Why Become?

By Glenn M. Smith

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After Shelley and I wrote *Creating Your BE-Print; Drafting Your Personal Blueprint for Living*, people have asked us some extraordinary questions. What would be so great about everybody becoming who he or she wants to be? Would the world be a better place if everyone were working towards being who he or she wants to be? What if someone wants to be hurtful to others? What do you believe about human nature and the role it would play in a person's progress toward becoming who he or she want to be? Would people become more "alike" as they work towards being who they want to be? How does anyone know who he or she is supposed to be?

I usually begin to answer these compelling questions by sharing our intent in developing the BE-Print. The BE-Print is about your creating a reference (an ideal) for how you want to operate during your years on this planet. It is about creating a benchmark to facilitate self-evaluation. It is a way to be clear about what you can and cannot control and to constantly monitor your progress toward reaching your ideal. It is about examining your core beliefs and defining principles to live by that serve your mind, body and spirit. A critical element in this process is aligning your core beliefs and principles with your actions. This process is not about becoming the person that your loved ones expect you to be, your teachers have taught you to be, your friends want you to be or your spiritual doctrines tells you to be. It is not about conforming to or rebelling against past advice. As we developed the BE-Print, we had no "ideal" person in mind because we believe there is no one ideal person we all "should" be. As Dianne Gossen would say "Be careful about *shoulding* on yourself or anyone else."

Of course the voices from loved ones, teachers, friends and spiritual teachings will play a part in developing your personal BE-Print. I believe that just as architects need blueprints to guide them in creating the structures they build, an individual's need a BE-Print to guide them to create the people they want to be. Creating your BE-Print is not only about making an agreement with yourself by creating a clear reference of who you aspire to be; it is also about self-evaluating your progress towards this reference, day to day, moment to moment. A simple and effective self-evaluation tool I use is KEEP – TOSS – ADD (KTA). As you practice ongoing self-evaluation, you ask yourself which core beliefs, principles, and actions you want to KEEP, which of them you want to TOSS, and what you want to ADD to create the person you really want to be.

After defining the intent of the BE-Print and sharing this simple self-evaluation tool, I then talk about how I am personally living the BE-Print process. I am presently working on

adding to my BE-Print the practice of becoming a better friend to myself. I am aspiring toward being an individual who is kind, forgiving, and patient with me. I am listening to the voice inside of me that says, "It is OK to make a mistake; I will learn from my mistakes and become stronger." "This too shall pass." "I am doing the best I know how at any given moment." "My life is a journey, not a destination." I am focusing on envisioning myself being a person acting and thinking in ways that help me be a good friend to myself. At the same time I am committed to letting go of a specific outcome. I am working toward evaluating myself on what I can control, who I am becoming, and not evaluating myself on what I cannot control, the results and how others view me at any given moment. I am committed to this process in order to be something, not to get something. I am finding that as I practice these ways of being a better friend to myself, I am naturally practicing being a better friend to others.

What answers have I found that I can share with others when they ask their extraordinary questions? I don't know. I don't know if it would be so great for everyone to live the BE-Print process, and I don't know if the world would be a better place if they did. There is no guarantee that people would value the greater good being as important as they value themselves, or neglect themselves for the sake of the greater good. I don't know if people who work through this process would become more alike and connected or if they would become more different and disconnected. I certainly don't know who anyone is supposed to be or where they can go to figure it out. So what do I know? I do know that I am healthier as I live this way. I like being accountable for my daily practices and I like evaluating myself on what I can control. I also believe that as I get stronger those around me are better off. As for you, I think you will have to answer these questions for yourself. I will bet that no two of us will have exactly the same answers.

So BE It!

glenn