



Awareness

The Healer, Liberator and Ultimate Truth

Awareness is, and has always been, the most powerful force in the universe. Whether it is being aware of the truths that unify all of humanity and the world, or spiritual and scientific realizations that bring about revolutionary breakthroughs, *awareness* is the real power behind the throne; it is the invisible catalyst of creation and change.

You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free –Jesus of Nazareth

Of all the forms of truth that are available, it is self-knowledge, or more accurately *Self-Awareness*, that is the most transformative. It is the most transformative because it is the most essential – it is the *essence of everything*. In other words, our experience of who we are determines our experience of everything else. It is the lens and filter through which we experience the universe. It actually transmutes the infinite flow of Life into a very convincing perception of reality. If we have fear within, we experience the world and

others as stressful and problematic. If we have Love within, we experience that *same* Love within every human being and everything and every event in the world.

You see persons and things not as they are but as you are –Anthony de Mello

In 700 B.C, as a humble pilgrim seeking guidance from the Great Oracle, upon entering the sacred Temple of Apollo at Delphi, the first maxim encountered, carved into the stone of the forecourt, was *Know Thyself*. This is the highest, truest counsel anyone could ever receive. The usefulness of this counsel is so universal because the tendency to NOT look within is just as universal. To continually obsess about the world and its events and people, seems to be hardwired into all of humanity. It the primary cause of not finding a way out of suffering and harm.

Do not look for a sanctuary in anyone except your self –Gautama Buddha

When we want approval, what are we looking for? It is to feel good inside, to counteract a sense of lack – the feeling of not being entirely whole and joyful just as we are. When we wield power through aggression or greed, it is the same dynamic operating. We are simply trying to compensate for an inner feeling of being vulnerable and powerless.

Even our attachments to pleasure and entertainment are also attempts to feel good. *Why are we so obsessed with changing how we feel inside?* Perhaps there is something deep inside, not fully seen and acknowledged, that feels inherently lacking and fearful.

At some point, our obsession with getting what we want from other people and the world ends with either utter frustration or pure boredom. The mature Soul has gone through the dark night of seeing the futility of chasing after worldly prestige and pleasure and bowing to worldly fears.

Half of life is lost in charming others. The other half is lost in going through anxieties caused by others. Leave this play, you have played enough.

– Jalaluddin Rumi

When we realize that the world cannot deliver the happiness we seek, usually after much suffering and disappointment, we begin to turn within. *This is one of the most significant turning points in any human life.* While it may be daunting, even terrifying, to finally face what we have been trying to avoid, this is a time for celebration, for we have finally begun to tread the *only* path there is to true Love and Happiness! Besides, this is what the Divine genuinely wants for us and where evolution is headed, whether we resist or comply.

For most of us, that initial burst of enthusiasm is tempered by what we find when we are finally still enough, committed enough and brave enough to look within and *feel* what is there. Sure, there might be moments of peace, profound realizations and even bliss, but in order to let the Love in, we have to see through what is in the way. We need to expose and release the core hidden wounds.

Here are five guideposts that will help us along this most sacred *and* practical path (it is supremely practical because we are finally about to get what we *really* want).

1) Allow for fear and attachments. Turning fear and desire into the enemy, only strengthens them. Especially when we are engaged with the process of releasing fear, we are going to feel it as it burns itself out (gets transmuted into Love/Energy). Besides, who said fear is bad? Is it not just another phenomenon of the mind? Judging it, fearing it, and believing it has the power to usurp Love (which it does not have), only increases our suffering.

When you feel pain, simply view it as energy. Just start seeing these inner experiences as energy passing through your heart –Michael Singer

2) Awareness is the answer, the healing balm and the liberator. It is also the Truth that is finally discovered. Awareness does not mean thinking. Awareness is Love, Presence, God, Christ Consciousness, Buddha Nature, The Self, Spirit, Infinite Source, etc. These are all synonyms.

Awareness is the greatest agent for change – Eckhart Tolle

Here is a useful metaphor: The ego is the thief who constantly robs us of our commitment and ability to Know Thyself. The ego's trump (no pun intended) cards are fear, attachment (addictions) and deadness/numbness. The ego can play these cards with extreme subtlety and sophistication, such as in wanting approval, or with outright brutality, such as in panic attacks or violent fits of rage.

The most common response to this ego-thief is to try to control, suppress, or eliminate it through will-power, spiritual practices, self-help techniques, etc. This is like the chief of police trying to imprison (or execute) the ego-thief. But here's the catch: The chief of police IS the thief. They are the same person! They are both the ego-mind. The chief of police could be termed “the spiritual ego.”

As an ego, we are either running towards attachments and away from fears (the thief), or doing our best to eliminate those fears and attachments (the chief of police). BOTH are aspects of the ego.

How does one get free of such a tangled and sophisticated web? The answer is surprisingly simple: *See* all of it *without judgement*, without trying to fix or manipulate anything. This is the transformative power of AWARENESS. It is the only thing in the Universe that is outside of the dualistic and violent struggle for control. It is *true* Unconditional Love. Sounds too easy? Yes, ironically that is the greatest challenge. The ego loves drama, complexity and solving problems and it will resist the simple grace of Awareness-Love. But Awareness-Love always prevails.

Awareness is like the sun. When it shines on things, they are transformed
– Thich Nhat Hanh

3) Elicit assistance from a mentor or guide, whether embodied or in spirit. Here are two reasons why a mentor/guide is almost always absolutely essential. First, since the inward path is very challenging – often more daunting than any outer challenge that we have ever encountered, having someone to support, encourage, point the way and simply travel along side us

is often the only thing that keeps us going. Without it, most of us would give up.

Second, since the only thing that matters is the Truth, and the ego's only purpose is to hide that truth from us, it is virtually impossible to discern truth from ego deception. At the very least, having a mentor/guide can prevent years of going in the wrong direction even while we may have absolute conviction that we are on the right path. When I say years, I mean many years or lifetimes!

4) Optimize health and well-being. Spiritual awakening is not a mental phenomenon. It is not simply being conscious of a Divine Presence or having blissful experiences. Real spiritual awakening brings our *entire* being, including the body, to a higher vibrational reality. Giving it the best nutrients, rest, exercise and environment possible is vital in allowing it to fully blossom into its newly expanded radiate state of being. Once we begin to tap into the flow of Life, which rejoices in balanced aliveness, taking care of our health becomes a natural expression of Awareness.

Finally, I'd like to invite our awareness to open to the possibility that reading this article was itself a process of awakening awareness. Even more important than any intellectual understanding, is the Energy-Awareness infused into every word, the spaces between the words and beyond.

Thank you for taking this journey with me. If you feel inspired to do so, I recommend re-reading this article with the primary intention of receiving the Energy and Love imbedded within it.