themselves they could apply any self-help or spiritual technique and live life right from themselves rather than from a limited role such as "husband or father" or from a fixed personality such as "victim."

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT INTENSIVE

With the two different ideas Charles started thinking about how this could be done such that modern Westerners, with all their quirks and ways, would readily succeed in a reasonable period of time. He knew that yogis had used the question "Who am I?" as a silent contemplation tool. This question and "What am I?" were also ancient koans commonly used by Zen monks over the centuries.

Charles decided to take the age-old questions and combine them with the communication methods he had learned. The question "Who am I?" came together with the dyad format and thus was born the Enlightenment Intensive.

He saw he could have people sit in dyads just as he was already doing. They would take turns contemplating as in the ancient way, but also expressing to each other on a regular basis what had come into their awareness.

He then took some people to a remote area and gave his experiment a try and they had breakthroughs.

Those people went through stages in their contemplation. First they gave answers like, "I am a father." Then they came up with intellectual and logical answers, and then they had memories come up. As the hours went on they began to encounter their inner restraints and fears and some began to have insights. New realizations about their own life and patterns.

Most of them then began trying to see the truth in an effort to local the actuality of oneself, life or another they tended to look either into the inner space of the mind or outwardly.

Some people then began to reach an unusual place of nothingness, where no thoughts were happening in the mind and nothing seemed important.

Some would have emotions come up and some serenity. Some went into crisis and eventually inside this cauldron breakthroughs of a whole new kind began to occur.



Weekend Workshops

Our Weekend workshops are designed to help people grow and expand in the areas of body, mind, emotions and spiritually.

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Upcoming Events

Dyad Nights

These nights are an introduction to the Enlightenment Intensive and a way for those who have attended Intensives to continue their practice.

Enlightenment Intensives

The Enlightenment Intensive is a modern answer to the question, "Where can I go to directly experience the true nature of life, others and myself?" With one foot rooted in the ancient tradition of Rinzi Zen and the other in the modern dyad process of communication, the Enlightenment Intensive is a three-day retreat capable of producing deep spiritual awakenings at the core. Tell Me Who You Are?

Life Transformation Intensives

This is an EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP designed to give you the answers you have been looking for. It meets for six weekends over a six-month period, providing a loving and accepting environment for the challenge of profound personal growth.

The Life Transformation Intensive supports you in your spiritual path, whatever that is. Through the use of a variety of Heart-Centered trance techniques, you will learn to open up to Soul Work and to discover a much broader aspect of who you really are and what your purpose is at this time on earth.

Meditation Nights

An evening with a like-minded group of people in pursuit of Self-Mastery through a variety of meditation techniques.

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