

11-9-23 Daily Journal

Today I had the idea to write my journal about why throughout my life it has been difficult for me to look people in the eyes. It's another trait I believe stems back from anxiety and fear. As I thought about it, I realized that as a kid I went to great lengths to appear invisible, and I can only imagine the two are tightly intertwined. I also think this ties into my previous entries regarding doubt and social fear/anxiety. I didn't think people wanted to hear me, or talk with me, and I was bullied and outcast, so it makes sense that these things made me want to be invisible. So, I learned to avoid people instead of embrace them. I am obviously changing these tendencies now and realizing the truth – these are all tendencies rooted in false beliefs; beliefs I no longer hold onto. So how do I tie this into my ability to hold eye contact, something I have progressively gotten better at over the course of my life through conscious effort; but something I still struggle with at times.

Eye contact is a sign of being seen. If I am afraid to be seen, obviously I don't want people to look at me; and affirm this connection with eye contact. But I am no longer afraid to be seen, in fact, I want to be seen; I want people to see me and know who I truly am for better and for worse. I want to face the world and people head on, I do not want to hide.

- 1) I want to be seen, I want to face the world and people head on.
- 2) I want people to know me and to know the real me
- 3) I will start looking for opportunities to make eye contact with people and hold it as is reasonable, I will start with my tables when I am serving.
- 4) I feel better when I make these connections with people

Making eye contact with people builds an immediate connection with them, a powerful connection, an important connection. It shows them that they are seen and demonstrates that I am seen. Whether they realize it or not, people want to be seen, and I want to be seen – this is in part the connection we seek after as humans, the human connection.

- 5) People want to be seen by kind eyes, whether they know it or not.
- 6) Make eye contact and maintain kind eyes when you do
- 7) Eye contact reinforces human connection when kind and loving