

Awakening

Awakening is living wisdom and arises naturally when we do not give credence to conditioning or non-wisdom. Vigilance is requisite for awakening, as one has to see that things are as they are—quite different from how we would like them to be, and how this 'how we would like them to be' is the source of much sorrow.

Our hopes are our anguish, as hope is a dissatisfaction with things as they are and a preference for the way 'I' feel it should be. Situations come and go; who am 'I' to feel that things should be this way and not that? Can a wave hope that other waves or the ocean could be a certain way? Does it even matter to the world if I feel things should be another way? Who is the only one stuck with the bill for buying these thoughts and feelings?

Why do we feel that things as they are, are suffering, and things as we hope they would be, joyful? The 'I' that sees things as they are, and feels they should be another way is not only the seed of suffering, it is suffering itself. When one feels something is not joy-giving, one experiences sorrow. This little 'I' or the ego remembers a 'good taste' it registered as memory and hopes that if things could only be that way again, life would be joyful. The ego then stirs within and the energy that is released seems to goad us to 'change things', not realizing that we cannot change anything as everything *has its own nature*. Still, the ego is blind, and holding onto memory, it keeps releasing energy that makes us restless and feel that something ought to be done to change things 'so the joy promised' will come. And, who promised this joy? Not the situation, but the ego itself. It feels joy will come if things are a certain way and if by chance they do happen to be that way, it claims victory and experiences joy.

Sometimes things do seem to change at the moment we hope for change and we foolishly feel we are either the author or instrument of this change, but sage Vasistha calls this accidental coincidence.

If we examine the inner mechanism, we will find many flawed processes that are ready to act at a single moment's heedlessness. Awakening is recognition of the clear and present danger due to lack of vigilance. The mind cannot be divided any more than space can be divided, but it can and does project division within itself as thought. These thought fragments tangle with other thought fragments and the identification with these fragments is suffering.

Practical changes are most useful as they bring better utility. If, for example, after using something one way, we feel it is best used another way, we use it that way. But, is it necessary to try to change the nature of someone or something?

The impulse to change we are talking about is a non-acceptance of things as they are or the nature and shape of things to include people and conditions at this moment and from moment to moment. I'm using 'things' in its widest sense to include people, conditions and anything we generally consider to be objective.

Things as they are is how they are just now, right in front of us, in the present state of evolution—and this scene changes continually. What seems perfect to us right now, may not have been 'just right' a little while ago and also, may not be 'as perfect' some moments from now. The 'perfectness' and 'just rightness' are not in the object but *in our own minds only*, which are also continually in change. Something which is itself changing, looks at other things that are also changing and throws up likes and dislikes. There is no sense to it at all.

The changing mind can never be satisfied even with things just as desired, as when the mind changes, it will want change in the 'thing' again. All things are in their own state in evolution and if by chance two things appease each other, it is just accidental coincidence.

We exist in different dimensions at the same time. There is a part of us that is in the process of change just like all things, and this is interdependent on others. There is another part which is *independent*, all things having a status and nature of their own. Both of these are *subject* to change. There is also something that must be *beyond change*, as we are aware of change externally in things and also internally in the mind whose operation we see externally.

We make many mistakes and hurt ourselves and others when we focus on either the external or the internal exclusively; or, by ignoring 'understanding' which is the seat of expression and experience. Becoming aware of our deeper involvement awakens the inner intelligence which is not fragmented, as it is *this* that is aware of inner fragmentation—ever present but ignored.

This inner intelligence that is aware of fragmentation is also aware of the consequences of them acting out. When the danger of conditioning is very clearly perceived, the inner intelligence is roused into action and unbroken vigilance ensues.

One is aware of the outer and the inner in the same moment of awareness, so it must be undivided and capable of observing both without losing focus on either. The conditioned mind or *ego cannot observe the inner*, only the outer, and based on its conditioning only. It has nothing else to offer except what is on the shelf, and life does not cater to the inner shelf of memory—our likes and dislikes. The awakened intelligence, however, is free from this. It

utilizes memory as needed but is not utilized *by* memory and functions very efficiently amidst what actually *is*.

One is still not awake if these things are known conceptually but is unable to respond to life, to the nature of all things as they are, and the cause for this is fondness for habit or conditioning—even though it brings and causes hurt. The yoga way is a life lived expertly by which one does not hurt, nor cause hurt.

So, how does one awaken? You are very alert when driving conditions are dangerous and the clarity of 'seeing the danger' vigorously rouses all faculties and energy needed. Similarly, you have to be slightly awake to see that staying the course of living the conditioned life is treading a path of pain. When this is felt clearly—in every cell of one's being—one awakens. This is wisdom awakening.

When we lack inner clarity, our path is strewn with hurt. We hurt and hurt others and somewhere in this, we begin to examine things afresh. This is often a partial awakening, like a stirring in bed but not rising, and it can go either way though most often, one often goes back to sleep when the alarm of hurt stops—this is conditional awakening. Unless one seizes the moment and examines all of what is not right, one cannot bring about real change, which is change in understanding and not mere behavior.

If you are interested in every moment as it happens, the inner attention is roused into action and one walks gently, *naturally* avoiding that which brings or causes hurt. Why is being interested in every moment difficult? It is difficult if we give too much importance to thought—to our conditioning. Things as they are do not cater to our inner world of likes and dislikes and as long as one is fond of one's own conditioning, one walks a path beset with much sorrow. We try to compensate for this by making good money and having physical securities, but life is a good teacher and does not get tripped up by these tricks.

Being awake and the inner intelligence being roused and empowered are the same thing. The pack is at once lightened as the burdensome load of memory charged with desires is abandoned. One sees things as they are, without inner coloring, does what needs to be done, without catering to the 'I' or ego, and let's all go mentally all the while the physical action reaches completion, and as the attention sees the next opportunity calling. Just as a pebble tossed well skips across the water without stirring things up, one walks gently without hurting oneself or others.

The yoga way aims at a life far beyond sorrow and calls you to see for yourself by direct experience that such a life is possible.

Pain that has not come can be avoided;
and pain that has come can be abandoned,

as the factors that cause pain are not people, things and conditions but only the burdened mind, the conditioned mind and the dull mind. The wonderful news is that when we are aware of this, we are at once in contact with that which is beyond conditioning—the inner intelligence which is the undivided mind. This inner intelligence knows just how to live a joyful life amidst any and all conditions. When we heed its voice, things will still be just as they are but inner transformation will preclude hurt, pain, sorrow and grief completely.

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