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**"If I were you..."**  
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"It is only when we realize that life is taking us nowhere that it begins to have meaning." - J.D. Ouspensky

Much as we all search for the tried-and-true "how-to-make-life-work-for-me manual, technology, formula, tool, technique and the like, the reality is each of use leads a complex and unique life. One persons answer, suggestion, recommendation "for me" is, 99.999% of the time, one that is quick, easy and wrong.

One Size Does not Fit All

There is no one size fits all" road to change, growth and development the road that is well-paved, travel-worthy, lighted, secure, and sure-footed a road that works for everyone. The truth is, the right road for you is not a well-traveled road. Its a path and the reason its called a path is because its never been traveled before.

Personally, professionally and spiritually, you need to develop your own pathways. Personal pathway development is a challenging endeavor moving through rocky terrain and uncharted wilderness.

Those who listen to, and even follow the advice of, the If I were youthis is what I would do...so, you should, too" folks are more likely than not to move through life like a bumper car hitting dead-ends, bumps in the road, detours and the like as a result of looking for direction in all the wrong places i.e., outside themselves. No one can show me *the way* no one.

The Path is an Inside Job

The road ahead can come from only one place - inside. No one else can identify your path for you. Finding and successfully following your true path comes from your inner guidance and wisdom.

The path begins with a vision a vision of what life looks like at work, at home, at play and in relationship. This vision informs you of your place in life and on the planet. Your vision, when sought and discovered inside, and tested, provides a sense of worth and value that defines your place on the planet.

You Need Your Solutions

The reason other folks solutions (i.e., beliefs, "technologies" or visions, etc.) hardly ever work is theyre not designed for me. They may feel and sound good for a moment, and may provide a short burst of enthusiasm and energy, but in the long run they are seldom lasting, transformative or sustainable. Why? No one can empower you but you.

And the only way you can become empowered is to generate, from the inside, your own life vision and purpose. Its impossible to align with, and become congruent with, someone elses vision and purpose. If youre true to someone elses purpose or vision, its almost a certainty

that, sooner or later, you'll experience a sense of deflation, frustration or resentment. How can you not? You're living someone else's life! And that's dis-empowering. Not life-affirming. At least, your life.

Appreciate the Rockiness of the Path

"I never know what the next lesson is going to be, because we were not supposed to know; we were supposed to trust ourselves to discover it." - Melody Beattie

Every path, including yours, consists of its respective forms of difficulty, challenge, resistance, and problems - health, career, relationship, etc. all created solely and especially - for *you* - for your character and personality. (This is the major reason why the If I were you I would... folks can never ever begin to solve your issues and challenges. They are not you. Journeying along your own path allows you to discover the purpose of the obstacles and challenges you face.)

Through honest and conscious self-reflection you unbundle what's in your way and in the process move from ignorance to intuition, from selfishness to selflessness and from inertia to energetic intentionality. The conscious journey along your customized path can lead you to becoming the heart-and-soul based human being you are - perhaps gently filling the refuse containers along the way with bits and pieces of your ego-self which you begin to discard.

The rockiness of your path serves to tug on your sleeve asking you to work your character and personality, to become a better human being, to love and support others - at work, at home, at play and in relationship. The rockiness is intended to help you better understand, and live, the purpose for which you're on the planet which always, yes always, involves connecting with others for your highest mutual good.

Obstacles Offer Lessons to be Learned

"For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin -- real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be got through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life." - Fr. Alfred DSouza

Every obstacle has a built-in lesson which is intended to raise your level of consciousness. Every obstacle asks you to stretch a bit, or a lot sometimes beyond what you think are your limits. Every obstacle serves to bring your unconscious to the surface and in the process you have the opportunity to heal mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually and/or psychologically where you discover heart-and-soul-felt capacities and qualities you never knew you had. If there's one result that walking your own path affords you, it's empowerment realizing your value and worth, accessing your true and real inner strength and courage and discovering a belief and trust in yourself that walking someone else's path never offers ever.

And, that's why it's called a "path."

"To know how to choose a path with heart is to learn how to follow intuitive feeling. Logic can tell you superficially where a path might lead to, but it cannot judge whether your heart will be in it." - Jean Shinoda Bolen

So, some questions for self-reflection are:

- What particular challenge are you facing? Have you deeply reflected on what you need to do, or how you need to be, to help you become a better "you" who's capable of greater love, understanding and empowerment?
- Do you know what "the hero's journey" is? Have you ever experienced such a journey? Are you in the midst of one now? Do you consistently search "outside" yourself for the right path? How's that been working? Honestly.
- Do you surround yourself with "If I were you, I would..."- type folks? If so, why? Are you an "If I were you, I would..."- type person to your family, friends, partner or colleagues?
- Does the idea of walking your own path cause you concern or fear? What about a sense of excitement or adventure? And, "why?"
- What was "fending for myself" or "going my own way" like for you as you were growing up?
- Do you generally feel safe and secure - mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually or psychologically? Why or why not?
- Are you a trusting soul? A vigilant or suspicious soul?
- How do you feel about "not knowing?" Are you comfortable journeying into the "inner unknown?"

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