

From Psychosis to Growth – by Anthony Fidler

What we often call psychosis is like a bridge across a ravine between your past self and potential future self.

You can try to go back, but I doubt that is what life is asking of you. Stay over the ravine on medications and I think you will find you suffer, even though it may appear the easier choice, supported by those around you. Dare to cross the bridge and you may find out who you are and grow as a person.

Whether it truly is a psychosis experience, or a challenging inner growth journey, a ‘spiritual psychosis’ depends on how you respond to your situation.

Resources for Navigating Spiritual Psychosis:

1. Wake up! It’s important to realize whether you are now in or have recently been in a ‘spiritual psychosis’ state. This allows you to make wise choices...

2. Go slowly. Rest in the present moment. Don’t worry about past or future things that aren’t relevant to what is happening for you right now. Be curious about everything you are experiencing and how it is making you feel. Be open to what is happening even if it seems strange to you. Dare to feel everything – it doesn’t matter whether it is pleasant or unpleasant. These sensations are only temporary anyway and the more you can stay with the body sensation, the less the energy will go up to the head causing confusion and difficulty.

3. Find your place of refuge and take care of yourself there. It is essential to be able to find a safe place where you can restore yourself, recenter and ground and do the inner work you need to process the emotions of the inner journey. You can create it yourself. Equip it with tools and resources and sources of familiarity and comfort. The ‘place’ can travel with you – I have my kit of Bach flower remedies, essential oils, guided meditations to listen to, paint set to create with...

4. Take good care of yourself. Meet your basic needs for food, drink, rest etc. This is very important. Bodies need food! We need to take care of ourselves just like we were taking care of a newborn baby – spoon feeding if necessary. See if you can relax yourself while eating, so digestion can work. Let go of thinking about what is happening to you. While you are meeting basic needs, it is not relevant! If the food appearance morphs, see if there is other food which is okay for you. Avoid very heavy foods which are hard to digest. Grounding whole foods are better than junk foods, though at times a little meat can be helpful.

5. Take care of others around you. It doesn't matter whether they appear like cartoon characters or ghosts for you. Give them the benefit of the doubt and be respectful as in normal life. If appropriate, communicate that you are aware of what is happening to you and are taking actions to rebalance yourself, so they can relax and don't need to act or engage services unnecessarily.

6. Try to avoid conflicts with others. If a situation with others becomes frightening or stirs anger in you, see if you can stop and reflect on it rather than going into an emotional autopilot pattern. Make apologies and withdraw to your safe space if you need to give yourself time to process the situation. Emotions are much stronger and faster in these states, so you must take more care how you manage interactions.

7. Respect your inner journey and the archetypal situations that may come up but do not take it all 'too' seriously. Focus on love, not perfectionism. This is important. Not too much seriousness and fear. Remember love! Reflect on what love is for you.

8. Take things easy and connect with people if you can. Speak with friends as well as others. Sometimes it is better to just say a little about what you are experiencing so there is an authentic connection, then focus on them. Connection with others is the most significant thing for stabilization.

9. A final warning. The mind can create all sorts of crazy ideas at times when in a spiritual psychosis. It's not just nonsense, but you must interpret the thoughts carefully!

When someone takes their own life or harms themselves or others while in a psychosis, they have been swept away by the negativity. This is unnecessary and very sad. The experiences can be very scary and intense at times, but we can learn to navigate them safely.

What you need to realize is that what is happening to you relates to your inner world, not your outer world. It is a kind of dream state even though you are awake and in your body! Rather than acting the emotions out in the world, it is better to express them in creative ways. Paint them out, sing them out, dance them out, howl them out.

But choose a safe space to do it in...

© Anthony Fidler March 2024

First Published in 'The Health Bible' – Ann Peggy Hjerte

<https://www.annpeggy.no/helsebibelen/>

Afterword: This article is written for people experiencing a spiritual crisis without having spent time on anti-psychotic / tranquiliser medication.

If you are already on them and want to come off, then it is important to taper off slowly ideally with emotional support from informed others.

Inner Compass Initiative: <https://www.theinnercompass.org/> is a good resource.

Disclaimer: There will always be some people who are unable to navigate their experience without extensive support and guidance. If this isn't available, then individuals and those caring for them will need to rely on psychiatric services. Hopefully the services will be humane and make use of medications for a limited time only, with a clear plan in place to come off them as soon as is appropriate.