

# You're Awake. Now What?

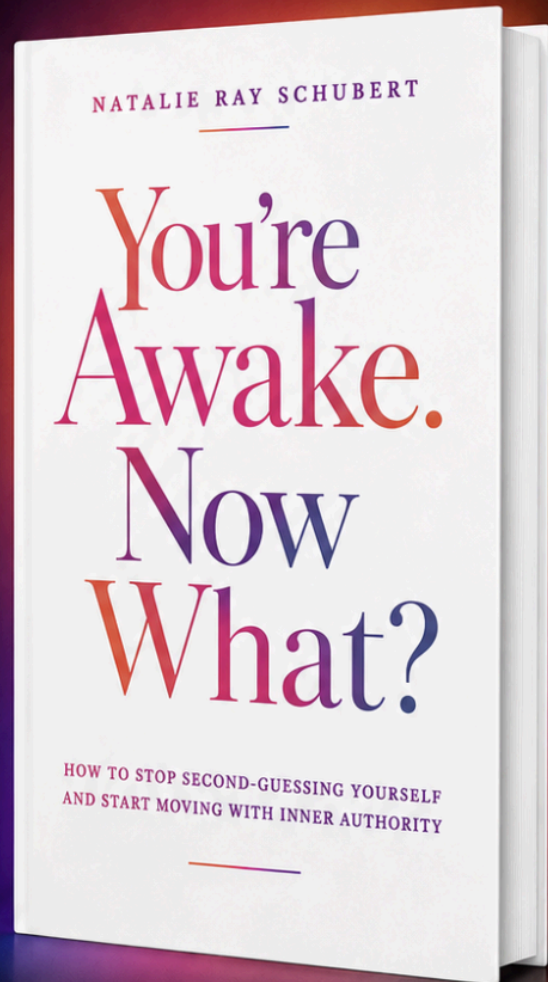
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Stop second-guessing yourself  
and start moving with  
inner authority.

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# **You're Awake. Now What?**

How to Stop Second-Guessing Yourself  
and Start Moving with Inner Authority

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This book is a work of original insight, experience, and creative expression.

Any references to known spiritual teachers, teachings, or practices are acknowledged with respect and are used to support the author's unique synthesis of lived wisdom.

This content is intended for educational and inspirational purposes only.

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# **Part One**

Orient

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A Message to the Spiritual Gangsta' in You**

You didn't plan for this.

Maybe it began quietly, with a growing sense that the life you built no longer fully contained you. Maybe it arrived through burnout, heartbreak, illness, loss, or a moment so synchronistic it cracked your understanding of reality wide open. However it happened, something inside you changed. You started sensing more depth beneath surface conversations, more awareness inside your own body, and more intelligence moving underneath everyday life.

The structures that once gave your life meaning began feeling different. Your career, relationships, goals, identity, and even the way you moved through ordinary moments no longer felt quite the same. Awakening is not just about becoming aware of more. It is about learning how to live inside that expanded awareness without losing yourself in the process.

That is the part almost nobody talks about.

How do you move through everyday life when your inner world has fundamentally changed but the outside world still expects you to function the same way?

Think of it like finding your sea legs. You haven't lost the ability to walk. The ground has changed. You've stepped onto a ship that is already moving, and your nervous system is learning to navigate an entirely new kind of terrain.

The disorientation that follows is real. The things that once grounded you no longer fit the same way. You may feel isolated, emotionally raw, misunderstood, or detached from the life you spent years building. This is the Sacred In-Between — the bridge between who you were and who you are becoming.

I wrote this book for the person standing in that space, where the old identity no longer fits but the new self has not fully stabilized yet. I wrote it to help you stop second-guessing what you already feel deep inside yourself, and to help you begin actualizing the awakened self instead of only experiencing glimpses of it.

You might think something has gone wrong at this stage because you keep searching for certainty, when what you actually need is orientation — a way to start moving forward with inner authority.

If you have ever made a decision and then spent the next three days quietly un-making it, asked five people what they thought and trusted none of the answers, or felt something clearly in your body and then talked yourself out of it by morning, you already get it. Somewhere you learned to look everywhere except inside yourself for permission to trust. That is what we are going to change.

### ***My Own Sacred In-Between***

My own awakening did not begin in a temple, a meditation retreat, or a mountaintop ceremony. It began through the cracks in my own becoming.

Less than a year after leaving the United States Air Force as a Captain and Air Combat Controller, I found myself completely disoriented. I had a Master's Degree in Aeronautical Science, years of leadership experience, ingrained discipline, and a life that looked successful by every conventional standard. I had done what so many of us are taught to do: work hard, achieve, perform, and keep climbing.

From the outside, my life looked solid. Internally, I felt restless in ways I could not explain. Eventually I realized I wanted to know who I was beyond the uniform, beyond the expectations, and beyond the identity I had carefully built.

So I left.

I didn't have some brilliant master plan waiting on the other side. I had no idea how any of it was going to work out. What I did know was that I could no longer ignore the part of me that wanted more aliveness, more expansion, more direct experience with life itself.

Did I land comfortably outside the military landscape?

Yeah. No.

Within a year, my car was repossessed. I declared bankruptcy. There were months when I slept in my car while attending massage school at night and working temp jobs during the day for ten dollars an hour. I remember wondering how someone could do everything "right" and still end up completely face-planted onto the pavement of life.

Yet underneath the shock, something else was quietly happening. Even in the hardest moments, I could not imagine going back to my old life without at least trying to experience freedom. I already knew what it felt like to be stable but disconnected, safe but numb, outwardly successful yet internally restless.

Ironically, my first attempt at freedom gave me poverty. It also gave me presence and depth.

For the first time, I began meeting people who lived completely differently than anyone I had known. Artists, healers, wanderers, musicians, seekers. Many of them had no idea where their next dollar was coming from, yet they did not carry the same fear around money I had been conditioned to carry. What impacted me most was not what they believed. It was how alive they felt. When they spoke to me, it felt like they were actually seeing me, instead of interacting with the role I played in the world.

I had never felt so alive and so poor at the exact same time.

On my way to work, I remember riding the metro into downtown Atlanta and noticing the posture of the people around me. Heads lowered, bodies collapsed inward. This was before cell phones trained everyone to stare downward, so what I was witnessing was not distraction. I remember thinking very clearly: I am in survival energy too, but I do not identify with it.

After a couple of months, I remember looking up toward the Universe and saying something like, "Okay, this is starting to feel a little more permanent than I expected, so if you could help me out here, that would be great." Then I let it go. I did not obsess over it or try to force solutions. I simply returned to the life in front of me.

Then one day, while I was at my temp job, my pager went off.

Yep. This was the 90's.

It was the Army Corps of Engineers offering me a job and in a single conversation, my entire sense of stability changed. There was only one problem. I did not even have enough money to rent a U-Haul for the relocation. So I calmly told them I would accept the position under one condition: they needed to take care of all my moving expenses.

They agreed and just like that, my next rise began.

I was returning to my comfort zone, back toward certainty and structure and out of survival mode. All I wanted was to stop being poor and chase money. Yet part of me knew I was leaving something behind, even though I couldn't name it. It would take years to understand that the gift was never in what I was walking toward. It was in what I had the courage to walk away from.

Years later, I had rebuilt my life and become a self-made millionaire. From the outside, it looked like freedom. Inside my body, I felt completely disconnected from myself.

Then my body began sounding alarms I could no longer ignore. Pre-diabetes. Adrenal collapse. Osteopenia. Exhaustion that sleep could not fix. The joy I thought success would bring never arrived.

So I left that life and chose me. This time, I trusted my journey into the unknown instead of running back toward certainty.

Over the last two decades, I have guided thousands of clients through profound inner transformation as an Advanced QHHT Practitioner personally trained by Dolores Cannon. Somewhere along the way, I became one of the butterfly people too.

What I have witnessed across all of these sessions is that your higher self is almost always far less intense than the human mind. Most of the pressure, urgency, and fear of “getting it wrong” comes from the part of you that believes you are somehow behind, failing, or missing your awakening.

The most consistent message I have heard, session after session, is this: there are no supposed-to's. No script you are failing to follow, no cosmic checklist you forgot to complete. You came here to explore themes and illuminate your own authentic self.

The burning question clients ask more than any other is: “What is my purpose?” The answer is almost always some version of: to help, to love, to serve. But here is the part people miss — it starts with you. You serve by becoming the most illuminated version of yourself you can be. Others feel it. That is how a single soul frequency lifts an entire room, neighborhood, city...you get the idea.

You are allowed to be a work in progress and still be entirely worthy of being here.

A Spiritual Gangsta is not someone who has it all figured out. It is someone who has stopped waiting for permission to trust what is unfolding.

Perhaps that's why this book found its way into your hands. Some part of you already knows there is more waiting beyond what you've been taught to trust.

The old map no longer fits. You are recalibrating, remembering and learning how to trust yourself again.

You're not lost, Spiritual Gangsta'.

You're awake.

Now what?

# Chapter 1

## The Sacred In-Between

What Your Body Knows Before Your Mind Will Admit It

*“The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are.” — Carl Jung*

I wish I could tell you I arrived at these insights because I was exceptionally wise. The truth is that many of my greatest spiritual lessons arrived after exhausting every other option.

For years, I tried to navigate life using the same strategies that had helped me survive. I thought harder, analyzed more, accommodated more and tried to be understanding, responsible, and a good person. I tried to make things work. If effort could solve it, I was willing to give more effort. If thinking could solve it, I had thousands of thoughts ready to go.

Often from the outside, much of it looked like it was working. I was busy and had achieved many of the things I was told would bring fulfillment. I earned the degrees, built the businesses and made the money. I checked all the boxes.

Yet somewhere along the way, I lost contact with myself.

I didn't recognize it at first because survival patterns rarely announce themselves. They simply become normal. They become the water we swim in. What once helped us belong, succeed, avoid rejection, or stay safe slowly becomes the way we move through the world.

Until one day it doesn't work anymore.

For me, the awakening journey wasn't born from being a model student of spirituality. Awakening has many doorways. Yours may have arrived through loss, illness, heartbreak, a spiritual experience, or a growing sense that life no longer fit the way it once did. Mine arrived through the slow realization that the life I had built no longer felt like my own.

My mind was willing to keep negotiating, to keep making adjustments, keep finding another reason to stay where I was. My body, however, had an entirely different opinion.

My body, my nervous system, knew before my mind did when I was saying yes while feeling overwhelmed, when I was carrying responsibilities that weren't mine, when I was trying to force a radio station that no longer came in clearly.

There were years I lived with a signal that wouldn't quite come in — full of static, strain, and efforting. I was frenetic and kept trying to make this complicated station work for me.

Eventually my body reached a conclusion my mind was unwilling to accept. Not one more step, accommodation, or attempt to earn worth or become who everyone else needed me to be.

At the time, that felt like failure. Looking back, I see it was my fragmented self asking me to come back home.

Perhaps that is one of the greatest misunderstandings about awakening. We imagine it arrives because we finally figured it all out. We imagine it arrives because we became enlightened enough to receive it.

Sometimes awakening arrives because we simply cannot continue living the way we have been living and the body becomes unwilling to pay the price that the soul can no longer afford.

If you find yourself exhausted, questioning everything, unable to tolerate what once seemed normal, I want you to know something important. It may mean that something deeper within you is finally refusing to negotiate away who you are.

There comes a moment in an awakening journey when the cost of checking out on yourself becomes greater than the fear of being yourself.

The discomfort is coming from becoming unable to continue being someone you're not.

That is often what awakening feels like in the beginning. For me, that moment felt like surrender. Surrendering the exhausting effort of trying to be someone I was never meant to be.

You feel it, even if you can't fully name it.

Something is unraveling. Something inside you is shifting in ways you can't explain. The things that once anchored you, old goals, old roles, even old relationships, suddenly feel like a frequency you no longer broadcast.

You didn't plan for this. Something inside you has expanded past the edges of what your old life was built to hold, and now there's no going back to the version of yourself who could comfortably live inside the old world.

Maybe you've noticed the spark fading from things that used to excite you. Maybe certain conversations feel hollow, or your body hums with restless energy at night. Maybe emotions come in waves you can't predict, and you find yourself quietly wondering, "What is happening to me?"

Pause here for a second. Just notice where you are right now while reading this. In bed at the end of a long day. In your car before going into a building you don't want to walk into. On the couch while everyone else in the house pretends not to notice you've been quieter than usual. Wherever you are, your body already knows something it hasn't fully

told your mind yet. The rest of this book is helping the two of them have the conversation.

Awakening is a real, physical, energetic recalibration of your entire system. It can feel as though your emotional body, identity, and perception of reality are all reorganizing themselves at the same time. A deeper, truer self is ready to emerge. All that you are that no longer matches it, is simply making room.

It can feel as though reality itself has changed overnight. In truth, what has often changed first is your capacity to perceive it. You are seeing, feeling, noticing and sensing more. The emotional dynamics in a room that once passed beneath your awareness suddenly feel loud. The roles you once performed without question begin feeling tight, artificial, or impossible to sustain.

At first, that can feel disorienting. You can see what no longer fits before you know what comes next. You can recognize old patterns while still living inside them.

That is why this phase feels so strange. You are no longer fully identified with the old world, but you have not yet stabilized in the new one. Your perception has expanded first. Your life is still catching up.

This chapter is a permission slip to stop performing a version of yourself that you have already outgrown. You're standing at the edge of something entirely new, and the discomfort you feel is the sensation of your inner world expanding faster than your outer life has caught up. What once felt motivating may now feel like interference. You may need to slow down to let what is actually trying to come through catch up to you.

At the beginning of my own awakening, all I knew was that everything around me felt like it was dissolving and I couldn't hold onto the person I had been. There were days when the life I had built felt like a role I couldn't stop performing. That's the initiation. It sometimes arrives as the opposite of bliss. Sometimes it begins as burnout, anxiety, or a quiet understanding that something is off, and the part of you that has expanded past the old story can no longer pretend it's not.

I remember sitting in family conversations during Christmas, smiling, nodding, and participating while quietly feeling disconnected from the entire reality happening around me. I love my family, but something inside me no longer knew how to fully participate in the old emotional patterns and conversations I once moved through so naturally. That kind of loneliness is difficult to explain unless you have lived it yourself.

Many of us quietly hide the very part of ourselves that is beginning to come online during awakening because we don't want to be seen as crazy.

We begin having experiences we cannot fully explain logically, even to ourselves. Some become far more intuitive, sense things before they happen. We walk into rooms and instantly feel emotional dynamics without anyone speaking. We feel deeply connected to energy, synchronicities, nature, animals, or unseen intelligence in ways we never did

before. Some of us begin sensing guides, frequencies, timelines, or dimensions that completely challenge the way we once understood reality.

At first, these experiences can feel interesting or even beautiful. Then they can feel confusing, even disturbing. Your mind tries to make sense of what is happening.

That was certainly true for me. I came into this open minded but pragmatic, the kind of person who wanted things to make sense before accepting them. It took experiences I genuinely could not explain away to loosen that grip, and even then I spent a long time negotiating with what I was seeing.

If something similar has happened to you, there is a good chance you haven't been running through the streets announcing it. More likely, you've found yourself sitting alone afterward wondering, "What is happening to me?"

You may have become surprisingly skilled at looking normal while privately carrying experiences that have completely altered how you see reality. Maybe you edit yourself in conversations. Maybe you test the waters before sharing anything meaningful or you say you're fine even though something much deeper is unfolding beneath the surface.

Awakening rarely arrives all at once with clean explanations attached. It often arrives in fragments. A feeling you can't quite explain. A knowing that appears before the evidence. A moment when something inside you recognizes more than your logical mind can comfortably account for.

You begin realizing that the version of yourself that carried you this far cannot fully contain what is emerging now. Your beliefs are expanding. Your perception is changing. Yet you may not know how to comfortably live inside this newer experience of yourself.

That can be a lonely place.

You may find yourself trying to reconcile two completely different realities at the same time. One part of you still wants certainty, logic, safety, and social acceptance. Another part is beginning to recognize something much deeper.

Over time, awakening becomes less about collecting extraordinary experiences and more about becoming willing to trust what you already know.

Your sensitivity begins to feel less like a flaw and more like a form of intelligence. And maybe the hardest part of awakening was never learning how to reach these deeper parts of yourself.

Maybe it is learning how to stop hiding them.

You may have felt that hiding last week at a dinner you didn't want to be at. You may be feeling it right now, reading this on a Sunday afternoon while the rest of the world seems to know how to belong to itself in a way you used to and somehow no longer do.

If so, I want you to know you are not the only one. Right now, someone else is carrying the same quiet knowing, in the same kind of room, wondering the same thing about themselves.

Something no longer fits. You are outgrowing a frequency that can no longer contain who you are becoming.

I thought awakening would help me find my people.

Instead, it first asked me to stop hiding from them.

There is something else that can happen at this stage that almost no one warns you about. When you first wake up, the world can actually look much darker at first. Your perception has expanded to include energies the old conditioning kept filtered out. The façade. The illusion. The dynamics you used to walk past without seeing. The systems, the quiet manipulations, the suffering that was always there.

This is part of what people call the dark night of the soul. You may feel grief you cannot fully explain. Some of it is not even personal, it is collective. You have risen out of slumber and you can now see what the slumber was filtering. That is what expanded perception actually feels like in the early stages.

What is actually happening is that you have new perception bandwidth. You can now see all of the crayons in the crayon box. Every color. The beautiful ones and the heavy ones. They are all here. They have always been here. You just could not see them before.

The work in this phase is to release the judgment about certain crayons existing at all. Every being on this planet is having an experience on their own radio station, both AM and FM. Some are tuned to AM. Some to FM. Some are still slumbering inside the static. Let them have their journey.

You will learn exactly how to work with these stations in Chapter 2. For now, just notice which one you are on.

Awakening is not only about seeing more. It is also about learning where you place your focus once you can see.

At first, expanded perception can feel like drinking from a firehose, suddenly aware of so much more all at once. The beauty, the suffering, the manipulation, love, fear, unconsciousness and all the possibilities. You can become hyperfocused on the darker frequencies because they are newly visible. No wonder it feels heavy at first. That heaviness is the sign that something opened.

Over time, something begins shifting.

You start understanding that awareness and attachment are two different things. You can recognize lower frequencies without emotionally building your home inside them. You can acknowledge suffering without becoming consumed by it. You begin realizing that your focus and your frequency are constantly calibrating your experience of reality.

The more time you spend reconnecting with yourself, slowing down, being present, spending time in nature, meditating, creating, breathing, and listening to your own inner signal instead of constantly absorbing external static, the more your system naturally begins stabilizing into a different frequency entirely.

Life begins feeling less hostile and more alive. More connected. More responsive.

You may begin noticing meaningful synchronicities, moments of deep intuition, a stronger sense of guidance, or a feeling that life is communicating with you in ways you never noticed before. You are finally becoming coherent enough to perceive more of it.

At the same time, another part of the journey begins unfolding internally.

This is the Sacred In-Between.

What once felt stable begins feeling unbearably small, and the strange part is that nothing on the outside may have changed yet. You can be standing in the same relationships, the same routines, the same career, the same body, and yet internally it feels as though the entire architecture of your reality is shifting underneath your feet.

Awakening sometimes arrives as clearing rather than addition. Everything that was never truly yours making its way out. Beneath all of it, something deeper is emerging, the real version of you. The true you wants presence over performance, and aliveness over the exhausting chase for self-worth. This is why this season can feel both terrifying and sacred at the same time.

You are learning how to operate without the old map, and your identity is reorganizing around truth. Although it may feel like all that you understood is becoming uncertain, something far more honest is finally beginning.

Awakening doesn't always arrive with fireworks. Sometimes it begins as the quiet crumbling sound of the old world breaking open inside you. If you're feeling it, you're exactly where you're supposed to be.

Sometimes the most transformational thing you can do during this phase is stop forcing premature clarity. Presence creates more access to truth than pressure ever will.

You are not in the waiting room. You are in the rewiring womb. Nothing about this phase is passive. You are reorganizing yourself around a truth you have been moving toward your entire life.

That was one of the hardest lessons of my own journey, and it took me a long time to understand why.

Have you ever been the kind of person who could eventually figure anything out, the one people relied on, the one who didn't wait around for clarity but created it? That was me for most of my life. Building businesses, creating financial success, moving things forward. Then something shifted. It didn't feel like I lost my capability. It felt like the

tools that had always carried me had hit the ceiling of what they could build. Still intelligent, still capable, and yet operating from an entirely different terrain my old toolkit wasn't designed for. The capability was intact. The approach needed to evolve.

Every instinct built from the old system said the same thing: lean in harder. So I did what I had always done. I thought more deeply. I analyzed what was happening, believing that if I could just understand it well enough, I would regain the forward movement I was searching for. What I could not see at the time was that the harder I worked the problem, the further I got from the answer. Why that was true would take me longer to understand.

Looking back, I can see something now that I couldn't then. I wasn't stuck in the way I thought I was. I was circling. I was moving, but not moving forward. Sometimes the nervous system uses constant motion to avoid presence. Stillness can initially feel threatening to a system that learned safety through managing, anticipating, fixing, or preparing. Stillness is not stagnation. It is where the deeper signal lives.

So I stopped trying to force myself forward long enough to actually listen to what was happening inside me. I was burnt out, exhausted from trying to think my way through an experience that clearly wasn't asking to be solved intellectually.

I needed relief. I found a brain entrainment meditation that helped guide me into stillness when I couldn't access it on my own, and although it seemed small at the time, that simple act of surrender became the beginning of a massive shift in my awakening.

What I understand now is that the in-between was a doorway. The world around me didn't suddenly change overnight, but my relationship to myself did.

Little by little, I stopped building my life from survival and started learning how to live from trusting myself. I began noticing how different my decisions felt when they came from peace rather than pressure, panic and fear. How much clarity became available when I stopped trying to force certainty before I was ready.

I began paying attention to what my body, emotions, and inner world had been trying to communicate all along. I started noticing which environments left me feeling contracted and emotionally drained, which conversations felt genuine and which ones felt performative, and where I was quietly disconnecting from myself in order to maintain harmony, belonging, or approval. That awareness became the beginning of real self-trust. Awakening was really a process of releasing the identities, roles, and survival patterns that no longer matched who I already was underneath all the conditioning.

Pay attention to where you're scolding yourself. That critical voice — the one cataloguing everything you got wrong — is not your higher mind. It's your wounded ego, and it will keep you treading water in the deep end on AM radio if you let it run the station.

So tell yourself something truer: I'm figuring it out, and that's the assignment. You didn't come here to be perfect. The intense lessons, the ones that produce real shame

were never meant for you to harbor shame afterward. You experienced them so your soul could grow, and your soul is full of gratitude that you were willing to come into this land of forgetfulness and bump around down here at all.

Be your own best friend while you're here. That's how your higher self loves you — without the scorekeeping. I got a glimpse of what that feels like through listening to “I Only Have Eyes for You” by Art Garfunkel. If you're like me, let yourself hear it as if your higher self were singing it to you.

### ***The Orientation Practice***

For now, rather than asking yourself, “What's wrong with me?”, try asking a question that actually fits where you are:

“What no longer feels true for me?”

Notice what drains you and what energizes you. Notice where you feel yourself performing and where you feel most like yourself. Pay attention to the places where your body relaxes and the places where it tightens.

You don't need a journal or a quiet hour for this. You can run it in ten seconds, standing in a doorway you don't want to walk through. Here is the portable version. Picture whatever is in front of you right now — the meeting, the text, the dinner, the relationship. Ask: *What no longer feels true here?* Then don't answer with your mind. Drop the question into your body and notice which way it moves — does something open, or does something tighten? That's the whole practice. You're not deciding anything yet. You're just taking a reading.

You are allowed to move slowly right now. You are learning how to trust your own knowing. You are learning what it feels like to make decisions without forcing, pushing, or demanding immediate certainty.

If you're anything like most awakening souls, you're probably reading about the Sacred In-Between and wondering how long it lasts.

The goal is to become honest enough to recognize what in your current life genuinely belongs to the real you and what was built for a version of you that has already been outgrown. Awareness comes before alignment, and the more honestly you observe yourself without judgment, the easier it becomes to hear the deeper truth underneath the noise.

Think of the last time you felt your stomach drop at the thought of something you were about to do. Not fear of something dangerous. Just a quiet, persistent wrongness that had no good explanation. Your mind probably overrode it. Your body filed it away and kept sending the signal anyway.

A woman once told me she had been waking up at 2am for two years. Every single night, the same hour, the same low-grade dread. She had tried so many things to fix the insomnia. When I asked her what she thought her body was trying to say, she went quiet. Then she said: I think it knows I need to leave my marriage. Her mind had been too loud to hear it during the day. The body had been delivering the message every night anyway.

Another client, Cheryl, came to me completely exhausted by the life she was living. On paper, she looked stable. She had a good corporate job, reliable income, benefits, and the kind of career many people would have been grateful to have. But inside, she felt trapped. Every morning felt heavy before her feet even touched the floor. She no longer felt respected at work, yet the thought of leaving terrified her. Almost instantly, her mind began generating every possible disaster.

What if I can't support myself?

What if I leave and regret it?

What if I end up broke?

What if I never find something aligned?

Like so many people during awakening, she was standing between two identities at once. One part of her already knew the old chapter was ending. Another part was gripping the familiar because uncertainty still felt unsafe.

During her session, the guidance that came through was surprisingly simple and calming. She was told very clearly that she was going to be leaving the job. The transition was already unfolding. She did not need to force it, panic, or obsess over how it would happen. Breadcrumbs would appear in perfect timing.

Then came the part that shifted everything emotionally.

She was encouraged to stop mentally rehearsing fear all day long and begin relating to her life differently right now, before anything had physically changed. The job no longer had to be viewed as a prison sentence. It could become something she appreciated for a little while longer, knowing she would soon be leaving it behind.

Notice the drive to work, she was told, because you won't be making it much longer. Notice the people in the office. The view from your window. The chapter is already becoming a memory; you might as well be here for the end of it.

I watched her shoulders drop as she listened. The job hadn't changed. The fear that had been running her morning had. By the end of the session she wasn't white-knuckling an exit anymore. She was almost curious about how it would unfold, the way you are at the start of a trip you didn't fully plan.

If you feel alone during this phase, the aloneness is not a sign that something is wrong with your path. It is often a sign that your internal world is changing faster than your external one, and the people around you may not yet have language for what you are moving through. That experience can feel isolating, but it is often part of standing at the leading edge of your own growth.

There is a fragile season during awakening when it becomes tempting to disappear on yourself simply to feel connected again. You may feel pressure to return to old identities because they were accepted, familiar, and easier for other people to understand. Yet constantly shrinking yourself to maintain belonging creates a deeper kind of loneliness, the loneliness of sitting in a room full of people while feeling disconnected from your own truth.

Each time you choose honesty over performance, alignment over self-erasure, and presence over force, you strengthen your relationship with yourself. You begin building the inner authority that the rest of this journey depends upon. This is how embodiment begins. Not through a single breakthrough moment, but through repeated acts of internal honesty.

Awakening asks for honesty, not performance. The confusion, uncertainty, and emotional disorientation that often accompany this phase are signs that your relationship with yourself is changing. Something deeper is reorganizing beneath the surface. Over time, the inner landscape stabilizes. Decisions begin feeling cleaner. Self-trust grows stronger. You stop needing every answer right away because your relationship with yourself becomes stronger than your relationship with certainty.

I didn't realize it then, but everything that followed would teach me one simple truth: what becomes visible depends on the state from which you're looking.

The old map may no longer fit, but noticing what no longer feels true is only the first half. The other half is learning what you're actually feeling, and what to do with it.

You were never lost.

You were becoming.