



Episode Transcript – Through the Looking Glass – Part 2 of the RTBM Series

Opening

Hi, this is Jenn Shallvey and welcome back to the Remembering to Be Me podcast. Today's episode is a continuation of the series I said I was going to record of the Remembering to Be Me program. I will tell you more about that when you listen to the rest of the episode. For now, I just want to say thank you for listening because I have restarted this podcast with a bit more motivation, real genuine commitment and this has only been a week, a gap of only a week since I last recorded. So for me in my masterful stop-start, avoid scared Jenn mode, I'm quite excited. But I'm also even more excited because when I sat down to do today's episode, it came so easily and I think that's because I have actually sat on it for a long time. So sometimes the delay, the apparent procrastination, the apparent 'I'm not ready for this yet', is actually a really good thing because inside everything's percolating and coming up and it's better than it would've been when you thought you were going to do something. So today is Through the Looking Glass and this is a Part 2 of the Remembering to Be Me series. Enjoy your time listening. Thanks.

Main discussion – Through the Looking Glass

Okay. Today's topic is called Through the Looking Glass and if you haven't listened to the podcast yet, there is an episode where I introduce a series of topics for a program I called Remembering to Be Me. And this is an online learning program that I went to create and I put a lot of effort into building and then I realised it was way too big for me at the time and at this point it probably still is. So I committed to putting together some episodes in a series and being the person that I am, I got the great idea and was all excited and off I went and I recorded the first episode, which if you want to go back and listen to is called The Seeker Awakens.

Yet, if you also listened to my other parts of the podcast, you'll notice that one of my specialties in life is getting really excited about something, then running away from it because I'm, I don't know, scared, whatever. There's a whole long analysis in one of them about that. So what I'm noticing is that I'm here not wanting to do that anymore.

I sat down and I brainstormed the list of things I wanted to talk about in the podcast. And the list is really long, but one of the, and when I brainstorm, I do a mind map, and so one of the arms of the mind map was 'go back and finish the series'. And I'm like, well yeah, why don't I do that? Because I have the content idea and I had fleshed it out a little bit. And so I went back, and what's been really fun about this is everything I thought I was going to do when I conceived this program two years ago,



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which is when I actually conceived of the idea, it's different or it's deeper or it's got a different relevance and that's what I'm excited about.

So I probably would even go back and redo the seeker awakens episode, but I'm not. So this one here, the original idea for this topic - I used to have this written online, so I'll read it, tell you what it is instead because it's not there right now, is...

'To be authentic, we need to consider being who we are through various lenses. Many of us are one person at work and another at home, for example. In this topic we explore who you are now in all these different contexts, what this looks like, where there are discrepancies and why and this module is for uncovering and understanding not changing or fixing.'

So when I, conceived of this idea it was originally to look through the lens of your typical sort of life assessment wheel, so things like relationships, money, spirituality, love, work, all that. And that was going to be really straightforward. I'd get people to look at each of these things and I had some ideas. Since then it's evolved. I have a really different sense of what this means and what really has sat with me is I wondered why I even came up with the title of Through the Looking Glass rather than using something as conventional as the word mirror.

And when I first created this idea, I did an intuitive kind of brainstorm and said what topics would be really good for a program to help people be who they are, to be authentic, to be real and this step of Through the Looking Glass came quite easily. The key of the whole process was to look at the way others see you only from a different perspective and so it made sense, but it wasn't about looking in a mirror. It wasn't about just going to the mirror and that was the challenge. And I didn't want to say the word mirror.

And when I went and looked this up, it was interesting to see that the word looking glass is also a definition for mirror and it's something that it has been around in the olden days. And so we've replaced the word with mirror according to my doctor Google that tells you all these things and for me this is a challenge because I think that when we look at ourselves, we often find it difficult to do this and what's most challenging when we do self reflection and we try and understand who we are is being objective and trying to see that from a third party way.

Not all of us have the benefit of getting somebody else to do a objective third party survey on us. And there are people in corporate where I used to work where, and I used to do this a lot. I used to do a lot of feedback on many different tools, but I did a



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lot of 360 degree feedback with people using a particular tool and there was an opportunity to get an objective piece of information. But in the end it still came down to, from my point of view, the validity of that for that person and how you will work with that and what I really want in a sense of understanding ourselves is an intimate, a deep and a meaningful sense of yourself, not somebody else's superficial view or their observation of your behaviours translated through somebody else's metrics. That isn't what I want in a sense of finding out who you are.

Because sometimes when we rely on that, then we actually can be constrained by that or we can be put in a box or we can feel that we have to adhere to that. And it's a great starting point. I, will never deny that getting feedback in a formal tool is a very valuable process. And I know that in doing that myself, and in doing that for others, it really helped open up an awareness level that wasn't there before. But the work is really about going deeper and beyond that.

And so what stands out for me is this topic, why did I pick this topic and use these words? So I went further online and said, okay, let's look up through the looking glass what in the world did I do with that. And I did have a very vague, recollection that these words might have been related to a book by Lewis Carroll. And sure enough, the author of *Alice in Wonderland* wrote a sequel or another book called *Through the Looking Glass*. Well, I never read that. I barely even remember reading *Alice in Wonderland*. And I think I might have seen a movie and understand the basic concepts and the characters because they've been around in life and we all know some of them. But I had not really understood the story.

And so I didn't consciously think of the wording as used in that book. And I don't usually reference to books like that and I don't usually use other people's expressions. But these words came so strongly and they were what led me to write this or to, you know, prepare this kind of content. So I thought about it more and let's just say I went down the rabbit hole and I reflected more on the words with the purpose of helping you find you and be more of you.

And I asked myself, how does this expression and the meaning that is attached to it help you and not why did I use it, but how can it help you? And then I got it and I thought, okay, it's looking at yourself can be overwhelming and also quite deceiving when we only look at the total package or we only look at one way. We can, when we do that aspects of ourselves that we like or feel dominate the ones that we may need and want or require more attention. And then also we can, get overwhelmed and consider ourselves, especially if we don't do it very often.



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So there's a lot involved in doing that. So the idea of maybe looking at parts of ourselves and understanding these in more depth helps. So I think there's another way of looking at this and that saying, can we go to a smaller topic, can we look at a smaller part of ourselves and then look at that in more detail. We can choose one that we find easier and go through that and then maybe later go to one that's more challenging.

This way the process itself is more established. Then our ability to focus on the content and the discovery is something that we actually build into our way. And it's not about I go and I do this once. It's about creating a process of self-reflection, of introspection with another viewpoint that we haven't actually taken before.

Another distinction for me is this phrase through rather than in or at. For me that means it is a process. It's an unravelling or an ongoing dynamic journey. It's not limited by time. It's not restricted by space and there's a sense of movement, a sense of going through and looking. And I really love that because that's how I see personal development and self-awareness it comes from a process.

It's not something that you get because you filled out a form and you got an answer online and someone says you are this or that. That doesn't tell you anything if you don't go to the next level. I think it's a lot trickier as well because there are multiple layers of readiness, skill, commitment, emotion, motivation, and because of we don't wake up one day and go, yeah, I know myself, I'm all done. We have layers that we uncover and then reveal. And with that we also have to deal with the dynamic of others and their expectations and their reactions. So when we approach the idea of a looking glass, it can almost be scary because we might see parts of ourselves that are hidden or not claimed. And I think that's what happens and whether it's a gift or in challenge, we often encounter aspects of resistance when we start to look at that.

So Alison in Wonderland, Through the Looking Glass, all that isn't the reason why I chose this topic, it's because I think there's something in that telling me about the process. And I think that's really useful for us in this experience. So let's go to more about what I think this means. And it's not for you to actually say, Hey, I now know Alison in Wonderland, but it is to say how does it link into the concepts.

So here's a fun thing is I did go and look up Alison in Wonderland looking glass and thank you to the people who have all the texts online actually could read some of the chapters. And that was kind of cool. And what I got from that is some ideas that you don't see what you think you should see. And this idea that the world that you're going into is the reverse of what you see.



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And so this is an alternate view of yourself. And there's this idea that you're going to go and explore what's not familiar and what seems strange to you. I think that our present and past self can be strange sometimes to ourselves. But the other thing about the story that was interesting was in the story Alice goes into another world. That's the reverse of where she is. So everything is the opposite. And then there's also this other aspect which is like having herself controlled or she's, or the world is controlled by another. And so there's this idea of you are being controlled by another. And I find that interesting too because in our world, in our day to day, we may not even realise it, but we often are conforming or following something because we just do it and we're not even self-aware why we do that. So I think that's really important to notice.

It's interesting to see when we look at ourself, I like to see this in my work, for example, a part of ourself that chooses what we we'll focus on. And then there's this other part of ourself that pulls us who we really are. So we'll have the part that's looking at who we, I think we are. And then we have the part that's really who we are. So for example, you might have a natural talent and you may have a preference for doing something. These are parts of you that will pull you in a direction, will be in a way that says to be fully who I am to really feel like me, I have got to go do this. And, and then the other person might not say that. The other person might say, well that's not me, but you'll say that's me. And so there's part of us that is shaped and controlled in a sense and that part yearns for expression, it yearns for freedom. And I think this is the, through the looking glass process it's going in and then going in a little bit more and then going in just that bit more to say, okay is this really true for me? There is a motivation and a reason for doing this. And that is because the more comfortable you are in your own skin, the more clear you are about who you are, the more you're able to give of that to others, the more you are able to engage, relate, and be present with others. So it's also a very unselfish thing to say, I'm going to actually spend some time going within and looking at myself. It's the opposite of what someone would say, and this is why, the old expression of, I don't get into all that navel gazing and all that self-development. You know what, I actually think it's a very unselfish thing to do because you are being a better person for others and yourself.

So let's play with an example, and I'm going to just do one example just so I don't take up too much time in the podcast, but let's just say, let's play with an example of how we would actually practically do this or in a reflective exercise do this. So pick a topic or an area that is of interest to you. It can be anything. And for me, let's just say for the working of this example, I'm going to pick relationships. Just generally looking at relationships, not love relationships, but just relationships in general with other



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people and so what I'm going to say is that as we step into the process of through the looking glass, there are three levels. Level one is our first lens and you might say here, you look at what you simply see, what you're asked to see.

I would ask you a question what is working and maybe not working for you in terms of relationships, in terms of the topic, you've chosen? A very simple question and then you might pause and reflect and if you actually are the kind of person who likes to write things down, then you might pause and write something down. If I was with you and I was coaching and working with you as a mentor, I would be more likely to say, let's go into this process. This would be just the immediate reaction, the first response, and I'd get you to just jot that down. No deep thinking here. We just want to see what comes to you from your own surface. That makes sense. It's your first level of awareness. It's your immediate understanding and knowing. And that's level one and that's often where we stay because someone will say, Oh, how you going?

And we'll often respond to other people in that way. We'll say, well this is how I'm going and or you might look at relationships and have a recent experience will trigger you to say, that's how I see that relationship when there might be much more behind it. Well what's a thing that I hear a lot of people talk about these days is you don't get a message back from someone's who take it personally or you wonder what's happening with that person when there might be a reason for that. And it could be a really simple one. It could be a deeper one, but that's just something. So that's anyway, level one is very superficial. It's very much what you're getting on the first take.

Then if you want to and you are ready and willing, then you can allow yourself and choose to go to, what I would say is level two, no fancy name, just level two and this is a little bit deeper and I want you to add something and I want to make this process more physically engaging, more of a process that you actually begin to do something.

And so I thought I'd have fun with this one and say I want you to grab a mirror. Yes I am going to use a mirror in this process even though I said we're doing this looking glass thing. Or if you don't have a mirror then what's really fun is if you grab your phone and put it on selfie mode and put it in front of your face and turn off the phone so that there are no interruptions or text messages or notifications just before you do this. Because that would be kind of annoying. And ask yourself the question again, what is working and maybe not working for me in terms of relationships.



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And you could even have a lot of fun with this. And do it in a even more interactive way. Instead of writing, you could actually record your answer, which would be really fun. But anyway, that's just me. All I want you to do is look at yourself and see yourself and play with that image in your mind as you ask yourself that question. See, you. See your own reflection. Just you. You are asking you what's working and not working in terms of relationships for me. Just notice what comes up. Does anything else happen? Does anything change from your first answer that you got in level one? It may or may not. It is a process. Now again, I'm saying that we should do these in sequence, not stepping away because that's allowing more to happen. So now you have done level two, you jot down or you record or however you're doing this, your insights from this level.

All right, now we're going to go for the final level. And you may or may not be ready for this because it's deeper. And the whole intention here is to strip away some of the, I don't know, the barriers that we create in our own self to see the truth. So you may not be ready for this. And if that's the way you feel, that's okay. Stop. But if you are ready, then let's go into little three. And you can approach this next level with total trust because it's just you. No one else in the conversation. It's just you. And make sure that you are not with other people. Make sure you have privacy. Make sure you're not interrupted because again, it's for you. It's your fun, it's your exploration, it's your journey. Another thing remember, you are not judging, assessing, or critiquing in any way whatsoever. There is no right or wrong. It is absolutely essential and integral to this exercise to be unconditional with yourself.

So instead of looking and noting what you see in front of you, I now want you to imagine you are the person in the mirror behind the screen. And I know this sounds really wacky and is out there, but that's the fun part of this exercise is you can be the other part of you. I want you to imagine you are looking back at yourself. You are the person with you. You are the real you. The one that knows. And now as you look back at yourself, I want you to ask yourself that question again. Are you ready? How are you going with your relationships, what's working and what is maybe not working in terms of the relationships, whatever topic you're working on.

And now see yourself again from this new perspective, this new embodied whole you looking back perspective. You're in the looking glass. You are looking back at yourself, you are seeing the you that plays in this world. You are seeing the you that operates in this world. You are seeing the you that is out there. What do you notice? What do you see? Do you sense or get a different or extra level of information? Now this is a deep, much more connected level. I consider this one much more of an intuitive place, much more of a inner place. And it's one that you may or may not feel



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comfortable in or even get to. However, there are ways to get into this place even more. And one of the things that, I suggest as you go back and you actually do this process again, but in your own space when you're not listening to this podcast. Now doing these three steps should really not take, that much time. I've actually worked through it in the podcast a bit more, but it really is very instantaneous. You can check in at any time, anywhere you want to do this. I want to go to level one, I want to go level two and now I'm going to go level three and you say, what am I noticing? And it can be a technique that goes beyond this that is with other topics, with actually situations. You might even just apply it to a decision or a moment or an interaction, an observation. Saying that you're going to go through the looking glass is a way to tell yourself I give myself permission to just quickly deep dive into this and understand myself. And really understand yourself.

So as a way to support you, because I like to do that and have fun doing these things. I am going to record separately, a little short guided meditation that you can listen to and then use to take yourself down through the looking glass as well because I would like to make that a process that you find fun. So I love, love, love, love guided meditations. I also love just normal meditation and many years ago when I trained as a meditation facilitator, I loved the teacher taking us on different journeys and have ever since then loved that. And in lots of workshops. I've loved that. I used to run a lot of meditation sessions for people, so I feel that having another person's voice is a really nice alternative, but it's not the only way to meditate because I also think that sometimes it's really nice to just sit in your own space with either no sound and just be with yourself and go there.

But for this I'm going to record an exercise or a meditation version of this level one, two and three. What I'm going to do is I'm going to attach that as a recording on the show notes page on my website. So if you are interested, if this sounds appealing to you and you think, I'd like to just have this as a meditation, not just as a podcast episode, then go to the website, jennshallvey.com and go to the podcast page. And on that page there will be the show notes for this particular podcast. I think this is number seven. You can just look for the title Through the Looking Glass. And once you have got there you'll find a link. And I should be able to, because I'm not a techie, but I can do things on my website. You can download or play the actual meditation from that spot.

So anyway, see how you go. So that's just a snippet or a play with the concept of Through the Looking Glass and I've chosen to go into this topic to help you find a way to be more of who you are in your life and your work. And it's from my point of view of really personal thing that you can do and it's a really worthwhile thing and it



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can be a lot of fun. So I encourage you to do this and I encourage you to explore and play with multiple topics and no one else has to know. It's just your own self learning about yourself and remembering to be who you are.

Another perspective

Okay. I thought I'd have some more fun with this episode. I encourage you to go if you're into this, to read some of the text of Through the Looking Glass and what I did was I went and did this and I really, enjoyed this one passage and so I am going to just read this one little section, which is not long. Here we go.

She stood silent for a minute, thinking: then she suddenly began again. 'Then it really has happened, after all! And now, who am I? I will remember, if I can. I'm determined to do it.' But being determined didn't help much and all she could say after a great deal of puzzling was, 'L, I know it begins with L.'

Just then a Fawn came wandering by. It looked at Alice with its large, gentle eyes, but didn't seem at all frightened. 'Here then. Here then.' Alice said, as she held out her hand and tried to stroke it; but it only started back a little, and then stood looking at her again.

'What do you call yourself?' the Fawn said at last. Such a soft sweet voice it had!

'I wish I knew!' thought poor Alice. She answered, rather sadly, 'Nothing, just now.'

'Think again,' it said: 'that won't do.'

Alice thought, but nothing came of it. 'Please, would you tell me what you call yourself?' she said timidly. 'I think that might help a little.'

'I'll tell you, if you'll move a little further on,' the Fawn said. 'I can't remember here.'

So they walked on together through the wood, Alice with her arms clasped lovingly round the soft neck of the Fawn, till they came out into another open field, and here the Fawn gave a sudden bound into the air, and shook itself free from Alice's arms. 'I'm a Fawn!' it cried out in a voice of delight, 'and, dear



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me! you're a human child!' A sudden look of alarm came into its beautiful brown eyes, and in another moment it had darted away at full speed.

Alice stood looking after it, almost ready to cry with vexation at having lost her dear little fellow-traveller so suddenly. 'However, I know my name now.' she said, 'that's some comfort. Alice--Alice--I won't forget it again. And now, which of these finger-posts ought I to follow, I wonder?'

Anyway, I hope you enjoyed that. I did because I just thought reading that and that she'd gone into the woods of not remembering whatever it's called and couldn't actually remember who she was. And then as she got out of the woods, she was able to remember who she was. And I think that's a great metaphor for life because we often get lost in places that we don't feel or are right for us. And we do lose a sense of ourselves. And it's not until we get out of that place that we actually can be clear. And so I want you to think about what in your life is like the woods that you can't remember who you are and how do you feel you can get out of that. You may not even know. Maybe you need a way to figure that out. But for now what I'm doing through this podcast is giving you a few extra little ideas and I hope you enjoy that.

Anyway, that was just a little bonus, something different and I hope you enjoyed that and you weren't too perturbed by my lack of ability to read as a voice artist cause that's not my job. So just enjoy it and have fun. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me. But for now that's my take on Through the Looking Glass. Enjoy.

Close

Thank you for listening to another episode of the Remembering to Be Me Podcast. You can find the show notes for this episode and others at jennshallvey.com Also for this episode, please go and look at the notes because you will find, when I load it, the extra special meditation session that I will make available at some point. If you would like to connect with me further, then I would encourage you to follow me on Instagram or to sign up for my newsletter, which I'm also restarting. Another way might just be to go to the website and enjoy reading some of the blog posts and other material. My purpose for being here is to help you to be clear about who you are, to find your own way to really be able to do that in your life and your work. And when you get stuck or when you're not quite sure what to do then may I suggest that you do this one thing, and that is say to yourself, this phrase *'Be me, and when I forget, remember to be me.'* Until next time. Thank you. Bye.