

Curiosity: An Essential Huna Adventurer Quality

By Pete Dalton and Stewart Blackburn

"I have no special talent, I am only passionately curious." –

Albert Einstein

In this article we (Stewart and Pete) reflect on curiosity and how it is an important quality for any Huna adventurer.

Pete writes:

Do you remember being young and wide eyed and curious and exploring the world around you? For most of us as children this was a common way of approaching the world. Unfortunately for many of us as we grow into adults these qualities are less in evidence.

Curiosity is a natural human tendency to seek out new information, knowledge, and experiences. Curiosity is a wonderful thing, in fact I think it is essential to living a rich life and an powerful ally in overcoming challenges that we might face.

Scientific studies are increasingly pointing to the benefits and healing qualities of curiosity. Examples include better emotional well-being, higher life satisfaction, and fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression. Curiosity may even be linked to improved quality of life and longevity.

I want to take a look at curiosity from an experiential perspective drawing on Huna in the process. Curiosity is rooted in the Seven Principles of Huna, for example:

Pono. A starting point is that curiosity can help us to live an effective life.

Aloha. Curiosity is a key quality that supports our natural desire for growth and connection. When we stop being curious we stop growing in an essential way, we may even become apathetic and stuck. Curiosity is often associated with awe and fascination.

Makia. Curiosity drives us to turn our attention to new things or to see the familiar and mundane with a fresh perspective which can provide new insights.

Kala. Curiosity allows us to explore new possibilities and free ourselves from the limitations of rigid thinking and indifference.

Ike. Curiosity is essential to developing knowledge and shaping our perceptions which in turn shapes our reality.

Mana. Even in challenging circumstances adopting an attitude of curiosity provides a way in which we can have agency and remain in our power.

Manawa. Curiosity can be a quality that can help us remain present to feel into our emotions and experience their intensity.

Types of Curiosity

There are many ways to think about curiosity and some of the models can provide valuable distinctions. I like the categorisation provided by Hills and Rossi (The Practitioner's Guide to Mirroring Hands). They postulate the following types of curiosity:

- Curiosity for information
- Curiosity for play
- Curiosity for possibility/meaning

Information curiosity is vital for the development of knowledge, this is a common conception of curiosity in the modern western industrial world. It is of course vital in making new discoveries.

Playful curiosity is important at all ages and is not confined to childhood. Here we approach things with playfulness – there are no predefined rules, we are just playing and experiencing. Play can be pleasurable and our *Ku* in particular finds pleasure in play-the more visceral the better! Through play we can gain new insights and explore the world in a way that we would not otherwise be able to.

Meaningful curiosity is important as we spend our whole existence living out our stories. Sometimes our stories serve us well and sometimes they don't and much of the time we don't realise they are all just stories. Sometimes the stories that we hang onto most firmly are the ones we could do with changing the most. We can examine our stories with curiosity and explore different meanings and create new possibilities. As meaning making creatures, when we create new meaning we change our reality.

Curiosity in Coaching

Curiosity is an essential component of my work in coaching with Huna. I am actively curious about who I am working with and what is going on for them. I am extremely keen to explore the adventure that can unfold through our interaction. I also encourage my clients to become curious about their experiences and challenges, which inevitably opens up new unforeseen possibilities and overcomes 'stuckness'.

Huna Healing with Curiosity

Curiosity is an essential part of the Huna Adventurer's toolbox in healing and harmonising, mind, body, relationships and circumstances.

For example, curiosity can provide a 'safe space' to facilitate the healing process. It is difficult to feel emotions and experiences such as fear, anger and depression while experiencing deep curiosity.

This is valuable in circumstances when someone may be faced with circumstances or emotions they don't like. In these circumstances a natural knee-jerk reaction can be to resist or close down. Doing this closes us off to our authentic experience and just represses feelings rather than allowing us to feel into them and let them go.

Curiosity can provide a way of enabling us to remain present to our experience. It can also provide a 'bridge' to changing how we feel. So, while we may be feeling a strong negative emotion it can be difficult to shift right away to feeling more positive, however if we can begin to become curious about what we are feeling it can provide a first step towards feeling differently.

Adopting an attitude of curiosity to a challenge can provide us with useful learnings and allows us to exhibit 'effectancy' taking a proactive empowered approach rather than being a victim of our reactions.

We might also choose to explore an uncomfortable feeling or challenging circumstance with focussed curiosity. We might explore its qualities – does it have a colour, a shape, a position etc? What does it look like from a different perspective?

We might also use curiosity whilst working at any of the levels of reality we choose. We could for example, take a garden journey to 'meet' with our challenge such as a pain or a negative emotion. We may meet it as a symbol or a character and really being to explore this with curiosity and gain new insights and perhaps even make a new friend. Here curiosity perfectly supports the adventurer approach to Huna with an emphasis on making connections, exploring and befriending.

Stewart writes:

I am particularly awed by how important curiosity is in healing. The primary healing aspect of curiosity for me is in finding out why we are creating our reality in any particular way. "Why have I done this to myself?" Without that curiosity we are focusing on the negative aspects of whatever experience we're having, and that just makes things worse. When we are willing to understand how we are doing something, we begin the deeper process of healing.

Curiosity doesn't help in symptom relief, which is so much of what we call medicine. We may well need to seek symptom relief in order to get to the deeper levels of what is happening. But in order to effect any serious changes, we need to get to the roots of the problem. Those roots are likely deeper than the germ-theory of disease. Most doctors recognize that it is tension and stress that set up the conditions whereby an outside agent can influence our health. So, our job is to explore what is creating that tension and stress. That's where curiosity comes in.

- (1) Curiosity takes the focus off the unpleasant, or worse, aspects of the experience.
- (2) It invites the Inner Self to give us information about what is happening to us.
- (3) It allows us to imagine solutions that may have eluded us while we were solely focused on symptoms.
- (4) It gives us the hope and confidence that we do not have to endure this condition indefinitely.

The use of curiosity in dealing with pain is especially interesting. When we start asking questions about our pain, we reduce the fear element of that pain. Fear is a major component of pain and the one that is most challenging. But in looking at our fear, face to face, we take away a large part of its scariness. Every thought that explores the pain reduces the fear. There may well be intensity of feeling, both physical and emotional, that is left to experience, but intensity is more easily dealt with if one is willing to expand one's tolerance of it.

Curiosity takes place in an inner place of confidence and trust. When we can feel confident that we are safe, and trust ourselves and our ability to take care of ourselves, then we can use tools like curiosity to great effect.

Get Curious!

It seems to me that there is nothing to lose and everything to gain by developing and nurturing curiosity in all that we do. We are curious about how you might explore your own curiosity and always welcome your feedback.

About the Authors

Pete is an Alakai of Huna International living in the UK. He uses Huna for coaching and empowerment and produces the Huna Adventurer's Newsletter. For more information and to sign up to the free newsletter visit: www.urbanhuna.org.

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If you want to explore Huna further Stewart and Pete run regular workshops on various aspects of Huna.