



Live Your Dreams

Transcripts - Module 3 - Identify Your Shadows



Welcome to Module 3 of Live Your Dreams. My name is Liz Jansen and in this module, we're going to be doing some shadow work, being able to identify our shadow and leveraging those.

Before we start, I'd like to do the Visioning Exercise we began doing last week-- just to get your mind free of distractions and clutter, and to prepare yourself to be receptive to the learning that we're going to be doing in the next little while.

Close your eyes and take some deep, slow, conscious breaths. Take some deep breaths in through your nose, hold them, and then exhale. As you exhale get rid of the thoughts, the clutter, all the things you've been doing today, the things you're thinking about for tomorrow, free your mind of all of those things. Continue taking those deep breaths, relaxing as you do so. Find that place of power. Usually it's in your solar plexus and imagine it there. This is where your strength is. And this is what you're going to be working from; a place of strength, a place of empowerment. Feel that strength as you feel it move through your whole body, ready to help you with the work that you're going to be doing. Know that you've got a unique skill set, a unique purpose here, that only you can fill. Everything you've done up to this point has prepared you for what you're about to do--and to live your dream. Accept that the Universe wants you to succeed and is here to help. Take a few more breaths and know that you're going to begin living as if it's already happening. Your dream is coming true. Because it is. One more deep breath and then open your eyes. Thank you.

So far in Live Your Dreams, we've been talking about getting your bearings. In Weeks 1 and 2, In Week 1 we talked about identifying your values, defining your dream and then defining your current reality. Last week it was about learning about what your strengths are; identifying those. This week to be finishing off the Getting your Bearings, we're going to be looking at what your shadows are and how you can leverage those for strength. That will prepare the foundation upon which we're going to build everything else that's going to get you to Live Your Dream.

Week 3, this module is focused on identifying your shadows. The objectives are to understand the concept of the shadow self. Bear in mind there's lots of information on this. I'm going to be skimming the surface and just pulling out some highlights for you. I'll give you some references too if you want to do more work in this. We'll have enough information though that you can do the work that you need to do and use it, because this is something that you want to use to Live Your Dreams. The reason why we want to identify the shadow self is because by being able to identify that, is looking at the factors that prevent you from being successful at doing what you want to do.

So understand the concept of the shadow, identify what your shadows are, and we'll talk about how you can leverage your shadows and make them assets for you. The whole idea is to change how you respond to familiar patterns that you have, the ones that you're comfortable with, even though they're not always the most favorable ones, and they don't lead you to the most favorable outcomes.

Who's in charge? Who's driving the bus in your life?

We use our conscious brain five percent of the time. Our conscious brain is where our creativity resides; it's where we have our identity, the wishes, the desires, and our aspirations. That's all in the conscious mind and that's in the present. However, 95% of the time, our subconscious is in control. We acquire who we are from what other people have told us who we are. Comments that parents have made, teachers, well intentioned-- particularly up to the age of seven, we're very open to this, and we're like a fertile field, receiving all these comments. The cultural training that we receive, the comments, the words that they use, how they use it, those are programmed into our subconscious and those tapes keep playing for the rest of our life. They stay with us the whole time. Some of those things work to our favor, some of them work to our disfavor and we'll talk about those in a bit. The way to stay conscious is to stay in the present moment. Where the subconscious comes in is when we are either embedded in the past and all that's happened to us, or we are worried about the future. The tapes that play are based on opinions from other people and they're not really our self at all. So we become who other people have told us we are, not who we really are.

If you're interested in learning more about this, much of the work that Dr. Bruce Lipton has done, he's been a medical school professor, and a researcher, and he now brings together the science and the biology together with spirituality. It's a fascinating read if you get a chance, do that.

The Triangle of Disempowerment is something we can fall into easily when our shadow takes over. When we're in the middle of this, we're surrounded by either victim, rescuer or perpetrator roles, and we take on these roles, unknowingly. Our subconscious takes over and we do it without realizing it and often times with the best intentions, but we catch ourselves, because this is a toxic situation for us, and when we find ourselves in these roles, then we need to step back and look at what we're doing, and catch ourselves and the best way to stay out of this triangle of disempowerment is to stay non-attached to outcome and not take things personally.

Let me explain a bit about what these three roles are. We can move between these roles very easily, and so a victim, when you're a victim, it's, "Oh poor me. Look at what's happening to me. I can't live my dream because I can't afford it, or

I've got family obligations." Whatever the reasons are that you can't do things in your life, or why people should feel sorry for you.

Some people love to be rescuers too and we all know who these people are when we see them. They want to step in and help people and rescue them. When you're rescuing somebody, you're stepping over the boundary of what he or she should be doing and what you should be doing, and trying to do their work for them, and it's disempowering for you because you're giving away your energy to something that isn't your role to play.

We all will become perpetrators at times too. You become a perpetrator through gossip, through trying to instigate other people, through the words that you say, or the behaviors, even ignoring people sometimes can be a perpetrator.

We move between these three roles. Some are more favored than others with us and you will recognize different people in your life who like to play these roles. When you see yourself in these roles, it's important to catch yourself and to move away from that, as the label says, it is a triangle of disempowerment. The reason being you is not working from your own place of power here. You're depending on somebody else. As a victim, you're depending on someone else to feel sorry for you, and that's where you're getting your feeling of worth from, because somebody's looking at you and taking pity and reaching out to help you. As a rescuer, you're reinforcing who you are because of what you're doing for somebody else, not because it's the right thing for you to do but because you are sacrificing yourself for somebody else. You're doing it with the wrong intent, again, giving away your power. As a perpetrator, you're being an instigator, in all of those situations; you need another person to get the recognition for those roles. That's why it's disempowering.

When you see others as good or bad, that's when you're the most vulnerable. That's when you're meeting your own shadow. We talked last week about seeing the good in others. This week we're talking more about seeing things that are not so good in others. Label them good or bad, however you want to label them, but this is when you are the most vulnerable for being disempowered and for having your shadow self take over.

If you want to read more about this, read *The Four Insights* by Dr. Alberto Villoldo.

So what is your shadow? It's a term that was coined by Carl Jung, and he calls it the person you'd rather not be. These are the parts of ourselves that we'd rather not show to other people, that we keep hidden. That's why they're shadows. He believed that you can only see yourself through other people. You can't see it through yourself.

When you want to define that shadow, it's really those aspects of self that we keep hidden in the dark, out of our awareness. Many of these aspects have great holds on us and we don't even realize that they're there, but they're dictating our thoughts, our feelings, our beliefs and our actions. They're actually in control much of the time, especially when we're not in the present and especially when we're looking at other people.

They include our deepest fears. "What is it that we're afraid of?" Maybe it's personal insecurity, maybe it's financial, maybe it's that we're not worthy enough, maybe it's that we're going to fail or fear that we're going to be successful. Or it's shames - things we've done in our past that we're ashamed of. Things that we wish we would have done and we didn't do. Regrets. Any time we're judging, whether we're judging our self or we're judging another person, those are times when our shadow is very willing to step in and help us form an opinion. It can include our core beliefs too. These are the beliefs about who we are. What we're capable of, what we're here for, what we can do and what we can't do. They're really the unconscious contracts. The vows we've taken without even knowing it. "I'll *never* do this." we say when we're young. And that sticks with us. "I'll never be like my mother was. I don't want to be that person that she is." Or, "I'll never love again." These types of things that we say to ourselves. These are unconscious contracts or vows that we make with ourselves and the "truths" that we form about life and we accept them as gospel. The shadow really encompasses everything that you don't know that you don't know, if that makes sense. All these things sit in our subconscious and they control our behavior without us even knowing it.

We talked about Projection last week, and these are the attributes we often deny in our self, but we see them in other people. Last week when we talked about it, it was about the positive attributes. So here, we're talking about the shadow self. So when we see something we dislike, if there's a person we dislike, what is it about that person? That person is mirroring things back to us. We need to turn that around and face it ourselves, and look at it. Once you own that, once you accept that that's a shadow of yourself, it diffuses the energy that you have been giving it, and it gives you back energy that you have given away, not even to another person necessarily, but you've given it away to negative emotions and negative feelings.

We learned last week that other people are your mirrors, and this is what we've just been talking about. Focus on what other people are trying to teach you, especially those people that really push your buttons. Why are they doing that, and what is that you don't like about what you see? Then look at yourself, and it may not be exactly verbatim something that you do, look for those tendencies though. Look for how that is playing out in your life. What do you see in the mirror when you look in the mirror of other people?

Who are your mirrors? I know you can probably think of them right away. I know I can. Who are the people that I just don't want to be around and I don't want to have anything to do with? Or they just make you feel uncomfortable as soon as you're with them. What are they teaching you about yourself and about what your shadows are? We don't like to think that ... we like to think that we're going to like everybody and everybody is going to like us. That's not true. I heard once that up to one-third, 30% of people love you and adore you, and are your friends. Maybe there's only a small portion of those who are in your inner circle but there's 30% that respond positively to you. Then there's another 30% that are neutral, "I could take her, or I could leave her." And then there's another third that really don't want to have anything to do with you or listen to what you have to say. That's OK. Accept that that's going to be there and don't take it personally, but these are people who can still be your mirrors and be teaching you things about yourself.

Let's look now at identifying your shadow patterns, and the reason we're doing this is because later on, we're going to talk about how we leverage these patterns to become your assets and these are going to become your toolbox, part of your repertoire for making your dream come true. So there is a method to this as we go through here.

Look for your patterns where your shadow has been active, and has been controlling you and has been stopping you from living your fullest potential and doing the best that you can be, even though it's saying, "You've tried. You've done the best you can." You know in your heart of hearts that you could have done more. You could have done better.

Take advantage of the challenging times, and crisis. Look for those times that were uncomfortable, that you didn't like. Where you didn't have the outcome that you really wanted. Look for what was really going on there. That's where your shadow was active and preventing you from going further. Usually it's the child in us. We all have a child in us. We all need to have a child in us; we need to let that child have an expression. But when that child is seeking attention and sometimes looking for pity, then we need to get that under control. But it needs to be heard, and there's a lesson in there for us. So with the different aspects of our self, whether it's the child or the adult or the wise elder. All of these roles that we had, had their place, but they need to be kept in balance. So if the child is telling you, screaming for attention, and there's times when it needs to be heard and embraced, these are usually times when there's a shadow present, when you're going through a rough time, when there are times of change, and these are the difficult times. This is when you're going to find where your shadow was.

When we look at these patterns, we're going to want to look at the deep-rooted reason behind these patterns. I'm going through this and telling you how to look for shadows, look for patterns, but keep in mind that this is a life-long process. This will make you more aware; make you more cognizant of your shadows and where they are. That doesn't mean they're going to go away. That means you're

more aware of them. And the sooner you're aware of them, the sooner you can catch yourself falling into those roles that don't work for you, and catch yourself with those thoughts and beliefs about who you are and what you can do. That's the real important part. It's not like it's going to go away. There's no magic switch that you can turn on to get rid of this. Being aware of it is the first step to number one, disempowering it, and then using that for your benefit instead of it holding you back.

What you perceive as your faults, or negative patterns, or things you don't like about yourself, are actually assets that you have. That's good news, don't you think? We need to just be able to turn that energy around and use those faults for an asset.

It's my firm belief that we are here on earth to be creative, to do a job, to fill a purpose, and while we're here, we're always in school. We're in Earth School. As long as we're here, there are lessons to be learned, the lessons get harder as we graduate from first grade and then go through elementary school, and some of us are now maybe in university or we're doing post-graduate work. The lessons get harder and harder all the time. As long as we're here though, the lessons continue. Once we're finished with the lessons though, it's time to go. So if you're still getting lessons and you're recognizing that, that's a good thing. That's a positive thing. That's what we're here for. We're here to learn and we're here to grow. Don't let it get to you if.....we feel like we keep learning the same lessons over and over again. Hopefully we don't have to repeat the patterns of the past, and we don't, once we start recognizing how they're affecting us.

When you see patterns, and I'll go through a few in a minute, think about, "What is my earliest memory of this pattern?" What does that look like? Who is there? What other people are there? Is it family? Friends? Co-workers? What are the words that I've used? That they've used? If you look back to early memories, what are the early memories about what people told you? What did your teacher tell you about yourself? What did your mom or your dad or your grandparents, or other people who played a significant role in your life? What did they tell you about whom you were? And what was this impact of the mental picture and these words on you? What have you carried?

This will take some thought. Now when you go back and if you still have the gift of having those elders around you, and hear the words that they say, or think about it, you'll be more aware of it. They may still be using some of those words. As you become more aware of these patterns, you will see how their words and their behaviors have affected you.

What were the feelings that you had, and what conclusions did you draw about what you could be, or should be or what you had, or what you should do? Write these down and through the exercises that you'll be doing, you'll begin to shed some light on your shadow. Remember too that the stronger the light, the

stronger the shadow. This goes back to the school analogy that I was using. The lessons do get harder. As you progress, as you grow, the light gets stronger. Your energy is stronger. But it also casts a shadow and some of the challenges that you have may be more difficult to work through. Write them down, look for the common ground, look for the similarities, look for the common threads, the underlying theme, the common words. As you do your work over the next week, I can help you. And if you have any questions as you're going through, of course I can help with that. I can help you identify the patterns that you may not be able to see because you're too close to the picture. So feel free to share them with me and I can help you identify them. Remember, we're using these to our advantage now. We're not looking to be hard on ourselves. We're looking at being objective and looking at the influences that have got us to where we are.

Here's an example for me, on my shadow pattern. I was raised in a fairly strict culture. I was raised as a Mennonite, which is really a combination of religious training and culture. This is where the thoughts and beliefs that formed who I thought I was, were imprinted in me. Although I went to a public elementary school, a lot of our family activity was really the larger Mennonite activity, so it really revolved around the church and going to church quite a few times a week, and church activities, and all of that. So that was a very strong influence when I was growing up. When it came time to go to secondary school, I really didn't have a choice because I was being pressured into going to a secondary school that was run by the church. I wanted to go to another public secondary school. I was afraid though, because of all the things I'd been taught about the outside world, and what would happen there, and how I would fit in. And so although I didn't really want to go to this secondary school that was run by the church, that wasn't as strong as the fear of how I would fit in and how I would handle a public secondary school. So I went. I was pressured to go there. I lasted there two years and then I refused to go back. I knew it wasn't for me and it was just something I couldn't deal with any more. I was scared. Yes I was scared, because now I'd been in this other environment for another two years. This was probably about the time, and it was, when the motorcycle came into my life. So this was the time, and I've written about this in my book *Women, Motorcycles and the Road to Empowerment* that the motorcycle entered my life now because that is a vehicle that has stayed with me to this day, and carried me through all these different life changes, and helped me to become more aware of who I am. I digress a bit.

So that was one pattern, a simple pattern, and it really went over a number of years, but these patterns don't really go away because now it was time for post-secondary education, and that same pattern came back to me. I was expected to go into nursing. I really wanted to go to university, but just as I was afraid to put myself in secondary school, a public secondary school, I was afraid of university. I didn't know how I could handle it. I didn't know if I was smart enough, it just seemed so foreign and so scary to me that I defaulted into nursing. And again, not that there's anything wrong with that. There isn't. It just wasn't the role for me

and I took it because it was the easy way. I did that and I did well, I graduated from nursing. Then when I came time to get a job, there's this pattern again. What do I do? I'm afraid of big city hospitals. I could have worked in one. But no, instead, I took a job (jobs were hard to find at that time), and so I took a job because I got a full time job in a chronic care hospital in the town where I lived. This job was not at all stimulating for me. You can imagine, here I am, a young woman fresh out of school, I was barely 20 years old and I'm working in a chronic care hospital because I'm afraid to do anything else. I stayed there a year and I finally got up. It takes me a while to learn things sometimes but I stayed and then moved to a larger general hospital. I also began to realize that nursing was not my calling. I had an opportunity to move into occupational health and I started working in a steel plant in this role, and that opened up all kinds of doors for me. But I eventually did leave the nursing profession for other things.

That pattern was there for me. If we look at it, here are the shadow aspects that came into play. The cultural expectations, when it came time to make the next move, whether it was time to go to secondary school or whether it was time to go to university or whether it was a job, there were cultural expectations that were playing this tape in my head, even though I was trying to put those in the background and was trying to express myself, those tapes were there, playing about who I was and who I should be and demonstrating that lack of confidence. Here, we're restless because our shadows are in control. Our inner self, our inner spirit is begging us for attention. This is a shadow pattern and this is what I'd like you to look at for yourself.

My shadows were the role expectations, based on expectations of what others thought I was, or who I was, or whom I should be and the idea is to turn it around and make it work for yourself. Take those strengths that are in that shadow, or in the energy and use that as strength. I had a fear of not fitting in or doing well, so I retracted. I pulled back. I wanted to be accepted. I wanted to do well. I was afraid of sticking my neck out to far though. I stayed in places where I knew I could do well if I didn't take many risks.

Being accepting can be a positive thing too. Accepting what's given to you and then you take action to deal with that. But accepting and being passive, allowing things to steamroller you is not a strength. That's when accepting can be a shadow.

Now it's time for you to look at what your shadow patterns are. We did this with your strengths last time. This time you're going to look to find out what your shadow patterns are. Ask. Ask to have your inner truth revealed to you--whoever you ask, your higher power, your Spirit, your guides, whatever it is for you. You can use meditation, if writing works for you-- the writing I talked about last week where you just sit down and write for 15 minutes, whatever comes into your head. Let it flow through your pen. Don't judge it, don't edit it, just let the words come and see what insights come to you. You can also use journaling; you can

look back on your journals and see where you have patterns and trends. You can go for a walk in nature. This is one of my favorite ways. A walk through the hardwood trees and I go out and spend time with nature. I always come out of the woods with brilliant insights. Of course the best way for me is a motorcycle ride, and not a ride from here into town. it's a ride where I'm out in nature, whether I'm going across the plains or whether I'm riding through the mountains or whether I'm riding along beside a river. You have to be out for a certain period of time, away from a lot of distractions, because we have to be safe and focus on our ride as well. But this is where, sometimes all of a sudden, sometimes there are so many ideas and insights that come to me it's like, "Enough already!" And I have to prioritize them. Whatever works for you. This is a fun exercise. Make it fun; because you're doing some self-discovery here, looking at what are your shadows and how have they prevented you from living your dream. Then how can you turn them into assets?

You want to leverage your shadow. The lessons of the past are there, you can't change it and they've been lessons that you've learned. So use those now as mulch. From those lessons, you're going to use them now as fertilizer to build the future that you want.

You can transform when you start looking for what those core beliefs are, you can begin to transform those beliefs about who you are and what you're capable of.

When we're talking now about living your dream and we're talking about the things that stop you, or the things that have stopped you, this has to do with the beliefs about whom you are and what you can do. This is your shadow talking. You're going to start to transform those things. Again, it's not a switch. There's nothing magic about this. It takes work and it takes action. Getting out there and doing it is the only way to do it. You do know however that it is possible. Anything is possible. That dream that you want, that's your inner spirit, that inner child talking, wanting you to express yourself, and your talents and your attributes, the things that you have come here to use, and the way that you contribute.

You will attract different experiences and different people into your life because now you're looking at things differently and the shadows have less power over you. You're taking that energy from the shadows and transforming it into something positive. So it's going to change how you react to familiar patterns. You'll recognize them sooner and say, "Ah ha! Wait a minute. That's my shadow. That's not really who I am. I'm capable of so much more. And you can believe that anything is possible"

Things that we have as strengths can also become shadows for us, so I want you to look back at last week's work at your strengths, and think about how those can also be viewed as shadows. I talked about my background in a Mennonite culture, which I was brought up in. that's a very strong culture. They're very

compassionate, giving, charitable, will bend over backwards and be kind. The shadow side of that though is that you can become insular and judgmental of other people who are exclusive to your community and there are walls that are built between you and other people. And you believe that you are right in what you're doing and they are wrong. That's your shadow at work. That gives you a false belief about who you are. It gives you a false sense of right and wrong. That same energy that creates the strength can also create the shadow so look at what those are.

Likewise, the shadows are strengths. So how can you look at those two things? How can your strengths become shadows and your shadows become strengths for you?

That brings us to the end of this module and you have a lot of things in your toolbox now that you're going to use to build your dream. This is where it all comes together for you. We've talked in previous sessions about identifying your values, identifying your dream, and the current reality. That was all in Lesson One. Last week we began talking about your assets and we talked about them in terms of the strengths that you have. Now, this week, we've talked about your assets in terms of shadows, and how we can use those to build our dreams as well, and looking at patterns. These are all assets that you have, tools in your toolbox that you're going to use to build your dream. You may find now that you go back to your dream and find that it has clarified, or crystalized, and that you have more insights into it. And you have more insights into what you can do, what is possible and how you can do it.

This is the homework for this week. It's shadow work. It's going to be identifying your shadows. Again, don't be hard on yourself. Look at this as going back to look at what influences brought you to where you are, and be objective about it. Take your list of strengths and see how they can become shadows, and take your list of shadows and see how they can become strengths. I'll bet you're going to find some overlap there. And then revisit your dream, and see if it's changed at all-- changed in magnitude, changed in scope, whatever! Perhaps you've reconfirmed that yes! This is what I'm going to do and this is how I'm going to do it. I will always give you feedback on it. If you can get it to me by Monday at 8:00 pm, I can give you feedback before the next class and before the next work that you do on your module.

Thank you very much. I look forward to hearing how your dream is coming along.