

## Locating myself - step one in getting from here to there

So, you find yourself the navigator in a rental car driving from the Paris airport to your destination, a hotel in the middle of Paris. The general direction is fairly clear, and after a while, even though you know you're 'pretty close', you notice that you've just driven by an impressive building (for the second time!), and you can feel the anxiety in your belly begin to rise! It quickly becomes apparent that the next step is in fact to pinpoint your exact location on the map (currently sitting idle in your lap!) That done, the route to the hotel is easily noted, and you get there in time for a nap before dinner, and a night on the town.

Another example - I'm in Toronto, and I want to get to the Lake ... no problem, I know I just head south and if I keep going, I can't miss it! That's very true, the challenge becomes locating and in this case ORIENTING myself. Once I've done that, the task is simple. IF however I misinterpret my orientation - I THINK I'm heading south, but in fact am heading north, I'll NEVER find the lake, and I can keep going on Yonge Street for a very long time!!

And so it is in life. We have all had the experience of feeling lost and confused, even when we are clear about where we want to go (a task in itself!). However, if we don't take the time to figure out our location AT THIS MOMENT, we can wander in increasing anxiety. So our journey becomes far more difficult than it need be. We expend all kinds of energy we might have used in other creative endeavours, and, we find ourselves in a place (situation) VERY different from the one we wanted.

There are times of course, when those unexpected turns result in the pleasure of the discovery of unknown treasures - that meeting of someone you just 'know' will be a forever friend, or an opportunity that you had never before encountered 'presents itself'. Those gift or grace moments are easy to recognize and celebrate!

But, listen to your gut! In those moments when you 'feel' uneasy - something is just not 'sitting right', words don't 'ring true', the picture seems 'fuzzy'. This is the time to stop. To take a few deep breaths and center yourself. To check in with your inner gyroscope or GPS and gently wonder about your location, your orientation, and your desired destination.

When you've discovered where you are, and the direction in which you're heading, alternative routes become clearer, and choices about what you really want more obvious. And THAT makes for gentle AND exciting living!!