



The Masks We Wear July 2008

Dear All

July is here and the heat of summer upon us, the lazy hazy days of summer as the song goes. Many of you will already be on vacation and the rest of you may be planning it; we hope you all enjoy your summer. July will be a restful month for Conscious Connections a time to recharge the batteries, a longed for rest and getting ready for the fall season and new workshops.

June was busy and the new workshops on 'Chakra's' which were very well received and fully booked as were the 'East meets West' Feng Shui and Crystal's workshops. As per request more are being planned and dates will be out soon. It was such a great pleasure to see you all, to see so many new faces and to see so many men now joining us and wanting to know more and more and ready to speak out about what they believe in, see and feel. Many more workshops are being planned and requests are being fulfilled as best as can be.

New heights were reached in Kuwait for the holistic world and for Conscious Connections where for the first time we were filmed for Kuwait TV, a real milestone for all of us, and more TV shows planned. This was a wonderful thing to happen for us all and shows how our word is now reaching the many and being taken seriously on all levels. Thank you to all those in Kuwait who were so much apart of this great experience and milestone and for making it actually happen.

Friendships and what they mean to us have so often been part of our workshops, the letters we constantly receive about reconnecting to old friends have been wonderful and we are glad that our message about 'making a difference' caring for others and the community as well as ourselves is really getting through. Over the next few months you are going to be seeing the words 'Who I Am Makes A Difference'. We will be teaming up with several well known people and making an impact in the community with those words, and the actions to go with them, which as you read them now will make you think. So watch this space. You will all be a part of it.

Always treat others as you would like to be treated yourself, always show respect and kindness to all those you meet and those who are a big part of your lives. Try to never take people for granted. Address people as you yourself would like to be addressed, that is hopefully with respect and courtesy. The little polite things in life, the little things that make a difference to people are so often overlooked. In our fast paced world, our world of quick emails and communications the small courtesies of addressing people nicely and acknowledging people and their names is so often forgotten. Are we not all worth the respect and their acknowledgement of our names, our identities? And of being addressed politely?

Call me old fashioned, call me silly, but I do think that we as a society on the whole are now forgetting the very basic courtesies and niceties of life, we are forgetting that people are real living beings, with feelings and lives and sensitivities that we are all worth something. People's names are important, they are part of a person's identity, a very big part and owning our names is also important, My good friend and world renowned author (who you will all have the chance to meet next year) writes about this in her Therapy book A Crystal Journey through the Chakras. Hazel Raven talks about the importance of owning your name, there is even a little ritual to follow. It is rather beautiful. We have even talked about it in recent workshops and will do so again.

Those who have ever attended a workshop or seminar and certainly all those who know me or have met me, know that I always go out of my way to remember your names or say your names, it is quite a joke in some places as I am not very good at pronouncing names and often do not get them right, but I do always make the point of addressing everyone I speak to by name, and addressing people politely for it is an important part of a persons identity. We all deserve to be addressed by our name or chosen name and we all deserve to be addressed politely when in any communication whether verbally or written. I have always done this with out ever thinking why and I have always felt it important. Over the years I have received many letters or communications with people saying how when they speak to me or write to me I always make them feel like the only person in the room, or they are grateful that I take the time to call them by name as very often lonely people rarely ever hear their name spoken or are called by their names.

I mention this as recently I have been doing much self development work and healing from my childhood. Many of you who know me, know my childhood was not the easiest - just as, perhaps, many of yours wasn't. My relationship with my mother was almost non-existent as a child and I still carry the scars just as many others do A mothers love and acceptance being so important in the development for any child. I do not remember my mother ever calling me by my name until my late teens or early 20's. She certainly didn't whilst I was very young. If she spoke to me at all, I was usually referred to as 'you', or 'her' or some other even less acceptable term. It was never written in a birthday card, nor was I addressed as dear Julie or similar in any correspondence from my mother, especially in my early years. Yet she addressed others by their names and I saw this and it cut deep. I remember thinking to myself in those days; I have a name, why does she not use it? She uses my sister and brother's names and everyone else's names, why am I not worth my name being used? Why does she hate me so much? Why am I not worthy of my name? Why does she never address me nicely as she does others?

I asked her once if she had forgotten my name - I can't remember much of her reply, other than the fact it was painful. I longed to be loved and needed and in my child's mind worthy of my mother's love, or indeed anyone else's love and time. Just to hear her call my name, write it down, anything that would make me feel loved and wanted and worthy.

In my recent self development and healing work this came up. It was something that I had not dealt with probably because I had pushed it aside and not really thought about, and yet I have subconsciously been very aware of it and how important it is and unknowingly gone out of my way to always speak to others as I would expect to be spoken to and addressed by them. So, because of this recent self healing work I reacted badly to an email recently and was very upset when someone very close and dear to me wrote a brief and what I perceived to be cold email to me without my name and even failed to sign it with their name. It triggered something deep inside me and I snapped back. I was worth my name. I am worth being addressed as Julie and preferably dear Julie or hi Julie or similar but a polite addressing of my name. Call me petty, call me childish, but I suddenly thought and reacted, ' hey I have a name', I deserve the respect of being addressed politely and so on. The recipient of my outburst did not react too kindly to the mail I sent saying how important our names were and how I felt I had the right to be addressed by my name in every email. Their response hurt me a lot. It was not expected and it shocked me in its coldness. It took me straight back to my childhood past. I had stood up for something for myself and probably for all the other nameless people on the planet and I was shot down for it and made to feel very small for pointing something out so small but yet so important to me. It triggered off those deep hidden childhood hurts and feelings of unworthiness. The response I got was so out of character of the person who sent it that I was even more surprised – but the universe has ways of getting our attention in so many ways!

Again this was proof and I think there was a lesson for both of us in it, one that needed to be bought out and taught. One that maybe we can use to help many others.

We all have worth and our names are part of our worth and our identity. Let us all start to stand up for the small things in life that are important. Email is such a quick way to communicate but basic common courtesies and good manners of using names or addressing people politely have gone out of the window, disappeared with so many of the now old fashioned courtesies of old. We are as a society loosing the art of basic communication and care of others.

I suspect I am not the only one who thinks like this and as always the universe works with me and when it happens once it happens again, as a day later I had an email from a client who was having the same problem with someone else and they were equally upset and were asking for advice on how to handle it. So I asked around if others I know felt the same and so may people do. I myself may have reacted badly because it did trigger off something deep inside hidden away for so long, Maybe it happened then as it is a subject that needs to be discussed and brought out into the open. I asked a friend and mentor for their advice and they suggested I write about it here. Having done so, it would be interesting to know how many of you feel the same way. I would be very happy to hear from you.

The topic of this month's newsletter is The Masks We Wear. I think many of us do wear masks as we hide behind what we think is more acceptable to society and not being or owning up to who we are. There is also a wonderful poem added to the end which says just about everything that needs to be said about masks and who we are.

Let's carry on consciously reconnecting to people, remembering and taking time out for those who love us and whom we love. Find that extra moment or those few minutes to let them know they are cared about; saying sorry to those we may have hurt knowingly and unknowingly. It really isn't worth letting beautiful relationships and friendships slip away out of stubbornness or just not taking time.

As we have said before, be good to those who are your friends, to those you love and whom love you. Stay in touch with them and take time for them. Just a text, phone call or email to say hello can mean so much to someone, especially if that person is having a bad day or feeling a bit lost or lonely.

On another note don't forget to check out the Spiritual Awakening Festival in Sounio, near Athens, Greece in August. I, along with many other internationally well known and respected facilitators, will be speaking on a diverse range of subjects, Myself I will be speaking about Illusion, delusion and values. This will be a wonderful event. Please check out the festival website on www.spiritinathens.gr. For English language just click on the flag on the top right hand side of the page. I know quite a few of you have already booked and it will be great seeing you.

Remember to put into your Diaries for next year 30th, 31st October and 1st November 2009 The first '**Crystals and Universal Energies Conference**' in Kuwait and workshops will follow. The world renowned leaders in their fields and guest speakers will be Hazel Raven, Judy Hall, Sue and Simon Lilly, Julie Lomas, and Kuwaiti astrologer Abdul Azeez.

More details will be released as we have them but please put in your diaries now as this will be an amazing experience. To have all these amazing world renowned healers and authors all No 1 in their chosen fields speaking at one time at one event is something not to be missed, with a day of workshops on the 1st November.

Frank Arjava Petter will be back in the Middle East in February 2009. Kuwait 10th - 18th, Bahrain 20th - 25th. He will be teaching Jikiden Reiki. Advance booking essential, for more details please contact info@conscious-connections.com

Divine Blessings

Julie x

"An injured friend is the bitterest of foes". Try not to injure your friends, and take good care of them. I'm sure they'll be there for you when you need a hand or a shoulder to cry on.
Zen quote from Jefferson,

Not to believe in the Angels is to believe in a mindless, meaningless, and soulless universe

Topic of the Month ' The Masks We Wear

Most of us live behind masks all the time based on the false assumption that we are somehow safer behind them, These "masks" are there because we have either not figured out who we are, or because we're afraid who we are won't be accepted, We feel that people may not like who we truly are so we try and become what we think they want us to be. Or because at sometime in your past you have been belittled or beaten or even imprisoned for showing you who are, for your ideas and beliefs have not fit into main stream society beliefs and values and social acceptance.

It is like a little child hiding behind his own hand and actually believing that his whole body has disappeared. Yet as we all walk around trying to be 'normal,' we overlook one extremely important factor, that which is other people are looking at you as their 'normal' gauge, just as you're looking at them for yours.

The person who is 'you' is exactly what you have created 'you' to be. Your experiences and your beliefs, your motivations and your actions have shaped you into who you are. Yet when you hide behind a mask and try to act out of alignment with who you really are, you will at some point begin to feel uneasy and nothing will be quite right. When you're afraid to be who you really are, you lose touch with the truth of who you are and act in ways you may later regret. So why do so many of us feel uneasy speaking up for our beliefs and living our own lives, while dreading the thought of not fitting in? Because we are afraid that somehow we are inferior to those around us, and we lack the confidence to believe otherwise.

Yet if you really think about the worst thing that could happen if you feel free to be yourself , it is that someone may not accept you, it's really not so bad is it?. After all, if you can't be genuine with someone, why do you want to be around them? If you can't be 'you' then what is the point of being anyone? We are all born as unique individuals with unique gifts to the world, only you are perfect as you are, only 'you' can be 'you' and we all individually fit the as a piece into the universal jigsaw puzzle, we all have our place just as we are, truly are.

Masks come in many forms, comedian, perfectionist, victim, know-it-all, peacemaker, wallflower, overachiever. Starting in adolescence, we learn to rely on superficial identities that define our place in the world. As we mature, our masks become more sophisticated and entrenched in our personalities.

A secret in life is that all people feel insecure. Masks are ineffective solutions to the problem of insecurity, either trying to fool others by pretending to be superior, egotist or know it all or sadly fooling yourself by acting inferior. Often people who hide behind 'I know better' masks are insecure in themselves and often also in denial about situations in their lives.

The masks we wear on Halloween, we can take off at the end of the evening. The personality masks that hide who we are become harder to take off as each year passes, and we really begin to believe the web of lies that we have been spinning.

By wearing masks, we make our relationships safer and more predictable. We protect ourselves from rejection, presenting the "me" that others will embrace or accept, or is socially acceptable. We don't want others to know the fears and insecurities and thoughts behind our mask/s and yet everyone else will have their own fears and insecurities too, every person you meet will have some sort of fear or doubt or insecurity or something they wish to hide from or from you.

You might think that the commitment and intimacy of marriage or long term partnerships would make authentic communication easier. If you share a bathroom, bed and checkbook with someone, why hide behind a mask? Ironically, marriage and long lasting/ life term partnerships is often where we become most guarded because no other relationship is potentially more hurtful. Although being betrayed by a friend or co-worker stings, the rejection of a spouse/lover is devastating. We cannot simply walk away from wounds inflicted in marriage or long term partnership or relationship. So we choose to stay safely behind masks rather than reveal our vulnerability. If you share a bathroom, bed and checkbook with someone, why hide behind a mask?

Our masks might be one of the greatest threats to intimacy in marriage and life partnerships. In fact, many people understand their spouses in terms of their masks, never considering what might lie beneath: 'Sam is a workaholic' 'Lucy' is someone who can never say no. 'Jane is the life of the party, but she's a grump once she gets home.' 'Never start an argument with Tom, he won't ever let it go.'

Knowing each other behind the masks, however, helps couples and friends understand why they respond the way they do. I have been privileged to sit in sessions / workshops / seminars in which a husband and wife, and long term partners have really see each other for the first time. She sees his fear of failure behind his perfectionism. He sees how terrified she is to trust his leadership because of the ways her father abused his authority for example.

An other time the man has owned up to seeing and knowing there are other beings out in the universe and astral projection and she has also known the same, had physic gifts of clairvoyance but neither has said anything because they didn't want the other to think they were mad, or indeed spying on the other.

In some ways, we are all scared little children in a grown-up world, afraid of failure and rejection. Our masks help us feel in control. The intimacy we desperately long for though can only be established once we reveal our vulnerability, and it is a hard thing to show but a wonderful to do so as it gives you immense strength and personal power and inner peace when you do.

If your fears and insecurities make it difficult for you to be who you are, you do need to release them if you can, and maybe get help from a councilor or qualified therapist to do so, because when you let go of your need to be how others want you to be the sense of contradiction within you will disappear, and you will then feel your inner confidence shining through.

Your best approach is to let go of wanting to be the way others want you to be so you can simply be yourself, realizing that your true self is far more beautiful than any mask, no matter how bejeweled it may be.

Action Challenge:

- **Take off your own mask** -The only mask you can take off is your own.
- **Write down a list of what masks you wear** in front of your spouse / lover/ friends
- **Write down what vulnerable feelings or fears lie beneath?**
- **Start to look for ways to deal with any feelings or issues**
- **Talk to a trained councilor or therapist** if you need help to deal with the issues.
- **Learn to ask and listen.** People love to talk about themselves. Even shy and reserved people will gladly unload their thoughts and feelings if you ask the right questions and show them you genuinely want to know, their masks will fall away.
- **Enjoy the poem below about the mask I wear** and let the words sink in, many will resonate with you.

Good luck!

THE MASK I WEAR

Don't be fooled by me.
Don't be fooled by the face I wear
For I wear a mask. I wear a thousand masks-
masks that I'm afraid to take off
and none of them are me.
Pretending is an art that's second nature with me
But don't be fooled, for God's sake, don't be fooled.
I give you the impression that I'm secure
That all is sunny and unruffled with me
within as well as without,
that confidence is my name
and coolness my game,
that the water's calm
and I'm in command,
and that I need no one.
But don't believe me. Please!

My surface may be smooth but my surface is my mask,
My ever-varying and ever-concealing mask.
Beneath lies no smugness, no complacency.
Beneath dwells the real me in confusion, in fear, in aloneness.
But I hide this.
I don't want anybody to know it.
I panic at the thought of my weaknesses
and fear exposing them.
That's why I frantically create my masks to hide behind.

But I don't tell you this.
I don't dare.
I'm afraid to.
I'm afraid you'll think less of me, that you'll laugh
and your laugh would kill me.
I'm afraid that deep-down I'm nothing, that I'm just no good
and you will see this
and reject me.

I idly chatter to you in suave tones of surface talk.
I tell you everything that's nothing
and nothing of what's everything, of what's crying within me.
So when I'm going through my routine
do not be fooled by what I'm saying
Please listen carefully and try to hear
what I'm not saying
Hear what I'd like to say
but what I can not say.

It will not be easy for you,
long felt inadequacies make my defenses strong.
The nearer you approach me
the blinder I may strike back.
Despite what books say of men, I am irrational;
I fight against the very thing that I cry out for.
you wonder who I am
you shouldn't
for I am everyman
and everywoman
who wears a mask.
Don't be fooled by me.
At least not by the face I wear.

----Author unknown -this has been published in many publications.

Forthcoming workshops and Events –

Please email us on info@conscious-connections.com
Or the email address listed with each workshop

August 2008 - Greece

Topic: Spiritual Awakening Festival – Workshops on spiritual development and enlightenment releasing Delusion and going with the flow, the Element of Water

Location: Sounio - Nr Athens Greece

Date / Time: August 16th – 21st

Contact Paschalis Kazakopoulos info@angelicreiki.eu, angelreiki2004@yahoo.gr

See website www.spiritofathens.gr

Julie and Steve's Meditation CD's can be bought from:

- Bahrain** Bookcase
Noraini at Touch for Health Tel: +973 39246544
or Karen Perry - blues88@batelco.com.bh +973 39543127
- Cyprus** Steve – steve@conscious-connections.com
- Dubai** Jack Montgomery Tel: +971504585860
Elements Feng Shui AL KHALEEJ CENTRE BUR DUBAI
- Kuwait** Hana Al-Ghanim halghanim1@yahoo.com
- Spain** Julie - Julie@conscious-connections.com

Angel Essences

- Bahrain** Julie or Karen Perry blues88@batelco.com.bh
Eight Mansions Feng Shui Country Mall, Budayia
- Cyprus** Steve - steve@conscious-connections.com
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- Spain** Julie - Julie@conscious-connections.com

This a monthly newsletter about spiritual and positive life changing or thought provoking subjects, a sort of life makeover based on spiritual values and relevant topics. Any comments or suggestions are welcome.

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