

Q: I find that I'm just using your space to help myself. I find myself still scared to be honest in my own space about God and religion. I'm working on that. It's important to let that fear go.

A: All of us have been taught things by our parents and other authority figures before we reached the age of reason--before, that is, having the capacity of subjecting those ideas to any critical examination--so that those ideas simply etched themselves into our brains immediately, without ever being assessed, doubted or called into question.

Those ideas are part of our parental "imagoes" (imago is a psychology term for images of mommy and daddy which are "introjected"--google these words if you want to go deeper into it).

The imagoes feel to us as if they were part of our essential selves. We may believe that they ARE our essential selves. Unless we are able to find a sense of freedom in the aloneness and insecurity of NOT knowing, we depend upon those imagoes for the illusion of security they seem to provide. That is why it can feel so frightening to have one's "values" called into question, even by one's own logical aspect.

The myth of a "heavenly father," who hears my prayers and cares for me (but also is fearsome and punishing when I do "wrong") is an extension of my actual human parental imago, which may explain the childishness with which otherwise intelligent people approach this one theme.

As for your own honesty, there is no hurry to any of this. Things happen in their own time. You cannot simply decide to "do" honesty. Nor can anyone simply decide to let fears go. When understanding changes, behavior changes without anyone "doing" anything.

Allow understanding to unfold organically without, insofar as possible, clinging to anything--and this includes clinging to the idea of awakening or becoming enlightened.

Awake and enlightened are words that refer to ideas one can discuss endlessly. Prior to discussion life unfolds. Enjoy it while you are part of it.

Be well.