

Opening to the Mystery of Who You Are

Catherine Nelson, Ph.D.

Recently I was with a small group of people who came together to go on a snowshoe hike in the Madisons. At the end of our five-hour hike we were all tired and decided to share a meal at a nearby restaurant before driving home.



We sat at a long wooden table and we had time and space to talk with each other for a few hours. I always enjoy meeting people. There was a retired lawyer who is deeply committed to the conservation of wilderness. There was a couple originally from Oklahoma who now live in Ennis. There was an architect; a woman who was an accountant for her husband's business; a MSU professor who taught biochemistry; and a young woman from California who climbs rocks and cliff walls. Can you feel the richness and diversity of personalities in this group?

We human beings share a lot in common physically, emotionally, and mentally. For example we have similar skeletal structures, brain functions, and sensory abilities. Yet I marvel how we are each unique and different from every other person. What sounds contradictory is actually true. We are like all other human beings and we are each like no other human being. No cloning here.

The question I have is how and in what ways do we become unique? Are there innate characteristics, born personality types, and natural tendencies that can help us understand and even predict each

other's behavior? For some of us the search goes even deeper in wanting to grasp our life purpose.

At the macro level there is so much to consider—our culture, our community, our family, and many other external influences into which we are born. If we look at the micro-level of personality and life patterns, there are numerous theories both ancient and current to explore.

For example there is Astrology, which is thousands of years old in its origins and variations. The day, year, and time of your birth has great significance to those who can track the corresponding positions of planets and other heavenly bodies and explain the importance of it all. Astrologers can describe in detail and predict one's life path, behavioral propensities, financial tendencies and compatibility with others to name but a few of the many insights available in this framework. What is your sign and do you know how the heavenly bodies will impact you in 2016? Guaranteed you will be impacted.

Another entirely different path to understanding and predicting human behavior is Numerology, which can be traced back to Pythagoras almost 2500 years ago. Numerologists can identify your life path, personality characteristics, your destiny, and much more from your birth date, the number of letters in your full name, etc.

You can even learn which days are most compatible for making important decisions.

A third study of human behavior has its origins in Phrenology but in contemporary time, there is much more knowledge of what is

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**Catherine Nelson,
M.A., Ph.D.**

*Graduate & former teacher
at the Barbara Brennan
School of Healing &
Certified Pathwork Helper*

now called the structure and function of the human body. There are facial structures and physical body structures that seem to correlate with different emotional, mental and behavioral traits. Simply stated some people are long legged while others are short legged. Long legged individuals are more likely to want to sit down to relax and rest whereas short-legged people are more comfortable moving and doing. Sometimes life partners with the two different body types will have trouble understanding each other's "needs" simply because of the innate tendencies based on different physical structures.

Personality traits are often related to certain facial characteristics. In looking at the trait of "self-confidence," the person with a square shaped face tends to be innately self confident where a person with a long narrow face learns to become self confident over time through life experiences. Many physical facial traits (e.g. eyebrows, lips) can reveal information about particular emotional traits which in turn helps to understand why some people make the choices they do.

In these three sample theoretical perspectives each provides a different focus and logic on how to perceive human behavior. In a way this reminds me of holding a crystal in my hand observing it's many facets. Human beings are incredibly complex and yet there are ways to use different well established "codes" to see more, to perceive natural tendencies, emotional traits from birth, as well as innate abilities and talents and ultimately appreciate how special and how unique each individual is.

Even though I did not know many of the people in the group that day, in listening to the conversations and laughter in the restaurant, I could begin to recognize with great enjoyment some of the innate talents and characteristics of different people.

I once read that every person comes into a lifetime by choice and his or her soul has two purposes. One is to develop spiritually to help the soul become whole and the other purpose is to bring one's innate gifts and talents into the world. Are you aware of your natural talents and abilities and have you brought them forward to share with the world? ■

Catherine Nelson, Ph.D., has a counseling practice in Bozeman with over 20 years of experience working with individuals and groups. She has taught at the Barbara Brennan School of Healing and has been a certified Pathwork Helper for over 16 years. She offers workshops on personal transformation and energy healing. Call Catherine at (406) 585-8025 or e-mail cnhobbit@gmail.com.

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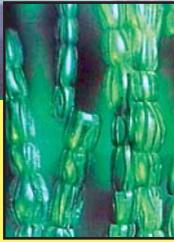
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