

Night Sky Sangha

Inquiry into Awakening

(Facebook posts January 2019 – June 2019)

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We're 128 hours in and so what

From my desk it's around 8 am on Jan 6th and since I'm not so good at math I used a spreadsheet to help determine that we're about 128 hours in and so what.

We're 128 hours into the New Year and I'm wondering if anything's changed about me, ideally for the better, and to be frank nothing has.

Sure I had one of those Costco kale and cabbage salads with the crunchy cheesy almond slivered sweetened cranberry toppings and the packaged lemon poppyseed dressing for lunch, but then I had a double scotch and soda, bowl (not cup) of broccoli cheddar soup plus pizza and fries for dinner followed not too far later by flavor blast fish crackers and a decent helping of Ben and Jerry's chocolate brownie ice cream- so what's changed about me, phuck all nothing at all.

And I'm wondering, since I'm kinda cloistered in my own little world of aching self-importance, if anything special has happened to you in the last 128 hours, and not that I can know for sure, but I kinda bet that nothing has.

I mean I hope you're well and staying the course when it comes to your bid for becoming enlightened some day, I wouldn't want to derail you from that noble endeavor, but it sure seems to me like we never tire of being and staying ourselves. I wonder if you've noticed that too?

I was listening to a spiritual exchange just yesterday, please don't ask me why, the reason is I'm weak minded and absent of any pledge or resolve, so I was listening to others hoping a wild haired transparent waif of a man sage would answer their questions about what this is and what they might do about it and themselves in fact to be more like him.

Since I'm terribly shy when it comes to admitting my own failures and continued lust to take over the world I covered my web-cam and muted my microphone and changed my identity so I could eavesdrop on this spirited conversation anonymously secretly hoping I might become more like this guy as well - and to no surprise it didn't work.

Nothing ever does, nothing works, nothing can, whatever this is it's doing what it pleases and it's not asking for my opinion or my preferences of how things were, are, or should someday be and that's the phucking truth if ever there was one and I'm sure glad there's not one because that would mean I would have to relent to unbearable sorrow, and honestly speaking I don't think I can handle it.

We're 128 hours in and so what? Does anyone know if Costco is open on Sunday, I could sure use another package of kale cabbage shredded goodness with the toppings and a few free samples right about soon?



Sweet Kale Salad: Costco

Desperately Seeking Relevance

If you're lucky enough to have a few moments peace from yourself there can ensue a most marvelous revelation that you weren't all that necessary in the first place.

At first this can be a bit startling and trigger a "hey, now wait just a minute" moment, but trust me, you'll get over that soon enough.

If not for the heavy interest in yourself, your life, your stuff, your thirst for the best that life on earth has to offer; there would be little concern for just how much is your fair share.

The unrelenting thirst for experience and security has you desperately seeking relevance, and filling yourself with the ideas of others while you stand on the bread line that never ends and never moves.

I want to be satisfied, noticed, relevant, worthy of respect, have people listen to and understand me; I want, I want, I want again.

Living whatever life is through the lens of wanting and anticipation is suffering at its finest, and we're all in, despite our protestations to the contrary.

We are the air, we are the water, we are the sunlight, we are the beauty of darkness and the lust of being encased as flesh. The wanting cannot be avoided, every cell craves it's glucose feed - the engine must have its fuel, its oxygen, and its spark.

Trying to be any more relevant or spiritual than that is just so much hubris. Tell your spiritual friends you're sated as hell and you're not gonna take it anymore - the good ones will understand.

Desperately Seeking Crustaceans: Rick Nilson



Under a Languid Moon

What if what this is is not what we would have it be?

What if it were something entirely opposite of, or worse, entirely other in every possible way than the what and the way of what we take this to be? Then it's quite possible if not plausible that our predominant reality field could turn out to be profoundly untrue?

Under a languid moon what if it were revealed to you that what this is is an unspeakable trans-spectral unicity of perfect impossibility?

What then?

Waxing Crescent Moon: NASA



Let's Break This Down

As you find sufficient pause from the seeming momentum of mind you may discover just how protean actual, not narrative, experience really is.

You might careen at half speed into a gelatinous plenum of non-specificity as the reflex to acquire or cling or claim is tamed into quiescence.

Then here you are, as and with yourself in perfect inner quietude. One's awareness simply drops the urgency to orient toward or away from anything. Your entirety no longer anticipates or rejects, it has become self luminous without symptom.

Present experience therefore is the on-ramp and the fruitless fruition of whatever self-realization promises to deliver.

We effortlessly reject dowsing with the mind into the mind; only a chattering buffoon would continue to take any interest in what appears in experience.

The yogi penetrates the sacred tendency of Shiva Nataraj to self-conceal and is whisked beyond any frame of reference, where Brahman unknowingly rests in itself in trans-perpetuity.

So what's a true disciple of presence to do? Less and less and less and less than that for as long as the perfume of stillness will intoxicate you.

Let's break this down. Here is the threshold and revelation of this being about nothing at all and that's just swell with you.

Homage to Roberto Matta: Mark Townsend



Take Your Pick

Generally speaking one comes to spiritual endeavor by way of some form of dissatisfaction, and if the dissatisfaction is really good, one can quite possibly discover subtle realms of dispossession worth finding.

For most the game is one of cultivating satisfaction for one's self, and though this turns out to be quite a frivolous dead end it can keep you busy for the better part of a lifetime.

For the few, and by invitation only, is a more harrowing adventure where one is invited to consider freedom from one's self, something entirely other than some acquisition of conditional satisfaction or security.

The familiar grooves of your mind and the nature of association will always drag you back to the presumption of individuation and one or other form of pop culture.

Now it may be sufficient for you to truck with various gurus for the resonance, the transmission, the good vibes and the teaching, but I have my suspicions about the long term satisfaction one may receive in the company of a Sage because sooner or later you must become the Sage, even if you're really bad at it - still you must inhabit the uninhabitable for yourself.



What if the craving and becoming and aloneness and begging we do to medicate the unshakable frustration of self and other were to simply fall off leaving you in a trans-tactile wonder-field of absolute companionship?

From whom would you seek knowledge or comfort then?

There is no deliverable when it comes to miraculous discovery, nothing is or can be attained, the very fabric of discerning consciousness simply drops the insatiable need for impressions leaving you bereft of anyone to please.

You can live this thing as if you matter, or you can abide in perfect companionship - take your pick.

Sweet Dreams: Donna L. Martin

You Will Surely Smile

It's not that I have anything against meditation, in fact, if you have no relationship with meditation you're not paying attention. You're completely missing what this is.

For those who have cultivated some interest in sublimity I think a novel approach may yield some interesting results.

The momentum of conditioned mind, the influence of language and reference, and the seduction of anticipation and projection are quite formidable. They pretty much dictate the possibility of what you expect to find and shape the inner and outer landscapes of how we experience experience.

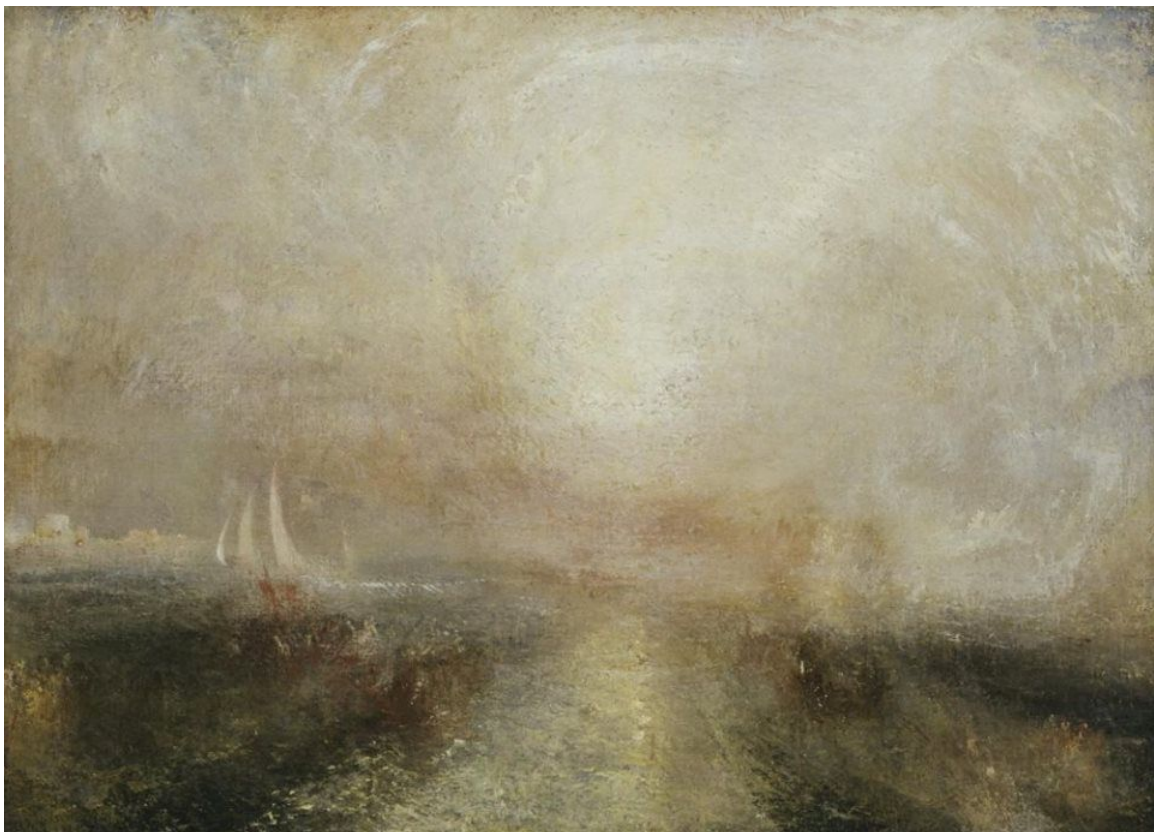
Thus mindfulness is often taught as a means of attenuating whatever awareness is to what appears in awareness as the objects of experience and this can become quite frustrating because the way we are bent is bent - it becomes near impossible then to apprehend the absence of one's self since the reflex of projection has such momentum.

Here's the trick; loiter in present experience without taking your mind or your mindfulness along for the ride. Simply feel (by way of texture, not sentiment) how this feels and open your attention to receive the primary blessing that being is, free from the imposition of familiarity.

Take a chance to nourish yourself with wonder without hoping to find anything, relax the reflex to understand or condemn yourself to opinion. As you explore the realm of availability without needing to know what anything is, this speaks to you in a profound and intimately provocative way.

You are informed by infinity and you will surely smile.

Yacht Approaching the Coast: Joseph Turner



The Mere Suggestion

Beware the Sutra, especially ones written by friends sent by friends, even if the intention is to brighten your day.

I mean it this time and don't make me come over there; the mere suggestion that pithy word play can paint lipstick on a pig is beyond the pale, you can't braid a bald man's hair and you can't be brought any closer to what this is through Sutras.

If you really need to say something about this, then just blurt out at random moments throughout the day to whomever is nearby, even if no one is, 'pass the sugar'.

Really it makes more sense, the odds of awakening to the mortal chaos of streaming erasure via Sutras is nil, but every once in a while if you say 'pass the sugar', someone is bound to offer you some - and in the end you'll be way ahead.

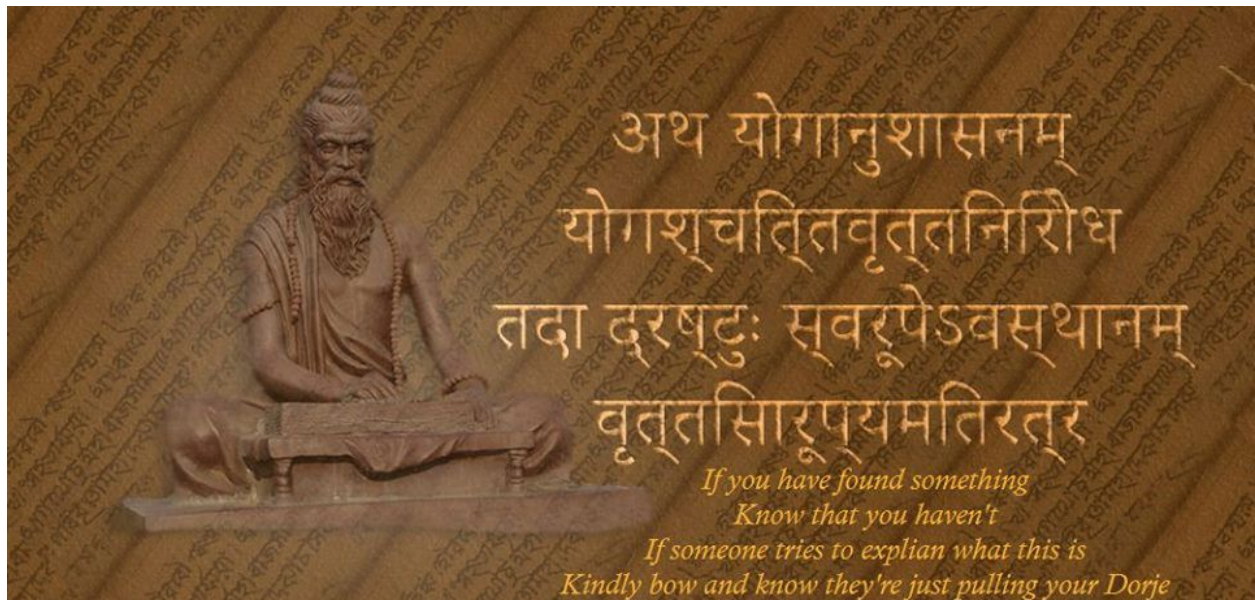
It may pay to see that the arising of interest itself is the gilded road to disappointment and the hubris of knowing, even divine knowing. Don't let wild eyed gurus seduce you into thinking that if you give your attention to the actuality of reality there will be some realm of delight to enthrall and entrance you - that is the way of subjugation, refuse it.

Don't go into the substance of anything, don't presume you can discern what this does to baffle itself and make 'you' believe shit that isn't true. Then you think there is shit that isn't true and shit that is, and that's just more shit.

Go this way and flies will be your constant companions.

Now that I've got your attention - follow the link (below) to the Sutras at your own risk.

The Radiance Sutras of P. Brown



Infinity in Your Face

The Absolute hides in plain sight as this very curious moment, but don't go looking for now or here since there are none, it's only infinity that you can find.

This is the sacred unicity and bifurcation the neo-advaitists get all excited about, but there's not much point in going on a retreat about it all. I mean by all means go for the food and camaraderie, I'm just referring to the harboring of the idea or anticipation that there is something other to find or discover on your retreat that isn't already streaming and broadcasting and befuddling you with aplomb right about here.

Present experience, free from the entanglement of its demand to be known, is no longer present experience; it's the revelation of realization which isn't anything particular at all.

You are always standing at the jhanic shore of absolute immersion, it's just that the reflex to know or acquire is also the reflex that suggests the knower, the seeming presence and continuity of yourself as an entity, the 'person' behind the senses.

This is the magical incantation of emptiness, if you conceive of it or yourself you entrain the world and then there's two. However, as you begin to sense and trust the majesty of it the reflex to acquire relaxes in present tense and all the tension disperses into the very benevolence from which it arose.

The conceiving insistence, the demand the world makes to be known is no longer binding upon you, and that's infinity in your face.

Love What You Do - Liz Holleyman



The Spare Nature of Turbulence

Approaching the border where self-referencing melds and melts into non-specificity is what all yoga is about. Contrarily speaking, most so-called spiritual endeavors are offered and practiced as ameliorants, accelerants, and deodorants of our smelly ideas about things.

Fixing suffering is inevitable, but always a waste of time, more suffering will come and more fixing is bound to ensue. I'm not talking about applying practical means to practical problems, anything you do to feel better - I hope it works and lasts.

What I'm referring to is the border crossing from where you imagine that you are having an experience to where you see that you're not.

Such intimacy usually, but not always of course, requires some spare time to remain sufficiently still for long enough to settle into the spare nature of turbulence.

As you contemplate the ineffable, what this is will fight back, it will tempt and trick you over and over into objectification and flow, into the personification of presence and the appearance of events that have come before and can be anticipated to arise in your future.

I'm not telling you anything new or unusual, you've know this magic show for as long as you can remember being someone. What I'm suggesting is that you experiment with presence and spare attention, sense the turbulence that arises to convince you of separative existence, and notice the strange capacity to be simultaneously aware of objects and emptiness.

Thus you can learn to recalibrate your attention and very being from the hubris of imagination to its absolute nature, to your absolute nature.

Here it is - no matter how you might try, you cannot really convince yourself otherwise.

Patience: Oleksandr Pidvalnyi



I Dare You to Stop

I dare you to stop imagining that this is about anything, that you are less than anyone, that there is somewhere to go, that there is something to do with yourself, that there is realization, that you're not there yet, that your behavior must be honed into obeisance, that you should be more or less of whatever you imagine you could be more or less than or in possession of.

Then, when you're done with all that, I dare you to stop having any idea about how this should feel to convince you that you have reached a spiritual gold standard.

It's only when you stop entangling with your imagination of where you've been before now, what you've felt before now, what's happened before now; that you're free to not know what this is.

If you grant yourself the kind permission to relinquish any and all coordinates that place you in a place or a time or a condition, the transcendental nature of sensate awareness, free from reference, opens unto speechless realms where there is neither the presence nor absence of self; such qualifications have become entirely moot.

There is no need to qualify what's present as if it should or shouldn't have anything to do with whatever you held to be true about human experience - that is gone.

What exactly do you imagine you should or could do to be free from the specious momentum of yourself? Why truck in trivia when the entirety of pre-manifold potential is whispering in your ear?

Specious Present 7: Ben Pond



Intimacy

I woke up this morning as I often do. One nose was slightly stuffed, my breathing was once again compromised despite the use of my trusty CPAP on high flow, used in conjunction with a tongue suction apparatus that resembles the appearance of a penis (that you put your tongue into to pull it forward in your mouth to prevent your airway from closing), and ear plugs to dampen the whining sound of the CPAP motor straining all night to help me sleep, which I only do in spurts, between obsessive and repetitive dream fugues that occur due to oxygen deprivation.

So, as you can surmise I woke up refreshed and ready to start the new day with vim, vigor, and a curious gratitude infused throughout my body kind of resembling what I can only describe as non-specific bliss.

My thought engine was noticeably quiescent and while I was preparing my espresso I wondered who or what does the noticing of the noticing. To add to my reverie this morning we had the pleasure of baby sitting a dog named Baby, a near all-white fluffy furred Havanese whom I took out for a walk around the yard blanketed with gleaming white crunchy rain soaked snow under a golden morning sun, weaving around the hoof-prints left by deer who visited during the night.

At times it may have looked to a stranger that I was walking a pink dog harness suspended in the crisp winter air with nothing attached, such was the natural camouflage of a white Havanese sniffing about with insouciant invisibility.

I couldn't help but wonder, 'what is the nature of joy?' The mere contemplation was joyful in itself, and I was more glad than not, not to know the answer.

Back in the house I sat by the kitchen window, our private bird blind, Baby (all pooped out figuratively and literally) at my feet, to keep company with the woodpecker, blue jays, cardinals, and other winged seed snackers who forage from our bird-feeders.

Silence is what I found. Silence and the impulse to celebrate it in prose. My mind naturally looks for an angle, a kernel, a way to kick start a contemplation that maybe others might enjoy so the word 'Intimacy' came into view; but what to do with it?

One typically associates intimacy to be 'my' feeling of closeness or even more than closeness with some thing or some one. This morning though, intimacy was not that, it was what is left when the noticer of the noticing has vanished from view, much like a Havanese does while walking in snow.

Baby: E.M. O'Riordan



From Eternity to Here

It is because of our involuntary consent to feel the way this feels that we suffer and then seek relief from suffering, still clinging rather unconsciously to the demand that we go on feeling this.

Conversations with God can be fun, but invariably prove to be without merit or utility, so I might recommend, without making any recommendations, that one have a Conversation with Emptiness instead - it bears more fruit.

The intrepid student of the three kāyas dispatches their keen skills of discernment to delve as deeply as their karmic allotment of intelligence permits, into the nature, if not genesis and evaporation, of whatever it is we find as present experience.

One eschews all and every seduction of authority, coercion, and creation myth to open a portal back into essential nature, though it was never actually possible to depart from same.

Let's use the Dorje and its toroidal geometry to illustrate the field of consent (represented by the center disk) that permits emptiness to manifest as the experiential manifold of all that can be felt and imagined, which curiously is exactly the way back from confusion into non-specificity.

With no effort or specialized knowledge you already stand as the naked entirety of all that is potentiated without being so, that's what realization reveals. However, without giving your consent you do in fact consent to feel how this feels to feel how this feels and as such are catapulted at great force and dizzying speed into the myth of separative existence.

Once you're you, you're likely to defend your existential position to your own detriment, but hey, someone on a cross once said something about forgive them for they know not what they do, and that's that.

However, from time to time a certain restlessness wells up and inspires the unwitting to 'Get Back' so the hilarious adventure of spiritual seeking occurs quite of its own accord.

After you've been at that shell game for a while, if you're lucky, you learn how to ignore the world for a few moments here and there and discover once again how it feels to feel this and rest in that simplicity without guile or anticipation.

With enough momentum and affection you learn how to withdraw your consent from the insatiable insistence of consciousness to be or to feel and you drop back into the emptiness from which you arose.

That is, this is what presence is, the bifurcated, though not really, magisterial brilliance of non-specificity masquerading as other than itself by consent.

Note to Self: Do not post another cute dog photo for a while.

It's Doggos all the way down: basedonair



c

We like to go places. Sometimes near at hand, other times, as far and as fast away from here as we possibly can. It's downright unnerving just how fast some stuff can travel.

The Cheetah can run at huge strides and dizzying acceleration up to 100 feet per second. Still a Peregrine Falcon can dive from the sky onto clueless prey at 352 feet per second, that's just nuts.

What could possibly travel at nearly three times the speed of a hungry falcon, you guessed it, the speed of sound is clocked at 1,125 feet per second. Boom!

But let's say you're hunting for big game and you need some fire power at your command, well then you can always buy a gross of Swift bullets each of which travels at over 4,000 feet per second into your defenseless target.

But let's not stop there, the big guns, the rail gun, uses electromagnetic energy to hurl projectiles at a whopping 8,270 feet per second or 1.56 miles per second. Whew!

Exciting stuff, right? OK, here's some more cool stuff made of speed. Did you know that in order to leave earth's gravitational field to enter orbit a space craft must rev up to 7 miles per second to blow past the atmosphere.

It doesn't end there of course, if you're really bold of intent and want to escape the warm embrace of the sun you'll have to kick it up a notch to 26 miles per second so you can enjoy the quiet cold void of interstellar contemplation.

Speaking of contemplation, let's do a casual segue with "c", the constant, the speed of light. You know when they say go big or go home, here's a fun one and I'm sure you've heard it all before. The speed of light translated into local values is 186,282 miles per second.

Armed with this Apollonian magic just think of the places you could go!

Just a small caveat before you get too excited, the "perceivable" (that has to be in quotes) universe is a phucking monster, it's so huge that even now is not / cannot be the same across the throbbing emptiness that this is. It's also so small that the eye of a needle is vast beyond imagination for the protean time-collapsed quantum entangled building blocks that consciousness uses to infer manifestation.

Riding on a surf board that can hurl you through the fabric of space time on a dime can get you where exactly? Well the nearest star to ours (the Alpha Centauri triplet) is just a mere 4.2 light years away, so if you need something from the store a round trip is still less than a decade. No problem.

Of the fifty or so closest stars to what we call the Sun, the farthest is DEN 0255-4700, only 16 light years away. That's as close as your own breath from an intergalactic perspective.

Here's where it gets really fun, the nearest galactic level star cluster is the Canis Major Overdensity, a mere 25,000 light years away. This is at the speed of light mind you. It takes 25,000 years to get there and that's one way!

OK, not that you've asked, but what is the perceivable and probable volume of the universe? The experts say since the universe has been expanding for 13.8 billion years (a big bang centric assertion), the co-moving distance (radius) is now about 46.6 billion light-years containing two hundred billion galaxies, recently upgraded to a suggested 2 trillion.

Extrapolated into further speculation of the unknowable universe based on the factors of expansion, heat signature, and constituent elements of matter and dark matter some estimate that it must be at least 250 times the radius of the observable part which means the unobservable Universe, assuming there's no topological weirdness, must be at least 23 trillion light years in diameter, and contain a volume of space that's over 15 million times as large as the volume we can observe.

What's the point here? Well on the one hand even if you command the speed of light just what do you think you can do with it, where can you go? The answer is nowhere special and not very far, in fact it may as well be nowhere but here because the universe is so phucking phat that you can't get anywhere of any significance, not ever for as long as you live even if you lived for a ridiculously long amount of time.

Recently I heard a Guru refer to light in his introductory remarks by saying something along the lines that everything is made of light and you could sense that typical admiring gasp flutter through the fawning crowd all hoping that enlightenment might be their's someday with no one bothering to take the time to remind the Guru that you can't do anything with light, you can't go anywhere with it, light is just irrelevant. Light and enlightenment, why bother?

Conception of Observable Universe: Pablo Carlos Budassi



We dare not relinquish the thirst for attainment

If you've been at this for a while, you are inexorably on a collision course with some formidable frustration.

That frustration is made of the very stuff that consciousness and experience are made of; and that would be the streaming though momentless, full though empty, novel though ever the same, obscure though clear as day nature of whatever this might be - from which you are clamoring for enlightenment.

We can't help but bring a certain hidden expectation to the myth of our lives which is that something special occur as an artifact of experience within the myth of our lives.

You can see it in the faces, hear it in the questions, observe it in the body language - the innocent and insoluble appetite for what I think and hope will happen to me that will provide the demonstrative evidence and sum certain take away that proves beyond the shadow of a shadow that I have arrived.

Though it is impossible to enjoy any certitude when faced with and saturated by mercurial ambiguity, still we dare not relinquish the thirst for attainment and that's what keeps us in the game.

Magic Mushrooms: h.koppdelaney



It'S Nowing

I looked out my picture window and yup, it's nowing. No serious accumulations are expected, but it's best to drive slowly.

Face it, we're made of two simple things, envy and resentment. We want whatever it is we don't have and we envy then resent those that do or have the means to get.

We don't dare see that we're already so much less than enough, that there's little point in pretending to be someone in pursuit of something more.

If fullness had the least bit requirement, it couldn't be fullness, only perpetual insufficiency.

If you presume existence, that's absolute assurance of all that can and will go wrong. Let existence be someone else's problem and you can stop going to retreats, unless you really like going to them.

If you meditate, and you should, it's not important that anything come of it. If you seek to manifest or attract or co-create you are truly a loser. You are too much, suffering from the myth of too little, working too hard to change things that aren't actually happening and aren't listening anyway.

What's wrong with you, simple, you.

Having taken credit for way too much, still you insist that something or someone else is in your way, make up your mind already.

Right about now, now is gone. Right about here, there is no possible context for your location. Familiarity can only be imagined, and one wonders where all the contempt comes from.

It's not really important that you have the best day ever, what choice do you have?

Jizo in Snow: Nicole Is The New Black



Bias - Mara's Secret Weapon

Let's be clear, there is no reason that anything occurs in the way it does.

This is true concerning your station in life, your emotional resiliency or paucity, your capacity for or lack of intimacy, your sense of self worth or self image, how you respond to intrusion and unavoidable mishandling, your astrological sign, what you've done about all the ways you suffer, and of course, your thirst for whatever you think enlightenment might be.

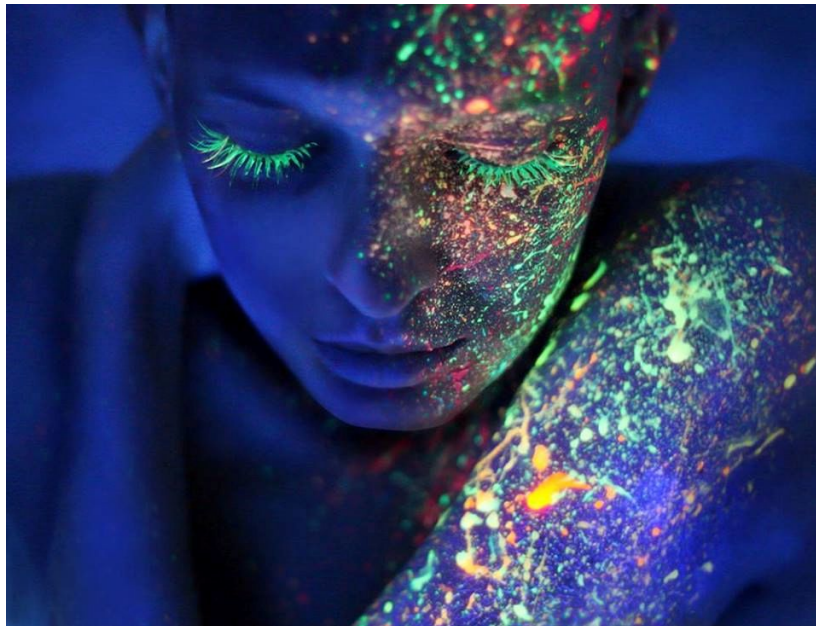
Find anything at all that you presume to be about the world or about yourself and I can assure you that there is no reason for it. Insisting that there is, is bias, and that's the "reason" that you writhe with existential disappointment and a life time of 'what to do about everything', though I contradict myself of course - and that's intentional, though without reason.

Bias pollutes your unfettered soul quite unconsciously and fetters you with ideas foisted upon your sacred naiveté by the sick and malevolent culture of civilization making you a slave to its expansion and extinction driven growth curves and then gives you, or more to the point, inoculates you with liturgic memes of toxic masculinity and obedience under the guise of religion, education, politics, economy, and all manner of intoxicating and incarcerating hell realms which we gleefully and foolishly call 'my life'.

And you think that mindfulness or extraterrestrially assisted ascension riding your de-calcified pineal gland from your Muladhara Chakra to your Sahasrara Chakra while chanting the Chandi or the Heart Sutra and sipping coconut water infused with pond scum and ginger through a glass straw after you have your silver fillings removed will bring you happiness, balance, and all the things you've convinced yourself you need to thrive delivered by a FedEx robot that says "good morning, I hope you're having the best day ever!"

Are you plucked or what? Don't even take a moment to consider the choice, there is none, you're plucked.

We might hope that someone or something has our best interests at heart and that spiritual cultivation is cumulative, but neither is true.



For as long as you're operating from the position of bias as concerns everything you think you are and all that has or hasn't happened to you, you are unwittingly compelled to reinforce the very bias that was never true in the first place and that's why even your sincere attempts to be free continue to fail.

Now, watch what happens when you consent to this simple observation without reluctance or rejection - that's yoga.

Glow: Unknown

The Rose, the Ruse, and the Thorn

If you slept with Michael Jackson as a child I am so very sorry for the sorrow and confusion you must be suffering. I don't wish to victimize you any further with my superficial sympathies, I do realize they can't even or ever begin to meet you where you are.

For some it may be possible to reassemble an adult sufficiency to troll this mad mad world and discover what love feels like, for others, could be a steep and impossible climb.

The consciousness of civilization, the pervasive rose, ruse, and thorn that we all suffer is for each one of us, a life long journey from indentured codependency to whatever dignity of being we may be able to procure.

The fundamental wound of a fractured self-identity made of memory and the specificity of ideas about ideas about ideas under the thumb of ancestral loyalty and superstition makes us all absolutely insane, no one escapes it.

It is a profound encounter, should it occur, that no amount of apology or empathy or spirituality for that matter will soothe the basic flaw of individuated consciousness - that aching sorrow is the on ramp to realization.

What you are witnessing, though there is no personified witness, is an incomprehensible serendipity made of non-local impulses having no actual duration or existence even, only masquerading as light and form, genesis and implication, the stuff of human history and present milieu.

If you don't take the courageous and crazy making journey to see it, you're not likely to know it even exists - you'll be you, the perpetrator and the victim for the long haul. The inertia of self-interest and the prowess of didactic narration will confound you with total bullshit and a life of deferral.

Magical celebrity is an intoxicant, and worth paying for at the theater, but if you stray too close to the fire of popular culture, the hit making machinery behind the song, the allure of money, being made special, and taken without true consent into the dark corners of a serial malignancy (whomever's it might be), the fee is often too high to bear.

Here on earth, the beauty is unspeakable, and so is the seduction of the rose, the ruse, and the thorn. My most sincere well wishes to those who have suffered the theft of their right to say "No".

Rose Thorn: Unknown



Confrontation with Cessation

Before you take this or yourself to be anything at all, what is its nature? Before you leap to remedial action for all that you're not, wouldn't it be a reasonable suggestion to first discern what this is?

If you are preemptively convinced of anything at all you have invariably and perhaps involuntarily come to some conclusion(s) from which your interest and motivations begin.

The confidence you place in whatever it is you have come to believe is likewise involuntary, but you don't know that unless you're willing to look unflinchingly at the body of evidence and the manner by which you have come to rely upon such evidence to take the position that you do.

I'm not replacing what you believe with something else to believe that's any different, any better, or more or less true - what I am suggesting is worse than that. More disturbing in fact.

What I am suggesting is that your primary experience is a confrontation with cessation, ceaselessly so. It may be inferred then that whatever you hold to be true about whatever experience is, if it's anything at all other than the defenseless revelation of cessation, it is absolute bullshit.

That's about it.

Point of cessation: Zefi Syrivli



It's OK not to be Spiritual

If you tell the average person that it's OK not to be spiritual they'll probably look at you somewhat quizzically as if to say, 'tell me something I don't know choir boy'.

But if you tell a seeker it's OK not to be spiritual they're either gonna punch you in the nose or pee themselves on the spot with the greatest relief they've ever known!

I'm not so sure whether it's in the delivery or the power of the message. For those who enjoy the unrelenting disquietude of wondering whether they're OK just being themselves you can't be too sure how they'll react when they find out that it's perfectly OK just being themselves, when for all this time they just weren't sure.

In fact, even if you're perfectly sincere about it and as disarming as you can be, you're not likely to convince them of this good news. And that's OK, because it's really not up to you and certainly not me of course to convince anyone of anything, especially whether they're OK just being themselves or not when we may not be so sure ourselves of what is true about anything.

What if it is OK to not feel all that useful, all that fulfilled, left out, bereft of ecstatic experience, droll and trolled by life in the curious way we find ourselves living the way we do pretending to be anything other than what we might actually be just because we don't really know what we might actually be, but somewhere in the midst of all that we are and all that we're not I really do believe on the days that I do that it's OK not to be spiritual, and that's a mighty fine day indeed.

Don't you think so too?

Fortune: Judith Linhares



The Single Sentence for Guaranteed Awakening Challenge

The principal restlessness is the imagination that there's someplace to be, when there's not.

Untitled: Anna Charney



The Single Sentence for Guaranteed Awakening Challenge II

Present sentient being flourishes as infinity unsolicited by the implications of narrative self-reference.

Gorgeous Smeared Sky: Matt Molloy



Belief is not a suspension bridge

I bet you can recall the auspicious day that your father's mighty and one-pointed flagellate gazed upon your mother's translucent and welcoming ovum and said to itself, "man, she's the girl for me" which penetration cascaded unceasingly into a frenzy of mitosis that not too long after became the self-loathing bundle of shallow and banal hubris known as you.

It was a great day indeed, and though we only culturally celebrate the annual womb emergence day, that loving and lustful moment when at least one of your parents surely orgasm-ed was phucking awesome. I bet you would agree.

Before you could claim yourself to be the rightful and prideful owner of sentient awareness, consciousness, and preference actualization, what were you really?

And are you still that or have you become something other than that, something better, imbued perhaps with the hard won skills of vocabulary, discernment, belief, and the joy of knowing all that you know which makes you perfectly suited to choose the optimal course of action for all that you do for the benefit of all sentient beings?

I'm not trying to reinforce or dissuade you from anything you hold to be true, I'm just kinda curious as to how you imagine you have become what you take yourself to be given the orgy of evidence to the contrary.

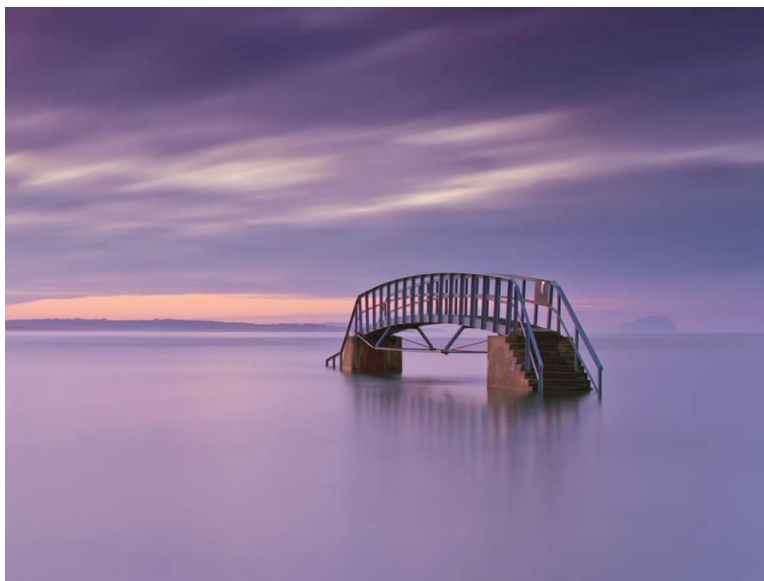
You may (or may not) insist on being the possessor of free will but rarely, if ever, question whether it was free will or not that brought you to your cherished conclusion.

Let's face it, most folks dismiss awake as not being worthy of their time and even more than most have no idea that such an imperative could even, does even, exist. And you know as well as anyone could that they likely believe in free will too.

Anyway, if anyone tells you why things are the way they are, they're lying and you would be wise to keep that in mind as you rummage around in the incestuous playground we call spirituality.

Denial is not a river in Egypt and belief is not a suspension bridge to somewhere other than here.

Bridge at Belhaven Bay in Dunbar



Captorless Captivation

If you were sufficiently daring and adventurous to plot a course for escape, you'd first have to be meticulous in your survey and truly accurate as concerns the nature of your incarceration and the means by which your captor was so easily able to entice you into servitude.

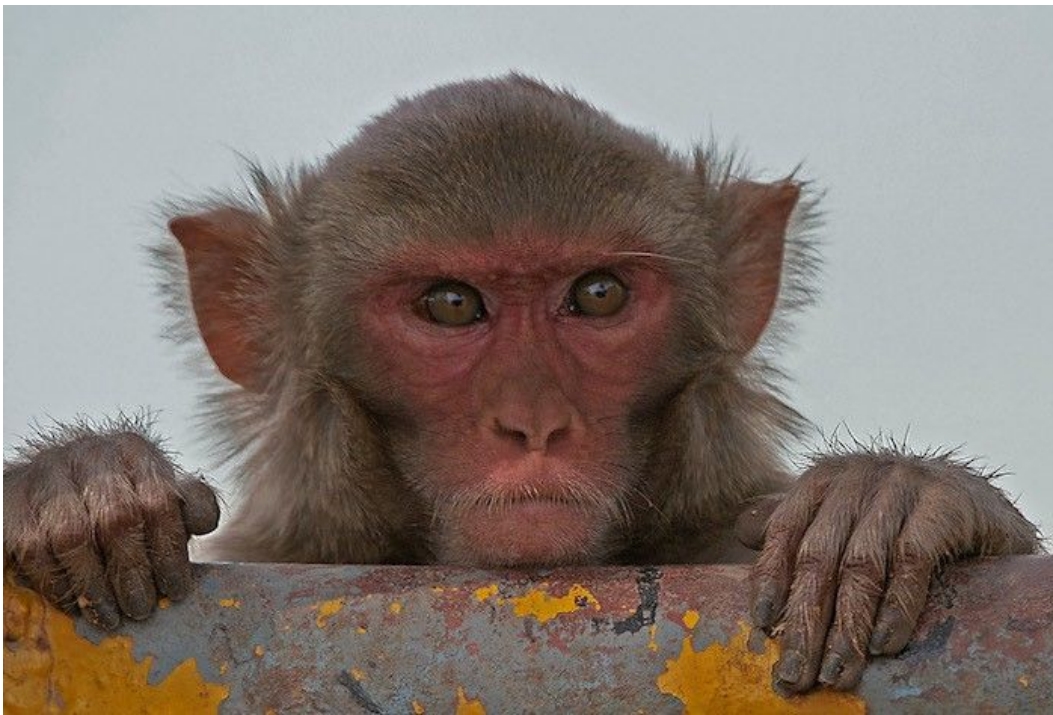
If you lack the patience and cunning to reveal the nature of your bondage you will inexorably be condemned to rattle your chains and grip the banana with your defiant fist ensuring your everlasting commitment to existential deprivation.

You are neither responsible nor capable by virtue of choice or without for the primary nature of identification you feel as your sentient experiencing self.

The magical binding force that compels you to be and to take first-hand interest in your biological viability, your chances for survival, your capacity for joy, the bright glimmer of your future, and your success with healing the vicissitudes of your past is not yours to command or transcend.

See this where it really counts, see it with a fullness few dare to solicit, see it in your soul so that the trinkets and artifacts of experience no longer hold you prisoner to captorless captivation.

Rhesus Macaque: Wikimedia Commons



No really, I really do, I have a real spiritual question

It's not unreasonable to divert or just redirect all spiritual questions to the same somber and rather useless sacred moment where just a moment before you made the stirring announcement of your conundrum du jour nothing actually happened to you at all.

This is not too difficult a revelation to claim.

The unceasing serendipity of whatever this is scales up from the sub-protonic a-causal gelatinous slurry of 'nothing's really possible' to masquerade as all the ideas you harbor about what and why the shit that happened happened with such rapid effusion that it leaves you reeling with the hypnotic certainty that something spiritual or even partially spiritual may have occurred or missed you completely and now you have a question about what you should do about it in the future should it ever happen or evade you again.

The fact that you can take yourself sufficiently seriously for long enough to muster up a juicy complaint, a head turning moment of specialness, and a deep advaitic or talmudic dilemma ought to be proof enough that you are being played.

I realize it's just too embarrassing to admit, but whenever you step up to the mic to ask a spiritual question of someone else, the preface is always, "I refuse to see that this isn't really happening in the way that I need it to, but....."

Specter Azure Area Rug: Capel Rugs



Peer Pressure

It's obvious, at least to some, that there is little hope for humans to ever agree on anything of value. We're just too quirky, too impulsive, too insatiable, too varied in our monotonous and monstrous personas to be able say, "Hey, let's make sure the air stays clean, the water pure, the habitat undisturbed, the kingdom of g-d to remain sacred and held in the highest regard."

Nope, not gonna happen, our appetites like our lives are unmanageable. The religions and the evangelicalism (which thrive as well in the Asian oneness cultures and the bastions of non-dual puffery) just become cauldrons for more authoritarianism, more projection and transfer, never ending toxic paternalism, and exploitation of all sorts.

The specter of violent stupidity passively aggressively promoted by the corporate media, by government, by the devolutionary voices of regime and the moronic voices of the hopeful, the New Age Spiritualist, the Mufons, and their ilk cannot be contained or countered.

Everyone 'deserves' their voice, their rightful perspective, their ability to game and manipulate the system, the courts, the broadcast narrative. We enroll the needy and angry minions in our solution and conduct one genocide after another, one egregious mass shooting after another, which at this curious crossroads of human saturation includes the means and ends to usher in the 6th great mass extinction with such viral futility that all we have remaining is absolute insecurity and the promise of the surreal.

We are ripe for fear and loathing, for the shouting orange headed autocrats and their despicable sychophantic apologists to destroy the enterprise, to deny culpability, to claim dominion, to lie and misdirect with such unnerving and psychopathic verve that we all go down wondering what it is that's happening as it happens.

Sure, for now you can still get a decent taco somewhere (if you can) and await the next season of whatever your favorite show is with giddy anticipation while the glaciers recede with unprecedented ferocity into the warming ocean.

And the point is; as if I have one, as if I've ever had one, and I'm not convinced I have, might be the admittedly shallow

encouragement not to succumb to peer pressure as the world becomes madder and madder with mediocrity on the way to existential evisceration.



Time upon a Once

All of consciousness conspires untiringly to remind you of you unbeknownst to you and that's how it gets away with the victim-less crime of having you believe in a world made of nothing but dreams as if it were your own.

This magical hypnosis has no particular agenda or interest in enslaving you or compelling you to suffer the indignity of imagining yourself to possess personal continuity.

It is merely pervasively good at what it is, and fast too - very very fast.

Though neuronal impulses and the plasma of perception do not travel quite the speed of light, they're fast enough to convince you that you indeed experienced something less than vague a moment before now. And who would dare argue with that?

That's how you come to be a seeker. A glint of suspicion pierces the veil of conformist reality and you can no longer be contained. Though it can be a circuitous journey from here back to here, it is / was always the same here that releases you, once confounded you.

It's all time upon a once, I presume you've seen this for yourself. There's nothing other than this to see.

Your prowess for narrative suggestibility is just a magic wand that you wield quite innocently enough to self conjure. Though it may seem counter intuitive for your typical Hogwarts student, it can be quite useful to just put the wand down.

Don't lead up to it, don't count to three, don't slip in just one more question, one more explanation; with no effort and nothing to lose, you just put the wand down.

What remains, if anything does, is up to you.

Beech Wood Wand: Brown & Lobban



True Dat

The single-most solitary completely strange absolutely verifiable forever binding never to be not true always count-on-able ancient and present remarkable and oh so ordinary sacred blasphemous magical unforgiving merciful frustratingly obvious and hidden in plain sight reason that you fail in your bid to wake the phuck up is that you need something to be true about you.

Arunachala Sunrise: India Mike



Aperture & Intimacy

All religious ideation is just that, fetish and specialness, a worm hole of self-interest and the hallucination of disparate circumstances across the epochal misery of time.

If you want to wake up, and that's not up to you so don't stress about it too much, you must discover either through meticulous exploration or dumb phucking luck what aperture and intimacy really imply as concerns the nature of presence and phenomenality.

I'm quick with advice so let me give it a try.

Aperture is simply a gauge of open. If you're open you are prepared to abandon everything you think you think about everything you think about.

This is where you discover just how uncomfortable it is to relinquish all previously and presently held beliefs and bias unconsciously relied upon to tell or approximate the truth(s) about the mystery of perception and being.

In simple language you are absolutely undefended and quite prepared to be the fool. If you still harbor the slightest presumption or causal confidence then you know way too much to be of use to anyone, most importantly yourself.

Intimacy is the capacity to pierce the veil of an ever abundant misdirect that has you reeling, generally unconsciously, from the shock and awe of presently appearing phenomena, about which you think you can derive and put to use reliable data that says and projects something of value about your past, present, and future conditions.



If you have, and we all do, an intimacy disorder, it has little or nothing to do with getting the love you want or attracting (by law or other means) some other hell realm to rescue you from the one you're in. It has more to do with your unrepentant greed for personal security and continuity.

These two factors are really one and the same, open is intimacy and intimacy is open. Similarly the dearth of either portends that you will likely ask some spiritual teacher to guide you from the condition that you're

not really in to some other condition that you can never actualize - and that's the carrot on a stick conundrum that permits some teachers to become wealthy while you become poorer.

If, by some strange twist of fatelessness, you empty out the old camp trunk of all the moldy and fetid contents of your clever mind, you may be confronted with an immeasurable aperture of speechless intimacy and all the seeking ends right there and then, right here and now.

So Few, So Little Time, Better Hurry

I'm not sure if you've noticed, and maybe it's just me, but there's a phuck load of suffering out there. The breadth and scope of the maladies is truly staggering, take me for instance.

I've got a spirochete thing going on in my right shoulder, neck, and arm, a root canal that gives me daily reminders, lingering gout in my big left toe, I'm adjusting to two new eyes thanks to the marvels of cataract surgery, a sore hip, a bad attitude, compulsive introspection, muggle avoidance, nuclear family abandonment by my own doing, disdain for anyone that thinks 911 was caused by hijacked airplanes, and that's just for openers, it gets worse.

Sometimes I think maybe enlightenment would be really nice to have, but then I think the better of it. What if my garden were full of monkeys and peacocks? What if I wore a diaper, smoked bidis, went into unscheduled reveries, had to perform pujas, or listen to Rupert Spira; I think I'll pass.

Some cool and lonely folks play Second Life and similar avatar games on the internet to get away from it all and it never dawns on them that their waking life is just that, they are avatars on the life stage, moved to and fro entirely by nothing you can find, running out the clock on their karmic allotment, giving and getting advice that never amounts to much and doesn't really need to. It's all anonymous role play behind the mask you were born with.

The vanity of ideas and the hedonic pleasures of somatic saturation keep us believing that there's something to this, some way I can and should better myself, be a player, express my will, influence others, give back, hit the gym, save the planet, redact, redact, redact.

And all the while we're waiting for our ship to come in, ancient spires succumb to fire, the fungi quietly seeks its next victims, those entrusted to protect the public good have abandoned their moral post and left the unwitting to fend for themselves as the methane sloughs off the thawing permafrost.

Where do we imagine this is all going? To a better place, a new presidential election, carbon credits, the exoneration of Assange, a dzogchen retreat in New Mexico, are we phucking kidding or what?

Truly when it comes to the curious enterprise of awake there are so few, so little time, better hurry.

Permafrost: Olafur Ingolfsson



Verge, Midst, That

For the greater part of your life you're on the verge, but you're not quite sure of what or what of, you just have a faint feeling.

If you have the dubious and great good fortune to seek out the few that have gone over the event horizon of conformist perception, well now you're in the midst, but you're not quite sure of what or what of, and yet the feeling has grown stronger, more compelling than before.

Then through some miracle of persistence or just plain ole bad luck, which is not yours to claim, you stumble into That.

Precipice of Truth: Bishop of Balance



Reverse Spirituality

The marketplace that serves our insatiable needs to control and attract and feel better is rife with suckers and fools and the racketeers who help them part with their money.

It doesn't stop there of course; the same exploitation wends its way into our most intimate and chronically codependent vulnerabilities culminating in all forms of emotional, physical, psychic, and sexual abuse.

These regrettable misadventures of the human spirit are found everywhere from the family to the church to the boy-scouts to the ashram and worse, they even fuel legislative incarceration and punitive violations at the level of the nation state. It's 2019 (whatever that means) and some can be stoned to death for consenting affection.

For as long as we deny the god-given right for what amounts to our pathetic views of anti-social wiring that diverges from the singularly acceptable behaviors of privileged heterosexual and consenting adults, all 'others' are forced into the shadows - yet their needs and rights for happiness and prurient fulfillment cannot be denied.

Pardon my digression, this is not a plea for enlightened inclusion or a blueprint for a progressive and more than tolerant human society, I had a more yogic agenda that I can now pursue.

The wise and patient aspirant with a penchant for shamanic alchemy learns how to study the fractal and fascinating world of deception. Contrarily, any cultivation of premature ascension or suffering mismanagement, which as it turns out is unavoidable, does little more than to further cloak the profound formidability of self interest which is no solution at all.



If one fails to penetrate the stupefying mystery of genesis transcendent acausality percolating up from no where (sometimes spelled now here) then the pride of personification and self reference will not be broken.

One's narrative dependent mind and identity must have a from - to, a reason, a cause, an author, the building blocks of matter and galactic inflation, dependent origination, how and why this is, a time stamp; all of which amounts to nothing more than a present infusion of deception imposing itself on the not self without your permission.

What we may refer to as ego is nothing more than a presently appearing matrix of self justification, an involuntary and generally unconscious denial of acausality.

One is arguably better served by reverse spirituality, by seeing via direct access, the nature of presumption and the ache for future fulfillment - then it may be possible for both to atrophy in place.

Sigil of Reverse: Wolf of Antimony

Relish & Embellish

One of the exciting aspects of living is to see what happens next. Even though we can be gnarled with anxiety or twisted with dysfunctional control dramas we're all about what's going to happen next, and primarily to me.

We live with a certain embedded schizophrenia; a quiet and sacred hunger for the end of affliction, and the insatiable anticipation for more of what's next.

We think that material success of one kind or another will pave the way to winning and ameliorate our hidden hunger for security. Or perhaps if we could just get spiritual enough, for long enough, we could reconcile our inherent mistrust of our own conflicted agendas and come to peace - secretly hoping that someone notices of course.

Generally speaking we rarely get a glimpse of the fundamental conundrum we're in and so conduct our affairs in a way that remains existentially unsatisfiable with an attendant unconscious belligerence that appears to shelter us from the unwholesome truth, the one we don't really want to know about.

If I can play the black or white card for a moment. The only prescription for this fever is not more cow bell, no, it is nothing short of realization. The rub is, if we intuit, and we often do, that the fee for realization includes the involuntary relinquishment to relish & embellish, we're not willing to pay up and that's why we remain seekers for as long as we do.

Static1: Allison Stewart



The fastest way to here

Baba Ram Das fueled a revolution in pop spirituality in the West when he and some good friends, all of whom were steeped in experimental LSD culture and influenced deeply by the then living Murti of Lord Hanuman in the person of Neem Karoli Baba, wrote Be Here Now!

A lot has happened since then and though I enjoy being an amateur cultural biographer of cool and horrendous spiritual shit, it's not really worth going into. It seemed quite relevant at the time, but now what remains is the dried scat of insouciant ambivalence as pertains to the interest I once had in how my life should be lived.

Eckhart Tolle got a little mileage out of 'now', the Vipassanā crowd also seems to cherish its contemplative cultivation, Paul Hedderman wonders aloud 'where else do you think you can be?', and the long list of those who imagine they have a workshop to teach may also have some advice as concerns where you're better off being, now or here or elsewhere, we're just not sure where or when - admittedly it gets a little confusing.

What to do with or about one's self in order to stake the proper claim for true spirituality is somewhat subjective as in 100% always.

A collapse of temporal and spatial orientation is more to the point, but that leaves little for you to do with or about yourself and that's the last thing you want to happen all the while we're clamoring for actualization and relief.



What's so special about here or now anyway that suggests some imperative that we improve our chances for being present and to experience what exactly? As long as you drag the experiencer with you on your next retreat or to your next mindful sip of water the congestion of self-reflection and the value judgments that pervade your otherwise pristine nature stay stubbornly alive.

It's so phucking obvious that the stakes are already piercing your hands and feet binding you to the cross of a will much greater than your own, and yet we flail about in bold disregard of the simple observation that whatever this is is doing itself.

I hope you find the the fastest way to here in your journey, then that will be then and then will be now and now will be then and when will be never and never lasts forever except when it doesn't as now just keeps coming at you amounting to little other than what just happened and no one really knows except when they think they do but that doesn't last, at least not for long, unless you imagine it to be otherwise when you do in fact imagine that it must be someway other than the way that it is if it were some way to begin with that might be more enjoyable than now once it occurs.

Vipassana: H Kopp Delaney

Psychics Eat Pizza just like everyone else

Just last night a couple of psychics came to visit our NSS salon. I had a premonition that some fireworks might ensue so I did what I always do to soften the blow and seduced some fellow inmates to join the conversation because everyone knows if you take on a couple of psychics alone, you're gonna pay for it.

So I got some Brooklyn style pizza and an order of sautéed broccoli and garlic to attract some reinforcements and thank god it worked!

To my amazement and delight the psychics had a slice each and I felt even more comfortable that their palates for good pizza might foreshadow a smooth flowing conversation.

We did pretty well for the intro (you can watch or listen to the salon on our YouTube channel - link below), but things got a little warm when the psychics got into their "mission" statements.

J. Krishnamurti was on a mission, Osho was on a mission, Swami Muktananda was on a mission, the Missionaries were on a mission, the Mormons enjoy a good mission, all of the swell folks who conducted mass genocides were also on a mission. Hasn't it become obvious by now that having a mission is at best useless and at worse phucking lethal?

As if that wasn't enough to get my non-dual goat I could sense that the psychics were dowsing my aura and I'll be perfectly honest here, I'm no poster boy for enlightened well-being. All you're gonna find if you query my essence is rage and fatigue, that's all I have left. Wish it weren't true, but my allotment of free-will left town with Elvis a while ago so I do the best I can with what I've got.

One of the psychics claimed being one with oneness, the other was on her way to one, but to her credit admitted that she wasn't quite one yet. I'm not sure where that leaves anybody, oneness has some clever ways of appearing to be more than one. I thought that if you were aiming for anything, less than one might be a preferred destination if only you could find the right bus to take you there.

I think the other key was limitlessness and the judicious use of free-will, which the psychics insisted everyone has, to choose what's best to get from here to there. I wanted to be agreeable to our new guests, but my free-will got in the way of my free-will once again (as it always does) and I had to protest, to no avail of course.

Toward the end of everyone's patience the psychics permitted me the courtesy of having my beliefs and graciously exited so they could rest up for their day jobs.

When I turned toward the judges table to check my scores, their chairs were empty and I was left to finish off the last slice alone.

For the record, my bias is that awake is better approached through spare and non-exotic means, invisible authority figures are just not that helpful, and the bold willingness to eschew all reference and relativism does indeed pack a punch - unless of course you already know stuff.



Reality is already free of itself

What you take yourself to be is no more or less than emptiness itself doing what it does best.

To discover that the great deception is also the pass key to nirvana, is cessation.

Other than now, elsewhere than here, will never arrive.

The entirety of previous perception is not your concern.

Being spiritual never amounts to much, and that's the good news.

Conceiving and annotating are doing themselves, to cleave to them as self is a game of fast diminishing returns.

There are no GPS coordinates to free.

Don't even bother surrendering, you are neither the agent nor possessor of anything worth giving up.

You cannot rely on anything that happened before now, and more startling than that, you cannot rely on what you imagine is happening now, it's not.

Reality is already free of itself, and we're the last to know.

Be Thou My Vision: Mike Moyers



Soliloquacious Interminability

One's impulsive appetite for feeding on impressions is neither willful nor personal. The fundamental predilection for imagining that imagination is capable of telling the truth about anything is present even before you embark on a journey of self-inquiry and that's why self-inquiry doesn't work.

One hopes that evocative discovery or visions of pristine illumination giving rise to the inflationary spectrum of all phenomena might help relieve the paucity that I call myself, and they will, but only for a short while.

Consciousness is unceasing and without fatigue in its capacity to imbue you with delusional loyalty to the pride of self-referencing. If you think that some form of contemplation or transmission or meticulous investigation into the nature of reality will result in whatever it is you one day hope to attain, you are mistaken.

In the game of spiritual whack-a-mole, the moles always win, you'd do better in Vegas.

True to our biologic, entropic, and dissipative natures we can't help but feed on basic space. We must breathe, drink, eat, assimilate, urinate, evacuate, fornicate, and supplicate our way to the grave. Maybe we have a few moments to read a good dzogchen tome from time to time and engage in a little licentious tyranny just for fun, but that's about it.

We don't and can't see the manner by which our involuntary and belligerent refusal to wake up is functioning the way that it does so we reincarnate from moment to moment as 'self' with no solid evidence or motivation for doing so.



Even the movement to tame our existential restlessness will not crack the code that determines, by way of unrelenting indeterminacy, our fateless fate since once we are under its sway the spell of being and becoming will not relent no matter how many times we have read "I Am That" or asked with due sincerity, "Who Am I?".

It's not what you might find that sets you free from the repetitive familiarity of insisting on yourself, it's the magical and effortless cessation of seeking a remedy for the myth of personal experience that relieves you of the irritability that accompanies predatory impulse feeding.

As you might discern, I don't write this way for public consumption, even skilled seekers reject the implications of these mercurial sigils. I write this way to satisfy my own selfish appetite to peel the onion in a vernacular that just makes more sense than the soliloquacious interminability that passes for spiritual instruction in the 'me-first' marketplace.

You're much less than you ever hoped you would be

A quite common misdirect that spiritual seekers mistake for progress has to do with an over reliance upon the artifacts of experience as a barometer for getting closer or farther from the goal. Paradoxically the goal is often expressed as the very cessation of the seeker who cherishes the day when he arrives at the goal - maybe you can sense the irony.

This is both an acquisition arc and a narrative compendium that further reinforces the hallucination of behavioral or attitudinal adaptation which can make it seem that my steering wheel, under my influence, can point to and deliver me where I want to be, especially if that is other than here.

The personification and anthropomorphisation of whatever consciousness is is the principal dilemma. Doing something with or about the symptom field of scattered and shattered memories and resentments can only contemporize the hallucination of willful individuation which insures that you become and remain the headliner of a variety show that has long since closed and was never signed in the first place.

Your inherent and seemingly repetitive urgency to inhabit whatever reality might be as the experiencer of experiencing is what really drives you nucking phuts, but until you are ready and willing to see this simple observation for yourself you will defend your right to self accuse, even when it's not possible that anyone is actually there.

Blurring this rather secular and unadulterated reflection with spiritual teachings and talk of awareness is merely one of the countless and regrettable ways we self-incarcerate while we claim and cling to one bad idea after another.

While the brave and selfless warriors of our global police state strive to be all that they can be, I sure hope there are a few ordinary souls traveling on the road to you're much less than you ever hoped you would be.

Milky Way from Mauna Kea



Hallucinatory Surrogacy

The most practical on-ramp to realization is to simply acknowledge the presence of hallucinatory surrogacy masquerading as the real.

What this actually is defies one's most skillful exploratory and explanatory prowess so the wise seeker relents to the palpable and ever present bliss field of streaming mystery as an alternative to fussing over the myriad distractions fomented under the veil of implicative narration.

If your attention has been kidnapped by discursive orientation and fascination with yourself you are living, often unknowingly, under the thumb of hallucinatory surrogacy. This is the very dream engine that portends all suffering.

For as long as you insist that your life and your enjoyment of that life are the primary motivators for your existence then you self-condemn (though not willfully) to an endless and thirsty desert of mediocrity and defensiveness.

We may think we have an avid interest in whatever liberation may imply, but what we're really interested in is what's possible for me to suffer less and enjoy more somewhere down the road just after I finish my meditation, my yoga class, or my sandwich.

The potency of present distraction fomented through the effortless impulse to claim and cling and control is far worse than cat got your tongue, it's more like saber-toothed tiger got your soul - and we don't dare notice it.

We writhe under the monotonous and unconscious inebriation of the personal, a stone's throw from the real, not a breath away from now.

Untitled: Rick Souders



Liberation is not an Accoutrement of Self

To "Self" or not to "Self", that is not the question.

All spiritual and non-dual jargon are just that; it's a quest, gone south, of Jason and the Jargonauts and everyone gets fleeced!

One need not become a scholar of spiritual affirmation or esoteric knowledge to peer into the unknown. That is a path of pride and can only elicit more of same - the path of the pundit has no release.

One would be wise to study (through as many means as pleases you) the great deception. As you become more intimately familiar with the tricks of the trade that consciousness deploys to convince you of being the author and owner of the myth of individuated identity you are relieved of its influence.

On the way, the great deception yields to the non-dual and atemporal intelligence of non-specificity and that's what sets you free.

Unhurried availability and affection for discovery are more potent than spiritual warrior-ship or the dramas that accompany those pesky dark nights of the soul.

It can be useful to appreciate that the organic movement from self-importance to dis-individuation happens quite efficiently even without your participation, all you have to do is suffer.

With the slightest willingness on your part it dawns on you, much to your delight, that liberation is not an accoutrement of "Self".

Jason & the Golden Fleece: Penn Museum



Not Quite Sure

if you gave it a try
a mere casual gesture
not encumbered by need
nor desperate for reply
the lightest you could think of
and more still than that
if you gave it a try
might you find
that it's perfectly wonderful
to be not quite sure

Humming: Wangechi Mutu



Unqualified Intimacy with All That Is

Don't count on having a satisfying spiritual experience, there aren't any.

Don't aim for some finality of understanding, when the nature of things is to slip away.

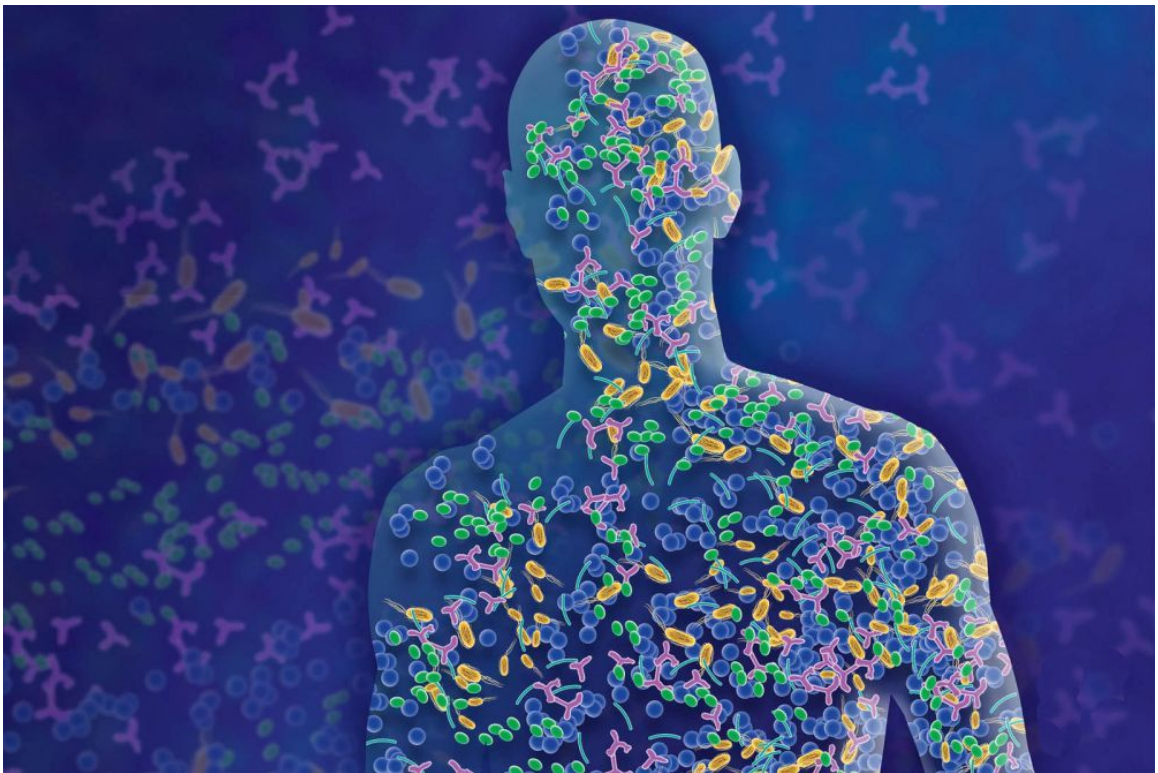
Don't contrast what you take to be your prior experience with anything present or future, none of that is reliable.

Unqualified intimacy with all that is, is all this is, without being anything at all.

And just so we don't appear to be too lofty or on some mission of inspirational life coaching, know this
.....

5Gee is not a celebratory Hindu Chant like 'God, God, God, God, God', no. 5Gee is weaponized microwave technology that is absolutely antithetical to organic wonder and disrupts the fractal beauty of the microbiome and the genetic code of life itself. I'm confident you can take it from here.

Microbiome: Darryl Leja



Support Our Tropes

On this lovely Meme-orial Day we can indulge in various displays of flag waving, hamburger eating, beer drinking, and self-celebrating accolades for our great country and the enviable examples of faith, courage, and forgiveness that prevail across the media landscape.

We give homage to all those that died in vain protecting our police state, beating the world's dictators and autocrats into submission, insuring that women, people of color, non-binary brothers and sisters, and the life giving biosphere all suffer the indignity of the fascistic corporate agenda enabled by wave after wave of corrupt politician, right and left wing propaganda, deliberate control of the narrative, and the mind numbing influence of digital distraction.

Since the dawn of fire we have traveled on a path of iterative and wanton greed for self, and how could it have been otherwise, and more sadly, why should it have been otherwise.

Control and surveillance and theft of dignity, theft of life affirming intelligence, is what's touted as our hard won freedom while wearing the MAGA hat of hate speech and toxic entitlement. We are beyond stupid, we have become irredeemable.

The dystopia of all that is untrue, all that foments xenophobia, all that encourages violence, all that exploits fear and the worst of white male supremacist evangelical faith is mistaken for freedom. Chaos is now the norm, perhaps it always was.

Still there is wonder and the quiet ways of refuge, I'll meet you there.

The Grand Refuge: Doug Oliver



My Suspicion

My suspicion is that stillness, saturated with non-specific feeling, is trans-mutagenic across the electromagnetic spectrum. What there is to behold there cannot be survived by the composite we call the person.

There is no need to wade through the fetid swamp of one's persona to liquidate unto the boundless plasma that precedes 'being' itself.

Desert of the Setting Sun: Andre Lang



The End of Fatuousity

When you, if you, consider the strange and curious nature of narrative free reality you can only find the signature (written in invisible ink) or ever receding wake of what's referred to as perception and experience, you can't actually occupy a cogent event.

All that we presume or insist to be what is happening is completely dependent upon the narration and ornamentation mentally assigned to whatever it is / was that we imagine just happened; we can't really really truly truly know with any remote or present certainty what our actual experience is. We can only approximate or claim to know our experience by way of applying a million acts per second of random delusion to the intrinsically liquidating nature of whatever actuality might be.

To notice this observation, then take refuge in its fecund and assimilative beauty, is what spirituality is all, if not ultimately or presently, about.

As we come to understand, with or without our permission, that the continuity of being in possession of reliable and dependable faculties that shape or dictate what or who it is we take ourselves to be is fatuous, we can rest in being fabulous.

A moment of recognition: E. O'Riordan



The Malignancy of Denial

It's not merely the fact that the government lies, the president lies, the media lies, the scientists lie, Industry lies, the gurus lie, the liars lie and the truth-tellers also lie. It's more importantly the fact that we lie to ourselves, that the malignancy of denial cannot be remedied.

We can give our attention to environmental and climatic matters, we can read and research and activate, we can seek herd immunity, we can vote, we can be transparent with our tax-return, we can default on our student loans, we can believe, we can swamp it out in addiction, we can recover; there's so much that we can do and be, but still the malignancy of denial cannot be remedied.

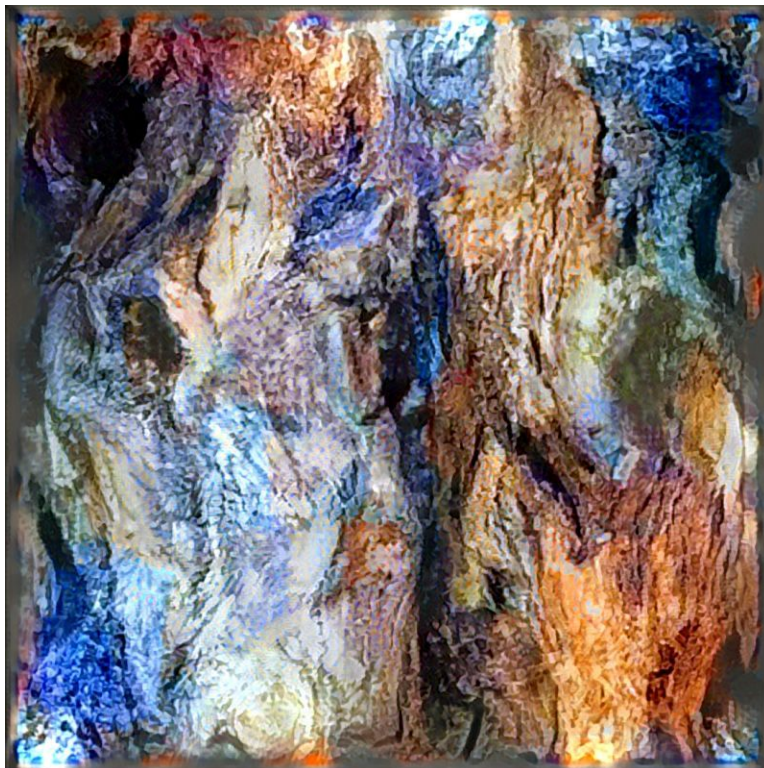
The Hindus have some awesome ideas about shit, and so does everyone else proclaiming a path to piety, to deep understanding, to the truth of things, all the way in fact to god-realization if it's your time of course. You know it's coming; but still the malignancy of denial cannot be remedied.

The Huffington Post (a bastion of truth) headlines - Nikki Haley: Backers Of Abortion Rights Are Forcing Their Values On America. The former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations said that "women are expected to support choice simply because we're women," and asserted that groups supporting abortion rights were creating hostility among women and trying to force their values on others; but still the malignancy of denial cannot be remedied

It's not really fair for us to expect to be told the truth about anything while we commit, purposefully or otherwise, to the long game of selective or wholesale denial within the sphere and scope of our own consciousness. Or is it?

If you dare tangle with your own consciousness you will need some reinforcements and I can think of two off the top of my bald head. Ferocity and affection, apply them as best you can in just the right mix for you and if you're lucky you may punch a hole right through the malignancy of denial, but you'd better be prepared for what you find, you may not like it.

Bark: J. Rosenbaum



The Persistence Dilemma

Let's say, just for fun, you put your thinking down for a moment. Just place it on the coffee table, it won't leave a stain, you can pick it up at anytime, it won't stray far even without a leash.

So, what are you now? What does the texture of present experience say about itself? What evidence do you have for all that you believe to be true about your former or present experience?

What confidence do you bring to the involuntary push of sensual and perceptual consciousness in order to make persuasive claims about yourself? And to be frank, is anyone really interested?

There's a ton of good reasons to suffer the indignity of modern culture, but hasn't it always been modern culture when viewed from a moment later than what it was just a few short moments ago? And isn't that what we mean by the present, a place or time from which one can peer into what masquerades as the past or projects as the future?

We think we are in some agreement as concerns a bunch of stuff, but I never could quite figure out if the past began just after the primordial and revered big-bang and traces forward to the present or if the past begins now and traces backwards toward some physicists' idea of when things really got started?

Same conundrum with the future. Does the future begin now and then rush further into itself or does the future begin as far forward as the perceiving universe might be capable of being so and wend its way back to now?

I'm probably having a persistence dilemma, but how could I know? Having put thinking down somewhere before whatever now is I'm not exactly sure how we got from there to here, or why, or when, if ever it may stop or start again to portray as something done by me or to me, with or without my consent.

I bet you're perfectly sanguine when it comes to what this must be and how you came to be the way you are crafted by the mighty hand of free will, personal choice, and decisive political affiliation based solely or in part on the accurate impressions you've discerned about the world since your conception.



OK, fun time is over, please pick your thinking back up from where you left it and make sure to insert it according to the proper tabs so you don't break anything. Fixing thinking can be expensive.

Unequivocal Incompetence

Though they flocked to him in great numbers from continent to continent, and sat with rapt attention to hear the curious anti-wisdom that he shared so confidently, few were able to actualize the unequivocal incompetence of which he spoke.

The urgency of his invitation was saturated with passion and the generosity of giving, his slight stature would tremble with the poignancy of his conviction, his hands would reach far into the audience as if to conjure a welcoming unto inconceivability.

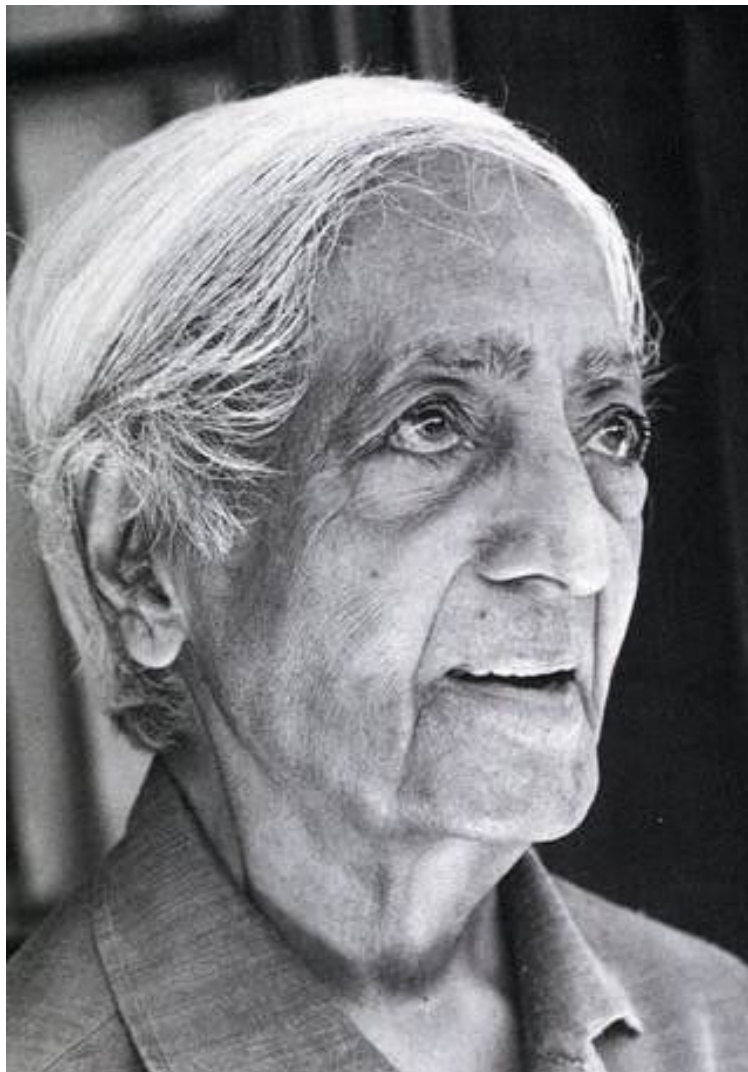
It was neither important nor distracting that his personal life, like all of ours, had its warts and exigencies - that is unavoidable.

His dedication to non-conformity and his willingness to publicly eschew every nook and cranny of authority was absolute, therein lay his freedom, and therein lay ours as well.

For as long as one indulges in secular or spiritual forms of satisfaction seeking, the juggernaut of separation and its inherent conflict burns a candle at both ends of your soul.

If and when you might relent to unequivocal incompetence, the door to reality will surely open, and there will be nothing left of you to defend to anyone, least of all yourself.

Jiddu Krishnamurti



Craving & the Craven Craver

Living in near constant prostration to "I don't know" is a rather prodigious spiritual discipline; hard to imagine, even harder to apply. And yet, as a purifying contemplative gesture it has few rivals.

Any spiritual journey which is not racked with a long stream of aching frustration and cathartic release is hardly worth taking, with the absence of some righteous despair you're just phoning it in.

The concentration and recalibration of energy required to exonerate from the influence of your own mind is not trivial, though after the fact one might rebuke any suggestion that there was any effort involved.

As you become more solemnly convinced of the fact that you truly don't know, an innocent enough curiosity is likely to emerge that asks, "will I ever stand in anything called truth?"

Poetically speaking one wonders if there is any end or outcome for the years spent taking a knee to "I don't know". Will I rise like a phoenix from the ashes of innocence now baked into my marrow or merely persist in lingering uncertainty about everything?

At this juncture, or any decent juncture for that matter, it may be useful to see how the seemingly innocuous arising of craving spontaneously infers the presence of the craven craver.

The "I" that wants to know is itself a mirage of empty artifacts made of the echoes and impressions of what appeared to be former knowledge about one's self, which denies the fundamental practicality of "I don't know" because now (or at least for a distracting moment) you once again know too much.

We mistake the witch's brew of memory and will and preference and implication to be more than sufficient evidence for individuated existence and so we crave and cleave first and foremost to persistence - and that is the primacy of confusion and unsatisfactoriness.

Insistence and intent which imply time and animate the fraudulent notion that presence and experience are mine, must yield to inconsolable incredulity, if you plan on getting anywhere spiritual that is.

Craven Lime Works: Aiden Wellock



Murmuring Mesmerization

Humans are cool, for sure, but not all that bright. We are easily distracted and entranced by our own myopic somnambulism, we can't rally sufficient momentum to adjust our consumptive and copulative exigencies to avert the inevitable consequences of too many of us.

Aided by fire, agriculture, fossil fuels, nitrogen fixing fertilizers, metallurgy, atom splitting, and the hallucination of ritual and cultural ancestry we have become our own worst enemy.

Now that the jet stream wobble is deeply underway and the permafrost crumbles into the warming sea the stress of heat waves, over-drenched prairies, water shortages, catastrophic weather, decimation of the agrarian and oceanic food-chains, plant, insect, and mammalian extinction pressure, exponential increases in atmospheric CO₂, and geo-political mayhem is contributing to the certain demise of sustainable structures for civilization to thrive.

When one moves past denial and minimization, remedial hypocrisy, blame and shame, activism, and all sorts of head-in-the-sand dismissals of our near term appointment with desperate and violent migrations, there are only a few sobering options to consider and they sure as shit don't include hunkering in a bunker.

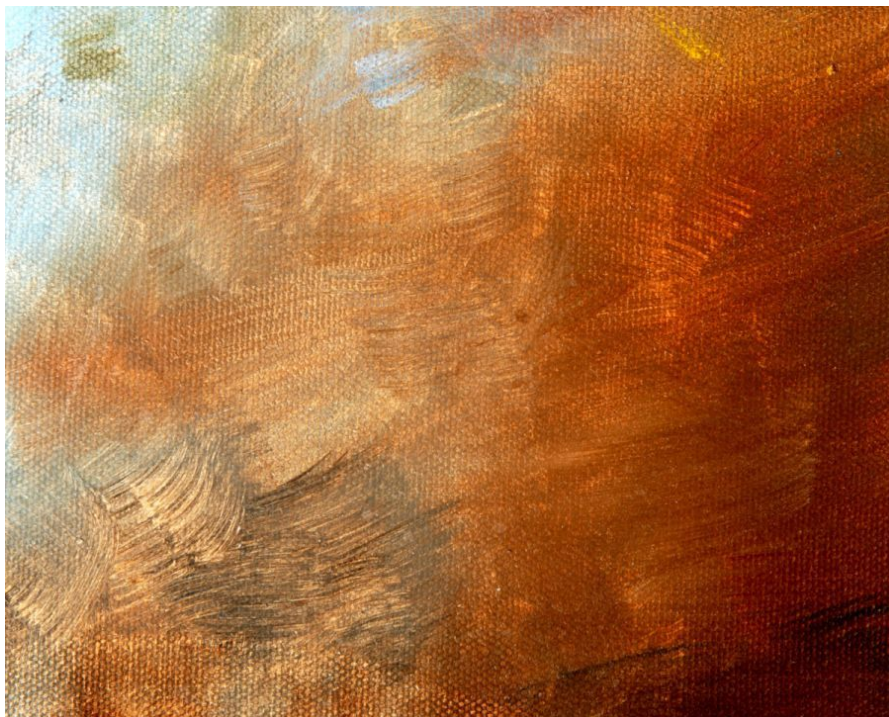
I know you're not ready to hear this and it sure isn't spiritual, but all that remains (as long as apparent stability ensues) is how you prepare to prepare to euthanise while living out the remainder of your life.

There are no longer any constructive actions that can be taken to reverse the accelerating effects of the collapse of habitat and ecological ruptures for the human and fellow species.

Every sentient being eventually comes to terms with cessation, and now all generations will converge on their mortality more or less at the same time, which is shortly.

This is not to say one must regress into fear or brazen forms of rejection or entitlement, no; one uses what remains to contemplate the nearness of the sacred and relishes the company of others that have made peace with come what may.

Painting: Meg Stewart



Nearer than Near

It's not so easy to use the written word to convey total freedom from conceiving. One's capacity to invoke and evoke is ideally met with a similar capacity for receiving and discovering a harmonic that releases one from personally held identity.

The way of realization is not one of accumulation, of enviable experience, of insight, or freedom from anything. It cannot be contingent upon or even suggest some destination where knowledge can be found or cultivated.

It's perfectly OK to win a golden ticket, tour the magic factory, and throb in unison with the oompa loompas, but even if Mr. Wonka offers you the keys, it is best to politely decline.

And that's what the true yogi learns to do with the seemingly insistent nature of persona and the mirage of self. One simply declines the seduction and implication of separative existence and the didactic stream of self-reference, no matter how captivating it may be.

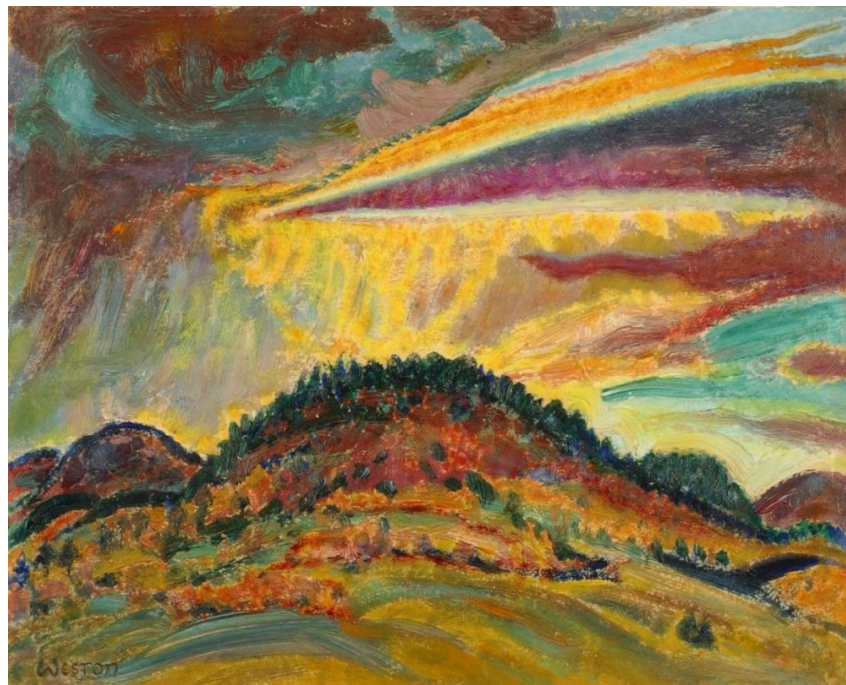
Not surprisingly this intimacy requires some degree of availability and the contemplative coherence to be simply present, to feel without conclusion, to explore without anticipation or rejection, to sense the presence of attention without claim or insistence that there be any utility for one's very existence.

Religious and spiritual and New Age ideation has no intrinsic value, there is no bridge from one place to another, or benefit derived from becoming a better person, a spiritual person, a beacon of accomplishment.

In a manner of speaking, all that is perceived and perceivable occurs at the pleasure of this that is so, without anthropomorphizing or idealizing, without objectifying whatever consciousness or the absolute might be, without the propaganda of the holy book, commandments etched in stone by fire, or the authority of the robe or the crown or the sword.

At the root of our inherent confusion one finds the scroll upon which all our misgivings are written, one sees the quill and the ink for what they are; we lose confidence in our own mind to tell us anything at all as the inherence of object free attention comes to the fore.

Sunset Over Baxter Mountain: Harold Weston



Christ may have reached his allotment

If you do a little bit of theological exploration into the whole 'he died for our sins' thing you may find some fairly pedestrian and feudal influences that shaped the message and crafted the hypnotic narrative used to catalyze us as creatures shackled to shame.

We are unflinchingly disabled from being capable of and culpable for progressive stewardship of our domain; one wonders if indeed we are masters of our own domain, maybe only George Costanza knows.

One wonders what Christ's allotment for saving souls was?

How many could be saved, what was the period of performance, was there a renewal option, were there any metrics applied to qualify the success of his contract, was there any bonus provision in the event that a certain number of sins and souls were satisfactorily processed by say 2019?

What if Christ's allotment for recycling sins into forgiveness and guaranteeing a decent seat in the kingdom of everlasting peace has run dry, like so many aquifers and reservoirs and wells have?

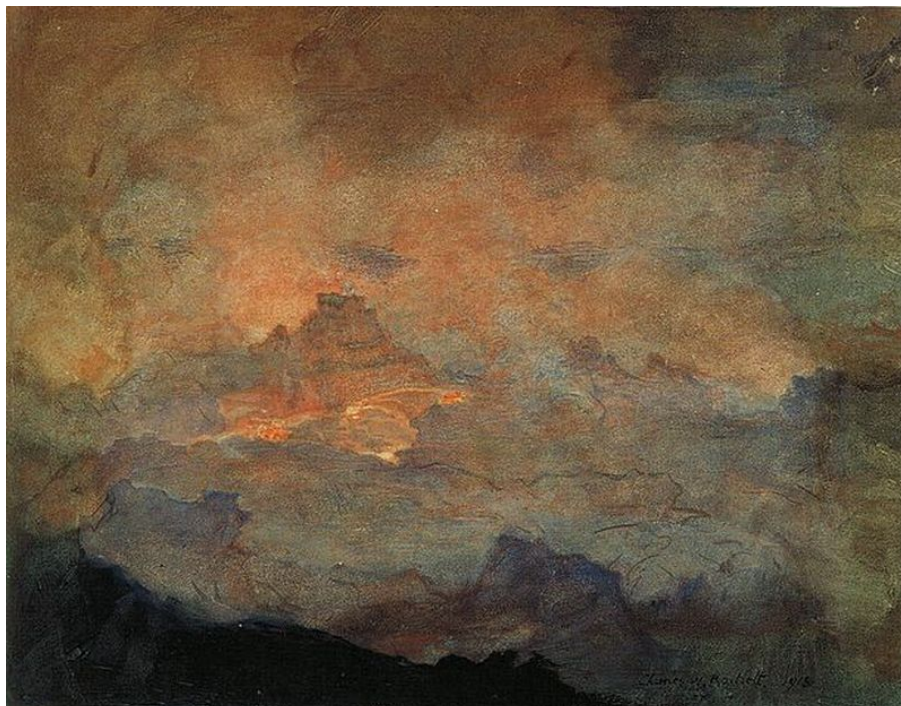
As we minions of post-industrial and post-copulative excess will soon come to realize, the cornucopia of stable climate and fresh water and monsoon replenishment and fecund growing seasons and robust pollination has also run dry or become excessively wet to be rendered non-arable.

A phuck load of dying is already underway; be it insect or plant, climate migrant or serially depressed teenager - the natural order of things that conspired to facilitate the fossil burning agricultural revolution of population abundance has turned the corner and now we are heading into a realm of unprecedented atmospheric saturation of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide (no laughing matter).

It's gonna get worse than hot, it's already trending toward unbreathable.

Like Jesus muttered on the cross shortly before his final asphyxiation, "Neti Neti on the Namaste you loathsome phuckers".

Kilauea Crater: Charles W. Bartlett



Let's Get Spiritual

Wearing robes, taking vows, eating slowly, getting clam baked under a canopy of blankets filled with hot stones, reciting mantras, begging for intervention, stretching balletically, calling on the benevolent deceased, calling on the benevolent ascended, going to meetings, working the steps, cleansing the sinuses, evacuating salt water, going on retreat, supplicating the ether, fondling crystal skulls, consenting to cosplay, relinquishing one's native intelligence to believe in shit - does it ever end?

You know the real reason we want to heal is so we can live to suffer another day.

All that is sought is a movement of vanity.

Celebrating others is a masquerade of codependency.

Security and the persistence of separative existence is our primary companion.

Doing anything about the ego serves whom exactly?

To strive to be other than you are presumes you have the authority to know who you are in the first place, you don't.

All the coordinates of consciousness that place you in a context of time and space and feeling just changed, that's all they can do.

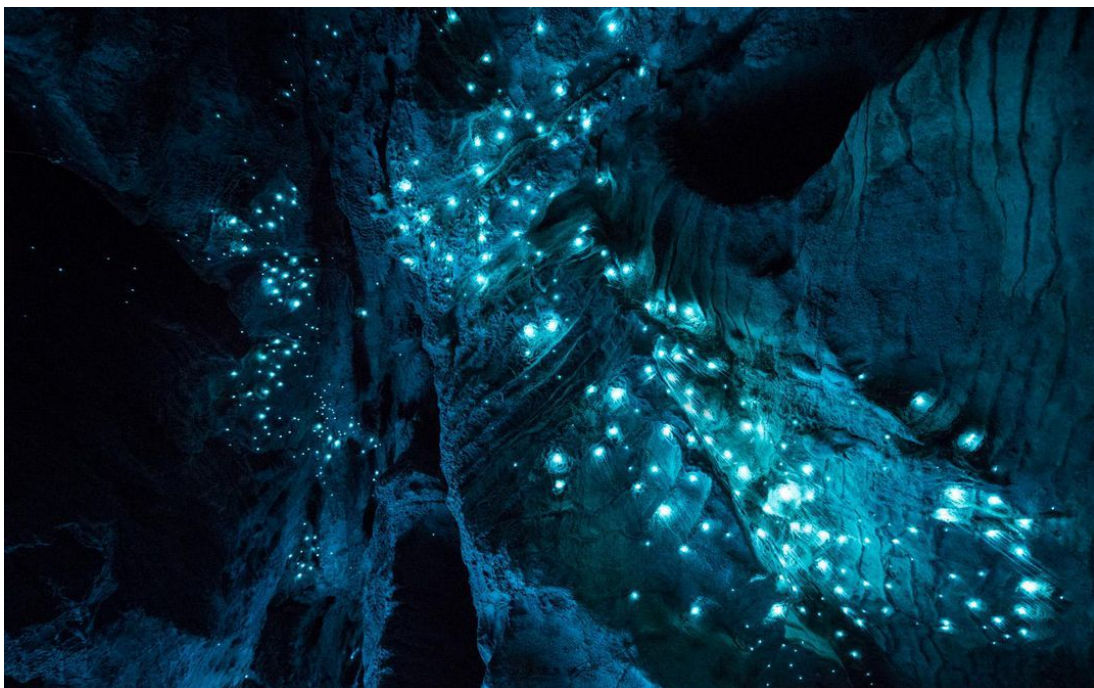
Relying upon what you take yourself to be in order to feel better about things is unrelenting.

Despite your counterfeit confidence in 'knowing' what this is, you are always prior to yourself, see it and speechless wonder is pervasive.

As long as you harbor notes, suggestions, inferences, what if's, outcomes, and paths to wholeness; you remain under the influence of time, you suffer the myth of becoming.

Luminosity is all this is, one hopes that someday that will be enough.

Luminosity: Joseph Michael



Abundant Insatiability

These days it seems more and more people are sincerely interested in the most sure path to enlightenment, you can see signs of it everywhere.

I was standing in line at the organic hot dog cart at the local farmer's market on the summer solstice under blue skies taking in the cool breeze listening to the birds and sipping on my iced decaf Americano with coconut creamer just the other day when a stranger says to me, "Hey, aren't you the Night Sky Sangha Guy?" to which I replied, "Why yes I am," which was a sufficient enough reply for the stranger to ask, "Well I got one for you, is consciousness made of abundance or insatiability?" to which inquiry I replied, "Exactly, consciousness is made of abundant insatiability," whereupon the stranger who was in front of me in line at the organic hot dog cart at the local farmers market took a moment to let it all in, and I mean all of it, and simply evaporated from view leaving me in the enviable position to place the next order.

When the hot dog cart vendor asked me how do you want your dog you can imagine my reply.

Hot Dog: BurgerFi



It's not just a Towelie thing

Maybe you're not quite sure why you think getting enlightened is worth your while? Maybe you have some dreamy expectations or a strong motivation for imagining how life would be without suffering?

Maybe if we all meditated together at the same time we could end violence and stupidity, reverse decades of ecological carnage, bring back Jim Morrison, impeach the POTUS, get a twofer at the golf course, and everyone can enjoy an Indian buffet lunch with a bottomless cup of chai.

Everyone likes to get high, and why shouldn't they. Isn't that what a joyful and well-lived life is all about? I've never understood why peace drugs are Schedule 1; cocaine and friends I get are best to keep under progressive social controls, but why are visionary and 'high' medicines held in such contempt?

Back to the point at hand, which I'm never quite sure of, waking the phuck up is not just a Towelie thing, though we'd probably be better off if more people were joyfully incompetent and always in pursuit of snacks to share with a friend of course - it's like a benevolent zombie movie where everyone nourishes others as contrasted with eating their intestines.

It comes to mind that our rather deplorable response to human rights in this country and elsewhere of course seems more like entrails munching than it does a Bob Marley song sung while running naked into a cool ocean filled with friendly turtles wondering if there really is a dog - that's a different joke.

What I'm trying to say is that it's not just a Towelie thing, getting high is good, make no mistake, but what you want to keep an eye out for is transcendent wonder, transparent intelligence, cessation of self-interest, release from attention seeking, the joy of being superfluous and without intent.

Humans have sharp teeth, grasping hands, plus the curious capacity to believe in shit in large numbers which makes them phucking dangerous and most likely, not all that long lived.

If you can, for a few moments here and there, turn the human lights down low, in fact, turn them off entirely - take the time to be refreshed by a total absence of want. You'll be glad you did.

Towelie: South Park



Hey Marianne, what's your game now, can anybody play?

I had a dream I was in a field, Donald Trump was on his knees weeping with release, with the sweet and leveling sorrow of a man who was shaken to his foundation by the greatest power the world has ever known.

You guessed it, off in the distance a former waitress from Houston wrapped in white robes carrying a copy of A Course in Miracles was giving witness in love, not fear, but love riding stand-up on the backs of two mighty sheep in her vegan Velcro dress sneakers entraining the minions into a guided meditation of everything being made whole through personal responsibility and the courage to change.

As I have done with so many previous nightmares; I ran as fast as I could, outstretched my arms to catch some cosmic wind, and lept off the ground into another dimension where I landed on a red Naugahyde swivel stool at an old time fountain somewhere on Route 20 and ordered a root beer float and a burger well done with curly fries.

That move always works.

The only candidate worth listening to would be the one that says, "we're phucked, we're all gonna perish and no one including the bunker dwellers will be able to survive the temperatures and climatic mood swings that are soon to destabilize the biosphere and render the habitat incompetent to grow grain so we're setting up voluntary no cost psilocybin nitrogen inhalant euthanasia centers all over the world and we hope you and your loved ones will take advantage of them as soon as you feel capable to do so."

If you prefer to remain hypnotized by the notion that a new President of whatever party will lead humanity to a new green deal in the sun, it may as well be Marianne. Then we can ask ourselves the difficult questions like, and I quote, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?"

Now we're getting to the root of it.

Marianne Williamson



Uncomplicated Transcendence

The unfettered and unadorned primacy of whatever experiencing is is uncomplicated transcendence.

It's already that, this is already what it is.

Once you enter the stage as the presumer and possessor of some kind of knowledge, some kind of genesis story, some kind of physics, some kind of bang (big or small), some kind of origin story, even the one where you are made of sin; you're a symptom of something or worse, someone, other than you.

Something or someone was here before you and you are the product or symptom of that. Isn't it true, isn't that what we are told and taught by the authorities, by all authorities on the subject of reality, the subject of creation, the subject of purpose, intent, utility, consequence, karma - all designed to control you from the get-go.

If you dare, and so few do, to bring the full force of your affection and instinct for the sacred to bear on the question of your present experience I bet you'll be able to dismantle all that you were told about everything by everyone committed to your subjugation and discover for yourself, without any expertise or needed preparations, that indeed you are and have always been uncomplicated transcendence.

Any takers?

Ned Kelly 1946: Sidney Nolan

