

# The Holocron



Letter from the Editor, Connor Martin “Laxus”, Editor-in-Chief : *Connor is a Jedi from Indiana where he co-runs the Indy Jedi with Crystal Neumann. He has been a Jedi for over a decade, training at various sites. He currently is on faculty at the Institute for Jedi Realist Studies and is a Knight at Temple of the Jedi Order.*

Every time a new idea sprouts up in the Community, there is always a sense of excitement and a sense of resistance. Jedi have been conditioned to abhor change and new ideas because, for some reason, the quality of these new ventures tends to be lacking. I remember in 2005 when there might have been one hundred Jedi sites just waiting to be explored, the vast majority of them being hollow shells using the Jedi name as a façade for an ego trip. Fast-forward ten years, and you have the Community as we have it today. It is a combination of bright-eyed newcomers, hardworking Knights, and seasoned veterans. Among these groups, there is always a challenge to new ideas. It is not because the Jedi Community wants to stay the same; we face these problems because the Community wants to invest its time in useful growth only. We have spent twenty years feeding egos. Now, it is time for a different kind of beginning.

The Holocron, a quarterly review of articles open to any of the main Jedi groups (online and off), has been met with unanimous exuberance. I have witnessed people screaming about how excited they are that this is coming to the Community. I have also seen people skeptical that it will do anything at all. I should be perfectly honest, we don't really have any particular motive for this review. Yes, we want to strengthen the community. Yes, we want to keep everybody in contact and reading each other's material. Yes, we want to show that the Jedi Federation is committed to quality material and training. But, these things are secondary to the pure joy of sharing the Jedi vision and training with everybody we can find. The team here at the Holocron is passionate about sharing all of these wonderful articles with you. Let me share a little bit about each of the team members. Gabe, our Jedi Federation leader and liaison, is truly one of the great Jedi Masters of our time. His wisdom and his happiness show that being Jedi is truly worth the hard work. His guidance has been invaluable in putting this together. Rugadd (Adam), is our Design Editor, and he is an absolutely amazing and committed Jedi. He has been a key player in making sure the Holocron looks good and is well formatted. Without him, it would quite seriously be a collection of pdfs thrown together by me. Lord knows, we don't want that! And, lastly, I wanted to thank Crystal Neumann for taking the time to read and proof all of the articles going into this edition. Without her, I would be up at 3 A.M. trying to make sure all of the periods and commas are right! Ha!

This project is something really special, and I just wanted to take a couple of lines to share with you the purpose and goals of the Holocron. First and foremost, our goal is the continual communication and coöperation among all Jedi sites and orders. Secondly, the Holocron is focused on providing quality material on a specific subject word that changes with each publication. This time, we are writing about “Beginnings.” Third, the Holocron should be freely and openly distributed to anybody who wants a copy. So, feel free to share it.

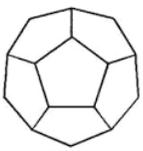
I hope you all enjoy this premiere edition of the Holocron. Please send all your remarks and criticisms to [laxus@jediismway.org](mailto:laxus@jediismway.org) for review. And, you are also welcome to send in submissions from your order to that address as well!

May the Force Guide and Protect You,

Connor Martin “Laxus”, Editor-in-Chief

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## A Letter from the Jedi Federation By Angelus Kalen

“Follow your bliss,” remarked Joseph Campbell, “and the universe will open doors where there were only walls.” The Jedi Community has seen its fair share of walls. There have been those who mocked us because we have found a connection with a modern, fictional story. Some have taken our name to use as a protest against a political system, thus diminishing what we believe. The media saw us as nothing more than a sound bite to increase ratings.

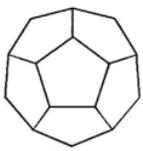
Walls have been built from the inside as well. Neophytes would run groups with no vision, no plans, and no benefits of mentorship. Members would leave because they saw the community as a farce. Skills and experience would be lost. As leaders emerged, so did their egos causing power struggles and disagreements. It would lead to schisms and the closing of communication.

Yet, for those who persevered, those walls have surely changed. Now I see leaders working in concert to build something greater. The “old guard,” people there since the beginning, have been imparting their knowledge to the next generation of Knights, in hope of never repeating the same mistakes. More and more people have proudly and publicly claimed the title of Jedi with real meaning. The community, at large, is reaching a new level taking their training to the offline realm and sharing it with others. As such, people from outside the community have been treating us with more respect. Radio shows, newspapers, and even a documentary have been accurately representing our community. The Jedi have firmly established themselves as part of the culture.

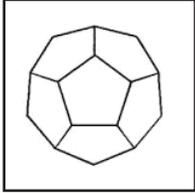
That resolve comes because we are following our bliss. I am thrilled beyond belief that we have offline groups that came together to form the Jedi Federation. With chapters building, the vision for peace, justice, and diversity spreads. People are working together to build up each other and improve the world around us. Even when there are debates, egos have no footing as discussion continues to provide a larger perspective. Standards are elevated; as we learn more, we do more. We find joy in being Jedi.

I now wonder what doors will open for us and our future community. As the Jedi Federation becomes established it gains some protection as well as possibilities. The building of a temple has always been a dream. Yet, that dream is lived out in our local chapter meetups, regional and national Jedi gatherings. A physical headquarters with satellite locations may not be far behind. Where before there were no books written by Jedi, we are gaining more authors. Perhaps we will fill an entire section in a library. The next generation will surely inherit more than we have had.

What great wonders happen when we follow our bliss, even more so when it is a shared bliss.



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## Arkinnea By Samantha

Starting Arkinnea Jedi Order was not what it has since become. It started out as Alan Wilson, myself, and a few friends who wanted to learn about what it is to be a real life Jedi. Alan has lived nearly his whole life by a code of honor, chivalry, integrity, and other values and ethics in his life. He wanted to share these with others so he created a Facebook Group to do some Jedi Training with the few of us interested. It was small, cozy, and comfortable.

A few months went by and people from outside our small circle were coming to him for training. We began to grow. Jedi of old began to come and see what we were up to and offer their hand in helping us. Part of the spirit of being a Jedi is lending a hand. And there have been many to assist us in our new found growth and new involvement within the greater Jedi Community. It is no longer small and cozy, but definitely something bigger with greater purpose.

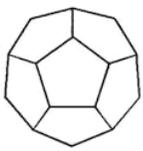
In the summer of this year, we attended the 2015 Indiana Jedi Gathering. It was amazing! Personally, I was able to be part of and see the vision we as a community hold for our future. I saw the family bonds, the love for fellow human beings, I saw conflicts resolved by swallowing pride and saying sorry. I saw everyone pitching in somewhere to help out, whether it be teaching or picking up trash or just listening and being there for one another.

So as for beginnings, Arkinnea has only just begun a long road to greater community involvement, both in and out of the Jedi Community. I am so grateful to be involved with such amazing people and have the Jedi Path to thank for it!



*Jedi Force Class by Karen: Karen Schwob-Ticknor has been a Jedi since 2000. She was trained by a Scythe and is now a student to Vishwa. Her specialties are knowledge of and teaching the Force. She teaches a Force Class on Facebook. Her hobbies include art, taking walks, laser tag, reading, and helping others.*

Anyone who knows me knows my big thing is the Force. The Force is my life, my love, and my strength. I might seem a little over the top about it, teaching weird skills like precognition, telepathy, and such, but really my first and most favorite lesson is a simple one: How to feel the Force. Feeling the Force is simple. You basically completely relax your body, mind, and emotions to the point you lower down that natural barrier we all have, and feel the energy in and then outside of yourself. It's that buzzy, tingling, war, flowing feeling you have probably felt before, but didn't pay attention to it because no one every pointed it out to you. The reason why I love this exercise so much is it's the opening of a whole new world (cue Disney music please)! There are a thousand different directions you can go, and my class only offers just one of those directions. Feeling the Force brings you awareness of your body, mind, thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, health, nature, the emotions and thought patterns of others, the flow of energy and life around you, danger, destiny, places you need to be, or just perfect timing. If that wasn't enough, those who practice the Force have developed the easy ability to meditation, relax, think more clearly, pay attention to little details, and know what to do and how to do it. Truly, learning about the Force is a requirement of Jediism.



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*Growing Pains By Angelus Kalen : Angelus Kalen (Gabriel Calderon) has been involved with the Jedi community for well over a decade. He began with what was then the JEDI Academy, which is now the Institute for Jedi Realist Studies (IJRS). He continues as a senior instructor at the IJRS. Angelus also became involved with the Jedi Resource Center which organized offline Gatherings. At the encouragement of the organizer, he started an offline group in Illinois in 2006 - "Chicago Jedi". Over the years, several offline groups came together to form the Jedi Federation, in which Angelus provides direction and leadership. He has quickly become a prominent and respected voice in the Jedi community.*

The trip back to Chicago from the 2006 Ohio Gathering was one of the longest ones I had ever driven. While Big Prairie is only 6 hours away (7 hours with stops), it's neither the distance nor the fact that I was exhausted after another great Gathering. It was that just before I left, I was asked to start a chapter in Illinois.

The year prior had been my first experience of a Jedi Gathering. I got to meet Jedi, share knowledge and stories, and train. This year had been no different, except for that one conversation with Moonshadow. She remarked that there were quite a few Jedi in Illinois. It also had the metropolis of Chicago; there were bound to be a few more. Little did she know this conversation would play in my head as I sat behind the steering wheel.

Sure it would be great to meet other Jedi on a more consistent basis. But how would I go about starting a group? What events would we do? Would people show? Am I even ready for something like this? I wish someone else had started one.

By the time I arrived home, I finally built up enough courage to take that next step. A flurry of emails went to everyone listed on the Jedi Resource Center (JRC) Registry who put Illinois as their location. To my surprise, I received some responses.

"This is great; I've been waiting for something like this to happen." Already a smile began to form until I read the next few. "I would love to participate but I don't know how committed I can be." "I don't have a car, so travelling is difficult." "I'll have time once I'm done with school."

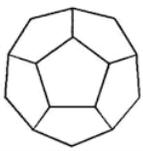
I kept pushing. After some more correspondence, the first meeting of the Illinois Jedi – Chicago Chapter was set for 28 September. I was excited! Things were finally going to happen. The plan was to gather at Borders while talking over some coffee, peruse the books we might want to study for a later meeting, and eat at the Panera Bread across the parking lot. I sat and waited, nervous with anticipation. Only one person showed, a young Jedi by the name of Mabijs Majere. While the conversation was great, it was frustrating to put in so much effort for such little attendance.

The next month was no different. I had even changed the location with the hope of getting more people. Destiny Froste was the only one who showed. Still it was good to have her present as she gave me the history of the Jedi. She had been there since the beginning, having attended the first gathering in Montana in 2002.

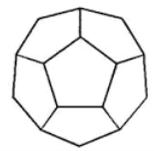
Meetings went like this for the next year – one or two people showing once a month, if that. There was even a period when meetings were rescheduled an entire season. "Hey," I thought, "every group starts out small." Yet, when I heard that Mabijs was moving to another state, my heart dropped. Later, Destiny would inform me that she was going to study overseas for a year. It felt like the group was disbanding. I had failed.

Rather than let my depression take hold, I went to work again. I looked at the JRC Registry once more. Perhaps there were some new additions. I also started a group page on Meetup.com. These things did get some attention. However, it wasn't until 2008 that activity increased. New people joined. We had events once a month – consistently. Each person would bring more life and energy. It was getting to where members wanted to meet more often. We even started referring to ourselves as "Chicago Jedi."

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With this increased workload, I knew it would be time to get some support. That's when I asked other members to help lead, thus forming our Chicago Council. We had meetups twice a month. Chicago Jedi was getting more involved with the larger Jedi community. The leadership committee was knighted at Gatherings.

I thought things were going great, until I noticed a rift forming in the organization. There were some there who did not like the direction the group was taking. They saw the group only there for their own personal gain. I could remember the anxiety building as I addressed the ring-leader. Removing this unhealthy element was one of the hardest things I had ever done. There was a dramatic departure of some members. Yet, it was needed for continued improvement.

Chicago Jedi has made leaps and bounds since that dark time in 2011. We have a leadership team that works well together. Raphael Ben Raven, Zen-Ryo Senchi, and Boom Darklighter would each use their talents for the benefit of the group. We meet every six weeks to vision and plan. Members are becoming Padawans and earning knighthood. We appear in the local newspaper on multiple occasions. More people are requesting our presence at conventions. We meet 3 times a month with a regular attendance of at least 10 people each time. Now when people move away, they go and start chapters of their own.

Yes, there have been trials and tribulations. However, it has been worth it. As I think back to that drive from Ohio all I can say is "Thank you, Moonshadow."





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*Why Jedi? By Katie Mock : Katie, also known by her Jedi name Kai-An Tatok, has been walking the Jedi Path for over a decade. She began her training at the Force Academy and trained with Chicago Jedi under Gabriel Calderon. When she moved back to the West Coast in 2012, she was unwilling to leave behind the benefits of practicing with an offline community, and founded California Jedi. She has taught at several online academies and now runs and writes for California Jedi. She was Knighted by the Jedi Federation August 2015. Katie loves constructed languages, good food, and will read anything that sits still long enough.*

Why do we call ourselves Jedi? There are many parts of the path that have their roots in other places: Buddhism, Taoism, stoicism... the list goes on. But we have chosen the patently fictional template of ‘Jedi’ as our identifying marker and inspiration.

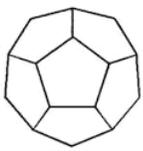
I went to lunch with a college mentor shortly before I graduated. She was an Episcopal priest that, despite my distinctly nontraditional and non-religious leanings, had been a great source of friendship and help. I mentioned the Jedi way to her and she was, as many are, deeply confused. “But,” she blurted out, “what do you base it on? None of it is real”.

She was right, of course. Star Wars and the Jedi are extremely fictional. I can name the year they were invented and the person who created them. Most people would say this is a severe flaw in any sort of philosophical or religious path. How can it have deep meaning or inspiration if it didn’t come from ancient times or a divine source? Isn’t it just cultish or fannish to choose a role model that is only a few decades old? However I believe that the obvious fictional nature of the Jedi makes them ideal role models.

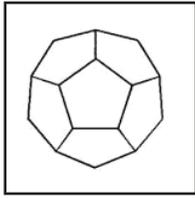
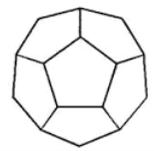
Firstly, the fact that we draw our inspiration from fiction makes it very difficult to take ourselves too seriously. There can be no evangelism, because everyone knows what the Jedi are, and can decide for themselves if they like the idea. There can be no literalism, because we have no sacred text. Even the Jedi code is vulnerable and open to interpretation; no Jedi can say “This is what the code means”, because we know it was written for a fictional book. It was probably even phrased the way it was simply because it sounded ‘Jedi-ish’ and cool. Many religious hit the pitfall of ‘our way is the right way’ or ‘this is the direct word of god, therefore my understanding of it and actions are right’. With the Jedi path there is no recourse for that, no matter how some try. We are forced to laugh at ourselves when we use the word Jedi, even as we take pride in our training and dedication, and that alone is a great strength.

Secondly, in fiction we have the luxury of examining a situation from many angles at our leisure: should the character have acted the way they did? What information would have changed the situation? How should they have prepared? Why was their action correct or incorrect? Not only can we learn from the characters victories and failures, but we can put ourselves in a myriad of situations and test our Jedi ideals in our minds before we implement them in person. Because our initial inspiration is already fictional, this comes with the territory. A good Jedi must have curiosity, imagination, and an open mind.

Thirdly, when we give ourselves permission to be inspired by fiction, not just enjoy it and put it aside as escapism or fun, when we allow ourselves to be deeply moved by fictional material, to the point of changing our lives, principals, and morals to encompass these fiction-based ideals, we free ourselves from cynicism and pessimism. Our world is complex, and every situation has many facets, tinting everything not in easy shades of black and white, but in the full Technicolor of real life. Someone who dares to call themselves a Jedi can look at the fictional and see what we as a species can accomplish, what we can imagine. If we are able to imagine possibilities and futures as strange and unexpected as those found in fiction, we can imagine solutions to the problems of the world and see brighter futures for ourselves and for everyone.



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Temple of the Jedi Order By Edan : *Edan is a Brit Jedi Knight at TOTJO, with a slightly more unconventional spiritual background. Currently, she is an accountant by day. But by night, she is 2 years into a part time psychology degree to further her knowledge and understanding of people. She is rarely not studying something, but when she is not, she enjoys playing music, gaming, writing, running and watching the birds from her window. Edan finds some of the greatest enjoyment in deep conversation, so she is always open and willing to chat to anyone and everyone.*

On the first Saturday of August I received the great honour of being knighted at the UK Temple of the Jedi Order gathering in Cheltenham, England. Like anyone who reaches another stage in their journey I was nervous and worried about how to assimilate into the existing order of things. I had spent a lengthy period as an apprentice happily bobbing along that stage of my journey with varying difficulty, so the jump to knight has been a daunting one with many new challenges. Upon settling in to the new way of things I have actually realised that it is nothing like 'assimilation'. Each new knight to the Order brings with them their own experiences and their own methods and so they diversify the Order instead of having to mould themselves into a predetermined shape. Wisdom though comes not from rank, though rank can help identify it.

The gathering brought me some enlightenment when it comes to 'position'. When you have a predominantly online community every member is recognised not just by their name or postings, but by their rank and position. At the Temple we have the guests, members, novices, initiates, knights, senior knights, masters, and councillors, and I have not even begun on the clergy. It is possible to believe that we are all nicely divided up into a kind of Jedi pie with each person in their set place and that this is somehow inherently important to the functioning of the Order, and to the members themselves. The friendships I have cultivated among those members though have always lead me to believe something different.

In Cheltenham there were Jedi who were very new to those who had many years under their belts; with members up to councillors. During the weekend we talked about Jediism, about life, ate good food, played football, chess and guitar hero as friends, equals. There were no frustrating pauses of silence, no disagreements, we were essentially a Jedi family coming together without any snags or troubles. That weekend made clear to me that when people who share something important to them come together, newness and oldness can look very much alike.. like the colours of a palette running together.

One of the joys of being Jedi is that as a community we are forever evolving, we are always 'new' because we are never the same this year as the last. It is this that shows me that behind the colours of rank and title what matters is the experience and input of each individual member as they connect with others. One new person can join and with them bring ideas that help shape the community they become a part of. This belies a strength that comes from adaptability, and a flexibility that allows us to flow with our members without becoming stagnant or bloated. So, we are what we are because of our membership; they are not what they are because a few people told them to be. This is an important distinction I feel that is the difference between a hierarchy of paper and a community of meaning.

Rank can only tell us so much about a person, that it is, at least, some measure of experience. It is worth remembering though that the value of experience comes in its sharing and, if the passed on stories of old are anything to go by, this experience has the ability to filter very far down along the chain. We are not a static community so every day, online or offline, the diversity of our members and their knowledge and experiences have changed again, make us all new for a new day.



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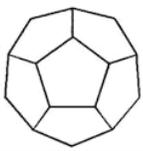


*Jedi-Beginnings By Jackie Meyer: Jackie Meyer is principal of the Institute for Jedi Realist Studies and has been part of the online Jedi community since 2002. Her current focus is on raising her infant daughter, being a supportive spouse, and building the Jedi offline in Colorado while working full time as a geophysicist.*

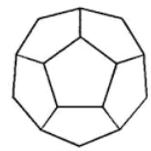
We all start from somewhere. When I first looked around for the Jedi path, back in 1996, it didn't really exist in a form that I could follow. I found a meditation and a mentor of a sort that gave me things to think about over the following months. But with so little available my path wandered off to college and the Marine Corps, exploring religion, sexuality, gender...basically discovering who I was with the information available to me. It was 5 years later when, in an attempt to find inspiration to handle a difficult situation in my life, I picked up two Jedi Apprentice books. Within I found the wisdom that brought me to the Jedi path years before. I went back to the internet and this time found an actual Jedi community! I found a mentor, trained in various programs, and before long found myself leading training programs myself. Throughout that time I often blazed a trail because there was only so much information available. One of my personal goals is to leave a clear trail behind me so those coming up after have an easier time of it and can blaze more trails ahead of me.

For people arriving now, the quality of training is higher than what I found over a decade ago. I have observed and participated in this process. I know how much training and effort goes into creating training programs for others. I also see how far we are from reaching the dream of what the fiction shows us with offline training praxeums and being a Jedi for a profession. I see new people find the community and expect so much more than what we can deliver today. Occasionally they will speak up, but it is rare. If they did, I would tell them that I share their dream! I want to move to a Jedi Praxeum and devote my time to training and teaching, to focusing entirely on my development instead of the 95 job. And I believe you'll find this is true of the vast majority of the community. The only difference is that, instead of being disappointed and walking away, we got to work creating the future we want to enjoy. That's my challenge to all Jedi. What can you contribute? The Jedi path we desire isn't going to be built in a single lifetime, but across generations. We are building the foundation from all who walk the path and share their contributions. No contribution is too small. In fact, you may have a key piece that pulls a whole area together.

Currently, the bulk of my personal training is not under the umbrella of the Jedi because that knowledge doesn't exist in the community (that I have found). And that's ok! I bring my training back to the community, putting a Jedi spin on things whenever I can. In this way I strengthen myself and the Jedi path. Up until the last year or two, there weren't any books written by Jedi Realists available to learn from. This has changed with books from Kevin Trout and Alethea Thompson. The Jedi Path continues to evolve and deepen and reaches more and more people every day. If you're reading this, you found the path for your own reasons. You have a lifetime of experiences leading up to today. Those experiences are valuable. Contribute, receive, build this community one person at a time and our descendents won't be talking about Jedi vs Jedi Realism or Jediism. They'll just be talking about Jedi, and we'll all be considered The Beginning.



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**New Beginnings: A Part of Change By Diamond Firefist:** *Diamond Firefist (Crystal Neumann) is a 32-year old woman, who resides in the Indianapolis area. She is currently a Padawan under Zen Ryo Senchi, and she aspires to become a Master and mentor for others on the Jedi path. Diamond is working on her skills in mediumship, healing, and herbology. Her hobbies include: gardening, dancing, and reading. She is a wife and mother of two beautiful sons. Her eldest son is also currently walking through the Jedi path. She began her path with the Chicago Jedi and is working on building the new chapter in the Indianapolis region.*

Some might view a new beginning as a fresh new start. However, I believe it can also be viewed as a part of the change, or a shift of direction on one's journey. As Jedi, we are leaders. We must help lead others through such changes.

The first thing to remember about change is that change is constant. Change is necessary to manage new challenges and allow ourselves to evolve, or go through our own personal transformations. Transitioning through change is essential for organizational and interpersonal harmony. This harmony is also crucial for the change to take place.

Because change is inevitable, leaders must help followers to face the unknown rather than ignore the uncertainties. Effective leaders resolve and embrace change. Yet, some change initiatives fail due to a person's inability to facilitate, communicate, and engage others in this process. Instead, a leader must possess social skills to listen to followers and encourage people at all levels to share their input, suggestions, fears, and concerns. Effective communication helps with understanding and resolving conflicts, as well as building innovative ideas.

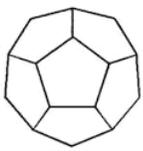
Frustration and anxiety may be experienced by those who resist change as a defense mechanism. These negative reactions are simply reactions based on a lack of clear understanding, failing to see the mission, or failing to envision where the new mission is headed. If this is the case, to battle resistance to change, one must promote the change. Five stages of radical changes and leadership types include: (a) planning, (b) enabling, (c) launching, (d) catalyzing, and (e) maintaining. I can continually see how this concept is effective and takes place in real life and the workplace. Where I work, planning takes up a lot of time, effort, and analysis. It is always vital to make sure that we are doing performing certain changes for the right reasons and to try to predict the outcome. From my experience, the enabling stage takes more time because it is essential to get everyone on board to feel comfortable with any changes and to be sure everyone is on the same page.

Acceptance is also crucial, and openness and willingness to adapt must prevail. Critical factors to help others with a transition include participation and constant communication. Otherwise resistance can cause possibly undermine or derail the process. In dealing with those who oppose of change is to promote and enthusiastically overwhelm, instead of overcome the resistance. A good way to do that would be through heightening awareness and making sure that it is guided by top leaders, and ensuring effective communication and an understanding with influential leaders may enable the change. Those who are pro-change must also be aware that they are attempting to move the group outside of its comfort zone.

Examples of positive change include, but are certainly not limited to the following:

- 56k modem to high speed Internet
- Eyeglasses to LASIK
- Cassettes to digital music
- Airline travel to teleportation (Okay, so we haven't quite gotten there yet)

Change is innovative and moves us forward. Join us in this new beginning and brace yourselves for an adventurous journey ahead



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Jedi Living Holo By Kevin Trout: *Opie Macleod found the Jedi Community in 1995 and has been stuck ever since. In that time he has been knighted at several sites, ran a couple of sites, and even published a few books on living the Jedi Way. He currently runs jediliving.com and dreams of living the Dagobah hermit life.*

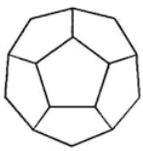
Bruce Lee once said, “Before I studied the art, a punch to me was just like a punch, a kick just like a kick. After I learned the art, a punch was no longer a punch, a kick no longer a kick. Now that I’ve understood the art, a punch is just like a punch, a kick just like a kick. The height of cultivation is really nothing special. It is merely simplicity; the ability to express the utmost with the minimum. It is the halfway cultivation that leads to ornamentation.”

I don’t think I can really express it any better. What I can do is remind those new to the Path that this applies well to the Jedi Way. When I first started the Path was exciting and big and the more I learned the more complex it seemed. Application is always the difficult part, but once you have that - once you have learned the technique - it becomes a very simple thing. Now after two decades it is simply a thing I do. It is how I live. It is not a complex thing, but just a thing.

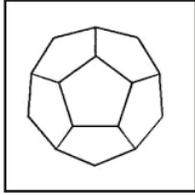
Many people asked, how should I respond to this person or this event? The answer of, “as a Jedi” may seem useless to non-Jedi, but really it is a reminder. The Jedi Way is not complex, it is much harder to memorize the Periodic Table than the core guidelines of the Jedi Path. The difficulty is often the Jedi Way is simply not what our base human nature wants. And the initial question repeats itself - is this how I want to live my life? Do I find this lifestyle beneficial and productive? If the answer remains yes then we must remember a favorite Yoda quote - “Try not. Do or do not. There is no try.” Or the Nike slogan - Just Do It. Once you have determined this path is for you then it is simply a question of adhering to it or not.

Overcome Aggression, Arrogance, Recklessness, Defeatism, these are not complex things. Halfway through the journey? Yes, they seem very complicated, they have great depth to them. Yet the more you live by these concepts the more you learn and realize they really are simple. Keep the Basics at Heart. They serve as a valid foundation for growth.

The Jedi Code is as basic you can get for the Jedi Way. Emotion, yet Peace. Ignorance, yet Knowledge. Passion, yet Serenity. Chaos, yet Harmony. Death, yet the Force. When I first started the Code was just a guideline. After I learned the Jedi Way the Jedi Code was a deep pool of reflection, contemplation, and complex thought. Now that I understand the Jedi Path the Jedi Code is just a guideline. Don’t get stuck in the over-thinking. Simply keep the basics at heart. To end as we begun, with a nice quote. “If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.” - Albert Einstein



# The Holocron



Conflict and Learning through Conflict By Vandor Draconis: *Is a Paladin and member of Force Academy.*

There is no emotion, there is peace.

This is one of the lines of our jedi code. When we all first came here and went reading through the lectures given here, we all came to this, looked at it, and pondered it as well as some of the other lines within the code.

When I first read it, I wondered to myself if this was conditional for it seems logical as human beings that we will from time to time experience emotions which will govern our actions. In this lecture, we are going to take this idea to its limits, at least to the limits of what the FA can provide us. And as the title suggests, it is conflict.

But unlike what the title suggests, which some might have read as saying one can gain peace by conflict. But rather maintaining peace as conflict continues. Conflict as a light jedi is avoided like the plague. It is a common belief that there are always methods of avoiding this and for many here, this is a reality. I do not deny this and I for one am extremely happy for them.

But the reality of our site and our lives in general is that conflict can happen at the drop of a dime. We as human beings are blessed with imaginations, these imaginations can help us to leap beyond logic and allow us to create in ways that benefit life for all. However, nothing comes without a price. Many times, our perceptions differ. And depending on how much you believe in a subject, and depending on what you have learned in life as being acceptable or not, will dictate how far you are willing to go.

This is the primary reason that conflict or confrontation is frowned upon by the light as it is the most notorious time when emotions will govern our actions which would have us do things we may regret. This is where the code applies. It reminds us that the more we control our emotions, the more likely we are to answer a given situation as positively as we can. But also, this is a time when the true reason the jedi exists can be used to its best outcome. For the more you can learn of a subject, the more you can talk intelligently to a subject and avoid an emotional response.

The reality of a confrontation is that it uses the same path that anything else in our lives do, the exception though is to avoid the desire within us to create an emotional response and that normally such a situation tends to add a level of urgency to it.

When challenged as individuals we all have the following to rely on:

Our personal code

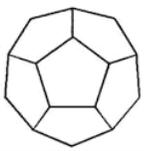
The tools we have created for ourselves

Outlets for information

I talked previously in a past post about this personal code which we all have. This gives us sort of a boundary or parameters that we as individuals follow.

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# The Holocron



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The tools we have are those tools which we as individuals utilize on a day to day basis, but in this case we focus on the tools we have created for ourselves to assist us in human interaction. In my case I have been in the military, worked in corrections, juvenile detention, and in the Health care fields, so I can bring a fair amount of human interaction to a conflict for the majority of these areas are noted for conflict-oriented environments and I have been taught the tools to be able to handle these areas.

And finally, outlets of information. There are always people we can ask for information. Other perspectives can help us to see what we did not see before.

But how do we use these tools in a conflict? There are two common mistakes a person can make during a conflict. First, a person can just assume they are right, which has the possibility of leading to a prolonged conflict due to the fact that where the conflict might have started as a seeking of knowledge, it soon warps into a need to prove one self as right. The second mistake is that we stop asking questions and just assume our information is right. In some cases, these are seen as the same thing. I separate them because when we think in terms of our individual self being right or wrong. We are thinking in terms of the versus mentality. When we talk about information being right or wrong, we are working more in the realm of the light jedi. Assuming our data is right can be rather problematic for a jedi for when such assumptions are made, we are also stating that no further data is accurate. Which means we stop learning.

In a conflict situation, the need to learn is paramount. Time is of the essence and the ability to learn or unlearn a thing can be the very thing needed to resolve a dispute effectively.

When in a conflict, the light jedi keeps their emotions in check and focus their minds to learn in order to cope within a conflicting environment. As with everything, the object is to still affect positively as many people as you can. In the case of a conflict, to resolve it as amicably as one can. But while keeping ones cool and being able to learn can help one to get to that resolution more rapidly.

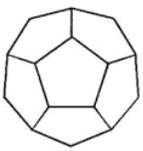
In handling conflict, it is important to note the nature of conflict. Typically as one moves from the open debate frame of mind to the conflict frame of mind, there is a visible closing of the mind within the individual. So when one has reached the conflict point, they normally are as close minded as they can be.

Another aspect of conflict is that very seldomly is conflict engaged in that can result in an amicable solution. Both parties have normally came to the point that they need to be right, that it is an impossibility for common ground. The irony about conflict is where both enter it with the intention of either point being 'won' typically the end is with neither being truly accepted. Conflict quite often is engaged in solely for the purpose of doing such and often without the first dispute in mind. Very often, those confronting one another are so focused on victory that they will even forget what brought them to conflict in the first place.

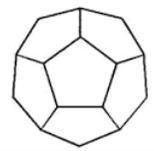
Keeping these in mind. The jedi goes into conflict knowing that their choices are to stay out of conflict mode in order to solve an issue amicably or to engage with the intent of forcing submission. The second clearly not being the choice position.

Some of the tools that can be brought into play are listed below:

Intervention



# The Holocron



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The light jedi can inject an idea which can throw the people out of conflict and make them reasonable again. Interventions are a standard tactic used by psychologists in therapies to help in anger management. This can be accomplished by either focusing on the words of another in a different manner than the initial intent or to focus on a piece of the position of another and generating responses based on that particular issue. Changing the subject keeps the light jedi from getting bogged down while being able to continue to discuss.

## The Wall

When one goes into conflict, their intention is to cause another harm, be it mentally or physically. A jedi can present themselves as a wall which cannot be hurt by such. In the case of physical, understanding a person is not at their normal capacity, we can present ourselves for verbal abuse in a way that it does not affect us. In the physical instance, we can do the same, allowing another to beat upon us until they are tired.

Neither is for just anyone. One must be mentally focused on who they are and what they intend to be able to be a mental wall to verbal abuse. To be a wall to physical abuse one must be conditioned and be of certain character to withstand such as well as a mental state which would help them to refrain from returning violence onto the other person.

## Diffusion

The jedi can diffuse a situation in order to de-escalate another to return them to a more reasonable state of mind. This is commonly done by empathizing with the aggressor.

## Consolation

Can be used to give the other person the impression that you are trying to see their side. Trying to understand the position of another can more often than not stop a confrontation.

## Bandwagon principal

Where you try to help the other person to see that you both share common ground.

## Reversal

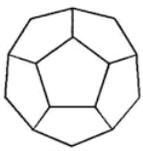
Where instead of arguing a point, concede the point and support their perspective in order to de-escalate them.

All of these tools are used to create parameters so that learning can continue.

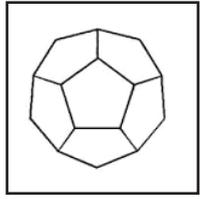
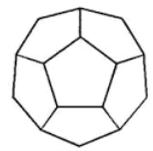
One of the common misconceptions of conflict is that it is the end of reason and therefore the end of learning.

If this were accurate, then we have no business calling ourselves Light Jedi. I say this because our judgment, peace making ability, and even our own knowledge base, all rely on having opposing viewpoints. For a light jedi, a conflict situation is presented by one who believes in their perspective so much that they are willing to escalate to conflict. For a light jedi, the why is important. Hence where our focus of learning should be.





# The Holocron



Moving beyond Duality By Ellen Merritt: *Is a member of Force Academy. Inspired by a remark by Charles McBride.*

There was a time not too long ago when I firmly believed in the existence of good and evil in the universe. I believe still that we humans have elements of both within us, and it is the side we feed most which grows strong. But that is the inner world. There are many stories from just about every culture known on this planet to illustrate the Inner spirits of the human being. But what of the outer world? It certainly cannot be denied that we humans have had a deep impact on that as well. Lately, say over the past 60 years especially, this effect has been disastrous. Rampant consumerism, war, greed, lust for power, and so forth have literally ruined much of the earth's surface and driven many species to extinction. On the other hand, we see random acts of kindness every day, we see people who every day strive to leave their patch of earth (wherever it might be) a little better each night than they found it that morning. Some do this through YouTube inspirational videos. Some do it through using artistic talents. Some nurture gardens, animals and other people in various caretaker roles. Is this just a manifestation of the Inner spirits we carry? Metaphysical principles clearly state that thought plus intention becomes concrete form. It does seem to be clear that we as humans have definite power to create our world and our reality, and we do seem to be waking up to the fact that so far, we have made a pretty poor job of it.

There are increasing numbers of people today who are working to change the status quo. Not all of us are going about it the right way. Some charge in with figurative guns blazing, allowing emotion and a lack of understanding of the big picture to guide their actions. They don't get very far before they are basically cut down. The Crusade approach never works.

There are other groups who take time to do their homework, figure out what needs to be changed, and try to legislate morality. This doesn't work either. First off, morality is an ambiguous concept which tends to change from culture to culture and from generation to generation. We certainly can't determine what is good and evil from law. What legislation does is to force the taboo du jour underground (e.g. bootleggers and speakeasies during Prohibition, back alley abortions). Corruption soon follows, as there will always be some who seek to control, intimidate and profit from the current situation.

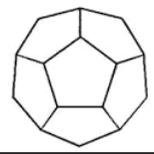
Then we have the countercultures, the groups that rise to rebel against the system, usually in a nonviolent way. The hippie culture of the 1960s was a rebellion against traditional gender roles and a protest against the current government in the U.S. It was also a recognition of the damage we as a race were causing the earth as a result of the post WW II prosperity. But this method of change doesn't work either. Hippies were ostracized from mainstream society, although they did attract some followers who were able to understand the message and who were seeking a deeper meaning and purpose in life. Being almost 50, I am more familiar with the hippie movement. Since then, Generation X has come along. Same deal. When I was in grad school for the first time, studying social work, one of my professors discussed the importance of "joining" with a client in order to effect change. Joining is a counseling technique in which you meet the client where he or she is mentally and emotionally, The Wall

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# The Holocron



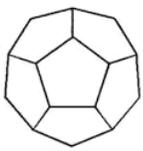
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identify with them, then subtly insinuate alternative ways to handle a problem. It is not so different with programs, institutions and government. However, working from within the system to effect change is very risky because of the ever present danger of corruption. It is advisable to have a strong and ethical support system.

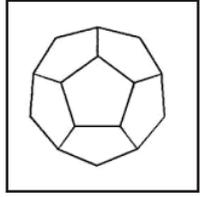
Cosmically speaking, we as a race are coming into a new paradigm. The age of duality is slowly coming to a close. Separation of race and culture is decreasing. Martyrdom is over. Even the theological teachings of eternal life vs. eternal damnation are being questioned as new texts, suppressed for centuries by various church authorities and councils are being discovered. I realize that the daily news contradicts the above. There is still war in the Middle East. There are still race related crimes. There are still acts of terrorism. There is still corruption in government. There is still world hunger and poverty. And yes, the abomination that is Planned Parenthood still exists (although it is being shut down). But cosmically, we as a race are evolving. There is more interest in spiritual matters and psychic abilities and phenomena. There is a growing earth consciousness and a knowledge that we are one race and everything is connected. The Wheel is turning and change is happening. Question is, are we going to be primary agents of this change, and if so, how will each of us choose to go about it? So is there good and evil? Is there a great cosmic war using humans as pawns? I used to think so. I believe there is an omnipotent and omniscient God. I believe there is a Divine Feminine Goddess to complement and balance. I believe there are beings other than humans existing on various planes of reality. But I am no longer sure that there are evil creatures. Perhaps we create thought forms and feed them with our emotions and fears, our pride and hubris, our greed and hunger, our shame, doubt and guilt... feed them to the point where they are powerful enough to take on identities we call demons.

On Earth, there are plenty of people who do terrible things. Are they evil? Are there such things as Dark souls? I don't know. And it is really not my place to judge. What I am finding out is that we create our own world and our own reality. We feed those qualities in us that we like and want to keep. We starve and cut off those qualities that make us uncomfortable. I guess that makes us the duality. The cartoonist and satirist Walt Kelly observed in the 1950s, "I have met the enemy, and he is me." Perhaps he spoke far more truly than he would ever know.





# The Holocron



The Warriors Ethos By Alethea Thompson : *Is a member of Heartland Jedi.*

New beginnings can be scary. I should know, I have had several new beginnings in my life. From going to a new school to making transitions between civilian life and military life. It's a natural state of life to be afraid of the unknown, though. And our beginnings, through various stages of life, define us.

As I reflect upon the various beginnings I have experienced, I realize that none were more frightening than the one I am currently going through. I have faced switching various schools year after year until I reached high school, going through two different branches of basic training and even going into a combat zone. And as odd as it seems, this is my second transition to civilian life from active duty, yet it is the most frightening beginning I have ever been through in my life.

I saw it coming months in advance, which may have been the defining factor in my struggle. Knowing that financially I was not stable, compared to the previous transition, took its toll. There was actually a point the night before I clocked out of work that I couldn't move, and I just stared at a screen with the Army Warrior Ethos staring back at me, for hours. It was a stanza of a creed that I needed to recall within myself:

I will always place the mission first,  
I will never accept defeat,  
I will never quit,  
I will never leave a fallen comrade.

(US Army Warrior Ethos)

The next day, I continued the fight forward for my new life to work. Taking small stances at first until I had to make a larger play to win a battle. The next battle would be to get a job. While there was one out there that I was qualified for, I could not take it because it didn't match my families needs. Stumbling through the crisis one obstacle at a time until finally I reached a field that looked like a promising stronghold. Which is where I am this past week. And it is a very terrifying endeavor- because the land has more mines and traps than my initial assessment lead me to believe.

What is funny, is how I got there though. After fighting so long without asking for help from the people that knew what they were talking to, I finally reached out to, what many Jedi would consider, an unexpected source: A Sith. A well accomplished Sith at that. After taking a look over what I had, he asked me to draw him a picture of who I am professionally, and encouraged me to express myself to potential employers as though I was a Sith myself. In doing so, I found the courage to post on Craigslist a sort of cover letter. And I got a hit. My invitation to a new battlefield for my life. A new job that has, in only a week, challenged me to discover new ways to put my talents to use- and show me that I am far more useful in fields I would have never considered expanding into.

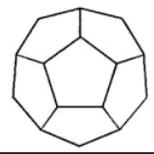
Beginnings are frightening, exciting, and challenging. Whereas keeping to the same old routine is boring, safe and uninspiring. But they are not things that you jump into without

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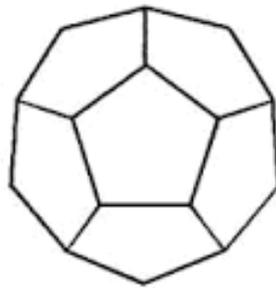
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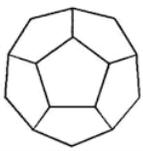


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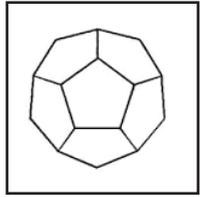
reviewing the consequences, circumstances and your capabilities. We need knowledge, skill and experience to navigate the fields we are in. We need allies along the way, because we can't get through everything alone. And we need to take our time in deciding what course of action is appropriate.

Don't let the beginnings scare you away, decide to have fortitude, commit to a mission, determine the best course of action, and execute it; always placing the mission first. When the mission fails, do not let it defeat you, decide whether or not you need a new mission. Never quit on yourself, and never let the people around you down by giving in to self-defeat. They rely on everyone around them to show them that it is possible to pull through severe crisis events.





# The Holocron



My Beginnings By Silmerion Skywalker : *Is a member of Force Academy.*

At the beginning, there was a sparkle of energy, a vibration in the void, the tiny root of a thought which slowly formed an idea.

Rooted in centuries of History and Sprituality, Star Wars was born.

From words written on a sheet of paper, dialogues were created and made alive through the actors.

They resonated in the ears of the audience and made their way into their thoughts and the very tissue of their lives.

I watched Star Wars for the first time as a kid, and during years, its deep meaning matured in me. Until one day, for some reason, I became convinced that it was possible to train and live as a Jedi in real life. I began to search and finally I discovered that the same thought had embraced many minds.

I joined the RJK online Order. Over the years as a Jedi, many were my beginnings: as a Padawan learner, as a Knight, as a Council Member, as a Master.

There was the beginning and creation of the COJK and years later my joining the FA Order and Council.

Offline, I was studying and practicing meditation, TaiChi and finally Shaolin Kung Fu. Beginning practicing those disciplines had not felt like a complete beginning for me though, there was something familiar.

At the beginning of every discipline comes the choice, then the learning process of the theory, then the constant repeating of practices.

Then there is the beginning of a deeper journey into human nature, through love. A love story has many beginnings because love, just as human nature itself, needs to regenerate in order to keep its flame alive.

The beginning happens many times in a life time, even, many times in a day. Waking up is a beginning. Beginnings are a gift, of time to use, of energy to shape, of choices to make. The energy of the beginning is powerful because it calls our creativity to shape it.

The beginning is also consequence of past actions. Some beginnings happen naturally as my swimming in the sea during Winter. One day, it happened, it was the beginning of something that is still lasting.

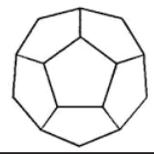
Beginnings are often meant to allow us to go beyond what we knew. We have lived in a certain way for years, and one day, we begin to think differently and we change. We begin doing things for the first time, looking at the world as if we had never seen it before. And then, we begin to grow...

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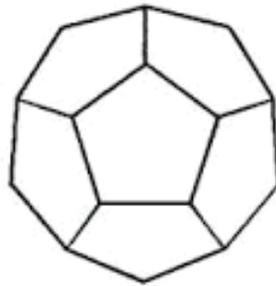
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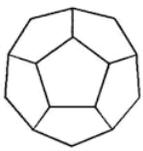


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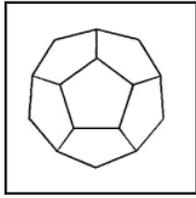
We need to begin constantly in order to build something. The architect will begin working on drawing the plan for a tower, then he'll begin building the foundations, and then he'll begin building ground floor, and 1st floor, second, third...until one day, the tower will be high enough to open to the public- for the first time. In there, someone will begin his first day at work- another will live his first day in his new house- another will open his shop for the first time...

All the beginnings of the world interact with one another, that is how the sparkle of energy which allowed Star Wars to begin existing impacted the life of the now existing Jedi Community- and our own beginning as Jedi will go on impacting the world around us- hopefully making it a better place...





# The Holocron



New Beginnings By J. K. Barger: *Star Wars has been an illuminating companion for J. K. Barger/Jacob. Joining the Jedi community in 2002, he was drawn to the Path by how plainly the stories and legends of the Jedi and the Force relate to the profound truths of the world's spiritualities. To help the community explore these connections, Jacob spends time at the Institute for Jedi Realist Studies and Temple of the Jedi Order. Involved with his local sangha, Jacob is an ardent student of meditation and is most interested in seeing how the different traditions of the Jedi movement develop, especially as Jedi bring their own practices to the Path.*

“Ebbing and Flowing,  
The Force is always with us.  
Ebbing and flowing,  
the Force is always with me...”

Whoa.

Just “Whoa...”

As I stop for a moment and take in all that has happened to me in these past few years, I see my life flash in reverse and forwards- with each transition happening at points of confluence, slowly making a design. I can only imagine what it is like from other points of view- like maybe a cyclical string of events that look superficially the same yet unique in their own way.

I've always fancied the “fabric of time and space” analogy, and it strikes me that these differences- the variance- are the details in the tapestries that are our lives.

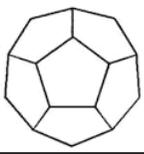
Each one a waypoint to unknown worlds of possibility--new things, wonderful things, and maybe even a few shitty things to spice it up.

This thing we got going on- the Jedi movement or the Jedi Community is one of those wonderful things. It has been speckled with ups and downs (thankfully more ups than downs) while retaining this loose cohesion that has given a whole generation of seekers, wanderers, and the just plain curious a place to come back to- a home base. (Yavin, anybody??)

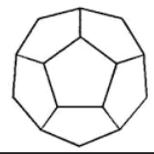
This particular waypoint reminds me of that song “Closing Time” by Semisonic where he says “every new beginning comes from some other beginning's ends,” and I used to think he was talking about meeting someone new at the bar. To me, he touched on change and permanency. While the circumstances of his life change, the world of his presence stays put while he himself is able to melodically reflect-meditate by word of mouth if you will-on the beauty of it all, the possibility of the Force.

I wonder what I can learn from this now. With change in the air, I can't help but be reserved about what will happen. Oh, but what possibility there is!! Think about the things we are creating. Now that will resound for generations! I mean, transitions are wonderful-literally. If we are mindful about it, they afford us the often rare pause between breaths to stop and really get a good look at ourselves. On one hand, we can keep up with the patterns we have been carrying. But on the other hand, we simply don't.

What am I doing?  
Where are we going?  
How did I get here?  
So on...and so forth.



# The Holocron



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These are great thoughts to reflect on. If we take it a step further and remove that internal impetus to automatically take that next step, we open ourselves to the Force and the potential within. With the whole universe “co-reflecting” with us, the path becomes clear and our hearts lead the way.

When we move onward-lucid upon the path, our hearts reflect the freedom of the Force. This freedom found in new beginnings lay not in the actions of past or the hopes of the future, but right now in this very moment. Even after I write this, that time is always now, for freedom is always there.

The Force is always with us.  
Literally.  
Beginning. Middle. And end..  
Whoa.

