

for us and was able to guide the journey for both of us through the barriers raised by human consciousness, even though while floating down the stairs we “kept the tips of our fingers on the handler.”

It seemed almost an arduous journey for Alice to get into the “let’s pretend” scenes she talked about before she stepped through the glass. Imagination is a dangerous thing! Was she speaking about this difficulty when she found the first leg of her adventures thwarted by the twists and turns of the path that always led her back to the same place? Is it that conventional reality is so remarkably inscribed upon us that we must wage a battle to recover our imagination?

When Alice eventually allowed herself to walk in the direction that seemed to defy logic, she found herself in the presence of the Red Queen, the model of “appropriateness” and dictum. The Queen immediately jumped on her with questions, reprimands, and instructions for proper behavior. Alice, of course, fell right back into her learned, docile, well-behaved role of the Victorian child. She experienced feelings of inhibition, fear, and, finally, indignation. But when she asserted herself, guilt created the necessity to pull back into the proper expected role of good behavior. This was a very familiar theme in my life, and in the lives of most women I know and have read about.

During her adventure, Alice’s mind never seems to fully rid itself of the barriers constructed for her there. Most of us know that feeling; it is all too familiar. Still, we seem to be fearful when we have the opportunity to free ourselves from the societal constraints placed upon us! I know this through my own experience, and I see it in the struggles of others who want to find a more peaceful and fulfilling path in life but are afraid to upset the status quo.