

Awakening from Awakening

Source: [Life Without a Center](#)

by [Jeff Foster](#)

This is a true story.

Once, at a conference, I watched a spiritual teacher addressing a grieving woman whose precious young son had just died.

Her world had just collapsed.

An old reality had shattered.

She said, "My heart is broken and raw".

He told her, "Your heartbreak is the activity of the separate self,

and therefore illusory, based in ignorance.

When the separate self dissolves,

there will be no more suffering.

In awareness, there is no death.

Awareness has no son."

He told her she needed to 'wake up'.

She needed to recognise herself as 'Pure Awareness'.

She was pretending to be a victim.

She didn't know 'who she truly was'.

And in that moment, I saw a deep sickness and inhumanity at the heart of much of our contemporary spirituality.

The invalidation and shaming of trauma,

the false promises, the power games,

and most of all, the suppression of the divine feminine.

Making our grief, anger, fear and joy a 'mistake' or some 'sign'

that we are not awakened enough, not spiritual enough,

not 'divine' enough in our embodied humanity.
The pathologising of our wildness.
The shaming of our fragility, our sensitivity.

Friends, if this is 'spiritual awakening', I simply have no interest.

Let us bow to our fragile, vulnerable humanity! Not run from it!

Let us bless our precious broken hearts! Not pathologise them!
Let us infuse our deepest human experience with empathy, understanding. See it for the miracle it is.

Send a curious, warm awareness deep into our wounds.

Not to mend, not to fix, but to feel!

Not to 'awaken', but to penetrate and be penetrated by love. The awakening of the heart. The remembering of the magic we knew when we were very young.

Let us embrace our painful feelings.

Not see them as a 'sign' of our spiritual failure,
or our inability to manifest,
or our ignorance,
or our lack of strength.

Let us wake up from the old concept of 'awakening'.

Re-enchanted the word itself, drench it with compassion.

Return to the sacredness in our humanity!

Let the Divine shine through our messy human hearts.

Bless them. Infuse them. Let them ache and be transmuted.

Meet each other in the fire of living.

Be present with each other
instead of trying to fix each other.

Say, *"Yes my heart is broken and raw and you are my sister!"*