



LESSON 11: The Threshold or Liminal Place



Let's talk about change. We are living in a period of great change, so, it makes sense for us to study change and to learn how to safely navigate changes (big and little ones). We must recognize the *in-between place* for what it is—an opportunity to open ourselves to a greater understanding.

Every physical door has a threshold—a slightly raised piece of material on the floor marking the spot that is exactly *in-between* the inside and the outside. When you stand at the door to someone's home you are outside. When the door opens and you step onto the threshold you are *in-between*, no longer outside and not yet inside. When you step over the threshold, you are inside the family's personal space. Think about being *in-between* for a moment. What does that feel like?

Thresholds are phases through which we pass that change us in significant ways. We have personal thresholds, such as our first day of school, becoming an adult, getting married, giving birth to a child. All cultures that I know of have created a ritual to support people as they pass from being single into being married. We have social and cultural markers such as religious and national holidays, however, they don't really qualify as thresholds since we are not really different after the holiday.

Psychologically we experience the loss of our old self during a threshold phase. Pride, status, selfishness and hierarchy are stripped away. For a few seconds or a few years, we feel humble, naked, vulnerable. The old world is gone and the new world is not yet visible. However, all is not lost. Creativity thrives well when you are on a threshold! You can use the heightened energy of this very special, sacred time to re-identify yourself with a greater understanding. At the end of this phase, you return to loved ones with your heart opened, your mind expanded and in a real sense, you are a new person.

Globally, we are living on the threshold between an old and a new world view. Today (2008) tremendous change is taking place everywhere on our planet. The Internet, television, radio, cell phones, magazines and newspapers blast us with information we are not prepared to handle, interpret, absorb, relate or fully understand. Many people are stressed out. Some fight and resist making any changes. Some get depressed and give up. Some move away hoping to avoid change. Some point fingers and blame the government, neighbors, parents.

Is there anything you can do instead of blaming, resisting, avoiding and giving up? Yes, you can work with change by awakening to the deeper, Essential Self within you which is changeless. You do this in Self-Observation. Think of yourself as a compassionate, nonjudgmental, yet caring observer. View the entire situation and ask the following questions:

1. ***What is happening right now?*** (Notice what you are doing, thinking, feeling. Notice your breathing. Just notice.)
2. ***Am I outside the door, inside the door or on the threshold?*** (If you don't know what to do, you are on the threshold.)
3. ***Am I willing KNOW the changeless part of me?*** (It is here now. Just drop your awareness into your heart and FEEL.)