

PHILOSOPHY

INTRODUCTORY COURSE – WISDOM

Session Three

Being Awake

Summary

Levels of awareness:
Higher Consciousness
Fully Awake
Waking Sleep
Dream
Deep Sleep

Practice

1. Practise the Exercise twice a day. It is designed to help us experience the states of Fully Awake and Higher Consciousness.
2. At any time ask the question, '**What is the world for me now?**' Then connect with the senses.
3. Use the question, '**What would a wise person do here?**' Remember that a wise man or woman is awake.

Quotations

Story

Attributed to Buddha

Once a student asked the sage, 'Are you the messiah?'
'No', answered the sage.
'Then are you a healer?'
'No', was the reply.
'Then are you a teacher?' the student persisted.
'No, I am not a teacher.'
'Then what are you?' asked the student.
'I am awake', the sage replied.

Portia Nelson

Autobiography in 5 short chapters

Chapter I

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost . . .
I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes me forever to find a way out.

Chapter II

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place
But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter III

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall inIt's a habit.
My eyes are open,
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter IV

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter V

I walk down another street.

Edgar Mitchell

Lunar Astronaut, Apollo 14, 1971

What I experienced during that three-day trip home was nothing short of an overwhelming sense of universal consciousness. I actually felt what has been described as an ecstasy of unity. It occurred to me that the molecules of my body and this spacecraft, of the world I had come from and was now returning to, were all manufactured in the furnace of . . . ancient stars like those surrounding us. Our presence here was not an accident of nature, but rather an extension of the same universal process that evolved our molecules. And I felt an extraordinary personal connectedness with it. I experienced an ecstasy of unity. I not only saw the connectedness, I felt it.

William Blake
Auguries of Innocence

To see a world in a grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

Mary Spain
The View

'We'll take you up to see the view', they said.
And so we journeyed through the Autumn rain,
The children wishing they had played instead;
Their weary parents trying to explain,
With fraying patience, how they ought to show
Their aunt the countryside. Five people, set
Apart by irritation, huddled low
Within the car. We got out on the wet,
Sweet grass a very fractious cavalcade;
'Til, over-awed by space, dissension died,
And clouded eyes awoke to see displayed
The patient glory of the countryside.
As mortals changed, we stood in silence there;
And five were one, and one was everywhere.

Plato
Phaedo 79

But when the soul contemplates in herself, by herself, she passes into the realm of the pure, the eternal, the undying and unchanging. Being akin to these she always stays there whenever she is by herself and it is in her power to do so. She ceases wandering and she is unmoving, because she has attained these qualities. And this state of the soul is called wisdom.

Student

It was pitch black; there was thick snow and gale force winds. A continuous flow of falling snow made visibility almost nil and progress frighteningly slow. I had been out in these conditions all day, but the excitement of the climb had made me unaware of increasing fatigue and

freezing temperatures. After nine hours on the go, even reaching the top didn't prevent my spirits from falling. Cautiously we started our two-hour trek off the mountain. The dark meant our progress had to be slow. The situation was extremely dangerous, but by now I was just too tired to care. I found myself contemplating stopping for a rest; I didn't feel able to go on, but I also knew that stopping could be fatal in such extreme conditions. My desire to give in frightened me, yet I was convinced I couldn't manage the arduous walk through waist-high snowdrifts.

In desperation I did the exercise. Under these circumstances it was actually easy to concentrate on what I could see of the scenery, the sound of the wind howling, the gleam of our torches on the snow, the sensation of freezing skin and layers of clothes, the weight of heavy boots and rucksack. Minutes later I became aware that my pace had become steady, my breathing more regular, and I began to take pleasure in the very thing that minutes earlier had terrified me. I seemed to have tapped into reserves of energy I had been convinced were not there. My increase of morale seemed to spread to the rest of the flagging group. When we finally got to the bottom, not only did we find satisfaction at having survived the dangers we had endured; there was also a keen sense of the beauty discovered on the way.

Rumi
Mahnavi (Lines 588-590)

When any drowsy one awakes and springs up,
him the nurse Imagination beguiles, saying 'Go to sleep my darling, for I will not let anyone disturb thy slumber.'
But you, if you are awake, will tear up your slumber by the roots like a thirsty man who heard the sound of running water.

Shakespeare
Hamlet, Act V, Scene 2
... the readiness is all.

Diagram

Diagram 3 (b)

