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Archives



What Size And Shape Is Your Costume?

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Remember being in the school play as a kid? What fun it was to dress up in the costume and look in the mirror! We could laugh and play together knowing that the costume we had on was designed uniquely for the part we were playing. How would things be different if we could do the same with these costumes which were designed for our unique roll in the play we call life?

What size and shape is your body-costume? One of the most amazing things to me is that I have met very few people who like the costume they are in. Even those who fit the “perfect” costume standard for our culture, fuss and fret over the various pieces of their costume that they believe could be different. What a strange idea it is that a costume should be different! I have never met any animal or plant on Earth that gave a thought to its costume, so this must be a human aberration.

It is interesting how some people blame their costume for problems in their lives – not having a mate, a good job, a perfect childhood or even friends. They belong to the “if only” club: “if only I were thinner, if only my nose was smaller, if only my hair was curly, if only my eyes were blue, if only my legs were longer, if only...” A far more interesting way to think about your costume is to wonder what purpose it serves in your life. Has your costume taught you anything; what does it say about your role in the play; how is it perfect for your journey at this time; does it reflect anything about who you are underneath?

Costumes are not chosen randomly; they are always designed to aid us in the fulfillment of our purpose here on Earth. Of course, our purpose is not to attain some standard of beauty set by our culture but to learn what real beauty entails. Caring for your costume is important since you cannot be in this play without a costume. This is somewhat tricky, as costumes do not come with instruction manuals. Instead we must learn what our individual costume needs to function well: what type of food it requires; what exercise it needs; what its maintenance schedule is; how to restore balance when it is out of balance; what size is comfortable to us. These things are discovered through being in good relationship with your costume, not by trying to change it without its permission. The secret is that costumes will talk to you if you listen. All you need to do is to ask the question and you will get an answer.

Listening to your body-costume involves quieting your mind and paying attention. Sometimes it communicates through feelings or body sensations. Other times it may show you images or give you verbal feedback. Information can also come from outside you, in which case it will be confirmed by a sense of resonance with the information. Muscle testing is a good way to communicate with your body-costume. I use the “Tilt-test” quite often to determine what supplements my body needs or what foods will nourish it. Simply stand with your knees slightly bent and hold a candy bar to your belly with both hands. Notice whether your body leans into it or away from it. Then test an apple. You should get a very different response. If your body leans into it, it means that the food will nourish your body. If your body leans back away from it, it means that it will be harmful to your body. If your body does nothing, it means that it will neither help nor harm your body.

When you want to change something about your body-costume, for example, lose weight, you must look first at how the weight has served you and whether it is serving a purpose for you right now. If the weight is needed now, you can look for other ways to meet the need or see why the need is there and release the need. Then you must consult with your body-costume about the best way for you to release the weight so you can be healthier. Being angry about your weight, or feeling shame about it, is disrespectful to your body-costume that has always done its best to serve your needs.

Loving your costume requires that you see your body as loving you and doing its best to help you fulfill your purpose. Start each day simply appreciating what your body does for you without your conscious involvement: moves you about; keeps oxygen coming in; eliminates wastes; and keeps a very complex system functioning. Then ask how you can help it do its job better that day. I have developed the habit of looking at myself in the mirror each morning and saying, “Nice costume!”