

Why 'Appreciate the Fog'?

When I was introduced to my inner child as part of a counselling process, I judged him as pathetic, weak, vulnerable, and something to get rid of. I then spent several years fighting and punishing that part of me which created a significant life crisis for me. That seems to be a pretty obvious result now, but at the time I experienced a life filled with fear, anguish, and darkness, and I did not see a link to my treatment of myself, most of which I was unconscious of. As the pain and panic grew, life became increasingly intolerable, and I grew desperate. A friend attended a personal growth programme and I saw the real benefit it was for her so I chose to go for myself. On that course I became deeply aware that I not only lacked love and acceptance of myself, I hated myself.

That was the beginning of an intense process of getting acquainted with myself, learning to manage my anxiety, trust others, and develop love for myself. I became hungry to fix myself, and over time learned that was a fallacy. Beneath all the layers of hurt, fear and angst was a beautiful being that radiated love, beauty and power, and did not need fixing. He was buried by all the protections I had erected to keep him safe and shielded from the dangerous, scary world.

I started to peel away the layers of protection (behaviours, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes) that locked that part of me inside and pushed the rest of the world



Why did I write 'Appreciate the Fog'?

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Abstract

The personal story behind why Stephen wrote his book 'Appreciate the Fog', including some of the key life incidents that shaped his experience and philosophy.

Keywords

Appreciate the Fog, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs, personal transformation, relationship with self

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away. I earnestly worked on myself, tried to sort out all the stuff in my way of being, and I one day realised I was so earnest that I was creating a lot of the still current crap in my life. I was clearing something up, and instantly looking for the next thing to work with. The actual process of working through my crap and sorting myself out was creating more crap. I was not allowing time or space for my life to settle. The image of using a stick to stir up the bottom of a pond came to mind, and I realised that I never stop stirring, and was desperate to work on the next issue. I realised I could stop stirring, remove the stick, and allow the pond to settle. When a bubble dislodged from the bottom of the pond, as they do, and erupted on the surface, I could then work on whatever that bubble contained. Life slowed. Plenty of work still presented itself, but I experienced ease and peace.

My life has certainly been filled with experiences to create the anxious man I was (and sometimes still am). Some of the key experiences/contributors include:

- My father leaving the family as I was turning eight. I effectively ruled him out of my life, and after a few years I did not know if he were alive or dead, and I did not care.

- My mother remarried when I was 11, and at 17 she and I evicted him from our home for the safety of the family.
- I grew up in a fundamental religion that instilled many beliefs around how I should live, including many beliefs and fears associated with disobedience

These and other experiences contributed to my pervasive confusion over my personal identity, relationships, sexuality, and a host of other attitudes and beliefs about life.

As I peeled away the layers and got closer to my true essence inside, I became deeply acquainted with my inner child, learned to love him, and developed a relationship with him. Now we effectively walk side-by-side, and if needed I protect him as necessary from the world, but he no longer needs to be protected from me. I love him. I love myself. From that space I find it

much easier to shine, be real, and be myself. Life still has fog and patches of darkness, but I navigate those easier because I have more certainty about who I am, and have stopped being my own persecutor. When I find I am struggling the solution is inevitably to reconnect with myself in a loving and accepting manner. I came to realise that appreciating the fog is much easier and more rewarding than struggling to force clarity and certainty from a life that is meant to contain unknowns.

My book, 'Appreciate the Fog' (click [here](#) for more information), emerged from my own experiences that took me into many a fog, and the learning process, both formal and informal, that has taught me how to better work with my fear-based responses. The outcome is the capability to operate consciously, with power from a basis of love. The aim of the book is to offer what I have learned in the hopes that others may benefit. I have certainly benefited from writing it and getting clearer about my own processes that get in my way.

For more information related to themes in this article, refer to: Harrison, S. G. (2012). [*Appreciate the Fog: Embrace Change with Power and Purpose*](#). Auckland, New Zealand: Xlibris Corporation.

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