

The SoulCollage® “I Am One Who...” Exercise

Adapted from *SoulCollage: An Intuitive Collage Process for Individuals and Groups* by Seena Frost
and explained by Sue Volpi Gelber

Unique to SoulCollage® as developed by Seena is the “I Am One Who...” exercise (sometimes the “I Am the One Who...” Jung taught that we are all immersed in the “cosmic unconscious” and through it we know far more than we could know as separate, local individuals. We know more than our reasonable, logical minds tell us because we are connected at a soul level to the wisdom of the universe. In short, we have inner teachers on several levels if we take time to consult them. We name these teachers Neters¹ in SoulCollage®.

The SoulCollage® process is a perfect entry for many people to begin speaking about themselves. A chosen image can unleash words in an amazing way, whereas regular talk therapy and interactive groups can be difficult for those to whom words come with effort, especially words describing their inner worlds. Writing about chosen images will deeply enrich the process. Some people keep ongoing journals with notes on the words of the Neters, as well as reflections on the words. Others write poems about the images and the energy of the SoulCollage® cards.

Becoming the Image. You might try this for yourself. Find an image that draws you. This may be something torn out of a magazine, a photograph, or some other image. From the moment you tear out (or are drawn to) your first image, wonder why this image grabs you. From that moment on, use the “I Am One Who...” exercise. It is simple, but it does take practice to learn to switch hats.

Behold the Image. Look at the image—at its central focus, if of several subjects. Is it a person? A cat? Is it a child? Maybe it is a cliff or a house. Select the piece of the image which is foremost and which is making you look at it just now. Become that part, in your imagination. Slip into it as if it is alive, has a history, has a voice. You now *are* that being with that history and that voice.

Speak from the Image. Speak from within the image, letting whatever suggests itself bubble up. Start with the obvious, like a description of yourself: “I Am One Who is a little kid, about ten. I seem to be poor. I certainly am alone and I am hungry.” Or, from an animal image: “I am a tiger. I Am One Who is sleeping on this branch and no one dares bother me. I am too powerful to be meddled with.” And other images can be given voices, too: “I am a tree in a forest. I Am One Who is tall and beautiful and alive. I am well-grounded for my roots go deep and wide under the forest.” And so forth.

Go on with the voice of the image. Keep talking about yourself as this being, this Neter. Begin again and again with “I Am One Who...” to help you keep the ideas going. Deeper meanings will come up after the more surface ones are said. It’s fun and surprisingly potent to make up a story or speak the history of this Neter. After a bit you will uncover some of what drew you to this image. You will know some of its energy and thrust for your life, and you may even have discovered its name. Now it has become a Neter and you celebrate it with a SoulCollage® card.

Practice the “I Am One Who...” exercise until you overcome the strangeness of it. The value of becoming the image and speaking from it is well worth the effort it takes to overcome the awkwardness you may feel. Your inner wisdom will be more apt to sneak around your logical, local mind and speak out some surprising truths. *Role-playing* an image is more powerful than talking *about* an image. It will be more powerful to role-play the Neter than to describe it objectively. When talking objectively about an image, you might say: “This looks a little bit like me as a kid when I was unhappy. He looks like he just got scolded. I think he’s angry about it.” Saying this will give you something, but never the awareness jolt that becoming the image can give you. When you role-play the image, you will say something like this: “I am a kid who is really, really sad. My dad just gave me a bad scolding, and I would like to sock him but I can’t. I can’t do anything to get back. He’s really unfair. I get scolded all the time for nothing.” Feel the difference. The second is active and present and alive. The first is more detached.

You can practice this exercise with any of the images you have selected, even ones you have not yet decided to use in a card. Confidence grows by continuing on with the *I Am One Who...* exercise and continuing to push deeper into what an image may be saying.

¹ Each SoulCollage® card has a Presence. We name that presence or essence “Neter” (rhyming with *better*). Our word *archetype* comes closest to paralleling the meaning of *Neter* (or *Neteru*). The name Neter comes from ancient Egyptian texts where, in a mysterious and all-encompassing way, the word meant “God”—not as a separate Supreme Being, but rather a subjective, unformed Source out of which all that exists is born. For more information, see *SoulCollage: An Intuitive Collage Process for Individuals and Groups* (Frost (2001, p. 3).