BEING AWARE OF BEING AWARE

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CHAPTER ONE

KNOWING, BEING AWARE OR AWARENESS ITSELF

Being Aware is continuous.

 is always present

 is never changed

 the known always changes, knowing never changes

 is like a screen—but overlooked

 is always there with good or bad

 can’t be removed

 is never modified

 is stable

 is the primary ingredient of all knowledge & experience

 is the medium in which all appears

 is the experiencing of all experience

 is never an object

 but we’re aware that we are aware

 is called the nonobjective experience of knowing

 empty of all objects—yet full of itself

 is the most obvious element of experience

 yet most overlooked

 is more hidden that most secrets

 yet more evident than most things

there is no effort needed to recognize experience of being aware

 it is not necessary to control thoughts or anything

 is independent of what’s experienced

 there is no need to change experience

 nothing needs to veil it—except we permit it

Allow the experience of being aware to come to the foreground.

Be Aware of Being Aware

Being aware is also known as Consciousness or Awareness

 but don’t think those names are objects

 something to search for

Being aware, Consciousness, Awareness is *the very nature of the mind*

 If asked, “Are you aware?” You would say “Yes” out of your experience.

You may then wonder “*What is it that knows the experience of being aware?”*

The common name for the experience is “I”.

 I am aware of this thought.

 I am aware of that tree.

 I am aware of that feeling or emotion.

 I am aware of that pain or sensation.

 I am aware of the sight of my room.

 I am aware of the sound of the traffic

 I am aware of the smell of the gardenia

I is Awareness itself.

 Obviously, *I am aware that I am aware.!!*

*(*No need to “direct” awareness --- that would be trying to direct it toward something other than itself

Awareness’s *nature* (being) is to be aware of itself.

Awareness knows itself by being itself.

Note: As an apparent separate self, we **have** awareness.

 But when we’re aware of being aware, we **are** awareness.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATURE OF AWARENESS

Awareness is not disturbed by contents of experience

 is peace itself

 it is the peace that ‘passeth understanding

 it is neither enhanced or diminished by any experience

 like the screen by movies

 it needs nothing nor fears nothing from experience

 it is happiness (causeless joy) prior to any experience

 it is unlimited or infinite

 it is not limited by any experience or condition

 it is unconditioned

First Step: locate awareness in the background of experience

 like noticing the screen behind the movie

 awareness is seen as the witness of experience

Second Step: see that all experience is *permeated* by awareness

the screen is not just in the background but saturates experience

Third Step: see that awareness is all there is to experience

 all **thought** is thinking--and all thinking is awareness

 all **emotion** is feeling—and all feeling is awareness

 all **sensation** is sensing—and all sensing is awareness

 all **perception** is perceiving—and all perceiving is awareness

Pure awareness is whole

 perfect

 complete

 indivisible

 and without limits

Pure awareness is the absence of duality

 of separation

 of otherness

 it is the experience of love and beauty

the distinction between a self, an object, an other or a world has dissolved

This is non-duality. Love and beauty is the *nature* of awareness.

The mind (thinking, imagining, feeling, sensing & perceiving) moves

Awareness (knowing, being aware) never goes anywhere

In the form of the mind, awareness moves without moving

Awareness is not affected by experience.

Awareness is always in prime condition.

 Experience leaves no trace on awareness

Awareness is open and vulnerable to experience

 but unharmable and indestructible

Awareness is the same awareness at every individual’s age

 as awareness has no age

Awareness is the same at all levels of intelligence

Awareness is the same whether I a sensation of pain or pleasure, an experience of anger or kindness

The mind thinks awareness resides in the body and is born, gets old and dies and disappears with the body

 but awareness remains in the same ageless condition throughout

 even in deep sleep

Awareness is birthless and deathless.

Awareness is eternal

One’s true nature of pure awareness is the ultimate healing

Nothing ever happens to awareness.

CHAPTER 3

THE OVERLOOKING OF OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE

To shift our focus, stop being so fascinated with what we are aware of: objects

 and instead focus on the experience of being aware.

 that is, **be aware of being aware**

 it’s a nonobjective experience

 (like focusing on the **space** in the room)

It’s usually overlooked

Most never question who or what it is that is aware of experience

We’re so **fascinated** by the *content of experience*

and *overlook* the knowing of the awareness aspect

The experience of awareness is mixed with the experience of objects (dual)

which limits our objective experience

Thus we’ve forgotten who we are (non-dual)

The mixture of object experience & awareness results in the separate self or ego (duality)

 ignoring eternal, infinite awareness (or, religiously, God)

But even in duality, there is a longing for happiness

Only awareness is aware of awareness

 so apparently awareness overlooks itself

But its never totally obscured

 (just like the screen is still visible in a movie)

So **first** we see the object

 **then** we recognize the presence of awareness

 **then** we see awareness as the totality of objective experience

 **then** experience shines with awareness

Forgetting our true nature is the source of all psychological suffering

 so remembrance or recognition of our self is the source of peace and happiness

All that the apparent separate self or ego needs to do is recognize is own essential nature (and thus access peace and happiness) is to recognize that is essence of pure awareness is not conditioned or limited by objective experience.

We can’t direct our minds *toward* the experience of being aware.

It is found by a relaxing, falling back or sinking of the mind into its source or essence of pure awareness.: a naturally relaxed state.

The returning of awareness to itself—its remembrance of itself (being aware of being aware, or he using true **meditation,**

or saying “come home” are part of the direct path to lasting peace and happiness

CHAPTER 4

THE DISENTANGLING OF AWARENESS

Awareness, like the sun, is self-luminous.

 doesn’t need to do anything

 can’t be remembered, like an object can

 can be overlooked

 is always present

But awareness of awareness can be eclipsed (hidden) by awareness of **objects**

Only the infinite can know the infinite

And only the finite can know the finite

**So to know the finite (objects, world) awareness assumes the form of the finite mind!!**

And awareness can then know thoughts, feelings, sensations,

and perceptions

But awareness (being infinite) cannot know itself in the form of the mind (finite).

So mind is the activity of awareness in the finite realm

Mind cannot seek awareness

 It would be like a current in the ocean seeking water

But finite mind, as part of awareness, gets entangled with infinite awareness

And awareness seems to “veil” itself with its own finite activity

So a question (like “Am I aware?) or a two syllable word (like “come home”) can be used to extricate the simple experience of being aware from everything we are aware of.

Awareness cannot be discovered (by mind)

It can only be recognized.

The question (“Am I aware?”) is in mind. The answer if you are aware is “Yes” a bridging response that directs the knowing from that of objects to awareness itself. The two-syllable phrase (e.g., “come home”) can accomplish the same result.

The question or the word creates a gap between thought and pure awareness that restores the recognition.

Awareness is the experience of knowing itself

 the knowledge of simply being

To begin with, it may be difficult to stay with the non-objective experience of simply being aware

 Because we’re so used to assuming the form of mind and focusing on the objective experience (thoughts, feelings etc)

 So as soon as you notice the objective focus,

 recall the question or the word

 to invite the mind away from the objects

 towards its essence

 called “sinking the mind into the heart”

 the mind sinks or relaxes backwards, inwards or “selfwards”

 and gradually, or sometimes suddenly, the finite is divested

 and stands revealed as pure mind, original mind or infinite awareness!

The path is not a journey from one place to another

 it is more like the fading of an image on a screen

A mind that is used to ‘practicing’ the repeated dissolving to awareness becomes progressively saturated with its inherent peace

 and makes the mind’s activity available to humanity

CHAPTER 5

THE EFFORTLESS PATH

Like the sun, awareness cannot shine its own light on itself

 there is no distance from itself to itself

Awareness seems unknown or missing because it’s too close

 not too far

To know itself awareness doesn’t have to do anything or go anywhere

Awareness is the only knowledge or experience not dependent on the finite mind

All relative knowledge and experience come from this non-dual awareness

Before awareness knows objective experience, it knows itself

Then it spontaneously shines its attention to something seemingly other than itself (thoughts, feelings, sensations or perceptions)

Since there is no distance between itself and itself there is no path to itself

 So there is no path to be aware of being aware

 it's a non-practice

The Direct Path to awareness of awareness is a pathless path

We start with a goal and we stay there.

The highest meditation is simply to be

There’s no effort

 Any effort would be trying to control the focus of attention

The desire for peace and happiness is the desire to return to our original inherently relaxed condition

True meditation is relaxation of the tension in attention and return to awareness to itself

It is dissolving of the mind in the heart of attention

 not directing the mind towards any kind of objective experience

If one believes himself to be a separate self (finite mind) he feels cut off from the nature of pure awareness

 so being aware seems like a returning

 for awareness it’s just a recognition

So pure meditation or saying, e.g., “come home” feels like a returning or remembering.

 no effort

Mind is the activity through which and as which awareness knows objective experience

Therefore in awareness’s knowledge of itself (being aware of being aware) there’s no need for activity of the mind.

 No path from awareness to awareness (no practice)

But if we seem to have become a separate self or finite mind there seems the need for a practice to “come home” or meditate to remember being awareness

 to find or know again our essential self

 but not by perpetuating your illusionary belief in a separate self

 not by trying in meditation to effort your “self” to awareness

 but by using meditation or “come home” to “return to” or remember pure awareness

The separate self or ego is like the clenching of a fist

 it is a contraction of infinite awareness into an apparently finite mind.

Once our true nature of pure awareness has become apparent

 we realize that no effort is required either to return to it or to remain there

When the presence of awareness becomes increasingly our natural condition, there is no longer a distinction between meditation and life.

Effortless being is our natural state

 CHAPTER 6

THE INWARD-FACING PATH

(THE DIRECT PATH)

Awareness shines in us as the feeling of being

“I am” is awareness’s awareness of itself at the end of every thought, feeling, sensation or perception

 though usually unnoticed

 and during every thought, etc.

 but awareness seems veiled by them

 like the screen when watching a movie

“I am” (awareness) is thus prior to & beyond finite mind’s experience

So awareness is absolute knowledge

(In religious terms, absolute knowledge is known as God

so our knowledge of our self is God’s knowledge of Himself)

So resting in experience of “I am” is resting in and as our essential, unconditioned, self-aware being

 not directing the mind

 rather resting it in its own essence

a separate mind that directs itself to objective experience

 gets little feeling of being “I Am”

 it’s then an experience *within the mind*

From point of view of awareness

 it is *awareness itself*

Sufi saying: “I searched for God and found only myself;

 I searched for myself and found only God”

So “I am” is experience where finite mind and infinite mind intersect

 It is the portal or beacon that shines awareness in midst of experience

Ancient saying : “Whoever knows their self knows their Lord”

Methods to move from objective experience (finite mind) towards

the essence of mind (infinite mind): in the East, it’s meditation;

n the West, it’s prayer

The process is often called “self-inquiry”

 Can be initiated by a question like “Am I aware?” or “Who am I?”

 or possibly by creating & speaking a two-syllable word

like “come home”

In such ways one can, perhaps gradually or perhaps suddenly purify itself of all objective qualities and give way so is essential essence (awareness) stands revealed

Or an intentional meditation or prayer may unveil the mind with the subsequent exposure of it essential essence.

(So meditation may at first seem to be an *activity*

 that the mind takes to achieve a new state

 it is later understood to be the very *nature* or *essence* of the mind itself

Then meditation is seen to be what we are,

not what we do

Eventually we need to abandon (surrender or relax) meditation or prayer as directed toward a subtle object of devotion or attention

 and abide in and as the self

 resting in the “I am”

 practicing the presence of God

 (steps where the ego (separate sense) is not maintained)

This awareness is equally present and available to all people

 under all circumstances

 in all situations and

 at all times

It is not awareness that has been obscured or missing

 We have turned away from it

 The mind has turned away from its source and essence

(The “Fall,” in Christian tradition, is simply the turning away of the mind from its essence)

It is only when we cease seeking peace and fulfillment in objective experience and turn the mind in the directionless direction (awareness)

 that we begin to taste the lasting peace and fulfillment for which we have longed all our life

The essential nature of the mind of the Buddha (and Christ?)

were exactly the same as the essential nature of each of our minds

All the great spiritual & religious traditions promulgated disciplines & practice to refine the mind

This Direct Path bypasses these progressive means and goes directly from one’s current experience to the essential nature of one’s mind

THIS IS THE AGE OF THE DIRECT PATH.

CHAPTER 7

TRAILING CLOUDS OF GLORY

Imagine:

 John Smith, an actor, representing infinite awareness

 King Lear representing finite mind (separate self)

Note: they are not two different selves

 finite mind is an imaginary limitation

 assumed by infinite mind

 to manifest objective experience

Imagine:

 that John Smith play the role so well

 he forgot who he really was

 and believed he was King Lear

King Lear initially can’t do anything about the forgetfulness

 and simply continues to suffer as King Lear and seeks

 to relieve his troubles and seek happiness

 in objective experience

nondual teachings will suggest to finite mind some activity toward the source of peace & happiness within itself

 if finite mind is mature enough, it might pick up

 on it

 if finite mind not stable enough to turn away from habit if being caught up with objective experience

 the teaching might suggest some preliminary practices

 to free attention from such fixation (such as traditional meditation)

when attention has been purified to some degree

 the mind will only need a small hint to where to

 find such peace & happiness

 e.g, “Who am I?” “Am I aware” or “come home”

The Direct Path to return mind directly to its source

 is the essence & culmination of all spiritual practice

Back to King Lear:

 Assume (though still troubled by his kingdom)

 he’s mature enough to reflect on his own essence

 to recognize he’s John Smith (infinite mind) he asks himself

 such questions (e,g,. “Who am I really”. “Am I aware?”

 “come home”\_

 they will lead King Lear away from his objective

 experience to knowledge of himself as

 John Smith

 At some point the knowledge “I am John Smith” will be

 revealed.

But it is not king Lear that recognizes John Smith

 only John Smith has the experience of being John Smith

 that is non-dual knowledge

John Smith knows himself by simply being himself

King Lear is the activity John Smith assumes I order to manifest the drama of the play

It is never the finite mind that knows or becomes the infinite mind

While both John Smith and King Lear say ‘I’ referring to the essential self

 King Lear’s “I” is colored and limited by thoughts, feelings, sensations and perceptions

 whereas for John Smith “I” shines clearly as it is

the finite self is the infinite, eternal I

 temporarily colored by thoughts, etc. but never becoming anything other than itself.

 No self other than infinite awareness has ever come into existence

 Only the infinite mind

 assuming the activity of the finite mind

 no need to eradicate of dissolve the finite mind to know infinite awareness

the separate self is an illusion existing from its own illusionary point of view

the finite mind will continue to arise from its essence of pure awareness

 but its sense of separation & limitation has been neutralized in the clear light of pure awareness

King Lear is an illusion, but like all illusions, there is a reality. The reality of King Lear is John Smith

No new knowledge has been added to John Smith

 only that ignorance has been removed from him

Finite minds who are used to focusing exclusively on objective experience

 may find the knots and contraction accumulated in their bodies and minds over a life time released

 and this release my precipitate unusual effects in their body or mind

 if they happen, they are just simple recognition of your being

in this recognition our essential, irreducible self-aware being

 simply loses its apparent limitations

 and its reality stands revealed: open, transparent, luminous. Indestructible, unborn and undying

 and makes these qualities available to humanity

CHAPTER 8

THE OCEAN OF AWARENESS

If awareness was likened to an ocean

 thoughts would be the waves that play on the surface

 and feelings would be the currents that flow within it

Like that stillness in the depth of the ocean

 the heart of awareness is always silent and at peace

So all the mind has to do to find peace

 Is to sink into the heart of awareness

As a wave or current flows “down and down” into the depth of the ocean

 it loses its agitation, form and limitation as it come to rest

Waves and currents are simply the movement of water

There’s nothing new when currents and waves appear

 and nothing is removed from existence when they disappear

So mind quiets and expands when it sinks progressively into its essence

 when mind rises in form of thoughts, feelings, sensations or perceptions

 nothing new appears

 and when they subside nothing real disappears

Just as waves and currents of the ocean are only formless water moving within itself

 so only thoughts, etc., are only awareness vibrating within itself

Each of our minds is an apparent finite limitation of infinite awareness

 just as waves and currents give the formless ocean

 a temporary appearance

the finite mind is the activity infinite awareness assumes to know itself as a separate object

so true meditation (or “come home”) reverses this and takes the finite mind back to infinite mind

 the finite mind subsides and awareness loses its temporary finite name and from (but noting happens to awareness)

The Direct Path (the pathless path of self-surrender) is the means by which the finite mind is divested of its assumed limitations

 until the indestructible, imperturbable nature of pure awareness is revealed to itself.

At no point does the finite mind ever come into existence in its own right

The finite mind is thus the agency through which awareness (God’s infinite being) knows itself as the world

 Never as an entity in its own right (Stu’s sim)

There s only one reality (infinite being, consciousness, awareness) from which all apparent objects and selves derive their seeming existence

As a wave finds lasting peace only deep within itself

 so finite mind can only find lasting peace in the depth of its own infinite being

While the finite mind is an illusion, it is real from its own illusionary perspective (e.g. from our own illusionary perspective)

The “I” of the separate self is the true and only “I” of infinite awareness, seemingly mixed with and, therefore, apparently limited by the objective qualities of experience.

The limits of peace & happiness in the separate self is why there is a longing for true peace and happiness in the infinite mind.

The essence of true meditation (or “come home”) is the dissolving or longing in the heart of infinite mind.

We must die (ego) before we die.

In being aware of being aware—the knowing of our own essential, irreducible being—the mind loses its agitation and the heart is relieved of its yearning