

Eternity Now



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Foreword

We usually identify ourselves with a mixture of thoughts, perceptions, and feelings. This identification with a personal body-mind is deeply rooted in us. The people around us—our parents, teachers, friends, and so on—believed that they were personal entities, and we have found it quite natural to follow in their footsteps without challenging this belief, which, upon closer scrutiny, will be shown to be the origin of all our misery.

If the body-mind is an object, a personal and limited collection of mentations, there must be a witness to which it appears. This witness is usually referred to as consciousness or awareness. If we investigate what we are, it becomes clear that it is this awareness that is precisely what we call “I.” Most people identify this witnessing consciousness with the witnessed mind, and in doing

so they superimpose the personal limitations of that mind onto consciousness, conceptualizing it as a personal entity.

When we make a deliberate attempt to observe this witness, we find an unusual situation: Our attempt seems to fail, due to the subjective nature of consciousness, and the inability of the mind to recognize something that is not objective; but mental activity, made up of the current train of thoughts and sensations, seems to stop for a moment. Although this “stop” doesn’t leave any memories at the level of the mind, this non-experience generates a strong feeling of identity and an ineffable certitude of being that we describe using the words, “I” or “I am.” After a while, the ego resurfaces with the thought, “I am this body-mind,” projecting once again the space-time limitations of the personal entity onto the limitless “I am.” The limitlessness of the “I am” can’t be asserted from the level

of the mind, but remains with us as an “aftertaste” when the objective world reappears.

Having been informed of the presence of this witnessing background, and having had a first glimpse of our real self, a powerful attraction, which brings us back again and again to this non-experience, is born. Every new glimpse reinforces the “perfume” of freedom and happiness that emanates from this new dimension. As our timeless presence becomes more and more tangible, our daily life takes a new turn. People, distractions, and activities that used to exert a strong appeal to us are now met with indifference. Our former ideological attachments become weaker for no apparent reason. Our focus on investigating our true nature intensifies without any effort on our part. Higher intelligence sets in, deepening our intellectual understanding of the truth and clarifying our ontological questioning. Many personal conflicts and antagon-

isms are reduced or resolved.

Then, at some point, the ego is reabsorbed into our witnessing presence, which reveals itself as the eternal beauty, absolute truth, and supreme bliss we were seeking. Instantaneously, we are established in the certitude of our primordial immortality. This sudden revelation of our non-dual nature can't be properly described through words to someone who is still under the illusion of the duality of subject and object. Such a person will understand those words in relative terms, as an objective experience. It is the only kind of experience he can conceive.

How is it possible to convey the feeling of absolute happiness to someone who only knows relative experiences? Given any relative experience, no matter its intensity, there is always the possibility of an even more intense experience. But this is not the case when we are referring to the bliss of our true nature. How is it possible for someone

who knows happiness only in relation to objects to comprehend the autonomy, the causelessness, of this bliss? How is it possible to convey the non-localization and the timelessness of this unveiling to one who only knows events in space-time; its absolute certitude to one entangled in relative truths; its divine splendor to one for whom beauty is a relative concept?

If we say that our universe, with all its richness and diversity—the apples in the basket, the loved ones around us, the Beethoven quartet on the stereo, the stars in the nocturnal sky—at every instant emanates from, rests in, and is reabsorbed into our self-revealing presence, our words still fail to adequately describe the immediacy of this unveiling.

They fail to do so because they still convey the notion of a transcendental presence from which this universe emanates as a distinct entity, whereas such a distinction is nowhere to be found in