

The background is a watercolor illustration of a landscape. It features a light beige sky at the top, followed by a range of mountains in soft, muted colors. Below the mountains is a wide, flat expanse of land, possibly a field or a plain, rendered in various shades of blue, green, and brown. The bottom portion of the image shows a body of water, depicted with warm, golden-brown and tan tones, suggesting a reflection of the sky and land. The overall style is soft and artistic, with visible brushstrokes and a textured, paper-like appearance.

TURNING INWARD

A REFLECTIVE JOURNEY

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From the Author

This collection of questions is offered as a resource for your growth and healing. The questions are grouped into different topics and sections. Each section can be reflected upon or responded to on its own, or you may wish to move slowly through the entire collection.

You may find yourself making notes and doodling on these pages while you reflect, writing full responses separately in a journal or notebook, or simply sitting quietly with the questions. You may feel called to share your responses with friends, peers, or mentors, bring your responses into your next therapy session, or keep them entirely to yourself.

You could use these questions to facilitate a variety of group experiences or kick off interesting conversations at dinner parties. You could also use a question or section to access different parts of yourself or spark your creative process.

You may even wish to commit to meeting regularly with a group of “fellow travelers” and working your way through the entire collection together. Really, the utility of this offering is only limited by your imagination. I’d encourage you to trust your intuition regarding how to proceed.

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. There are only *your* answers, which may sometimes be quite simple and other times quite complex and even confronting. I’d encourage you to be as honest and as compassionate with yourself as you can be.

Additionally, you may find the support and guidance of a mentor, counselor, or sponsor to be helpful as you explore some of these sections and questions. Strong memories and emotions may arise from time to time as you reflect and respond. Remember that it is a great strength to be able to ask for help, and that there is deep healing made possible when we share honestly with others.

Lastly, you may find it helpful to begin a session of reflection or writing by setting an intention, saying a prayer, or performing a ritual. You may find it beneficial to do something similar at the end of a session as well. Again, trust your intuition as to how you might like to proceed.

I hope that reflecting upon and responding to this collection of inquiries helps provide you with new insights, perspectives, and understandings, which ultimately translate into a greater sense of peace, satisfaction, and contentment in your life.

Wishing you a light heart and a clear mind.

Kindly,
Drew

Getting Started

Do you have any prior experience with taking a closer look at yourself and your life? If so, what was that like?

What's your motivation for wanting to take a deeper look at yourself at this time?

Do you have any big fears about what this kind of self-reflection might reveal or bring up?

Do you have any big hopes for what this kind of reflective journey might reveal?

Thoughts

What do you think about thoughts in general?

What are some of the most common thoughts you experience?

Are there thoughts you try to force or prefer over others?

Are there thoughts you are uncomfortable with or attempt to avoid at all costs?

When it comes to your thoughts, are you more likely to share with others or keep them to yourself?

Are there any particular topics or ideas which you feel more or less comfortable sharing about?

Are there any particular topics or ideas that you feel more or less comfortable with others sharing about?

Feelings

How do you feel about feelings in general?

What are some of the most common feelings you experience?

Are there feelings you try to force or prefer over others?

Are there feelings you are uncomfortable with or attempt to avoid at all costs?

When it comes to feelings, are you generally more expressive or reserved?

Are there any feelings which you feel more or less comfortable expressing?

Are there any feelings that you feel more or less comfortable with others feeling or expressing?

Behaviors

What do you think about behavior in general?

What are some of the most common behaviors you engage in?

Are there behaviors you try to force or prefer over others?

Are there behaviors you are uncomfortable with or attempt to avoid at all costs?

When it comes to behavior, are you generally more expressive or reserved?

Are there any particular behaviors which you feel more or less comfortable engaging in?

Are there any behaviors that you feel more or less comfortable with others engaging in?

Dreams

What do you think about dreams in general?

Do you remember your dreams? Or was there a time in the past when you did? What was that like?

Are there certain or specific dreams you remember fondly and like to recall?

Are there other dreams or nightmares that are less pleasant which you'd prefer not to remember?

Do you think that dreams have any connection to waking life? If so, how?

Have you ever become aware that you were dreaming *while you were in a dream*? If so, what was that like?

Has a dream every provided you with insight into a problem or situation you were dealing with in your waking life?

Friendships & Platonic Relationships

In your friendships & platonic relationships, are there any patterns that you've become aware of?

Are there similarities among former and current friends and platonic relationships?

In these relationships, are there any particular outcomes you try to force or prefer over others?

In these relationships, are there any outcomes that you attempt to avoid at all costs?

In your friendships & platonic relationships, are there any frequent thoughts or judgments that occur?

In your friendships & platonic relationships, are there any frequent feelings or emotions that occur?

In your friendships & platonic relationships, are there any frequent behaviors that occur?

Intimate & Romantic Relationships

In your intimate & romantic relationships, are there any patterns that you've become aware of?

Are there similarities among former and current intimate & romantic relationships?

In these relationships, are there any particular outcomes you try to force or prefer over others?

In these relationships, are there any outcomes that you attempt to avoid at all costs?

In your intimate & romantic relationships, are there any frequent thoughts or judgments that occur?

In your intimate & romantic relationships, are there any frequent feelings or emotions that occur?

In your intimate & romantic relationships, are there any frequent behaviors that occur?

Family Dynamics

In your immediate family, are there any patterns that you've become aware of?

In your extended family, are there any patterns that you've become aware of?

How would you describe your immediate family as a whole?

How would you describe your extended family as a whole?

How would you describe your your primary caregiver(s)?

How would you describe your sibling(s)?

How would you describe your relationship(s) with your primary caregiver(s)?

How would you describe your relationship(s) with your sibling(s)?

How would you describe the relationship your primary caregivers have with each other?

How would you describe the relationship your primary caregiver(s) have with your sibling(s)?

How would you describe the relationship your primary caregiver(s) have/had with their primary caregiver(s)?

Are there currently any unresolved or unaddressed issues or conflicts within your immediate or extended family system?

Workplace Relations

In your workplace relations, are there any patterns that you've become aware of?

Are there similarities among former and current co-worker relations?

Are there similarities among former and current supervisor, boss, or management relations?

In workplace relations, are there any particular outcomes you try to force or prefer over others?

In workplace relations, are there any outcomes that you attempt to avoid at all costs?

In your work relations, are there any frequent thoughts or judgments that occur?

In your work relations, are there any frequent feelings or emotions that occur?

In your work relations, are there any frequent behaviors that occur?

Work & School

In your education and employment, are there any patterns that you've become aware of?

Are there similarities among former and current jobs & places of employment?

Are there similarities among former and current education and schooling experiences?

In work or school settings, are there any particular outcomes you try to force or prefer over others?

In work or school settings, are there any outcomes that you attempt to avoid at all costs?

In work or school settings, are there any frequent thoughts or judgments that occur?

In work or school settings, are there any frequent feelings or emotions that occur?

In work or school settings, are there any frequent behaviors that occur?

Us & Them

What are the most common judgments or critical thoughts you have about yourself?

What are the most common judgments or critical thoughts you have about others?

How do you speak to yourself (in your own head)?
What tone(s) and/or vocabulary do you commonly use?

How do you speak to others (outloud)?
What tone(s) or vocabulary do you commonly use?

Are there any behaviors which you engage in that you judge yourself harshly for?

Are there any behaviors which you observe others engaging in that you judge harshly?

How do you feel about listening and holding space for someone who is going through a challenging time?

How do you feel about having someone listen and hold space for you during a challenging time?

Give & Take

Are there specific relationships in your life where you feel especially seen and supported? Which are these and why?

Are there any relationships in your life where you feel invisible, dismissed, or rejected? Which are these and why?

Are there any relationships in your life which feel especially balanced and reciprocal? Which are these and why?

Are there any relationships in your life which feel extremely one-sided (in one-way or another)?

Are there any relationships in your life that leave you feeling especially tired or drained after participating in them? Which ones and why?

Are there any relationships in your life that inspire and motivate you, leaving you feeling “filled up” after participating in them? Which ones and why?

Are there any relationships in your life in which you find yourself frequently needing to explain, justify, or defend your behavior or choices?

Are there any relationships in your life in which you find yourself frequently needing to explain or justify the behavior of the other person to yourself or others?

Past & Future

How do you feel, and what do you think, about your past generally?

How do you feel, and what do you think, about your future generally?

Are there experiences from your past that you prefer not to talk about or actively avoid talking about?

Are there any experiences from your past that you seem to focus on a lot or can't seem to get over?

Is there anything about your future that you try to avoid thinking about?

Is there anything about your future that you seem to focus on a lot or have a hard time not thinking about?

Are there any thoughts, feelings, or behaviors related to your past that you invest a lot of time and energy in?

Are there any thoughts, feelings, or behaviors related to your future that you invest a lot of time and energy in?

Significant Impact

Are there any specific books or pieces of art that have had a significant impact upon you and your life?

Are there any specific relationships that have had a tremendous impact upon you and your life?

Are there any psychedelic or altered state experiences that you've had which have had a significant impact upon you and your life?

Are there any moments, events, or relationships in your life where you can clearly see a difference in yourself and your life before and after?

Consistent Behaviors

Are there any behaviors that you consistently turn to during times of stress or for relief or distraction?

Are there any of these consistent behaviors that you would consider an addiction or addictive?

Are there any particular emotions, thoughts, or situations that you've noticed are frequently associated with any of these consistent behaviors?

Have you ever tried to stop or change any of these consistent behaviors? If so, how did that go?

Something's Missing?

Are there any emotions or feelings that you feel are absent or very infrequent in your experience?

Are there any thoughts or judgments that you feel are absent or very infrequent in your experience.

Are there any behaviors or actions that you feel are absent or very infrequent in your experience?

Are there any types of relationships which you feel are absent or lacking in your experience?

Do you have any judgments or criticisms about any of these potential absences?

Do you have any explanations or justifications about any of these potential absences?

Do you have any emotions or feelings about any of these potential absences?

Do you wish to engage in any type of behavior or activity because of any of these potential absences?

Mindfulness & Meditation

Do you have any prior experience with mindfulness or meditation? If so, what was it like?

Are there any particular thoughts or judgments that you associate with mindfulness and/or meditation?

Are there any particular feelings or memories that you associate with mindfulness and/or meditation?

Are there any particular behaviors or activities you associate with mindfulness and/or meditation?

Do you think that mindfulness and/or meditation could be beneficial for you and your journey? Why or why not?

Are there any particular mindfulness or meditative activities or practices that you feel more or less aligned with?

Are there any particular mindfulness or meditative activity or practice that you might like to participate in but haven't tried yet?

Journaling & Reflective Writing

Do you have any prior experience with journaling or reflective writing? If so, what was it like?

Are there any particular thoughts or judgments that you associate with journaling or reflective writing?

Are there any particular feelings or memories that you associate with journaling or reflective writing?

Are there any particular behaviors or activities you associate with journaling or reflective writing?

Do you think that journaling or reflective writing could be beneficial for you and your journey? Why or why not?

Are there any particular journaling or reflecting writing activities or practices that you feel more or less aligned with?

Are there any particular journaling or reflective writing activities or practices that you might like to participate in but haven't tried yet?

Community

Do you have any prior experience with being a member of a community, group, or organization? If so, what was it like?

Are there any particular thoughts or judgments that you associate with being a part of a community, group, or organization?

Are there any particular feelings or memories that you associate with being a part of a community, group, or organization?

Are there any particular behaviors or activities you associate with being a part of a community, group, or organization?

Do you think that being part of a community, group, or organization could be beneficial for you and your journey? Why or why not?

Are there any particular communities, groups, or organizations that you feel more or less aligned with?

Are there any particular communities, groups, or organizations that you might like to participate in but haven't tried yet?

Self-Care

Do you have any prior experience with self-care? If so, what was it like?

Are there any particular thoughts or judgments that you associate with self-care?

Are there any particular feelings or memories that you associate with self-care?

Are there any particular behaviors or activities you associate with self-care?

Do you think that investing in self-care could be beneficial for you and your journey? Why or why not?

Are there any particular self-care activities or practices that you feel more or less aligned with?

Are there any particular self-care activities or practices that you might like to participate in but haven't tried yet?

Reflecting & Closing

How do you feel now as a result of reflecting upon and responding to these questions?

Are there any new perspectives or insights that have been revealed or gained as a result of reflecting upon and responding to these questions?

Were there any responses to questions or sections that surprised you? If so, which one(s) and why?

Were there any questions or sections you can see yourself returning to for additional reflection and/or writing? Which one(s) and why?

Do you think that your reflections and responses might affect or impact your future decisions or behavior in any way? If so, how?

Are there any areas of your life or topics which you feel have not been addressed here, which you would like write, reflect, or share on/about?

Are there any responses to questions or sections that you think would be beneficial to share with a peer, mentor, or counselor? Which ones, and who might you want to share with?



 Suburban Sadhu 

RECOVER - HEAL - AWAKEN

Drew Assini, MA is a person in long-term recovery who spent over a decade working in mental health and addiction treatment before leaving the traditional clinical paradigm behind to collaborate with folks in a more intuitive and impactful way.

You can learn more about Drew and his current approach by visiting www.suburbansadhu.org.