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*Whole Life Thriving*

*YOUR THRIVING NATURE*  
**CURIOSITY**

**BONUS MATERIAL • PRACTICES & TOOLS**

*Curiosity is a healthy interest in our experience. It is discovery of our nature and the nature of things. Curiosity integrates connection and compassion so that we can appreciate what is, what is needed and yearned for, and what could be. To be curious is to be “wonder-full.”*

- from *Your Thriving Nature, Connect with Your Innate Wisdom and Wholeness*

## Overview

Curiosity is a whole person experience. It engages all of the senses as a way of being open and interested in the experience at hand and the interplay of the internal and external environment.

Curiosity recognizes that there are patterns, systems, and features present that can help deepen our understanding and our engagement with life. The key to curiosity is innate respect for the experience before us.

From that respect flows wonder, an openness to experience, that there are greater possibilities present. Curiosity supports us in exploring the dimensions of our experience and honoring the diversity inherent in nature—including the diversity within us as we honor the diversity around us.

# Curiosity Practices

## Practice wonder

Wonder is a consciousness, a way of being aware in our experience that includes acknowledging and engaging with the present. Here are a few practices to cultivate wonder:

Try a “Wonder Hour” every day for a week. During Wonder Hour, pause to wonder about the things you encounter. Wonder doesn’t have to take a prescribed length of time, it is a consciousness that applies in a momentary action or a longer encounter, for example:

Allowing a brief extra beat as you pick up your coffee mug, noticing the sensation of the mug in your hand and pausing silently or aloud to consider *“I wonder what material this mug is made of?”*

Noticing when someone becomes highly animated or agitated in a meeting, observing what your colleague is saying and how they are saying it with a silent pause to consider *“Hmm, I wonder what matters most to my colleague right now?”* and maybe even asking aloud *“I wonder what is most meaningful or important to you on this subject?”*

Recognizing a routine, such as driving or washing the dishes and pausing to consider, *“What it would be like to do this as if I was doing it for the first time?”*

## Use acknowledging to replace the habit of automatic labeling

Automatic labeling is a term I use for the habit categorizing things on their face as “positive” or “negative.” It is a barrier to wonder because once we’ve labeled something we often move to action without fully understanding the qualities, possibilities, and meaning held within the experience.

Develop acknowledging by noticing when you label something and pausing to say silently or aloud, *“I see” “I hear” “I feel” or “I understand”* followed by a brief description of what you have seen, heard, felt or what you believe you understand about a situation. Acknowledging does not mean we agree with or find whatever is before us appealing, it means we know or realize what is present.

# Curiosity Practices

## Follow-up acknowledging with engaging

Engaging is a way of seeking the usefulness of what lies before us rather than stopping at our initial label. It does not mean that we agree or accept participation in something unappealing to us. Rather, engaging means we stay curious longer for a fuller understanding that leads to actions that flow from wisdom. This means that instead of reacting with a label of “positive” or “negative” and moving straight to action, we explore with ourselves or others questions such as:

*What is the usefulness in this? What learning or wisdom can we gain?*

*What is this here to tell us we care about?*

*This is not the whole of the experience, what else is present or possible here?*

*If someone was explaining this to me as an opportunity, what would they say or show me?*

*If someone was explaining this to me as a concern, what would they say or show me?*

*What systems or patterns might this hint at?*

*What is emerging here?*

*What does my initial reaction tell me I value or care about?*

*What other values might apply in this situation?*

## Schedule time for experiments

Choose something in any area of your life that you would like to try, do differently, or stop doing and replace with something new and make an experiment of it.

# Intentions

Find a comfortable, quiet space to consider the following questions.

What does curiosity in being and experience mean to me?

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How has curiosity already served me, and how can I build on what has served me going forward?

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Why am I ready to practice curiosity differently or more deeply? What values or beliefs will this practice help me to embody?

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What immediate favorable actions will I take to cultivate curiosity in my life?

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How will I support myself in taking these actions? Who or what might support me?

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