

## EGO AND SOUL STORIES

### EGO STORIES

- are stories we tell at a party when someone asks, “What do you do?”
- are stories told for the sake of self-promotion, as when we apply for a job
- focus on life’s high spots when we have been successful & affirmed
- try to portray us as in control or in charge of our lives
- are often linear stories of continuity and consistency, stories that have a resolution
- are highly crafted stories that leave out important things
- may ignore or falsify certain information by “spinning” the facts
- are always told in prose, and sometimes involve numbers
- are stories that do not sustain us in times of suffering
- are stories that “prove ourselves” or “compare ourselves”
- are stories that live up to internal or external expectations

*Produce! Get results! Make money!  
Make friends! Make changes! Or you  
will die of despair!*  
—Chuang Tzu

### SOUL STORIES

- are the stories that are hardest to put into words
- are the stories beneath the ego story, the ones with the thread of truth and meaning running through it
- honour shadow as well as light; suffering as well as gladness
- are often stories of twists & turns when our best-laid plans were undone by the unexpected
- allow us to integrate the fragments with the whole
- are unafraid of change, fear, loss, failure & shame, or mystery, passion & ecstasy
- are sometimes told in poetry, music, or art
- are stories that we can hold onto in the hardest of times
- are the stories we want the people we love most to know
- are the stories we are most likely to be reliving when we are awake at 3:00 AM or when we die

*your body  
is a museum  
of natural disasters  
can you grasp how  
stunning that is.*  
—rupi kaur

*There is something in each of us that waits  
and listens for the sound of the genuine in  
ourselves and it’s the only true guide you’ll  
ever have. If you cannot hear it, you will  
spend your days on the ends of strings that  
someone else pulls.*  
—Howard Thurman