

# Building the Foundations

Before we even begin to start our journey to develop mediumship we have to build the foundations. Our attitudes, intentions and understanding of what we are embarking on need to have a sound footing for us to progress along the road in the right way. Anything and everything that is in the unconscious will affect what we do so it is as well to reflect upon these things before setting out on the journey, much in the same way as a responsible driver would check the condition of their vehicle before they set out and plan clearly what route they wanted to take, before they set out, preparation is key to success in all walks of life. We all know that if the foundations of a building are not constructed properly then the building will have immense problems, maybe even be susceptible to collapsing at some point, so we need to make sure that our foundations are constructed properly.

The building of these foundations will be more difficult for some, depending upon their family of origin and the voices that surround them. There is a wonderful mantra in the modern field of personal development which states that if you want to know where someone will be in five years' time look at the five people that they spend their time with. This is of course the purpose of communities, churches, societies and groups, organisations which can advise you along the way and serve as a port of call, a safe harbour should some storm set upon you.

The development of mediumship can be a long and time consuming road and there is no set time limit as to how long it will take. In the past mediums could be training for ten years or more before embarking upon their first demonstrations, they were not allowed to work until they were ready. There is wisdom in taking your time, especially when it comes to teaching as immense damage can be done by those who do not

know and understand their craft. The choice of the right teacher and organisation is of paramount importance, not just in the beginning but throughout your mediumistic career as mediums never stop growing and learning. Please do not rush, development takes as long as it takes and there is never a wrong time to begin or a situation that you cannot learn from, however it is as well to avoid some of the pitfalls that will beset you, especially in the early days.

The biggest tool to build the foundations of our mediumship is study, learn to know the craft inside and out, find out about the pioneers of the movement, investigate the mechanics of mediumship, watch other mediums work, have conversations about the topic and do not accept easy answers and don't forget to talk to the spirit world who will be your best teachers. Whilst the ability of a medium might be there naturally, it will still need some sort of formal training before it can be demonstrated to the public and that is when the hard work really begins. Some think that when they demonstrate that is when they have made it but that could not be further from the truth. In fact the journey gets more difficult but good solid formal training will help you negotiate the difficulties and your support network will help you through them.

I like to have a few of what Vishen Lakhiani, in his 2016 book *Code of the Extraordinary Mind*, calls pinch points, things that I try to do every day that help me to be as healthy, in both mind and body that I can be. Things like exercise and educating myself I have found to be invaluable tools in my personal growth. To establish these patterns of behaviour takes time, so be gentle with yourself as you learn to integrate them into your life.

Try to do at least one thing each day that gets you nearer to your goal. Jeff Olson in his book published in 2005 *The Slight Edge* states that it isn't big dramatic changes that drive us towards our goals but those small little detailed changes which bring about gradual change which have a more permanent effect upon us. What I try and

do is pick one thing at a time to work on and then when that is done move on to the next thing. There is always something that needs attention and if we identify everything at once then we become overwhelmed at the enormity of it all. What we need to do is sow seeds every day and realise that these seeds will grow into something beyond your wildest dreams. Life can take dramatic turns but it is our attention to the little things that are long lasting and permanent.

We live at a wonderful time when information is at our finger tips in a way that it has never been before. The internet is a powerful tool that can, if used in the right way, be used to educate ourselves for self-improvement. Everything that you do will make a difference to the future you that you are working towards. There are so many good videos on YouTube and books on a variety of subjects that will help you become the medium and person that you want to be. I shall include some sort of resources section later but first I want to look at books, what they are and the process which is involved when we read. This is important as I believe that people don't make as much use of the wonderful resources that are available to us and at times the process of reading is something like mediumship. Let me explain.

When you pick up a book and read, I believe that what we are doing is somehow connecting with the spirit (or consciousness) of the individual who wrote the book. Have you ever asked yourself where the meaning of the words that you are reading really are? As we read a process is going on which begins to make sense of the words that we are reading, their meaning is not on the page, a page just being a collection of individual letter, which stand for sounds, which when joined together make up words, which then creates an images in our minds. So if I pick up a book by Carl Gustav Jung and start to read it then his thoughts, feelings and emotions begin to take shape in my mind and will make sense in as much as I am able to connect with them. Somehow through being able to connect with these thoughts and images I am able to

connect with the thoughts and images of whoever it was wrote the book. This fact is quite exciting as it enable us to tap into the thoughts and images of countless writers who have left us a wealth of knowledge. One of the interesting facts about that is that the meaning of something well written seems to change as we change. How many times have you picked up a book that you have read before to see something new, something which was always there but you could not see because of where you were previously? A new perspective or attitude enables you to see something which previously you had been unable to.

Paul Ricoeur wrote about this process, detailing what he called first and second naiveté. For example we might read and know a nursery rhyme as a child and take it at face value, this Ricoeur called the first naiveté. Then as an adult the same nursery rhyme can take on new meaning as we can look at things with all the accumulated knowledge that we have gained, most nursery rhymes have some hidden spiritual meaning in them and are tools of learning which work on a deep subconscious level which is why so many have survived the test of time.

When we allow ourselves to be opened up to a text and can have something like a mystical experience which will challenge us in all sorts of ways. For example if you read that the meek shall inherit the earth your perspective will determine what it is you actually understand by the text. If you understand "the meek shall inherit the earth" as a radical idea, what do you do with that? How do you apply it? How do you let it change you? Truly we are changed by the things that we read which is why all of the religions in the world have so called Holy Books but of course it is the perspective of the reader which makes something they pick up Holy. The same book for someone from a different understanding or tradition will not have as big an impact. So there is a kind of interaction between the reader and the text which is like a relationship, this makes books very powerful which is why wars have been fought

over them. For a book to have the right impact we need to open ourselves to what the text contains, put our minds at peace, open ourselves up to our senses and allow the relationship that we can form with the text to really speak to us. To truly do this takes time and practice, it doesn't come easily but when it does those who have had it become addicted to books and what they contain.

This then leads me to the concept of prayer which is so often misunderstood. Often people are superstitious about prayer, praying hoping for some deity or supernatural force to come and help them through an obstacle or difficulty that they encounter. This is true in a way but from the inside not from the outside. If I pray because someone, I love is ill or facing some crisis in their lives my pray will not effect that situation but it will change me so that I can face and tackle that situation in the right way. The same process is involved in affirmations and the talking therapies, where language is used to reshape and reform the mind. Again this is the reason why so many religions rely on ritual so that these habits and patterns can shape and mould us so that we can reach out to the divine. Prayer then is spiritual exercise, it is something that can strengthen our minds so that we can face any challenge that the world presents to us and as we have spoken of before, the ability to strengthen our minds is vitally important for our spiritual development.

The tools that we build into our lives when building our foundations for mediumship will become lifelong companions, sources of great comfort and something that you can go back to again and again. For each of us those tools will be different, we have to find the tools that are right for us personally which is why getting to know our own spirit is of paramount importance. The first spiritual being we must contact is ourselves, that spirit within. We shall talk about that in next week's article.

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