

Where

Nothing

Seems

To Be

Nothing Seems To Be

Nothing

Hermann Kuhn

Where *Nothing* Seems To Be

Hermann Kuhn

- New expanded edition -

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Where

Nothing

Seems to Be

What I am recording here documents an experience, a perception so massive and central, so fascinating that I feel compelled to convey it to others, - an experience that could easily also be yours.

I can only describe what I perceived, I cannot explain it - neither intellectually nor logically. I also do not want to convince you of anything. I relate what I encountered because I hope to awaken within you a deeply hidden, archaic impulse to also tune into this insight.

If it were only me experiencing this, I'd hardly take the trouble to set it down in print. Yet I observed that telling others triggered similar perception within them.

And because what I experienced is of exceptional beauty, fantastic and magnificent, I am passing it on to you.

Describing what I encountered is far from easy. Its magnitude, its all-encompassing appeal is so far-reaching, so extensive that our language simply lacks the words, the vocabulary to convey this type of content.

An analogy is probably best to give an impression of the sheer size of this perception: - Suppose we stand before a skyscraper, say, only one single foot away from it, - we see the stones immediately in front of our eyes, perhaps a few windowsills. We also sense the building extending further up, right and left, - but we don't take in the structure as a whole. There's no orientation how huge it possibly could be, - unless we step back, far back, to perceive its entirety.

The same applies to my experience. - Daily life, - that what we experience each single day, - resembles such a skyscraper. We stand so close to it, are so involved in all its turbulent events, its feelings, its challenges, that we get no idea, not even a notion of its Entirety, its Totality, how vast it truly is. Only when we perceive it from a new, - a distant - angle, do we become aware of the sheer magnitude of what we are involved in, - of life's immense, fantastic, formative power, - of its mysterious origin, - and of the majesty and grandeur of That which manifests this all.

A whiff of this splendor, this grandness reaches us, when once in a blue moon deep, deep within us there rises that vague feeling that we are so much more, so much greater, so much nobler than what we now live, feel, think,

act and tell others. These fleeting insights open our eyes - for whatever brief time - that existence as a whole is far broader, far wider, and has far greater dignity than all our materially, egoistically motivated dealings taken together.

This Grandeur, this all-encompassing, profound, sublime Majesty deep within us is what I experienced in supreme intensity, - and it remained awake within me ever since.

This insight gave me everything I ever longed for.

It showed me the incredible vastness of knowledge, of intuition, of comprehension, of sovereignty dormant within myself - dormant within every living being.

It lifted all fear, - and made me aware that any fear is only caused by an exclusive focus on our material form.

It showed me what this life is really all about, - what I am meant to do with it, - and what it will give me in return.

And it is infinitely beautiful.

What did I perceive ?

Now, - religiously oriented people might eagerly suggest that I experienced God. - But I emphatically disagree with this opinion. I am certain that any idea of 'God' is externalizing, is projecting qualities and abilities we carry deep within to an outside agency that's separate from us. Why disconnect ourselves from these, our inborn powers that hover just at the edge of our present awareness?

As long as we transfer this grand, sublime part of us to an external entity, we simply restrict our abilities to directly experience its full strength and make it our own.

We definitely sense (time and again) how exalted and noble we really are inside, - that we are capable of achieving so much more, able to reach so much farther than we currently do. - Why not go deeper into this, our very own notion, and purposely expand it to its true greatness. - What would the world need more than everyone realizing this supreme nobility within himself and manifesting it in his daily dealings?

Are there others who perceive the same ?

As this profound, comprehensive, for me entirely new perception awoke within, I wanted to know if there were others who had experienced anything similar.

A first mentioning of this I found in an obscure Tibetan manuscript - '*The Tibetan Book of The Great Liberation*'. Then another account surfaced in the *Upanishads* - a collection of ancient Indian scriptures connected to the Vedas.

These texts are readily available within the public domain, yet mostly are unknown and considered difficult to understand. (To make these scriptures accessible to our times, I transferred them into modern-day language.)

A third, more elaborate - Western - description I discovered in two manuscripts of the Nag Hammadi scrolls. They belong to more than fifty gospels written shortly after the events in Judea 2000 years ago, but were intentionally excluded from the official collection of scriptures called 'The Bible'.

Actually all gospels not deemed in line with the official policy fixed by the bishop of Rome, were declared heresies - long before Christianity became a 'government endorsed' religion, - and discarded in total disregard what invaluable insights these first-hand accounts could give into the original message of Jesus, and how significant their contents were for future generations.

Owning and communicating these contents was punished by banishment or death, the manuscripts hunted down and destroyed - apart from the few spirited away and hidden like those the Bedouins of Nag Hammadi found in an old earthenware jar in the year 1945.

Dangerous Knowledge

What powerful information, what dangerous knowledge did these ancient scriptures contain that they had to be destroyed, be taken so totally out of circulation, so totally out of the minds of all people? What message could be so menacing that even today it is still unknown to almost everyone, that even today the catholic church undertakes considerable efforts to cover up this information, declare it as irrelevant, render it incomprehensible to lay people through convoluted translations to keep its inner strength low, to detract from its inherent power?

Few people know that early Christianity witnessed an outdrawn fight between two fundamentally different fractions, the consequences of which still profoundly influence us today: - The clash between those who directly experience authentic, individual knowledge about

themselves, the universe, the truth about purpose and direction of their existence, who were highly fascinated by these perceptions, and who knew these insights to be available to everyone at all times without restriction, - and in the other camp those eager to organize and govern a formal religion, who thus were unwilling to permit independent, inspired, personal insights beyond the control of authorized, licensed priests.

Any direct perception of a fundamental, all-comprehensive, blissful awareness must almost inevitably irritate those who are unable to experience such insights, - or who do not want them in the first place. The continuous emerging of new, enthusiastic reports of such perceptions brought incessant unrest to the community, which time and again undermined hierarchy and administrative authority. To stop this, the officials of the orthodox, catholic church radically suppressed this free, expansive, ecstatic trend.

Of the more than 50 gospels that existed 180 AD, Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, selected four gospels he deemed suitable to the 'orthodox' (lit.: 'properly-thinking') fraction, - with the peculiar argument that the compass after all had also only four cardinal points. To force everyone to think his way, he declared his opinion to be 'universal' ('*catholic*' in Greek language) and then launched an all-out attack against everyone disagreeing with this dogma. Roughly 200 years later knowledge of man's ability to directly and personally experience the Magnificent, the Sublime, was effectively obliterated from general awareness. Later attempts to revive such knowledge were pitilessly prosecuted, its protagonists killed.

This - of course - raises the fundamental question why experiencing and communicating a fantastic, blissful perception enhancing one's existence needs to be organized and administered in the first place.

Our world might look different, if the fascination, nobility and orientation of this original content would have continued to inspire generation after generation.

Restoring the Original Fascination

As I began reading the manuscripts discovered in Nag Hammadi 1945, - scriptures *not* distorted by priestly translators and transcribers, - I was fascinated to find descriptions of perceptions identical to mine.

But I also realized that the words and terms predominantly used in these texts, generated different ideas, meanings, feelings and intuitive contents today than at the time the manuscripts were written. Terms like '*savior*', '*revelation*', '*father*', '*ghost*' etc. are nowadays associated with some narrow, religiously-conservative context that does little justice to the original intent of these scriptures.

Yet the unique, original strength of the texts immediately returned once I replaced

'Father', 'Ghost', 'The Unthinkable', 'The Incredible'

with -

'The Sublime, the Majestic Grand'

denoting -

'The grandiose, all-comprehensive, all-permeating, subtle, blissful, continuously expanding awareness manifesting

within everything, that causes everything, and that is permanently present within each one of us.'

(In the restored text I use *'The Grand, the Sublime, the Majestic'* according to context.)

'Revelation', 'Truth'

with -

'Gaining insight into this all-comprehensive awareness and perceiving oneself ONE with it.'

'Jesus', 'Redeemer', 'Savior'

with -

'A messenger (guide), who experienced the unfoldment of this self-initiating awareness of one's greater Self and consequently communicated it to others.'

I further noticed that - because of the old fashioned, grammatically and dogmatically correct style of translation - the texts could easily be put down as negligible, as mere sentimentally embroidered declarations of faith.

Yet central purpose of these scriptures was - and IS - inspiration and communication of vital information, which entirely vanish in the stiff, footnote-crammed translations currently available.

Thus - to adapt its content and inspiration to our present time, - I formulated a new, vivid interpretation of the Gospel of Truth that brings back life to the excitement and high emotional fascination the original does radiate.

So as you take this in, open heart and mind to the perception of *Greatness*, to the dawning of the *Magnificent*, the *Boundless*, the *Blissful* deep within you. Allow its power and unbounded sovereignty to expand your *Self* to this magnificence as well.

The following text restores the excitement and fascination of an ancient - approx. 2000 years old - scripture. It also adapts it to contemporary language and comprehension.

At the time this manuscript was written, the custom to furnish texts with a title did not exist. Thus when this Nag Hammadi scroll was discovered in 1945, in lack of a designated name, the beginning of the first line - '*The Gospel of Truth ...*' (meaning : '*Good and True Message*') was taken as its label.

Yet this label does little justice to the very contents of this document. Far more adequate is -

Awakening The Highest Dimension Of Life

(1)

Beyond material perception an all-encompassing, huge, majestic, all-permeating and continuously expanding awareness exists which everyone is able to perceive. We all carry this splendid, grandiose awareness within, - and these words intend to awaken this fantastic and indescribably beautiful perception within *you*.

A special power resides within this message; - the power to arouse this insight in those who up till now could not perceive it. This special power originates in the All-permeating Sublime, from whence these words rose.

It bestows hope to those in search for the Sublime, in search of the true purpose of their life, - it opens a new path to find this precious insight in our present time.

And it delivers from great fear.

(2)

Now is the time the material world begins to realize (again) that all its norms, its principles and objectives, that all it strives for, is far from ultimate truth, is far from any valid meaning. The world awakens to the fact that its true origin, that That from whence it sprang, is infinitely greater than all the idols and images it so smugly defines for itself. And the world again begins to seek why it experiences life, and where it truly originates from. Thus it turned towards the Unfathomable, - towards That which escapes all petty reasoning, - towards That which is beyond thinking.

Ignorance of this Grand All-Permeating Awareness caused terror and fear to seep into the world. It suffocated man's spirit and feelings like a dense fog no-one could penetrate any more.

Through fear, terror and by choking man's spirit error widened its might. Devoid of reason, in total lack of truth, compassion and understanding its power bent and twisted the world of matter to its will. With immense energy error concocted a creation that - in lieu of truth - had pomp and glamour as its central place.

(3)

Yet the Greatness of the Sublime Unfathomable was never even touched by this. Unaffected by error's and falsehood's creation, firmly grounded in unshakeable truth, it remained unmoved, unchanged in its infinite attractive beauty.

Hence - despise all error !

For it doesn't have roots. A thick haze prevents it from perceiving the Majestic, the Sublime.

Error's presence alone concocts ever new, flawed, imperfect fabrications that prompt disorientation, fear and loss of comprehension in those currently entangled in the world of matter. Error diverts from the true meaning and true purpose of life, it drags existence down, it traps man in tainted doctrines and ideas.

And error did become so strong that no-one even noticed that it had stifled true comprehension and insight to almost extinction.

(4)

The Sublime, the Majestic never causes loss of comprehension. He who perceives this Greatness, he who orients his very cognition and action along this line, never feels disoriented. The Sublime Majestic always and only creates flawless understanding.

Yet those reacting to this Great, Majestic in a conceited or sanctimonious way might well become disoriented.

Though now, - that this knowledge is accessible again, - error is easily unmasked, and thereby all loss, all disorientation and all deficiency in comprehension dissolved. The Sublime Majestic rises from its long obscurity. It is again perceived and recognized.

Deficiency in comprehension will only last as long as the Grand Sublime is not perceived. All lack of insight, all loss of understanding is instantly lifted once we again become aware of the Majestic All-Permeating Awareness.

If perceived consciously ONCE, - from that very moment onwards this exalted perception is never lost to us again, - it continues to always be present in our awareness.

(5)

This conscious recognition, this solid, sublime perception is the core content of this message.

Long time this information was forgotten, but the messenger called Jesus made man again aware of this. To those, who because of their lack of comprehension lived in timidity and darkness, he showed that to directly perceive the Grand Majestic Awareness was inborn to them and that this was their very right of birth. His message re-opened the path where untouched truth is guiding and becomes the means to illumination.

Yet error got furious as it had come to know that truth's path had been reopened. (It sensed its power wane.) It persecuted the messenger, destroyed his body and nailed him to a tree.

Yet exactly this transformed the messenger into its very symbol, - into the very essence of awakening the Grand Truth.

A symbol that never causes ruin, but grows into a fabulous treasure to those who are perceiving This. In everyone who finds this Grand Majestic Awareness within himself, an imperishable connection opens to the All-Permeating, Incomprehensible Sublime.

And as they became aware, they recognized their very identity with the Majestic Supreme, from whence

material creation sprung, which permeated it and whose Magnificence and Dignity they longed to live again.

(6)

Yet even before one grows aware of all this, the Grand Majestic resides deep within each person, - as a potential, an opportunity, an option that may be activated any time.

And if this perception has not awoken yet, the cause is not the Grand Sublime. It is the deliberate choice of those unwilling to give up flawed ideas, - and also because they lack maturity.

Should awareness of the All-encompassing Majestic be obstructed, it is not because of the Grand Sublime. The Grand Sublime does not know envy, resentment or malice. It never incites this in man (who actually originates from within The Grand).

Would the Grand Sublime dislike the world to reach perfection, no-one presently experiencing the world of matter could possibly perceive It.

True is the exact opposite: - Perfection, recognition of the Majestic Sublime reside in man for all eternity, in all past and in all future. Required is only man's willingness to perceive This. At any time everyone can wake This, his very own unspoiled and perfect realization.

(7)

The Grand Majestic manifests the world of matter. It also manifests within all phenomena of the material world.

And it became crucial that the world of phenomena became aware of this.

This can be compared to someone unknown, who desires to be known and loved by others.

- What could be more essential to this world than every man growing aware of the Majestic Sublime within himself ? -

For this purpose the Unfathomable Sublime became a patient teacher, - imparting knowledge to every one willing to understand. And the Sublime went into the very midst of people and spoke to them.

But then came those who take only themselves for wise, and challenged the Grand Sublime. Yet the Sublime showed them their very foolishness and thus they hated It because in truth they weren't really wise.

(8)

Those feeling the Majestic Sublime awake within themselves feel new and inexperienced at first in their exalted insight.

Yet the more familiar they become with It, the more they experience how perceiving the Grand affects their views, their motivations, their innermost being, and thus also their outer world.

They perceive and are perceived. They get praised and praise others.

In all their emotions, in all their being, in all their actions they exhibit the entire vividness and fascination that constitutes the essence of the Grand Sublime, - that same vividness and inspiration from whence this world

sprang, - the same vividness and inspiration that existed in the Majestic Awareness even before that.

No-one can ever destroy this essence, this liveliness, this inspiration. Only those obliterating it within themselves, - those not wanting to perceive it, - face ever anew cycles of deaths.

But to those longing for release, for enlightenment, this fascination becomes life's focus and the path that's leading there.

Thus the messenger called Jesus patiently endured all hardships till he had gained this knowledge and passed it on.

(9)

This process of insight is like reading a last will: - Before it is read to us, we are unaware of what wealth we inherited.

Similarly this world: - For as long as we are unaware of this world's origin and why we exist in it, we don't know our true, vast potential.

Therefore the messenger called Jesus took on material existence; - to make this knowledge his own and to reveal it to others.

And after stripping off the fragile fabric of his body, his essence garbed in immortality, in an indestructibility no-one can ever take from him.

Descending to the regions where fear and terror reigned, - to those who had forgotten, who were unaware of their innermost radiant essence, he revealed that in

fact their awareness is indestructible, immortal, eternal as well, - he radiated insight, radiated the full perfection of the Grand Sublime. And he taught everyone willing to take this in.

Who ever embraces this wisdom with all his heart and being, experiences the same vividness, the same fascination, the same indestructibility that constitutes the essence of the Grand Sublime. He takes in his sameness with the All-Awareness to its entire depth simply by opening up to this perception.

(10)

All existence attains fulfillment in this grand identity.

Thus we need to seek that which leads towards this goal. - To consciously experience This is inborn to everyone; never can it be taken away from us. We only need to evoke memory of our identity with This to consciously perceive It again.

For he who is ignorant suffers privation. Unable to access the Grand Sublime dormant within himself he yearns for that which makes him live perfection, live insight into the Magnificent.

But access to perfection, to this insight isn't automatic. Will and intention is required for us to rise to our union with the Sublime Grand again.

But then everyone truly experiencing this becomes aware that he had carried this identity, this Majesty within his very being, - had actually already carried it inside for all eternity.

(11)

Those who desire to see their dreams, ideas, their fears take bodily form (i.e. those desiring material existence), intentionally detach from the Majestic Sublime for this purpose.

Yet they go well prepared into this formative encounter. They go in perfect certainty that they again regain cognition of the All-Permeating, Sublime Awareness (from whence they sprang), as soon as they experienced all they chose to learn by taking physical appearance.

Everyone with the immense courage to confront his dreams, ideas as well as his fears in material form, becomes aware of his fantastic origin as soon as his or her encounter with (material) experiences is complete.

Once that part of us that's not immersed in the material world, notices that this learning process is concluded, it makes us again perceive the Majestic Sublime.

Yet as long as we still are deeply engaged in (material) encounters, we stay ignorant of this particular connection.

All those whose time of awakening has not yet come, are incapable of heeding this call. Until their learning process is complete they stay ignorant, - for only by being unaware of their magnificent origin can they experience what they intend to learn with the intensity they crave. And for as long as they are unaware of their true origin, they also die in this ignorance once their life ends.

Thus it is worth the effort to seek what makes aware of the Majestic Grand Awareness.

(12)

Whoever lives this insight, is always someone from above. If he is called, he answers, turns again towards That which is calling him, ascends to It, and grows in insight simply by following this call.

Aware of this special knowledge he manifests the Grand he feels within through all his action, - and in consequence is handed the sovereignty and freedom, the serenity and perfect peace of the Majestic Grand.

He feels like someone who was drunk and then became sober.

And since he found himself again, he tidies up what is his own.

(13)

The messenger brought many back from error's grip. He led them to their origin, - into the All-Encompassing Awareness they lost once they adopted error to their life.

He revealed the depth of the Sublime, - how It encompasses all roads and spaces, - how It is penetrating all that has existence, - and how It is even greater than all this.

(14)

What happens is a great mystery: -

Initially those currently engaged in the material world existed in the All-encompassing Sublime, - unaware of Its - their very own - grandeur.

And they realized that they were incapable of seeing the full greatness of the Grand Sublime in which they lived. Thus they took on material existence out of their own choice.

The Grand Sublime then revealed itself to them as (new) insight. And they became aware that the material world too is perfectly in harmony with the Majestic Grand.

These individual impulses of consciousness, - these beings in human form, - are unique initiatives of self-experience through which the Majestic Sublime expands awareness of itself.

Yet knowledge about this process (The Book of Life) is no mere scripture someone may read and interpret foolishly. This special knowledge carries within the full power of truth and clarity only those can truly speak who consciously do live this truth within their life.

These words of highest truth connect to the Entirety, they open access to what is Great, to the Sublime within us.

Each of this message's words presents a complete thought, - each word a flawless manifestation of highest reality.

The words took form (sound) so that the world can recognize their inborn, imperishable connection to the Majestic Sublime, - so that those presently experiencing themselves as separate from the Eternal Awareness again can see the timeless connection to their magnificent origin.

(16)

By making wisdom and insight accessible again, the messenger thus also dissolved all appearances and all pretense.

This world, dominated by jealousy and quarrel, is in a state of deep privation. The Majestic, Sublime however doesn't know *any* kind of lack. Privation only comes into existence because the Great, the Noble, the Magnificent is not lived consciously. Yet the very moment we realize the Grand Sublime within, every privation and all lack cease to exist.

As insight dissolves ignorance, - as darkness vanishes before the light, - so also privation disappears before the Grand Awareness's perfection. Once we perceive the Grand Sublime all outer appearances dissolve.

(Once we perceive the All-Permeating Grand Sublime, we recognize EVERYTHING as an impulse of this All-Encompassing Majestic. To experience this is infinitely beautiful. It bestows deep serenity, assuredness and sovereignty. We do not vanish in some faceless nirvana, but experience a high state of bliss when we regain and reclaim our own Grand Self.)

(17)

As we perceive our identity with the All-Encompassing Awareness, we find our Self. This insight dissolves all our entanglement in the kaleidoscopic world of matter. Like fire insight into the Grand Sublime burns (cleanses) life of all fragmentation, - in its Light all darkness drowns, - in its Life death vanishes.

(18)

And once we truly experienced this, let's bring our life (our house) in order, so calmness may enter it and we perceive more of our union with the Grand.

Let us behave like people who discard broken, useless vessels before they leave a place. This brings the master of the house no loss. On the contrary, - it delights him, since only intact vessels can be filled, bad ones can't.

Breaking bad vessels is judgment that comes from above. It judges everyone. It's like a double-edged sword whose blade can cut both ways.

(Untouched by flawed perceptions we evaluate whether persons, objects, projects and ideas we surrounded us with do justice to the spirit of the Grand we deeply sense within.

Applying this yardstick to the world we formed, we measure it, - and thus free ourselves from all that doesn't live up to our unerring perception.

We ourselves are this incorruptible judge. We only keep what deepens our union with the Sublime. We discard all that impedes this, our exalted perception.)

(19)

This message flows from compassion, from the heart of those communicating it. It imparts more than the mere words you hear or read, - it also transmits the fascination and strength the messengers radiate, and the example of their actions.

Yet this did cause bewilderment amongst the people. - Some realized that they were nothing, despite how high they deemed themselves, - some realized how great they really were, despite the low position they occupied. Some quickly rose to their true eminence, - while others lost what little they had, since they lacked will to grow farther. Some became pure and strong, while others broke before this challenge.

All the material world's quarters trembled. Everyone was shaken as it became obvious that pride and error's creation had no substance and was doomed. Error got terrified, unable to react. It despaired because in all its assumed might it so plainly lacked orientation and knowledge.

Whenever error encounters insight, error drowns, and with it all it ever created.

And it became clear to everyone that error was empty, void and lost all power to mislead.

(20)

Highest Truth became life's center to everyone it touched (to everyone truly longing to experience It), - enabling them to really see the Grand Sublime. They welcomed their perception and the Sublime's immeasurable strength, - which became theirs because they realized their unity with It.

Everyone perceiving this embraces this clarity and loves the truth It radiates, - because he feels it in his very being's core.

Everyone encountering this highest clarity becomes enchanted and wants to share his insight. And while communicating it to others, his words carry this clarity in all its glorious vivacity and thus move others to the core.

The Grand Sublime communicates by way of fascination, its radiant truth arouses those entangled in the world of matter.

Through fascination and inspiration the Grand Sublime reveals what man forgot for such long time.

(21)

Because in the end - what does exist beyond appearances, beyond all veneer, - what *really* does exist? - Only the Sublime, the Infinite, Majestic. - Everything taking material existence, every meandering path this world's inhabitants wander, - all springs from the All-Permeating Grand.

Those touched by this message realize that they emerged from this Grand like children from a perfect being.

They realized that they - before they took material existence - resided within the Grand Sublime in a state unmanifested.

While in this unmanifested state they couldn't see what they were going to experience when taking material form: - To become aware of the Grand Sublime they were unable to perceive in all its grandeur as long as they lacked separate experience from It.

Yet the Grand Sublime is above all this. It is aware of all paths (of all worlds) that reside within It. Once the Grand Sublime chooses to take form, whatever form it chooses does appear. The Grand gives form and task (name) to that which It intends to take appearance, - It thus causes this particular part of Itself to enter material life.

But those not having entered life yet (those who haven't seen the Grand Sublime yet from an outside - separate - point of view), cannot perceive the whole of the Majestic Grand that will (later) cause their existence.

(22)

I don't suppose that those who haven't assumed material life yet do not exist. They still reside in That which eventually will want them to experience the world of matter, - and also will want to manifest a future time for this to happen.

The All-Permeating Grand knows what It creates before it takes form and appearance. But that particular part of the All-Encompassing Grand which has not taken form yet is unaware of this, is unable to act.

Thus each path (each world) is rooted in the Imperishable, even if its manifested form is transient, perishable, temporary.

As long as we don't see that we originate in the Imperishable, experiencing the world of appearances does not enrich us.

Those thinking: 'I am imperishable, even in my material form' (*as almost all humans do*), lose their life again and again just because they think this way.

Yet some truth resides in this view: - something imperishable needs to be there, for nothing could take form otherwise.

Therefore think of yourself: 'I have material existence, yet I take it for a shadow or a chimera of the night.'

Once light (perception of the Grand within us) shines on these horrors (of the night), we realize that all terror was mere hallucination.

(23)

As long as we are unaware of the Sublime Grand because we don't perceive it, we'll continue to be ruled by fear, doubt, vulnerability, confusion, weakness, alienation, - yet these are mere delusions and hallucinations like sleepers encounter in a nightmare.

We flee and don't know where to hide, - we lose all strength and are hunted, - we fight and get beaten, - we fall from great heights or glide through the air, - we feel in mortal danger though no pursuer is seen, - or we kill others.

As long as we live under confusion's sway, we won't gain clarity because of the pervasive illusion that surrounds us. Yet once we wake up, we do become able to see.

Exactly this happens to everyone who sheds his ignorance like a bad dream. Fed up with delusion, tired of the

greedy, egoistical objectives dominating the appearances' world he now knows that none of these appearances will last. He leaves all this behind like dreams of the night. Perception of the Grand Sublime becomes his light.

And now he understands what motivates the sleepers, the unaware ones. - And he also observes how different he himself acts now, - how his activities did change the very moment he perceived his sameness with the Majestic Awareness, - the very moment he woke up.

This is man's highest achievement: - to regain awareness, - to come around, - to wake up.

And blessed is he who makes the blind open his eyes, - he who tenders his hand to the fallen to lift him up.

This is the message: - That now again the path is open, that now again the chance exists to reclaim our very origin, to fully regain the Sublime we deeply sense within.

(24)

Man's mind has the ability to understand this message and to experience it in this very life.

But we not only heard and understood the messenger's word, - we also could see him, touch him, smell him, - and thus experience how someone in human form (like we ourselves) was able to embody, radiate and purposely reveal the Grand Unfathomable.

The messenger breathed into us what was his deepest mind. He touched our hearts, and thus connected us again to the Sublime within. And many opened up to this perception and took the path leading there.

But to those deeply entangled in material existence all this looked strange. They never understood the real purpose of the message. They only saw the messenger's human form and could and would not want to see beyond it.

But nobody and nothing was able to stop the message, because the Imperishable, Majestic Awareness can never be seized nor suppressed.

(25)

In new words (*different from the clichés and phrases of existing religions and philosophies*) the messenger spoke the heart of the Sublime. He spoke of imperishableness, of the validity of the eternal. Light spoke through him and his voice carried life.

He gave man comprehension, mercy, freedom and strength of mind, - born of the boundlessness of the Sublime and its infinite compassion.

He ended punishment and misery that clouded man's vision, - because man needed compassion far more than penalty since error had deceived him and bound him to his own ignorance.

The messenger's strength dissolved all this. He demonstrated error's plain irrelevancy, its utter unimportance, - he showed how error faded to insignificance before perception of the Grand.

To the misled ones he became the path, - to the ignorant insight, - to seekers the finding, - to the wavering staunchness, - and purification to those thinking themselves unclean.

(26)

He is the shepherd who left ninety-nine sheep to search the one astray, the one that's lost. And he rejoiced as he found it.

Even on holidays he strove for the lost sheep. And by saving it he gave the sheep life; - so that you - children of understanding - will realize what holidays are all about: - that even on these days rescue shouldn't rest; - so that you know that above (in the Sublime) day never becomes night, - that there is light that never goes out and which is perfect.

(27)

And as you pass on this message, speak from an overflowing heart, - you, who are the perfect day, - you, who carry within that inextinguishable light. - Speak of the truth to everyone seeking it, of insight to those who error led to ruinous action.

Fortify those whose insight and perception wavers, - help the ones error made sick. Feed (your wisdom) to those hungering for comprehension, - calm troubled ones by giving hope, - raise those longing to stand up, - and wake the sleepers!

For you have wisdom. Wield it like a razor-sharp sword. Merge your inner strength with your sagacity, - then you'll command true strength when acting.

Care for your own growth, - never waste energy on what's behind you. Never burden your life anew with what you stripped off already, don't grieve for what you grew

out of. Never provide a new home to the devil (to error),
- you already decided against him.

Never cling to obstacles about to fall off. Don't put
attention to what's wrong.

What criminals do and amass neither has meaning nor
does it last. The criminal damages himself far more than
any law.

The honest act nobly in the open. The Grand Sublime
be guide to your action, - after all that's where you
sprang from.

The Sublime is infinitely positive. Whoever chooses It
to guide his action, enjoys immeasurable happiness.

The Sublime knows who you are. This is the very path
to find your peace in It.

Your actions' fruits do speak for you, - your deeds
show who you truly are.

First Interlude

See what I mean? - There's no doubt that the - original (unknown) - author of *'Awakening the Highest Dimension of Life'* (*'The Gospel of Truth'*) personally experienced the intense, fundamental widening of awareness he describes, - and that he intends to inspire us to also tune into the same riveting, noble perception.

The message is as captivating now as when the author set his words on papyrus 2000 years ago. And it is also crystal clear that he is not describing belief in a religious dogma, but that he was inspired by a deeply moving, direct experience.

The Left-out Passages

Passage 15 - a 'Hymn to the Word' - was left out, because its dissimilar style and unrelated theme indicate that this was written by someone else and inserted at a later time. The 'hymn' interrupts the sweeping flow of the narrative, so I chose not to adopt it into *'Awakening the Highest Dimension of Life'*.

Twelve passages at the end of the original text repeat what was said before. Since my main aim is to convey the text's original fascination, I left them out not to bore the reader. These passages are readily available in the internet to research, if you are interested.

Tales Around Campfires

A few simple facts shed light on how all these superb insights into an exquisite new dimension humankind is capable of experiencing got so heavily distorted in the initial, early centuries.

Few people are aware that the first and second century AD is highly undocumented. Only small fragments and single leaves have been found that relate to the events in Judea 2000 years ago. The first consistent 39 sheets - 'Papyrus 66', containing much of the gospel of John - were written around 200 AD only. -

- That's 200 years of telling tales around campfires, - with little documentation, no printed materials and without the instant broadband internet information we take for granted now.

Just relate these time-spans to our times: - How reliable would you deem stories of events that happened 200 years ago (at around 1810 AD) - related to you by word of mouth only, lacking all further documentation.

Also quite unknown is that the very first version of The Bible as we know it today (Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus), was only compiled in the first half of the 4th century - almost 300 years after the last eyewitnesses died.

The passage of time alone affects the way the original ideas and events were told, - radical interventions like the eradication of the entire expansive, free, ecstatic fraction the orthodox organizers annihilated from 180 AD onwards caused major parts of the initial message to vanish into nothingness.

Add the attempts of those frustrated and offended because they were unable or unwilling to experience the inner expansion their peers or even simple people deemed beneath their status enthusiastically described, - and who then tried everything to suppress, control or rationalize away such messages.

And then there are the inevitable mistakes in copying, the misunderstandings, differing versions of the same event, intentional alterations of the original tale to promote personal agendas, - to force unwanted people out of positions, - to endorse particular ideas, - to requisition money etc.

And then the fact that - until Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in mid 15th century - reading and writing was limited to a very thin strata of society, who up to this time monopolized the interpretation of ideas, and selected and controlled their propagation with a hard hand.

All things considered, a substantial number of influences had many chances to distort the original message.

Had not the scriptures of Nag Hammadi been found, we would know only the official, highly deformed versions.

'Resurrection'

One central insight that did not make it into our times was the initial meaning of *'resurrection'*.

The early Christians saw resurrection simply as the *'awakening'* of the soul - similarly as Buddha talks of becoming *'awake'* - not of becoming *'enlightened'*.

'Resurrection' is experienced by those waking up to their Oneness with the Exalted Awareness, to the realization that their awareness is eternal, even while living on earth, even while they experience their material body, - and also waking up to the assured certainty that after leaving their mortal frame, they will be free of being reborn in another confining body.

Those not experiencing this awakening - 'resurrection', oneness with the Grand Awareness on earth, in their present body, - will keep on incarnating in further restrictive bodies and circumstances.

Jesus the messenger clearly states in the 'Gospel of Philip' that resurrection is not a future event:

'Those who say they will first die and then arise, are mistaken. If they do not first gain resurrection while they are alive, once they have died they will gain nothing.'

In the Gospel of Thomas he is asked, *'When will the rest (resurrection) for the dead take place, and when will the new world come?'*

And he answers, *'What you look for has come, but you do not see it.'* - Resurrection and the new world are right before our eyes, but the ones who asked fail to realize this.

Further Distortions

Apart from 'resurrection' numerous other ideas got fundamentally distorted:

'Salvation' - the concept that external higher powers or God 'save' mankind from 'eternal damnation' -

- instead of man - in a self-initiated, inspired fashion - finding the Grand Awareness he never lost and always carries within.

'The investiture of priests' versed in clever speak and formal ceremony - instead of inspiration by those who personally experience the Grand Awareness, and thus are able to awaken similar perception in others.

'The invention of sin' - which does not exist in nature; - nor do the counterparts of sin: repentance, confession, penitence, -

- none of which make us expand, more noble, or perceive the Exalted Awareness. Sin forever makes us look backwards for imaginary past 'mistakes' invented by people with quite sinister agendas.

'The focus on belief' - a poor substitute for directly experiencing the Fantastic, the Extraordinary, the Ecstasy of the Exalted Awareness.

'The focus on prayer' to an external 'higher' agency - instead of rising to our own immense, noble power of creating within.

'The idealizing of conformist "good" behaviour' - instead of being guided by inspiration, expansion and one's inner nobility, - and challenging those who enforce

docility, restriction and formalism because of their own petty personal interests, - and telling them to get lost.

And these are only a few examples of distortions.

Gnosticism ?

Now, some people might say that what the ancient text contains is Gnosticism. - But I utterly disagree with this opinion.

Originally a '*Gnostic*' ('*knower*' in Greek language) was someone in command of a very special knowledge, who directly perceived the Grand Awareness underlying all physical experience, and who knew such insight to be accessible to everyone at all times.

Yet during the second century AD '*Gnosticism*' became an artificial classification, became a label the orthodox fraction used to first categorize the expansive, ecstatic community of people inspired by the original message of Jesus - to then destroy it.

Gnosticism - as it is defined today, - is merely a hazy image of what it originally was. This is because the only information about it - apart from the Nag Hammadi scrolls - stems exclusively from documentation written by those who actually eradicated it (Irenaeus, Tertullian and others). How reliable would you consider information about the resistance movement against a dictator, if it relied only on documents written by the police that actually annihilated this rising.

No, this text is not about lifeless, scholarly, footnote-ridden Gnosticism, this text carries a long forgotten,

inspiring, original message that opens up untold, fantastic, noble dimensions to mankind.

Onto Further Shores

Now - instead of trying to 'resurrect' information long so distorted as to be almost unrecognizable, let's turn to other cultures - let's see if they show similar messages, possibly clearer, less deteriorated, with more details how to purposely perceive and realize this higher part of ourselves.

The story how I discovered such scripture - actually the very first text of this kind I ever found - is worth relating, because the way it came into my focus was bizarre, spans more than three decades and defies logical explanation.

An Ancient Treasure Hidden in a Book

It was way back at a time where no more than fifteen serious 'spiritual' books were readily available in print; a time where *only one* local bookshop sported one single narrow shelf hidden in the back of the store, displaying Lao Tse's '*Tao Te King*', Seneca, Yogananda's '*Autobiography of a Yogi*', Govinda's '*Way of the White Clouds*' etc. Once you were through reading these fifteen works, you were on your own.

Oh yes, we knew that ancient Indian scriptures existed, but this was a huge complex of confusing archaic lore seemingly without discernible structure. And even if we knew a certain book existed, it usually was unobtainable, far too expensive, only available in original Sanskrit,

Pali, or Prakrit language, or translated by scholars who made their contents even more confusing.

Sure, nowadays a quarter-million 'spiritual' or 'New Age' books are on sale, - but to my personal experience they never went beyond what these initial fifteen 'spiritual' works described. - Or - more sarcastic - in the words of 18th century German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *'Stepping on quark (twaddle) makes it flat, not strong'*.

At that time - my age was twenty-two - I came across one book whose title I don't recall after these many years, but which contained the reprint of an original scripture written more than a millennium ago - a text that mystified me though I was utterly unable to understand it then.

Now, - instead of discarding it, as I had done with the works of Gurdjieff, Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner and others, I did something I'd never done before: I copied the few pages of this scripture. Since copy-shops didn't exist yet, this took an elaborate journey to the company of a girlfriend's father to get it done.

I then sealed the 12 copied sheets into an envelope which I placed inside a book I knew I'd never lend out or give away, because the - well-known - author had autographed it with an elaborate dedication.

This book - including the envelope I soon forgot - accompanied me on many of my journeys of the next three decades. During these years the book got crammed into cardboard boxes, travelled to three continents, sat on improvised bookshelves of highly temporary accommoda-

tions, was stored in attics or cellars of friends - once barely escaping a flood, while all the time hiding that envelope.

Then came the day when I was searching for information I - mistakenly - thought this book contained, drew it from its shelf, - and the envelope dropped out.

Like receiving a birthday-gift out of time, I took the pages and read them in utter amazement. But where before I could see only a jumble of perplexing words, I now understood the extraordinary, intense message the text conveyed: - In great detail it described what far more illustrious ancient texts never even mentioned, - it described how to gain access to an awareness underlying the manifested world and the Unmanifested.

This is how I discovered '*The Tibetan Book Of The Great Liberation*'.

A 1200 Years Old Message Reaching Its Destination

But reading and understanding the book intellectually was not the main event that made this whole process remarkable. All during the month following my 'discovery' something was working inside of me, - some vague notion, some hazy idea that seemed to sway just beyond conscious perception, just barely beyond my grasp. I felt as if I started seeing something where nothing seemed to be before.

And then - almost exactly one month after finding the hidden envelope - my mind suddenly zoomed into what the

author, Padma-Sambhava, described: - into direct perception of the Grand, Exalted Awareness.

The rest you know, - it's the story told in the beginning of this book.

So, - what I am presenting you now is the very text that triggered this perception.

Yet again it was essential to adopt the ancient text to contemporary language, - and to change special terms into present-day words. Had I not done so, the text would open up only if you are versed in Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and Tibetan philosophy, know the respective history and have some insight into Sanskrit. For those who desire it, the original translation of Evans-Wentz can easily be downloaded from the internet.

It was a joy transferring the book into present-day language. The spirited, almost staccato presentation of ideas, the inimitable way Padma-Sambhava sequences his statements to awaken insight sleeping deep within us, - all this rings out exhilarating fresh and modern.

He uses irony and pointed humour to stir, to rouse the reader. He employs paradoxes to shake us from deeply rooted thought processes. He provokes by challenging time-honoured, but ineffective courses of actions and beliefs.

So enjoy the ride. - See it as a letter from your future, - a letter your future awakened self sends into your very present to reach out to you.

May it open your mind and heart, may it open your whole being to this superb expansion of your inner Self.

The following scripture is approx. 1200 years old. It was written by Padma-Sambhava, a powerful spiritual teacher from Urgyan, Tibet, whose teachings had great impact on the entire country.

1954 the text was rendered into English by Sardar Bahadur S. W. Laden La, by the Lamas Karma Sumdhon Paul Lobzang Mingyur Dorje and Kazi Dawa-Samdup and by W.Y. Evans-Wentz.

On the basis of their translation I present this scripture in contemporary language to make it accessible to a wider audience.

The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation

Enlightenment
by Experiencing
The Great Awareness

Presented
in contemporary language by
Hermann Kuhn

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The Last Advice to the Seeker

The Method of Finding the Origin

by Perceiving
the Great Awareness

by Seeing Reality

called:

SELF-LIBERATION

Part I - Preliminaries

This text presents a systematic method of perceiving the Great Awareness, of seeing reality and of freeing the Self of all limitations.

It shows how your awareness works.

[First Advice to the Seeker]

Oh Seeker, who you gain access to this precious knowledge, - vast understanding resides within you, - penetrate deep into this mighty wisdom.

May the Great Majestic Awareness open your insight into Itself.

[These Instructions Complete What the Enlightened Taught]

Everything the enlightened taught, - everything recorded in 'The Door of the Dharma' and other scriptures, all remains incomprehensible because these texts do not describe the ONE Awareness.

Even the Tirthankaras, the enlightened ones of the Jains, have not taught anything regarding this.

And the vast multitude of sacred scriptures barely contains instructions how to gain access to the Great Awareness.

This scripture provides the true key to these eternal teachings. It shows the effective method how to apply them in practical life. It enables you to experience this Magnificent Awareness.

[The Second Advice to the Seeker]

Wake up !

Listen blessed seekers ! - Highest wisdom is before you now. - Listen with all your being !

[The Consequences of Not Knowing the Great Awareness]

Knowledge of what is commonly called 'mind' or 'consciousness' is widespread.

The Great, Magnificent Awareness however is unknown, - or thought of erroneously, - or known only one-sidedly without consideration for the missing parts. Thus desire

for these teachings is immeasurable. It attracts even those who do not know the ONE Awareness and thus do not know themselves.

Such people aimlessly drift throughout all regions of the world of manifestations, continuously assume new forms and suffer and worry.

As long as insight into the Great Awareness is lacking, such is the result.

So impressed are they by their own suffering, so overpowered, that they lack all will to give direction to their life.

And even if they long to know the Great Awareness, their lack of will to steer their life prevents this very insight.

[The Consequences of Self-Inflicted Asceticism]

Others follow faiths and practices that severely restrict their lives. Fascinated by such self-imposed, intoxicating yearning, they block all inner capacity for perceiving the Clear Light.

They allow such self-inflicted blockages to overwhelm their mind and thus are unable to even recognize a widening of their perception.

The Middle Path (*the simple path Buddha proclaimed*) certainly describes the true mechanisms of the manifested world and even The Unmanifested, yet aimless renunciation and clinging to rigid religious ceremonies obscure all deeper insight and all real comprehension.

Such attitudes likewise obscure what course of action leads to enlightenment.

It further prevents perception of spontaneous, intense expansions of our awareness that offer orientation how more advanced states of consciousness feel like, thus indicating the path leading there.

(These are sudden, fleeting insights into far broader comprehension which occur in regular intervals. We all experience these insights, but as long as we don't direct attention there, they remain fleeting and thus cannot assist in the expansion of our being).

[The Transcendence of the Unmanifested Great Awareness]

Since in reality duality does not exist, so also there exist no multiple causes.

(Duality originates in our longing to classify what we experience in opposites, e.g. good - bad, mind - body, consciousness - matter, interior - exterior etc. Yet in the basic reality underlying all our present perceptions, such splitting is nonexistent, - even if we might currently be unfamiliar with picturing anything beyond dualities and pluralities.)

As long as we don't pass beyond our desire for such classification we cannot perceive the ONE, Exalted Awareness, - will we not wake up from our current restricted state.

The material, manifested world and the Unmanifested are ONE inseparable unity. This inseparable totality IS our Awareness.

(The One, Exalted Awareness is the state from which all beings, properties, dualities, characteristics etc. emerge once they assume [material] appearance.

Overcoming duality does not mean to give up perception of plurality, but to widen our awareness so that we can make out the unity behind all plural appearances.

Perceiving the ONE Unity is less far away from us than we might think: - We almost always see the world through tinted glasses of our current feelings. When enthusiastic, we deem the world and our position in it positive; when feelings are negative, the world seems gloomy. Such emotions even determine what sense-impressions get through to our conscious attention [i.e. which things and situations we allow to attract our focus], and what we simply ignore or discard.

Thus, that what surrounds us - that what we actually perceive, - always reflects our interior, - our motivations, preconceptions, preferences, dislikes, our ideas and fears.

Yet once we let go our desire for duality [i.e. once we stop evaluating situations and objects as 'good / bad, attractive / unattractive etc.], - when we begin to see the world before us as 'silver screen', - as total reflection of our interior, of all our emotions, - when we cease to regard us as separate from what we perceive, we move closer to experiencing The All-Encompassing Awareness - of which we presently take in only a minute part.

And if we don't like some of what we see on this 'screen', it's exactly these 'unloved' parts that provide exquisite insight what we still carry [charged with a negative emotional tinge] within, and do not want to see.

Would it not exist within us, we would not [negatively] react to it, - could not focus on it, - would not let it reach our awareness, - would not perceive it in the first place.

It pays to acknowledge these 'unloved' parts of our reality as integral part of our life and to dissolve whatever negative feelings we associate with them. This considerably widens our scope, vision and range of life.)

[The Great Self-Liberation]

Seen from a worldly perspective - which everyone is free to accept or to reject - man aimlessly drifts through innumerable material forms and experiences.

Therefore - find what your life has as its purpose, - realize (*experience, learn*) what you intend to confront during this life, - expand your perception to the True Nature of your Awareness, - free yourself from all (*material and non-material*) restrictions.

This is the core of The Great Self-Liberation. Once ultimate freedom is reached, enlightenment dawns.

[The Third Advice to the Seeker]

Be aware! - Stay alert! - Let this sublime, mighty knowledge reach you deep inside !

[The Nature of Awareness]

What is commonly called 'mind' or 'consciousness' we access through intuitive channels.

The Great Awareness though - though it exists - cannot be found (*this way*) within the manifested regions.

Yet since it is the source of highest bliss, of happiness, of all enlightenment, as also of all burdens of the perishable world, it pays to know and value It, - as it pays to value all paths that lead to enlightenment.

[Names given to the Great Awareness]

Innumerable are the names given to the Great Awareness.

Some call it 'The Mental Self'.

Buddhists (of the Hinayana path) call it 'The True Essence of Doctrines'.

Followers of yoga call it 'Wisdom' or 'Self'.

Those taking re-incarnation for non-existent, or thinking the lives of man are ruled by outside influences, call it 'The Ego', 'The I', or 'The Cumulative Experiences of Man'.

Some call it 'The Means of Attaining the Other Shore of Wisdom' or 'The Vessel to Liberation'.

Some call it 'The Buddha Essence'.

Some call it 'The Great Symbol'.

Some call it 'The Sole Seed'.

Some call it 'The Potentiality of Truth'.

Some call it 'The Foundation of All'.

And common usage assigns a multitude of further names to the Great Awareness.

Part II - Realization

[The Timelessness of the Great Awareness]

He, who becomes conscious of the Great Awareness, who realizes its functioning and who actively applies this insight to his life, - in him awakens all knowledge presently concealed, - and also knowledge of the future, deemed unborn and unconceived yet.

Experiencing the present is the natural state of our consciousness. Yet to purposely experience itself, consciousness constructs its very own time-frame around this present.

(The present is the only time in which we access reality. Our life is only what we NOW experience and feel. - Even when we think of 'the past' or plan 'the future', we do this only in the present.

All other times are 'mental' constructs that support us to experience our transitory appearance in this [material] manifested world.)

[Consciousness in Its True State]

Whoever genuinely searches for the core, for the true, original state of his consciousness, promptly discovers that it is easily grasped and easily understood, - even if our matter-oriented senses cannot perceive it.

The very core of consciousness is naked, immaculate, not made of anything, free of any pre-programmed content, without duality and colour, transparent, timeless,

unimpeded, untouched by differentiation, not recognizable as a separate thing, but only as the unity of all things, yet not composed of them.

Nor is our own (*personal*) awareness separate from other awarenesses, - from the awarenesses of others.

Whoever perceives the core of the ONE Awareness also realizes its immutable eternal presence beyond the manifested worlds residing in it.

The ONE Great Awareness - uncreated and unmanifested, unformed, self-radiant, encompassing every location and path this world contains, - which carries within the experiencing of its own wideness, - which shines forth for all living beings and can be perceived by everyone at any time, - being beyond all thoughts, - IS the primordial substance in which all aspects are united, in which all aspects are ONE.

Whoever truly understands and applies this knowledge, realizes all set forth above.

[Consciousness Is Non-Created]

Consciousness in its true, all-encompassing nature is non-created. What consciousness radiates and causes, radiates by itself. - Thus, whoever claims it was created, never really experienced the true nature of Consciousness.

Since nothing except Consciousness exists, there also exists no object outside of Consciousness upon which to meditate. - Thus, whoever meditates on such (*irreal*) objects, never meditatively experienced the true nature of Consciousness.

The ONE Awareness encompasses ALL that exists. Its true nature is eternal - without beginning, without end. - Thus, whoever claims that there's beginning or an end, never realized the majestic timelessness of his own Consciousness.

Someone who never truly searched for and found the core of his consciousness ...

- who never directly experienced that Consciousness exists beyond everything manifested and also encompasses all Unmanifested, ...
- who never experienced Consciousness in its original, primordial nature, - never in its unmanifested, un-created state beyond form ...
- who never experienced how Consciousness carries all potentialities within itself, ...

... what worth carries his claim that Consciousness was somehow created?

Consciousness IS, - born of itself, - without cause, without an objective set for its manifested and unmanifested existence, - without anything existing outside of it.

Consciousness in its true nature cannot be grasped by intellect alone.

Insight into its true nature cannot be acquired, cannot be obtained by any specific course of action, by studying, by learning a certain knowledge, by special blessings etc.

Insight of this highest nature dawns once our time for this has come, - to then consequently unfold complete freedom and sovereignty within us.

[Look Deep Inside]

Like the essential nature of the All-encompassing Awareness which is free of all restriction and manifestation and not built on anything external, so also your awareness - your very own, personal awareness - is independent, free, limitless and vast as the sky.

Seek deep thine radiance in your awareness, - there you'll find how true this is.

Vast, limitless is Self-Born Wisdom. Without beginning, without end its brightness shines forever like the sun, - everlasting like eternity, - everlasting in the eternal present.

Seek deep thine radiance in your awareness, - there you'll find how true this is.

Highest Wisdom is indestructible, beyond doubt, continuous like the ever-flowing current of a river.

Objects and conditions appearing in our life are a mere flux of instability like fluttering air at the horizon, - mere apparitions that have no power on their own to fascinate and fetter.

Appearances - all appearances - truly are mere concepts, mere notions, mere ideas, self-conceived by our mind like images, like the reflections of a mirror.

Lacking real substance and fleeting like passing clouds, all external appearances verily fade away eventually back into their own respective places.

Seek deep thine radiance in your awareness, - there you'll find how true this is.

[Your Life's Deep Purpose]

Only in your very own awareness you'll discover the true motivation why you attained existence, - only here you find the purpose, the very basis of your being.

- Meditation that reveals such insight thus needs to happen in your mind, in your awareness, - no other place provides such access
- Here only - in your awareness - do you find truth that utterly convinces you, - only here you find true orientation who you really are, where you are and where it pays to go from here
- No other - alternative - place exists where liberation can be reached.

Thus teach and practice nothing that leads elsewhere.

Seek ever anew thine own radiance deep within your own awareness.

When you look outwards, into the void, into the emptiness of space, there's no place where consciousness does shine.

And also when looking inwards, - into your mind trapped in material existence - to here locate this shine, you find nothing there that radiates, that glows or glistens.

Awareness - The Great Awareness - is transparent, with no tangible qualities.

Its nature is the clear light of wideness, is the infinity of purpose of existence. The nature of Awareness equals the cloudless sky where nothing can be seen, that itself cannot be seen, yet which contains everything. Awareness - your awareness - cannot be grasped, not be described in categories of limited life.

Awareness is not plurality, is not duality.

Awareness is all-encompassing, all-penetrating, being aware of everything.

Great, truly, is the difference between knowing and not knowing how precious this knowledge really is.

[The Wondrousness of This Wisdom]

This Clear Light, eternally unborn, originating in itself, is a parentless child of Wisdom.

Wondrous is this.

Being non-created, it manifests Natural Wisdom.

Not having known birth, it knows not death.

Though it is Total Reality, there's no perceiver of it.

Wondrous is this.

Though it acts within the world of appearances, evil doesn't defile it.

Though it perceives the import of teachings leading to enlightenment, it stays unallied to good.

Although owned by all beings, it is not recognized.

Thus those who do not know this path and its significance seek other gains. And though the Clear Light of Reality shines inside their own mind, the multitude hunts for it elsewhere.

Wondrous is all this.

[The Fourfold Great Path]

Treasure this wisdom, - it opens access to the invisible, brilliant Awareness residing deep within you.

- This is the most excellent of teachings.
- This is the most excellent of meditations, - devoid of mental concentration, all-embracing, free of every imperfection, complete.
- This is the most comprehensive of practices, - it makes aware of the unmanifested, uncreated state within.
- This is the most excellent of results, - it awakens the incredible, the unimaginable in the most natural way.

These four components - clear, flawless wisdom, meditation that's all-embracing, practice that never errs, and The Incredible as outcome - are called the Fourfold Great Path.

[The Great Light]

This Fourfold Great Path awakens The Immutable Continuous Light of Clear Wisdom within -

- which unfurls before us all-penetrating vision of the three times.

(The three times - present, past and future - encompass the entirety of our material existence. The clarity that now opens satisfies each and every open question and completes any remaining unfulfilled material desire.)

Thus each of these four - highest wisdom, all-encompassing meditation, activity focused on enlightenment, and experiencing The Great, The Fantastic - are also called 'The Great Light'.

[The Three Times]

How do the three times - i.e. our current physical existence - appear to us once we experience the Great Awareness?

Past and future we cease to engage in once we perceive the Exalted Awareness; we intentionally abstain from recalling 'past' events.

(This does not mean that these events cease to exist. We simply condense what we experienced in the three times - in the material world - into one holistic insight, - similarly as we also do not recall each single move of our childhood that trained us to effectively steer our body as an adult. We condensed these particular experiences of

our youth into one holistic skill we now - as a grown up - proficiently access at any time we want.

A similar process of our consciousness condenses all we experienced during material existence into one holistic insight that enriches our perception in the Exalted Awareness.)

The future - (which - in reality - is a mere mixture of desires, fears and anticipation we project onto a virtual place we call 'future', but which has no real existence beyond these moody emotions) - is not welcomed and thus we intentionally sever it completely from our present.

The present - (as we confront it during material existence) - cannot be fixed, cannot be held on to, and thus stays in a state of vagueness, of voidness.

(Present, past and future - as universally valid they might appear to us as long as we experience material existence, - for the Great, Exalted Awareness they merely are facades, are mere appearances laying like a veil before our vision, having no more reality than dreams or illusions.)

[The Path to Enlightenment]

[Connecting Our Current State of Existence to the Exalted Awareness]

There being no thing on which to meditate, no meditation is there whatsoever.

There being no thing to go astray, no going astray is there, - if we are guided by our archaic imprint of the Exalted Awareness.

Without meditating, without going astray, focus attention on that brilliant True State within, - on recognizing and treasuring your own Great Self, - on perceiving the all-embracing, complete knowledge you possess, - on enlightenment born of its own power; - focus on Truth radiant in brilliant light inside of you. That resplendent brightness, that sovereignty and power you there see IS that enlightened, perfect being you really ARE.

In this realm of wisdom, transcendent of all meditation, naturally illuminative, where there's no going astray, where we perceive the emptiness of all concepts and doctrines, - there we recognize that liberating our Self and realizing the Great Origin's true broadness is an essential part of our being's purpose.

Without realizing this, the goal of this path is unattainable.

But simultaneously with this realization we also gain perfect enlightenment.

The wisdom taught herein is immeasurable, encompassing all knowledge in all infinity and depth, - still it is contemplated, mulled over and categorized in many ways. Yet for the Great Awareness no two such things as contemplator and contemplation do exist.

Once this is understood in all its depth, the seeker of this knowledge - on perceiving the Exalted Awareness - fuses completely with this teaching, though the seeker himself when sought cannot be found.

Thereupon is attained the goal of all seeking, and also the end of the search itself.

Then, nothing more is there to be sought; nor is there need to seek anything.

This beginningless, vacuous, unconfused Clear Wisdom of cognizing one's own Self is the essence - is the core - of total freedom from the restrictions of material existence.

Though there are no two separate things as knowing and not knowing, there do exist innumerable profound types of meditation, - whose end is the supreme triumph of knowing the Great Awareness - the majesty of one's own mind.

Though no two separate things as the object of meditation and the meditator exist, - yet if the meditator of meditation is sought and *not* found, thereupon the goal of meditation is reached and also the end of meditation itself.

And even if meditator and the object of his meditation are no two separate things, we nevertheless should not forego meditation (*and thus fall under the sway of veiling ignorance*); - for when we meditatively experience the Great Awareness's quiescence unmodified in our mind, the clarity of non-created Wisdom instantly shines forth as the result.

And even if there are innumerable profound practices, they all do not exist for Awareness in its True State, - because there are no two separate things as existence and non-existence.

There being no two separate things as practice and practitioner, - yet if the practitioner of practice is sought and not found, thereupon the goal of all practice is reached and also the end of practice itself.

There being nothing since eternity that needs to be practiced, thus there's no need to practice anything that leads astray.

Perception of the non-created, self-radiant Wisdom - actionless, immaculate, beyond acceptance or rejection, - is itself the perfect practice.

And even though no two separate things as pure and impure exist, an immense variety of fruits of association with the Exalted Awareness can be experienced; - yet those whose mind is founded in Awareness in its True State, perceive these fruits as mere expressions of the world of appearances in their unmanifested, potential condition.

And even if no two separate things as action and the performer of action exist, - yet if one seeks the performer of action and no performer is found anywhere, thereupon the goal of all attempts to obtain fruit is reached, and also the final consummation of these fruits itself.

No other method to obtain this special fruit exists, only the one depicted here, - thus don't allow that the dualities of trusting and distrusting, of accepting and rejecting this knowledge distract you from this path.

Realizing the self-radiant, self-born Wisdom, - insight that this Wisdom expresses in the manifestation of the material worlds, - and that this all springs forth from the

Exalted Awareness which cognizes itself in this process, - is the very fruit of attaining ultimate liberation, - is final, perfect enlightenment.

[Freedom From Eternally Transitory Aims]

This Wisdom releases from striving for aims we never can reach.

(Transitory aims are unattainable, even if tradition or society defines their pursuit as desirable. Freedom from such fruitless endeavour releases time and energy for something more effective.)

- This knowledge brings freedom from 'The Middle Path' (*which - according to Buddhism - fosters spiritual growth without requiring austere activities like renunciation, asceticism, penance etc.*

Yet the more one tries to engage in 'The Middle Path', the more elusive it becomes. Even Buddhists state that no one - except Buddha - ever reached enlightenment [awakening] by way of this path.)

Perceiving the Great Awareness requires no austere behaviour, but IS the awakening.

- This knowledge liberates from the need to acquire 'Wisdom'.

The 'wisdom' the world of appearances strives for brings no enlightenment since this is not its goal. 'Wisdom' only produces contrast to those who are 'less wise'. - The depth and broadness of the Great Awareness on the other hand is continuous,

ever-present in our life, - and unfolds without us needing to acquire 'wisdom' first.

- This knowledge liberates from the need to contemplate the five basic elements of the cosmos (*'The Essence of the Buddhas'*). - The Great Awareness encapsulates this essence in its unlimited width. Once we perceive This, whatever basics there are in the cosmos inevitably open up to our consciousness.

- This knowledge liberates from any search 'How to Reach The Other Shore Beyond Bodily Existence'.

Whatever effort is spent to find knowledge of our existence beyond our bodily form never achieves the longed for clarity about this special crossing.

Perceiving The Exalted Awareness dissolves all fear of dying (*all fear of the transition to an altered type of experience*). Would the power of this knowledge be known to all beings, much fear and insecurity would lift from the material world.

- Similarly no special action (*renunciation, asceticism, spiritual techniques, religious or magic rites, prayers, blessings, cleansings, or strictly obeying a guru's instructions etc.*) can 'Free Our Awareness'.

Those having reached enlightenment experience that Awareness IS without beginning or end, - thus what particular action could possibly lead there?

- This knowledge liberates from searching 'The Foundation Of Everything'.

Since the Great Awareness continuously expands dynamically, there simply is no (*static*) 'Foundation Of Everything'.

- And finally this knowledge liberates from 'Common Sense', which only occurs within the framework of material existence. Striving for such rationality will keep a person locked within these bounds.

Yet regardless what elegant and splendid names be given to fleeting aims, - what other Wisdom than that of the Great Awareness do we really long for deep inside?

To desire more than this Wisdom is to be like one who seeks an elephant by following its footprints, when the elephant itself has long been found.

[Connecting to the Great Reality]

And even if we seek throughout all the material worlds, - the Exalted, Pure Awareness cannot be found except in our mind.

Who does not know this and seeks the Self outside his mind won't find it there.

Who thus seeks to know himself is like a fool giving a performance in midst a crowd, forgets who he really is and then seeks everywhere to find himself.

This simile also applies to erring in other ways.

Release from the constriction of material existence stays unattainable as long as the true natural state of

substances and the Clear Light of Awareness is unknown or not perceived.

As long as we don't see the Great, Exalted Awareness in our mind, we have no access to enlightenment.

Enlightenment and its Wisdom seem utterly separate from the unreal, daydreaming illusion of material existence, - yet in reality they cannot truly be differentiated.

It is an error to conceive them otherwise than as ONE.

Erring and non-erring are, intrinsically, also a unity.

When we stop seeing consciousness as duality and permit our mind to (*again*) expand to the true broadness of its primordial all-comprehensive state, we attain liberation.

(While inhabiting a body we are deeply inclined to relate to the world outside of our mind and body as fundamentally different from our consciousness. This approach - called duality in this text - blocks the true nature and the immense abilities of our awareness. Once we stop forcing this restricting attitude on our consciousness, - once we give it [us] all freedom to experience its [our] original exalted status, our 'small' awareness automatically and naturally expands until it experiences its own fantastic nature and wideness. Experiencing this expansion is incredibly beautiful.

We reach this state by intentionally giving up blockages - i.e. by dissolving erroneous prejudices, flawed ideas, restrictive doctrines etc. - that lock our awareness into their current narrow limits.)

If we (*erroneously*) envision our awareness as separate from the external world (*as a duality*), this is not brought

about by ignorance, but by us never having sought to really experience our Great Self.

Seek within thine own self-illuminating, self-originating Exalted Awareness - firstly - from where all such flawed concepts rise, - secondly - which (*small*) region of your being they really affect, and - lastly - whither they vanish.

This process of realization is similar to that of a crow which, although already in possession of a pond, flies off elsewhere to quench its thirst, and finding no other drinking-place returns to the original (*known*) pond.

Similarly the radiance the ONE Awareness emanates, by emanating from our own consciousness, emancipates our awareness.

The ONE Awareness, omniscient, all-comprehensive, immaculate, eternal, unobscured as the empty sky, shining clearly, imperishable in self-originated Wisdom - is Itself the Only Great Reality.

The entirety of the visible universe also is (*merely*) an expression (just one of many signs) of the ONE Awareness.

By knowing the ONE All-Encompassing Awareness in our mind, we know it to be free of every limitation as the clear sky.

Equating the cloudless sky with the Great Reality is meant merely as an analogy.

It links the unreality of visible things to the sky's apparent emptiness, - yet experiencing the Great Awareness does not depend on whether or not we understand this special simile.

Therefore - retain your perception of the All-Awareness - never stray from this Great Path.

[The Validity of Mental Constructs]

Concepts (*philosophies, ideologies, belief-systems, dogmas*) are all deceptive, illusory in their very nature, - none of them are real, - and all of them always fade out in the end.

All theories of the Whole, of the world of appearances, of enlightenment, are nothing more than mental constructs.

Changes in our sequence of ideas and views trigger respective changes in our vision of the external world.

Thus, the multitude of views regarding the material world spring merely from a multitude of continuously changing mental concepts.

Human beings conceive ideas in differing ways.

The unenlightened see - outside themselves - only external, transitory duality and diversity.

All theories and doctrines are always seen through tinted glasses of our own mental concepts.

As a thing is viewed, so it appears to be to us.

Yet to see things as multiplicity, and to cling onto such separateness, is to err.

Now follows insight how mental concepts work.

Perceiving the Radiance which shines without being seen, is Enlightenment.

By not controlling one's thoughts, one errs.

Who understands the thought-process in one's mind and gives it direction, automatically attains liberation.

In general, all things mentally perceived are nothing else than concepts.

The bodily forms in which the world of appearances is expressed are also concepts of the mind.

'The material appearance of beings' is also a mental concept.

'The happiness of gods in their heavens and in the worlds of men' is another mental concept.

'The three unhappy states of suffering'

(1 - *Tangible suffering: - Illness, loss etc.*

2 - *suffering triggered by change: - the tendency to cling to a preceding state once life-circumstances are shifting, and*

3 - *suffering triggered by awareness of our present limited state of existence: - the fact that we currently do not experience our true exalted state*)

are also mere concepts of the mind.

'Ignorance, miseries, and the Five Poisons' (*hate, pride, greed, jealousy and ignorance caused by intentionally not wanting to comprehend,*) are likewise mental concepts.

'Self-originating Divine Wisdom' is also a concept of the mind.

'Full realization once one passes into Enlightenment' is also a concept of the mind.

'Misfortune caused by demons and evil spirits' is also a concept of the mind.

'Gods and the good fortune they cause', are also concepts of the mind.

Likewise, the various' perfections (*wisdom, patience, abilities etc.*) are mental concepts.

Deep, subconscious yoga-induced trance' is also a mental concept.

The colour of any objective thing is also a mental concept.

'The form- and qualityless nature of the Unmanifested' is also a mental concept.

'The One and the Many in the Exalted Awareness' is also a mental concept.

'Existence and non-existence', as well as 'The Non-Created', are concepts of the mind.

[Realization and The Great Liberation]

Nothing save Awareness is perceivable.

Awareness - when uninhibited - conceives all that comes into existence.

That which comes into existence is like the wave of an ocean.

He who perceives beyond all dualities achieves Liberation.

It's irrelevant what 'mind' or 'Awareness' is called, - truly Awareness is ONE, - apart from Awareness nothing exists.

That Unique ONE Awareness is not built on anything and has no roots in anything.

Nothing else needs to be realized.

The Non-Created is the Non-Visible.

By knowing the invisible Broadness and the Clear Light and seeing them as ONE (*since plurality does not exist in the Unmanifested*), one's own Clear Awareness is perceived. Yet exactly because no plurality exists in the Unmanifested, the Great, Exalted Awareness (*in its entirety*) cannot be known. (*This would require duality - i.e. an external, separate observer different from the Great Awareness.*)

Awareness is beyond nature, yet is experienced in bodily forms.

Realization (*unrestricted perception*) of the ONE Awareness constitutes Ultimate Deliverance.

Without mastery (*without deliberate steering*) of our mental processes realization cannot be achieved.

Similarly, sesame seed is the source of oil, and milk the source of butter, - yet not until the seed is pressed and the milk churned do oil and butter appear.

So also sentient beings ARE the Great Awareness in its very essence, yet not until they realize this can they attain Enlightenment.

By realizing this even a simple, untrained person attains Liberation.

Part III - Conclusion

[General Instructions]

In this text the author (*Padma-Sambhava*) faithfully recorded his own experiences according to his abilities.

To one who tasted honey, it is superfluous for those who have not tasted it to offer an explanation of its taste.

If scholars or pundits talk about the ONE Awareness without ever having experienced it, they talk nonsense, despite all their cleverness in expounding the many different doctrinal systems.

To lend ear - even for a moment - to the reports of one who never approached nor perceived the Great Awareness, is like listening to flying rumours concerning a distant place that never was visited.

Simultaneous with the first experience of the Exalted Awareness comes release from good and evil.

As long as the Great Awareness is not known, all practice of good and evil results in nothing more than renewed incarnation in higher or nether regions, or the material world.

As soon as we become aware of the Wisdom of the Unmanifested, concepts like good and evil karma cease to exist.

Even as the empty sky seems to contain a source of water (*rain*), but does not, so also in the Exalted Awareness is neither good nor evil.

When in our mind we see the Origin - unmanifested Awareness - in all its nakedness, in all its clarity, we realize this path to liberation to be exceedingly profound.

Seek, therefore, thine own Great Wisdom within.

What you'll find there is vast and deep.

[The Final Good Wishes]

Hail to all ! - This is The Knowing of the Exalted Awareness, the Seeing of Reality, Self-Liberation.

According to ancient tradition these essential aphorisms are kept brief and to the point.

This text is destined for those future generations who will be born during the Age of Darkness.

Thus the manuscript was hidden amongst other precious objects in a secret cache.

May this book be found and read by those blessed seekers of the future.

[The Last Advice to the Seeker]

Vast, mighty, deep is this exalted wisdom.

May it not wane until The Origin is known to all beings experiencing the manifested worlds.

Second Interlude

- Part One -

Now, - after reading this text the very first time, I asked myself rather bewildered: - What's the advertised method? - Where are Padma-Sambhava's actual instructions? - Did I miss something?

But during the second reading I noticed that everything was there, but just not structured like a modern handbook: Click that icon, press that button, and this will happen. Padma-Sambhava uses a far subtler approach.

To Know It's There

He alerts us that something *exists* in a place or region or space - or whatever you call an 'item' our language doesn't have words for, - where previously we thought there would be nothing. He directs our attention towards this seeming 'Void' where we didn't perceive anything before.

This doesn't seem like much, - yet is extremely precious. Being aware that something - previously unknown - actually exists makes it infinitely easier to really find it.

No one, - not our parents, not our teachers, friends, priests or anyone - ever told us about this, - or even knew about it. - '*It can't be seen, it can't be isolated in a test-tube, thus it can't possibly exist,*' my own mother, a medical doctor, instructed me when I was young. It took me years to get past this misleading early programming.

Sure it can't be analyzed materially, - simply because it's not material, - as all our thoughts are non-material, - as all our feelings are non-material, as all our verve to do something, all our motivations, our love, our storehouse of knowledge within us are non-material. We can't 'see' any of this; can't isolate it in a test-tube, pin it to a wall or buy in a supermarket, - but it certainly exists, - it provides the very drive that makes us experience life for fifty, eighty, hundred and more years.

Remember how you felt when falling in love the very first time, - and to your utter amazement discovered a dormant, entirely unexplored dimension of fantastic feelings within you, - a world whose existence you couldn't even have guessed at before, a new dimension that promised unfathomable ecstatic joy, triggered vast, powerful motivations and made you venture into completely unknown avenues of life.

Now also a new dimension is waiting to be discovered, but here it helps immensely to be aware that it exists to perceive it for real.

Then, as you begin sensing something in that 'space' you thought was 'empty', you now know not to discard this notion as you always did before. You now know to direct attention there. And even if it seems to hover just outside your grasp for a while, this perception suddenly becomes clear - as I and others experienced it, - and then awareness expands fast, and what previously was only a vague notion, shifts right into the headlight of your focus, becomes a conscious, vibrant part of your being.

You certainly are capable of experiencing this, because you carry it within you all the time.

- But this ancient text offers far more than solely the information that underlying all our perception a vast, all-comprehensive awareness exists.

What NOT to Do

Though Padma-Sambhava shows us no direct way, no particular action, no instrumental thing to do to trigger this grand experience, he nevertheless identifies crucial factors and actions that block this access. So be aware that a number of mechanisms may block your expansion:

- self-inflicted asceticism and deliberately restraining any of our senses, our potential, our thoughts, our freedom, - all of which makes us focus on limitations only, never on expansion.
- sticking to formal ceremony or other socially opportune conduct, - none of which widens our perception.

- being profoundly impressed by one's own suffering, and lamenting this to others to garner their compassion. - Such behaviour just squanders energy and time on one's deficiencies. It never steers life towards greater inner freedom and sovereignty.
- pursuing fruitless, transitory aims which never actually produce results. And even if the society we currently live in mandates such activities and puts pressure on us to pursue such goals, this only ever pleases society, but never stimulates our growth.
- practicing anything that leads astray, - like useless spiritual techniques, meditation, exercises, cleansings, rituals etc.

Sure, - some of these techniques may make us 'feel good', more relaxed and calmer, yet 'feeling good, relaxed and calm' should not be confused with inner growth.

Real inner expansion is always a boost of our capacities, a marked increase in the intensity of life, a sweeping breakthrough to more insight, superior understanding, more focused activities and far greater command of life. Most spiritual practices don't lead in this direction. They never 'produce' sufficient power to generate such burst.

- being dazzled by 'mental constructs, belief-systems or philosophies' - whose knotty reasoning more often than not is merely the attempt to mask the utter lack of *real*/insight of their originators.

Genuine truth is always simple and easily understood by everyone. Yet voicing plain truth often takes considerably more courage than articulating incomprehensible, but suave intellectual nonsense.

The more complicated a concept, the less the author himself understands what he is saying or writing.

The deeper the truth, the simpler and the more powerful it is.

- listening to those who never directly experienced the *Great Awareness*. Since they have no idea what they are talking about, their views completely lack all substance.

And even if such people try to 'explain away' our direct, personal experience, *this does not in the least diminish our ability to perceive it.*

Those only arguing or discussing about it, are unable to see it (yet).

- regarding the world as separate from us - as duality, - instead of realizing that the way our surroundings appear to us always and only reflects how we currently feel.

None of these factors advances expansion. Giving up such pointless activities and ideas frees our time and energy for real inner growth.

How to Stimulate Expansion

But Padma-Sambhava also shows how to support and advance perception of the Great Awareness:

- Being aware that there's infinitely more to discover than what we experience now, - and knowing where to locate it.
- Finding the purpose in our life, - becoming aware of what we really want to be excited by, to venture into, to learn, to feel, to gain from this life.
- Choosing expansion, - and going for change, for discovery, for adventure by creating the actual conditions to make this happen.
- Realizing that NOW - our present - is the only time that offers access, that offers us opportunity and power to initiate change in our life.
- Steering life consciously, - to purposely decide what we really want to feel, think and do, - instead of merely drifting and reacting.
- Seeking the noble we sense within, finding truth at our core, becoming aware of the depths our awareness really commands, - nowhere else will we find the all-permeating awareness underlying everything.
- Realizing that all doctrines are empty, - and choosing to be guided by our direct, vivid experience.

- Valuing the *Great Awareness*, - accepting what we perceive as our very own.

All this advances the opening of our being, - for sensing what we were born with, - what has been ours all along and what no-one ever can take away from us, -

- for the all-encompassing awareness within we never really lost.

The 'Fourfold Great Path'

And then there is the 'Fourfold Great Path' Padma-Sambhava advertises, - and dismantles two sections later: *'There being no thing on which to meditate, no meditation is there whatsoever.'*, - and re-instates two paragraphs further down, - and dismantles and modifies numerous more times.

This perplexing, bewildering oscillation aims at shaking us from the deep-rooted belief that any special action may indeed 'produce' perception of the *Great Awareness*.

But on the other hand desiring this experience and directing our focus towards it is essential for perceiving it.

Thus Padma-Sambhava emphasises not to forego meditation and other such activities - even if they cannot *directly* produce this widening of our awareness.

And he provides the key to all this seeming paradox:

'Without meditating, without going astray, focus attention on that brilliant True State within, - on recognizing and treasuring your own Great Self, - on perceiving the all-embracing,

complete knowledge you possess, - on enlightenment born of its own power; - focus on Truth radiant in brilliant light inside of you. That resplendent brightness, that sovereignty and power you there see IS that enlightened, perfect being you really ARE.'

Taking active steps towards this goal anchors this arcane longing within our current material environment, - thereby preparing the ground for our being to break through to grand awareness.

- And as I was exploring the text, venturing ever deeper into its many avenues, discovering its multi-layered insights, becoming energized by its intensity and subtlety of power, I suddenly realized: -

The Text Itself Is The Method !

The text itself does something to the awareness. In a mysterious way it somehow enlivens what is dormant and hidden deep within.

So, - read the text. - And read again. - There's more depth to this ancient scripture than is revealed at first glance.

Allow it to rouse, to awaken you to a fantastic, exhilarating perception that was yours all along, yet which no-one ever told you about.

Skip the words in *italics* and enclosed in brackets to get a feeling for the rhythm, for the original intensity. I

included these comments only to assist comprehension during first reading.

Get a feeling for the original impact of the text, get stirred by its pace, become entranced by its grand theme.

And talk to others who also show the signs. Connect to those who you sense also long to experience more than TV and money and shallow fun. Expressing this to others shifts this hidden dimension to the foreground of your mind, opening access to deeper parts of the message.

Inspire others, - as others inspire you.

Two Curious Distortions

While transferring *The Tibetan Book Of The Great Liberation* into contemporary language, I noticed two bizarre distortions of the original text in the translation by Evans-Wentz and the two lamas. The mangled parts deal with '*The Consequences of Self-inflicted Asceticism*' and with '*Freedom From Eternally Transitory Aims*'.

In the first instance the lamas probably could not bear Padma-Sambhava declaring renunciation and asceticism as ineffective for inner growth. The strict beliefs and convictions connected to the monks' particular life-style prohibited them to accept what the text really said, and made them bend the original words almost beyond recognition.

Yet Padma-Sambhava plainly states that by renouncing elements of life we not only block the widening of our perception, but also distort the way we see reality.

Perception expands because 'the new' attracts us more than our current experience. That any previous, lesser developed state becomes obsolete in this process and falls away, is a consequence, not the cause.

When switching from a radio station with 'boring' music to a more interesting program, we'd never see this as 'renouncing the boring music', but rather as a nice change for the better.

The monks mistook the disappearance of irrelevant ('boring') factors of life - which actually is only a side-effect - for the main cause of spiritual development. They then tried to produce this side-effect by renunciation, denial and asceticism, all while believing that this would further inner expansion, - a strategy that never works. A classic case of confusing cause and effect.

In the second instance the lamas mangled the entire segment on transitory aims. Padma-Sambhava's wholesale declaration of futility of *'the Middle path as taught by the Buddha'*, would have destroyed the very foundation of their training and belief. To find a way around it, they mistranslated the whole chapter.

Both distortions illustrate how clinging to rigid mental constructs denies a vivid first-hand account of someone who actually experienced what he is writing about, - and show how rigidity and dogmatism easily bars expansion into far more fascinating dimensions of life.

Fortunately the text before and after both these passages was clear enough to reconstruct the original content.

A Hidden Cache of Knowledge

And finally it may be of interest that the mysterious way the Tibetan scripture popped out of its hiding place just as I was ready to comprehend it, finds a bizarre equivalent in Padma-Sambhava's own life.

Foreseeing that his books would be burned by an insensitive king, Padma-Sambhava buried his manuscripts in concealed caches, hiding them amongst other precious items to prevent them from being destroyed.

Long after his death - and also after the death of the destructive king - people with special powers made it their task to intuitively locate these caches. Thus a significant number of Padma-Sambhava's works were found, amongst them *'The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation'*.

To those discovering his books, he left a last message: -

'This text is destined for those future generations who will be born during the Age of Darkness.

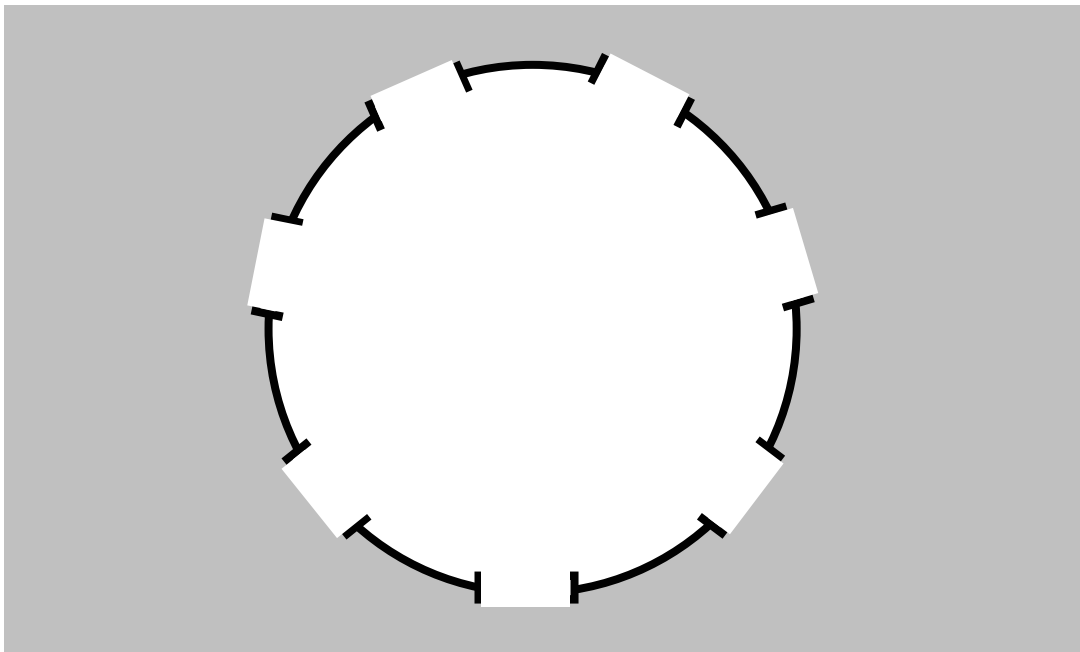
May this book be found and read by those blessed seekers of the future.'

WE are the ones this message is intended for.

The INSIDE of a Circular Room

During my research, as I was tracing similar descriptions of this grand, riveting experience in numerous religions and philosophies, in ancient as in recent cultures, one thought slowly, but persistently began to form in my mind:

Could it be that religions were portals,
were entrances to one and the same
circular room, - and that they provide the
same grand experience to all who enter?



In fact, the word *'religion'* originates in the Latin verb *'re-ligare'*, which means to *'re-connect'*, - *'to again become aware of something we were conscious of before, but somehow forgot for a while'*.

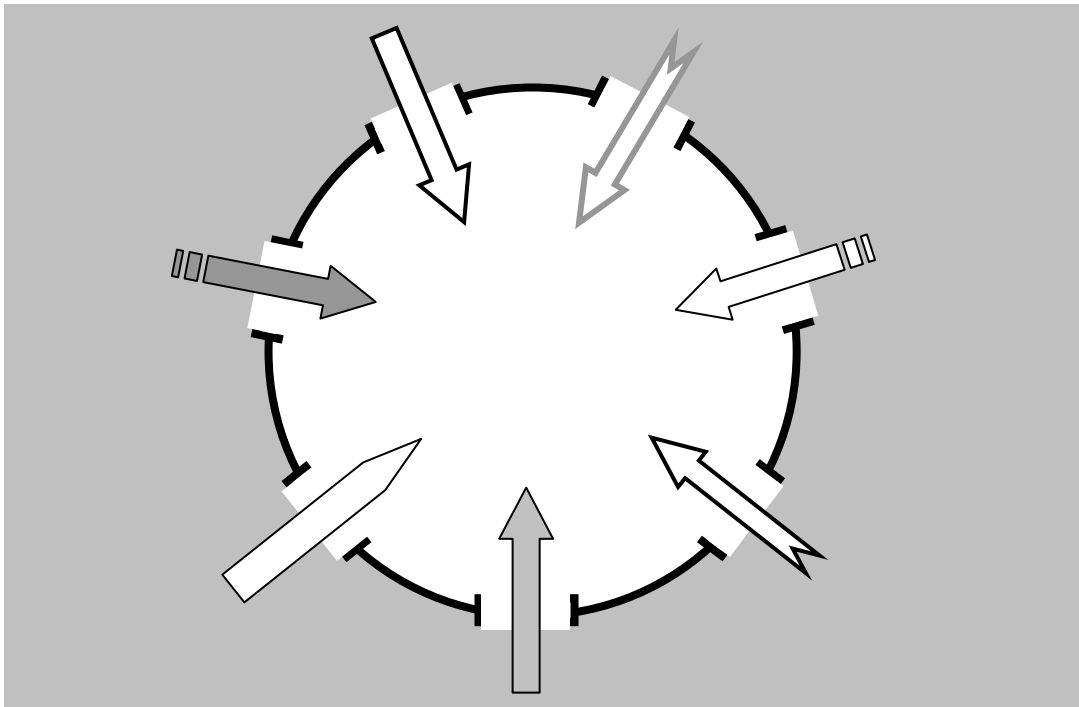
The same idea is at the heart of the term *'Yoga'*, - which also *connects* two things - that part of us experiencing the material world and the Grand Awareness we truly are beneath our currently manifested (small) self.

Actually almost all ancient Indian religions and philosophies describe paths and methods and approaches how to become aware of this essential, vital connection.

And nearly all religions have at their heart one man or one woman perceiving the extraordinary, the fantastic, the incredible, the huge potential and the immense possibilities open to mankind.

The paths these individuals describe appear like portals to one and the same grand experience.

The point is to simply use these portals, to walk through these entrances, to experience the fantastic, the inspiring, the unifying that's beyond all doors.



It's not the point to cling to the doors to argue which or whose entrance might be better, - and thus never to enter, never to discover the Grand, the Radiant the 'inside' reveals.

Unfortunately religions seem to attract a rigid kind of people keen on thwarting the joy of others, forbidding them to have fun and restricting natural freedoms and abilities. Common to them all is their strong zeal to exercise power over others, to forbid thoughts, to regulate what doesn't need regulating, to keep everything under surveillance, and - last not least - their total lack of real insight, which often makes them relentlessly kill the very intentions of their founder.

Perception certainly works well without an administrator regulating it. And any attempt to squeeze *unlimited* perception into the stiff limits of organisations always triggers catastrophic results. Countless generations got barred from knowing, accessing and using their inborn expansive abilities. Much of man's problematic history of the last couple of millennia is the sorry outcome of innumerable such attempts.

The *Grand Awareness* needs no administration.

- Those perceiving it recognize each other instantly
- Those longing for it or sensing its awakening will access it of their own power, - or intuitively find those already experiencing it, who will help them open their perception as well.
- Those not longing for it chose to complete their own individual themes of life before progressing further. Respecting *their* choice is as natural as *we* want *our* choices respected.

But all - men, women and children - carry the *Grand Awareness* within.

Second Interlude

- Part Two -

First Insight

into the Grand Magnificent Self is a breathtaking experience that touches the deepest of our emotions. An intense burst of ecstasy, elation and of profound relief suffuses us as we regain awareness of who we really are. There's the dawning of vast comprehension, immense freedom and deep sovereignty. And there's a surge of great exhilaration as we receive a first taste of the fantastic future spreading out before us now.

The high intensity of this initial burst typically stays with us for several days. Then slowly we become accustomed to our widened perception.

In the months following this breakthrough these feelings of intense happiness gradually decrease and slowly turn into a more stable, less prominent emotion. Something within us changed fundamentally, but as the

months turn this seems to fade into the background, until the hustle bustle of daily life gets back to dominating our life again.

Many who experienced this breakthrough reported such 'fading away'.

Apparently our very first ecstatic insight merely serves to give us orientation, to provide an anchor, to show us where we can find that hidden, magnificent basis within ourselves. Yet left to itself we easily may drift back to our previous, limited life without taking much advantage of this priceless insight.

Though we are able to re-vitalize this special experience at any time just by recalling the ecstasy, elation and serenity we felt during our initial breakthrough, it seems that something more would need to be 'activated' or 'done' or 'focused on' to stabilize our perception, to make it permanent. - *'If we are careless about it, we will lose it again'* was said by the wise Rangaramanuja.

Guidance from Ancient Times

Now - given the fact that awareness of our Grand, Majestic Self was quite thoroughly forgotten during the past 2000+ years, and that knowledge about it had been turned into much useless formal religion and empty ceremony, it's easy to assume that information about far deeper and even more advanced methods how to handle and stabilize such insight might have gotten lost entirely.

Yet - contrary to this assumption - there exists a body of ancient Sanskrit scriptures in which such special

know-how survived for almost three millennia - 'The Upanishads'.

Written from around 800 BC onwards, The Upanishads hold advanced information how to stabilize perception of our *Grand Self* - called '*Brahman*' = '*The Great, The Expanding*' in the scriptures, - and intricate details how our world functions when awareness is as its center.

During the eight centuries these texts were written in, such knowledge was evidently so thoroughly established that a long succession of people could lay down extensive descriptions of this central experience.

The title '*Upanishad*' itself contains a hidden clue about its theme, - and also about the type of person it is intended for.

'*Upanishad*' combines two words: '*upa*' = 'nearby' and '*(ni)shad*' = 'to sit', - denoting: '*sitting close by*'. For many centuries this was believed to either mean 'sitting close to a teacher (guru) to hear secret instructions', or 'being closely associated with the Vedas', though no textual evidence exists that either of these readings may be correct.

In the light of this new, dynamic interpretation, an entirely different meaning is far more obvious: - The dominating theme of all the upanishadic texts is *Brahman*, is the realization of our own *Grand Self*. Thus '*sitting closely*' simply stands for that special 'state' we find ourselves in after we became aware of our *Grand, Majestic Self* - *Brahman*, - but have not stabilized our perception, have not made it permanent yet. We 'sit near to' our

Grand Self, and now are introduced to the mechanism to fully integrate It into our life.

So widespread must have been this knowledge in the ancient days that its people didn't even feel the need to state what they were 'sitting near to'. For them it was entirely obvious that *Brahman* - their very own Grand Self - the very theme of these scriptures - was meant here.

The Elusive 'Seers'

There is a myth surrounding the ancient authors of The Upanishads. Called '*rishis*', - which means 'seers', - they are alleged to have somehow 'seen' the stanzas, to have divined them in a magic way beyond the reach of normal people. Much lore about these highly venerated sages accumulated during the millennia, none of which providing insight into this process of 'seeing', into the mysterious perception of this knowledge.

So far so good. - Yet if we simply take the core content of the scriptures these sages generated, then what they 'saw' was actually their Grand Self, - was what they called *Brahman* - 'The Great, The Expanding' - in their revelations. The *rishis* were simply 'knowers of their Grand Self', in the same way as the 'Gnostics' - the 'Knowers' of the early Christian era - had insight into the same Grand Majestic Awareness underlying everything.

While 'seeing', - i.e. while being firmly anchored in their Grand Self, - the *rishis* just verbalized the insights they perceived in this special state.

A Key Lost

Today The Upanishads are deemed to be remnants of an arcane and rather unfathomable philosophy that has little to no practical use for daily life.

Yet considering the fact that for at least one entire millennium these texts were painstakingly memorized and passed on in verbal form only, they clearly must offer more than mere dry, theoretical thoughts destined to perish in dusty tomes on library-shelves.

Somewhere within these scriptures vitally important, unique instructions must be hidden to warrant that huge concerted effort of a large number of families, who during a long one thousand years - for forty generations! - devoted themselves to hand down these text orally and exact from one generation to the next.

The effort of these dedicated people paid off. The Upanishads made it to our present time with hardly any distortion and are now widely available in printed and digital form.

Yet the key to that vital information, that hands-on access to their core substance seems to have gotten lost. The real purpose of these scriptures, their true meaning and the immediate, concrete impact they held in ancient times, remains utterly obscure today.

It's three crucial factors that thoroughly block access to the scriptures' true substance in our days:

- First -

All translations available till now focus exclusively on the - rather static - presumption that The Upanishads would be archaic philosophical texts. Thus they completely miss the practical, dynamic instructions readily available within their contents.

Brahman - our very own Great Self - is mainly thought of as an 'obscure principle', a 'theoretical postulation', a 'speculative idea' that could not possibly be experienced.

Yet many of these ancient texts explicitly describe such direct perception and mention a wide range of dynamic interactions with the Self that enhance life, - and which may easily amplify and inspire our hopes, ambitions and achievements today, if we just could access them in our times as well.

- Second, and most important -

None of the scholars translating it really knew Brahman, - really knew their own Grand Self from direct personal experience. None of them had true inner access to what the scriptures really talked about in an electrifying way.

Thus, without this direct knowledge, nearly all translations sport highly diffuse, twisted and often outright false meanings, which impose the interpreters' confused ideas and non-comprehension on the texts, - and in consequence render much of the original information unintelligible.

- And third -

There exist about 200 Upanishads, written by at least as many authors over a period of 800+ years.

The oldest are long and elaborate, while some of the younger ones contain only a handful of stanzas. Some just promote one particular monotheistic or polytheistic idea, some are merely extolling one specific feature mentioned in earlier texts, some tell intricate, elaborate cover-stories, some attempt intellectual explanation of the concepts they put forward, while others just list factors without any elaboration.

There've been attempts to classify these texts into major and minor works, but this is mostly along what scholars describe as *'the evolution of intellectual thought'*, - a criterion utterly useless for gaining insight into their real content, into the vital orientation and assistance they offer.

Yet what really complicated my task - i.e. to identify the passages offering instructions how to stabilize and intensify perception of our Grand Self, - was that the relevant segments were few only, and scattered over the entire collection of texts.

And then these select segments often presented multifaceted, complex views, aspects, paths of action and ways of thinking, all condensed into highly concise, comprehensive statements. Many repeated what other texts said, only adding further, often minute, yet vital aspects.

Uncovering the Core

To untangle this jungle of instructions and information, I chose to arrange the passages into three main groups:

- The Grand Self

- to understand what's hidden deep within us, - the immense powers of our Grand Self, its deep sagacity, its intricate, kaleidoscopic creative force
- to become aware of what's ahead of us, - what we are expanding into

- Navigation, Expansion and Stabilization

- to gain a compass with which to navigate the countless labyrinths of time that surround us at present
- to activate deeper mechanisms of our actions, thoughts and emotions that expand vision, perception and abilities
- to find the best way to steer life into total freedom, - and - last not least -
- to stabilize and intensify perception of our Grand Self

- Direct Interaction With The Grand Self

- communicating directly with the Grand Being residing deep within us through meditation and other means

There might be more suitable approaches than this particular grouping, and I am certain I didn't succeed in locating all the relevant passages The Upanishads offer in this regard. Hence I do welcome comments and suggestions that will improve future versions.

Our Inborn Legacy

And one word before I present the scriptures: -

There is really nothing arcane or unfathomable or intellectually complicated about this knowledge.

Being aware that a Majestic Self resides within each one of us that's only waiting for us to access it at any time we choose, is simple, basic knowledge that should be available to everyone.

To know that we were born with this Grand Self nobody is ever able to take away from us, enriches life immensely. It makes us independent of factors we dislike, it opens doors to unthought-of expansion, to entirely new ways of achieving what we desire, to intense fulfillment, vast happiness, and to wide-ranging sovereignty and freedom.

There's no precondition, no special qualification, nor any need for outside assistance to manifest this broad perception in our life.

And since we all are born with this ability, - why not inform our children about this - their very own - potential at the earliest time they are capable of understanding.

The following section presents selected passages of The Upanishads that offer insight how to stabilize and expand perception of our Grand Self.

One word regarding my style of translation. -

Most translations of The Upanishads look as if they were written with a corkscrew instead of a pen. Just one example: - *'The wise, verily, recognizing life eternal, do not seek the stable among things which are unstable here.'*

This convoluted style is nowhere found in the original texts, but was invented mostly by Christian missionaries in the second half of the nineteenth century, who were among the first to transfer Asian scriptures into western languages.

Though this scholarly-tedious 'tradition of translation' is still very much en vogue, no law is really mandating that artificial style when interpreting ancient scriptures.

I prefer to express these texts in contemporary language to make them accessible to readers not proficient in ancient Indian scriptures.

Rest assure that none of the original meaning is lost by using modern-day expressions.

The Upanishads

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Why I didn't translate all the Upanishads

Too Simple ?

This is for YOU !

Purpose of Life

The Way is NOT the Objective

Feeling Mystic

• The Grand Self

The Structure of an Unseen World

- What's Ahead of Us -

Our ideas how the world works shape what we perceive, experience, learn and how much we are able to enjoy. The wider our ideas are and the more we consider possible, the broader, deeper and more satisfying are the experiences that open up to us.

Now, - a world, in which our personal awareness takes the center-stage must inevitably differ substantially from a world in which matter, space and time are thought to play the main role.

Yet adopting this fundamentally different - awareness centered - concept doesn't mean that all our present, hard-won insights how *matter* works would lose all validity. Knowledge how to handle the world of matter is certainly necessary as long as we interact on this particular layer.

The new, awareness oriented view presented here thus does not challenge the know-how material concepts provide, - it just identifies the limits, the range within which our ideas how to handle matter are functioning, - and it alerts us that outside this range of matter, space

and time there exist layers where entirely different mechanisms apply and which are well worth exploring.

These broader layers interweave seamlessly with the layers of senses and mind we presently are familiar with. Being aware of these more expansive dimensions widens our focus and opens doors to entirely new, fascinating experiences and fulfillment.

Thus the following portrait of what exists has no intention to compete with any current concept of reality. It is destined for those who experience insight into their *Grand Self - Brahman* - and would like information how what they now perceive is structured. The purpose of this text is to assist these people, to chart a roadmap of the unknown that lies ahead of them, - so they may know what they expand into, and thus can make full use of their insight.

So, if the following passages irritate you because they won't support your present views how this world functions, then - please - just put this book aside.

How does our world look when awareness is at its center?

The stanzas of the Katha Upanishad outline the 'scenery' we encounter as our awareness explores more advanced levels of functioning. They give us a first idea what to expect as we expand from our current, matter-focused layers (senses, mind) to more advanced levels.

Beyond our senses is the mind.

Above the mind is truth (is recognition of truth).

Above truth is awakening of our Grand Self within us (*Atman*).

Beyond awakening of our Grand Self (*Atman*) is the unexpressed (the unmanifested).

Beyond the unmanifested is the Grand Majestic Self. It pervades all, but remains untouched (unmarked) by this.

Whoever (truly) knows this becomes liberated and reaches immortality.

Katha Upanishad II.3.7-8

Beyond the senses is the mind.

What our senses perceive is the matter-oriented layer of our awareness.

Beyond our senses is the layer of mind, in which we mainly gather and apply know-how how to interact with matter, space, time, and with other, similarly engaged beings.

While we focus on this layer, our ideas of what we experience may be correct (produce the intended results) or incorrect (lead us astray).

Above the mind is truth (is recognition of truth).

Beyond the range within which our mind functions, a higher layer exists, on which we recognize truth, - on which we gain deeper insight how our world really works.

Once we shift focus onto this layer, we experience such great clarity that error is unable to deceive us any more.

Truth as it is meant here is not any concept or idea deemed more valid, or 'superior', or 'more true' than others. - Recognition of truth as we experience it on this level, is an extremely clear perception, - is thorough individual insight how this world truly functions.

Once our focus shifts to this layer of truth, we swiftly become aware that all theories, ideas, concepts, philosophies and beliefs we previously maintained, are confined to only the layer of the mind, - that the mechanisms such systems describe do not supply a valid image of reality, - and that they have no functions beyond this layer.

Above truth is awakening of our Grand Self within us (*Atman*).

Being established in the state of truth, we awaken to our true origin, we recognize our innate, imperishable connection to our Grand Self, but have not integrated this insight into our life yet.

The Upanishads call this particular state *Atman*, a layer in which we are aware of our identity with our Grand Self - *Brahman* - and are striving to reach this highest level of our awareness, but are still influenced by our encounters within a manifested (material) environment.

While in this layer, we understand that experiencing the environment of matter did enrich us, but begin to realize the limited range of all such encounters.

**Beyond the awakening of our Grand Self (*Atman*)
is the unexpressed (the unmanifested)**

Here philosophers and theoreticians generally fail to understand what this really means. 'The unmanifest' - as they usually translate this part of the stanza - is not 'the void beyond everything manifested', or 'a bland principle devoid of attributes' the scholars deem it to be.

Meant here is that particular layer in which yet unexpressed desires and fears reside.

A picture may help to illustrate this:

[Please keep in mind that the following image attempts to show something that essentially eludes illustration.

And - please also don't forget that the image is meant to provide orientation for those perceiving what is described, to offer an explanation for their particular perception and to help them explore and use this insight for further expansion.]

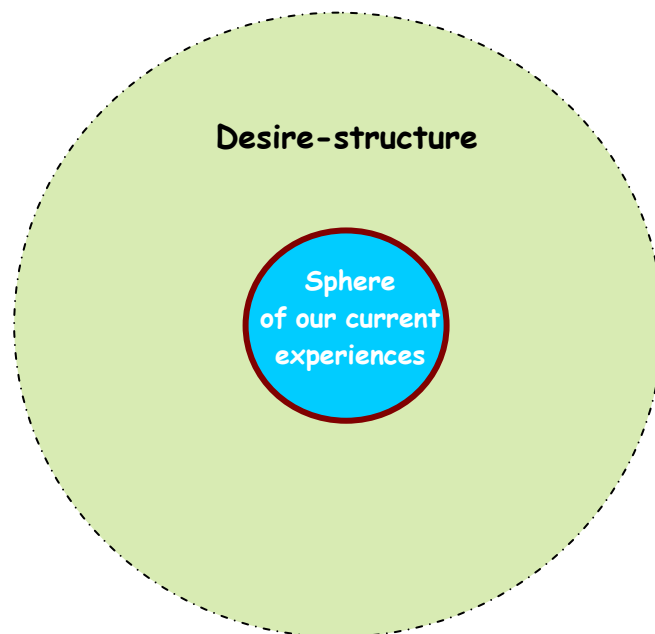
The purpose of experiencing this - our - reality is to enable us to physically experience our ideas, ideals, desires and fears (the themes of our life) until we gained optimal insight from them, and until the (completed) themes cease to engage our interest and emotions.

To facilitate this, all our current experiences, - everything we do, think, feel, believe, react to, suffer and enjoy, - happens on the surface of a sphere. ●

Yet during the course of our life new desires and fears continuously crop up that are distinctly different from the ones we engaged in before.

These cravings (and dreads) that will manifest in our 'future', and which we have not yet encountered, reside in a kind of 'cloud' that surrounds the physical layer we currently focus on. -

I'd like to call this layer of yet unexpressed, yet unmanifested longings - '*Desire-structure*'.



Desire-structure
with the sphere of our current experiences in its center

The 'Desire-structure' is considerably larger than the sphere of our current experiences. This indicates that

the 'sum total' of unexpressed desires is far greater than what currently manifests within our physical environment.

The yet unexpressed longings and dreads encompassed by this 'desire-structure' are neither static nor amorphous.

They are held in an intricate structure governed by the longing's intensity, by the weight they carry for our process of learning, by the interaction between different and conflicting longings, by their relation to the desires and fears other beings sustain, how close they are to their manifestation, by the degree of probability of their manifestation, by their fitness to be expressed in our currently perceived environment, and - last not least - by the level, or layer of awareness we currently focus on.

Nor is this intricate structure in any way fixed or static.

All the above factors are continuously balancing against each other, thus amplifying or neutralizing certain longings, forming desire-clusters that may jointly and cooperatively manifest, arranging themselves for simultaneous expression, or transforming into more subtle or more gross versions of itself.

The structure is continuously influencing the level we live and act in.

And we continuously influence the structure by everything we experience on the physical level and by the emotions that accompany these events.

In this kind of 'feed-back' the physical events we confront on the 'material' level are of minor influence. The major factor that alters the structure are our emotions, - their intensity, their orientation, their subtle, underlying content, and the energy with which we transfer them into action.

We begin to perceive this layer once we orient our awakening self (*Atman*) towards linking up with our Grand Self.

Yet this is not a process of 'acquiring' a 'higher' state, as if we'd be adapting something 'foreign' to our life. It's more the realization that the Grand Self is actually what we really are now and have been all along, even if we weren't consciously aware of this.

And though it may feel as if we have lived exceedingly long time in this state of reduced comprehension, the moment we become aware of that Grand, Majestic Core within us, - the moment we realize who we truly are, - these restrictive times look mere transitory to us, like a mirage, like a long, intense dream we just woke up from.

And as this realization dawns, our life also changes. We now shape it deliberately to fit the expanded comprehension we now are able to access. We complete a process that began when our focus shifted to the layer of truth.

A person aware of and familiar with the desire-structure is able to re-arrange his - or others' - desires to fit a more productive pattern, or shift basic longings into higher ones.

The desire-structure itself is limited. The permutations and variations it contains, and their possible expressions in physical form are not infinite.

This can be likened to a computer. The machine offers a multitude of variations and expressions that possibly could never manifest in all totality, - but the apparatus itself is limited. No matter what happens inside, or is displayed, or is steered by it, the machine itself and everything it does constitutes only a small part of our life - and there's a huge world outside of it.

Likewise there's an 'outside' to the desire-structure that is unfathomably huge. While attaining first insight into our Grand Self, we get a notion of this huge 'outside', - which we perceive in its true grandeur once we progress beyond 'the unmanifested'.

Beyond the unmanifested is the Grand Majestic Self. It pervades all, but is unperturbed (unmarked) by this.

The ultimate layer to reach is the Grand, Majestic Self - called 'purusha' in this stanza.

The Grand Self is all-pervading. - It is manifest within everything we ever experience.

Yet all during the time we spent interacting in a physical environment, it stays impartial and unperturbed by what we confront within these surroundings.

This being impartial and unruffled does not mean the Grand Self won't care about our material experiences. On the contrary, It is vitally interested in all we encounter and highly enriched by it.

Though it seems inconsistent to be impartial on one side, and taking great interest as well as being enriched on the other, this discrepancy is easily dissolved by a simple analogy from our own life: - When we e.g. lift a cup of coffee to our lips to drink it, we just do it without ever thinking how much time we spent as a toddler to train this particular control of our limbs. As an adult we never recall what went on within us during that confounded time of learning, how often we failed, how many things we needed to lift to gain this ability. We now just raise the cup impartially, unmoved and unperturbed by what happened during this training.

In the same way the Grand Self is enriched by the end-result of our experiences, but unmoved by what happened during our 'training' sessions within a manifested (material) environment.

This sequence of layers, this construction-blueprint is recorded in many Upanishads, - some providing further details, some adding one or more layers, some splitting one particular layer into a number of 'sub-layers'. Yet they all corroborate the above picture of how an awareness-centered world is structured.

Whoever (truly) knows this becomes liberated and reaches immortality.

Since the sum total of physical permutations is limited, so also our interest in them - inevitably - is limited.

Once we are fully satisfied to have experienced all we ever wanted to experience while facing our desires in

physical form, we realize that 'We' are that part of the Grand Self that experienced all this.

Then - with nothing remaining unfulfilled - we integrate this 'experiencing part' of us into the Grand Self we really ARE.

Our focus shifted completely to our Grand Majestic Self, we now are forever free (liberated) of any restriction the confine of physical manifestations imposed upon our awareness, and - since death is only possible within this confine - we also moved beyond death.

Beyond Death

This movement of our awareness 'beyond death' gets confirmed in another part of the same Upanishad:

**The One aware of everything - the Grand Self -
does not die;**

nor is It ever born.

...

It is unborn, eternal, everlasting, ancient.

**The Grand Self is not slain even when the body
is slain.**

Katha Upanishad I.2.18

Now, - this material sphere on which we interact at present is quite a dangerous place: - Everyone ever dwelling here before us, invariably died.

So we know death to be the only event of which we can be one hundred percent certain that it will come to pass in our life.

And we abhor the thought that our present reality will ultimately end.

Yet there is something living deep inside of us, - within each one of us, - something that is aware, - something that, even if only once in a blue moon, gives us a notion that we are so much more, so much nobler, so much greater than all we manifest during the jumble of our daily life.

**Smaller than the small, greater than the great,
the Grand Self resides within the heart of every
creature. ...**

Katha Upanishad I.2.20

And this 'something', this deeper, impartial awareness, apparently stays on. That what is aware within us, that what is hidden deep within ourselves, that 'something' doesn't die.

So, if everything else dies, but this doesn't, then death must have limits.

What - then - is the range of death? And how do we consciously move beyond its sphere of influence?

The Grand Self ... is undecaying, ... eternal, ... beginningless, endless, subtler than intellectual comprehension, everlasting.

If we perceive this, we become free of the jaws of death.

Katha Upanishad I.3.15

Death only applies to the (material) forms - our bodies - we use to interact within the environment of matter, - or within the environment of our dreams.

Our awareness adopts these bodily shapes to explore its desires (and dreads) in physical form.

Once we - our awareness - learned what we intended to learn by this, the body has fulfilled its purpose and falls off.

We - our awareness - continue to exist, - enriched by our experiences within material limits.

Our body is like a car we drive for a while, yet once we reach our destination, we get out and engage in entirely different themes.

For as long as we focus only on the interactions of our material forms, these forms all have expiration dates.

Yet once we - our awareness, the center of our being - move beyond this limited focus, beyond total identification with our physical shape, - that what is moving beyond, that never dies, that is beyond the expiration of our outer cover.

Desire for Expansion

So, what is this, - what is that 'part', that 'agent' within us that never dies?

And - why is it here? - What are its aims?

**It was born of old
out of desire to expand
originating beyond the unmanifested.**

**Residing secretly within the shelter of the heart
it looks forth through beings.**

And all This - actually - is you.

Katha Upanishad II.1.6

born of old

We - our Grand Self - created and entered this manifested world - like we do in dreams - out of desire to experience ourselves, to perceive our Grand Self - our origin - from a 'virtual' outside perspective.

This '*generating a seemingly detached (separate) existence*' is what is meant by 'born' here. It doesn't imply that the Grand Self was 'born out of (or created by) someone or something other.'

Based on the foundation of what is known (of what is old); - out of a longing to explore what is new, what is beyond the old, to experience, to expand into the unknown, - out of this thrust and intention our current manifested (material) environment was born.

out of desire to expand

There's nothing static about our Grand Self.

Its nature is ever-growing fascination with discovery, - with expanding into the unknown, - with exploring and becoming aware of its immense abilities and powers.

Thus the desire to expand is at the heart of all our present encounters as well.

The Grand Self created this manifested world and then immersed itself in it to dissolve, to neutralize, to 'burn' any flawed concept, idea, longing and fear that may impede its very nature of expansion.

'To burn by purifying fire' is the term used by the Katha Upanishad to indicate this neutralizing process, - which indicates the intensity and power behind this vibrant drive for ever increasing clarity.

originating beyond the unmanifested

This tells about the 'interface', the starting point from whence the manifested world gets generated. It is a special power, a special aspect of the Majestic Grand called 'Seed of Nature' that is expressing here.

It means the origin of our world lies far beyond the cloud of unexpressed desires surrounding our sphere of action I chose to call 'desire-structure'.

It means that our origin is greater than the sum-total of all that ever manifests within our current sphere of physical expression.

It also means that our awareness is older and far more majestic than what our focus is engaged in now, - and

most likely also greater than all we ever deemed possible before.

**Residing secretly within the shelter of the heart
it looks forth through beings.**

This Greatness, this Grand Sublime from whence we sprang, resides within our present form, is hiding right within the shape we currently inhabit.

It does not openly reveal Itself, It stays hidden not to disturb our current focus on discovery.

Yet the Self opens up to those wanting to see, who know where to look, and who are continuous in this endeavor.

'The shelter (the cave) of the heart' is where to find our Grand Self, as it is mentioned in many Upanishads. But - in the original, ornate language of ancient Sanskrit - this doesn't mean our body's physical heart, but our emotions, our feelings that drive the center of our existence, that provide the very power to sustain our actions.

Sure, - for the last two hundred years we focused more on our intellect, training it well, and reaching astonishing technical achievements on the material layer where our senses operate. Yet - taking these practical technical advances for a holy grail, - we forgot all that emotions are actually the driving force in our life.

Our intellect can never cause us to fall in love, - to engage in risky actions that seem not logically feasible, - to motivate us to venture into the unknown or put energy

behind a new endeavor, - to generate a new idea that seems to come from nowhere.

It's our emotions, our intuitions, our heart that makes this happen.

And here, in this - our - emotional center, we find the Grand Self.

It's here within us all the time, looking forth through our eyes, experiencing what we experience, being aware of our feelings, yet staying hidden, secret, knowing not to interfere - unless we want become awake to It.

And all This - actually - is you.

We are the ones immersed in this environment of matter now - to discover what is real and what is not, - what works and what leads to dead ends, - what generates a beneficial outcome and what does not, - what makes expand and what causes stagnation.

We engaged in this venture entirely of our own volition - and, - to be able to focus on this task exclusively, we also agreed to lower perception of our grand origin to a mere hazy memory. This state of our awareness will continue for as long as our attention stays focused on this process of discovery - to at the end find again the awe-inspiring greatness of who we really are.

There's total freedom to explore all avenues we feel the need to venture into.

And also the outcome isn't fixed. What we're exploring now - as strange or haunting, as boring or jubilant, as painful or joyous it may appear to us at times - all this is open-ended.

All we experience expands and enhances our present being - and, in consequence, the Grand Self as well; - 'the small' reflecting 'the large'.

And - all this - truly - is grand, riveting adventure.

The Grand Self stays aware and awake within us, even while we're asleep, even while our awareness is blanked out of our body.

**That identity who is awake in those that sleep,
shaping desire after desire,
that, truly, is clear, transparent awareness,
is The Expanding - *Brahman*, is the Grand Self,
is called immortal.**

...

And all This - actually - is you.

Katha Upanishad II.2.8

... shaping desire after desire

There's ever new and ever greater desires rising within us in a natural way - there's ever-ready motivation to seek new, intense (ad)ventures, and there's the powerful intent to move beyond of what we know, beyond of what we already are aware of.

All this, truly, finds its root, its origin, its vital inspiration in the Majestic Self.

It is our Grand Self's drive to explore the unknown that's at the heart of our fascination with discovering. The Self even generated and shaped this manifested world to discover ever new aspects of itself for this purpose.

Thus it is perfectly all right to have desires, to seek their realization in material and non-material form, to engage in ventures that explore the unknown, that go beyond the 'old', beyond of what we know.

Thus never think that to reach the highest you need to void yourself of desires, to forego creating the new, to give up exploring the unknown.

The Grand Self is never stagnant, - and thus too our life is ever changing, is ever presenting us situations we're unfamiliar with. It's just a matter of understanding, of accepting this fundamental force within our existence, - and using its power for our growth.

But to really access this power, might it not be helpful to know in which 'way', or 'form', or 'fashion' the Grand Self is apparent right now, in our daily life?

How To Find Signs of the Grand Self Within Our Immediate Environment

Inside of us the Grand Self resides within our emotions, within our drive for expansion. - But since the Self is all-permeating, it shouldn't really be that difficult to find signs of It in our present surroundings as well.

Now, - while focusing and operating on a layer where matter plays the central role, - locating some 'thing' might be as simple as opening the right cupboard, or traveling to a set of coordinates, or going to a particular street corner to then possibly find there what we are looking for.

In an awareness-centered universe however, this doesn't work. Awareness - as we experience it now - never stays firmly linked or fixed or attached to a particular spot, or location, or object, or situation, and also not to a particular time.

We know this from our years at school, when sat in class and our mind was here, there, but definitely not on what the teacher was saying. - We know this when we are driving a car, and our attention drifts to the meeting or task ahead, to a person we love, or dislike, or to the next junction ten minutes further down the road, - and our mind constantly strays so far from that fast-moving vehicle we sit in that we could easily ask, who - actually - is steering the car. - And these are only two simple examples.

So, - if our awareness is far too agile to pin it to a particular spot or situation, how - then - could we possibly locate within it the even more elusive all-permeating Self?

We need a different approach.

To locate something that's present within everything, but pretty much hiding in plain sight like our Grand Self, it's useful to identify specific mechanisms that show how the Self interacts with our awareness, - mechanisms that are subtle and not in the forefront of our thoughts, -

something we might take for granted and thus do not generally observe, - interactions that take place even though our attention is continually shifting, - something that stays continuous, some underlying layer or force beneath the highly transitory impressions of daily life.

To our present, technically oriented time, such method might seem far-fetched. But in ancient times the people definitely were familiar with tracking expressions of their Grand Self this way. The Upanishads list abundant instructions where and how to look exactly in this manner, - and also, - and this may prove even more helpful at times, - where not to look, - i.e. where and how we'd never find our Grand Self, no matter how hard we try, what venerated methods we employ, what holy places we visit, or how much pious effort we put in this direction.

Of course the Grand Self is present within everything, - the same way as in our dreams we certainly are present within everything we dream, within all that appears to surround us. - Yet here, in our dreams, our identity, our focus also does not rest on all that is expressed, but is centered on the I, the experiencer in the middle. With this I, this central experiencer, we have an interactive agent to explore the features of our perception in great detail, with hands-on probing agility, and with the capacity to walk around and act in our high 3D dream environment.

In our present world of focus, WE are that I, that experiencer in the middle. Thus - to steer this current world of focus more efficiently - it's useful to identify single features of our Grand Self, - to gain a clearer picture where and how it connects to our 'physical' being

and to our awareness, - to then click into its immense sagacity and power.

The more aware we are how this connection manifests, the more of its intense, creative force flows into our life, - to enhance all we experience within ourselves and within our current surroundings.

The next stanza shows where - and how - to find signs of our Grand Self in daily life, in our very environment, within the dynamic interactions that make our day.

...

Consisting of vitality the Grand Self enables us - the awakening self - to explore the senses.

Consisting of mind It enables us to expand our ideas about this world.

Consisting of comprehension It enables us to explore time.

Consisting of bliss It enables us to explore dissolution. ...

Subala Upanishad V.15

Consisting of vitality the Grand Self enables us - the awakening self (*Atman*) - to explore the senses.

Expressing Itself as vitality, as life-force - called *prana* in Sanskrit - the Grand Self shows Itself in the vivaciousness with which we explore usage of our senses.

Hence the verve to explore all our senses goes back to our very origin, to the driving force at the foundation of this world. And therefore it is entirely OK to use all our senses to investigate, engage in and discover what has been manifested for us - what actually we manifested for ourselves to explore.

With this vivaciousness and power being the heart of our entire sense-perception, never believe anyone suggesting that - to access your Grand Self - you must abstain from using one or more of your prized senses. Such people are simply ignorant of their Grand Self.

Use the vital force at your disposal to its fullest.

Consisting of mind the Grand Self enables us to expand our ideas about this world

Yet our senses are not all there is to this world, specially since their scope is limited.

Beyond our senses mind is manifested. And we know from personal experience that mind is probing, trying to identify what we perceive, discerning ever finer features, finding connections to other observations, searching for ever better ideas to explain what we confront in our life.

This probing, this drive to determine what we perceive, and to expand our thoughts and concepts - is at the heart of how the Grand Self enables us to ever broaden our grasp of this world.

The direction into which we choose to expand our thoughts is entirely our decision.

Yet - as mentioned before - while we focus on the layer of the mind, we better be aware that our ideas how this world works may surely produce intended results, - but as easily may also lead us astray.

So - to give us vital feedback which ones of our ideas truly work and which ones don't, there's a mechanism that radically shows us exactly that, - and that is time.

Consisting of comprehension the Grand Self enables us to explore time

Time enables us to experience and test our ideas and concepts how the world functions like under a magnifying glass, - until we found out which of our ideas work, and which ones don't.

Our current concept of time - the line of time we are familiar with, - is certainly well suited for making appointments and measuring something in an quantitative manner. But it entirely fails to explain the various speeds with which time passes subjectively in our life, - like the minutes we wait for a root-canal treatment at the dentist's that appear to us like hours, - like the hours we spend with someone we deeply love that appear to us like minutes in the end.

Yet the ONLY time we EVER REALLY experience is this SUBJECTIVE time.

Subjective time experiences are vital intervals during which we test and dissolve flawed ideas and undesired conditions, and also verify and strengthen concepts that work.

When we experience a process of learning, our mind 'stretches' time. We exercise and observe what we want to understand for sometimes quite extensive time-spans to take in many details like in slow motion.

Though this may sound strange, it's actually a process we are highly familiar with.

When we e.g. decide to learn to drive a car, everything we do, - every lever we press, - the judging of the traffic in a street, - avoiding obstacles etc., we exercise in a deliberate, controlled way.

This slow motion, this stretching of time enables us to really comprehend, to really condense new insights or skills into ONE holistic experience.

Once we have mastered a new skill, we - from then onwards - do not apply it in slow motion any more, but just do it without ever thinking about the extended time it took to acquire that ability.

When we were a toddler, we needed years to learn the muscle coordination to pour water into a cup without spilling. As an adult we do this effortlessly, sometimes even while carrying on a conversation that diverts all our attention.

We stretch time to 'slow motion' to give us opportunity to explore our ideas how to acquire a skill, and to get rid of those that don't work.

This extension, this exploration of time to intimately get to know, to truly comprehend what works and what doesn't, is an expression of our Grand Self.

And yet one further step: - The fact that we ONLY experience SUBJECTIVE, STRETCHED time while we focus on our physical environment tells us that all our present existence is one great process of learning, of exploring new insights and skills, and of discovering ever deeper meaning within everything.

We may not be aware that we are learning something, but this doesn't mean that we don't. - To become more conscious of this process and to be able to steer it, it pays to identify what themes engage our focus so intensely that our subjective time expands while we experience them. Once we know which topics have such firm hold on our attention, it becomes much easier to conclude them - if we so desire.

Consisting of bliss the Grand Self enables us to explore dissolution

Experiencing bliss is a fantastic way of knowing that we broke through to a level of greater vision or deeper understanding.

The rising of bliss always indicates that (inner) blockages just have been thoroughly removed from our life.

Bliss marks the very moment we break through. With crystal clarity we now recognize what blocked our awareness just seconds ago. It feels like stepping into the light, like finally being able to see. Vast freedom floods our heart, - we are electrified by insights that eluded us before.

Our outlook is now completely altered. We make out new paths, detect new meanings, cast dread and worry from our heart. A sense of future expansion rises within us, - and an excited certainty that future, deeper insights will also be revealed.

This type of inner comprehension requires no prior knowledge and no special training or ritual. It rises naturally as we remove inner blocks that barred us from perceiving the more expansive layer.

Yet the ecstasy we experience during such breakthroughs is just a foretaste of this intense expression of the very nature of our Grand Self.

The clearer we perceive this fantastic existence within us, and the more we orient towards It, the more of this bliss flows into our life.

Thus it pays to invest time and energy into removing any block that may obstruct this supreme, exulted feeling.

These four simple lines show us where exactly to direct attention to find subtle expressions of the Grand Self.

Such signs can be found in all layers on which we focus.

And once we begin to identify and click into these expressions in our immediate environment, the widening of our awareness accelerates.

Yet it is entirely our choice and freedom to what extent we use this insight.

A Portrait of Something Unportrayable

Describing something as elusive as the Grand Self, which is nonetheless present within everything, is quite a challenge. The knowers of old - the *rishis* - chose two distinct approaches in The Upanishads to rise up to this task.

Roughly half of them list what is not the Grand Self, is not *Brahman*, in the attempt to sketch an image of something words and concepts are thoroughly incapable of relating.

This type of 'negative' portrayal matches other approaches of that time, which show a liberated being just by its outline, leaving the space empty that normally displays the person.



*Statue of an enlightened being
as the Jains depict it since ancient times*

In our daily life we never really deal with something non-describable, but - it's easy to sense the stirring

helplessness, the intimate craving in the way the ancient knowers tried to convey to us something so enlightening, yet so utterly elusive.

The Grand Self - *Brahman* - is uncreated, not caused by anything else nor set into anything else, devoid of sound, touch, form, taste and smell, imperishable, not dim, not impressive, unborn.

Whoever becomes permanently aware of this to be his own awakening self (*Atman*), never experiences suffering any more. ...

Subala Upanishad III.1

Yet even if all this focuses on 'negative' characteristics, - what our Grand Self *is not*, - it still opens us a 'king's' way in our troubled times to find much coveted security: - Once we are firmly anchored in our Grand Self, we ourselves become untouchable by fear.

This great unborn Self

- undecaying
- undying - immortal
- beyond fear,
- called 'The Expanding' - *Brahman*, -

is indeed fearless.

Whoever is truly anchored in this knowledge, he becomes that fearless Self.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.4.25

Yet an equal number of positive depictions exist, trying to stimulate the exact same motivation within us to find our Grand Self.

The Grand Self, being unborn, yet residing secretly within our heart, -

Its body is earth and It moves through earth, - yet earth does not know Its Grand Self.

Its body is water and It moves through water, - yet water does not know Its Grand Self. -

Light - air - space - mind - comprehension - the sense of being the central experiencer - intelligence - the unmanifested - the imperishable - death - all this is the Grand Self's body and It moves through all this, - but this all does not know its Grand Self.

This inner Self, existing within everyone and (expressing within) everything, beyond any wrongdoing, - this supreme and radiant being is called *Narayana* ('The Story of Man').

...

Whoever pursues this is led to liberation. ...

Subala Upanishad VII.1

'The Story of Man' - *Narayana*

According to ancient lore *Narayana* is the name carried by that 'entity' in whom the entire know-how how to manifest the world we currently experience, is encapsulated.

Once our universe is about to take expression, this knowledge gets activated in a distinctive sequence of events, until the state is reached we now perceive.

Narayana is not the Grand Self in its totality, but constitutes a part of it. It is a personification of that power through which the entirety of our present state of being takes on existence.

Yet the name given to that special 'entity' carries a crucial clue about the distinct character, the particular 'flavor' of this manifested world we find ourselves immersed in at present.

Translated into English '*nara*' means '*man*' or '*human being*', - and '*yana*' denotes '*story*' or '*expression*'.

As '*Ramayana*' - one of the two great epics of ancient India - is seen as '*The Story of Rama*', *Narayana* may similarly be interpreted as '*The Story of Man*'.

Yet '*yana*' is also found in a number of other words that provide further clues to what we presently are involved in. In this manner '*na-yana*' means '*eye*', which often stands for '*observer*', while '*paraa-yana*' and its derivatives translate '*being so destined*', '*so inclined*', as well as '*the one to be worshipped*'. Taking such further associations into account is typical for ancient Sanskrit and its allegoric structure.

All this considered, the meaning of '*Narayana*' would expand into

*'Expressing, Observing and Honoring the Special
Destiny and Inclination of Man' -*

in short: - '*The Story of Man*'.

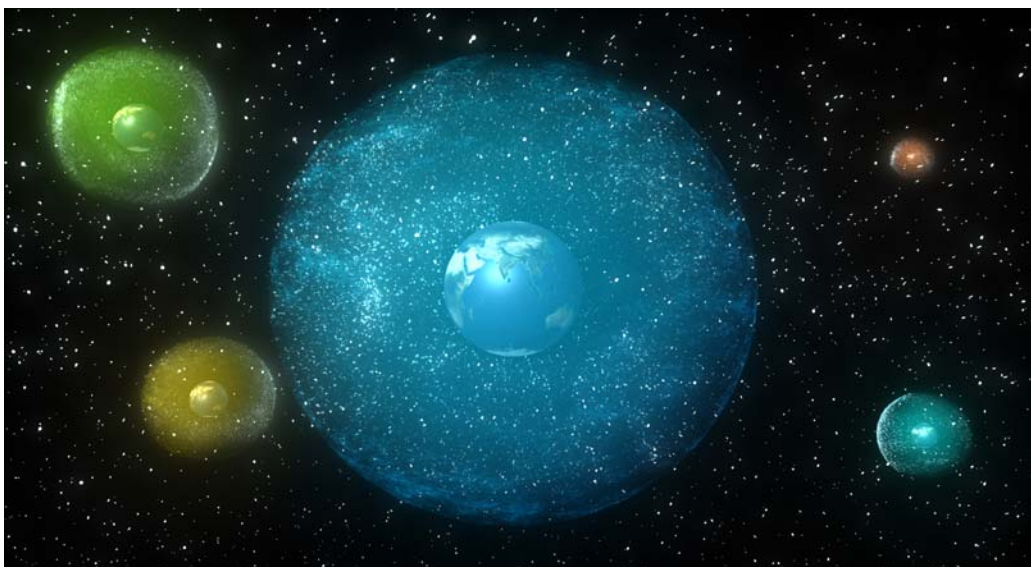
To identify the fundamental character of what manifests around us and within ourselves is the challenge we placed before us. We entered this world to explore the special character of man as it expresses in physical form.

But there is yet another - even wider - implication.

Everything man - i.e. what we experience within our current context, - is just one particular 'flavor' of what can be expressed. It is not all that can manifest.

So if our current world is just one version of all possible expressions, - as *Narayana*, the name given to our present world of focus implies, - there most certainly are other worlds in which entirely different 'flavors' take on existence.

Most likely our desire-structure and its sphere of physical experiences is just one of many variations in which our Grand Self expands awareness of Itself. - In fact there might be a multitude of alternative such structures out there in various stages of development.



Multiple desire-structures

To locate and explore these other desire-structures is an ultimate adventure open to those who extract their awareness from our present narrow bounds.

- What stretches out before us just got wider. -

Now some may say that such interpretation would take this meaning too far. Yet *outside* The Upanishads a number of sources describe exactly these other 'manifestation systems', which carry meanings and purposes entirely different from the physical world we engage in currently.

The vision of existence in which awareness takes the central role is not bound by the limits of a matter-space-time-focused world. What we - our awareness - deem possible more often than not reflects avenues potentially open to us. It's just a matter of 'going there' to perceive and experience exactly this.

To widen our vision when we were a child, we just 'had to' explore what parents and other authorities declared forbidden or impossible. So also now it pays to disregard the limits others declare and would like to impose upon us. - There's great promise in opening ourselves to ever increasing expansion and fascination.

And One Word to Conclude This Section

All these descriptions are only partial, trying to portray something that - in all truth - is far beyond words.

To those aware of their Grand Self such depictions are like black and white photographs, like flat sepia images of a 3D scenery they experience for real in splendid colors and in fantastic depth.

And still these inadequate pictures give insight into the grandiose scenery sprawling yet undiscovered within us - to be explored at any time we choose.

**Whoever has found and is awakening to that
Self (*Atman*)**

**that has immersed itself into this perilous,
obstacle-ridden world,**

**he is the maker of this universe, for he is the
maker of all that manifests.**

His is this world; indeed he is the world itself.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.4.13

While becoming aware of our Grand Self, we also realize that we have entered '*this perilous, obstacle-ridden world*' - i.e. our very own creation / projection - of our own accord to face the manifestation of our desires and dreads in material form.

It dawns on us that - if we ourselves create this world as our very own 'dream', - this makes us master of this, - our very own - world.

Thus - to explore our 'new' position of formative power, we need to find out how to actually handle the subtle mechanisms we are so intricately involved in creating. And here it helps immensely to connect to the actual power-base of our creation - our Grand Self, - to access its enormous abilities and make them our own. This is the reason why it pays to gain clear and permanent perception of the Grand Self.

• **Navigation - Expansion - Stabilization**

We certainly know how to conduct life. We have a number of proven methods and ways of thinking that much of the time somehow accomplish what we intend. And when our proven ways don't work - and we know these times well, - we usually blame adverse circumstances or the obstructive influence of others.

Yet once we enter uncharted territory -

- ◆ to break a trail towards unparalleled freedom
- ◆ to find a compass with which to find the optimal way through all the countless corridors of time stretching before us presently
- ◆ to activate unknown, deeper mechanisms of our actions, thoughts and emotions that expand our vision, - and - last not least -
- ◆ to stabilize and expand perception of our Grand Self

none of our 'proven' ways yield any results.

There are two reasons for this:

- First -

None of our established methods and ways of thinking apply to these tasks: -

The Grand Self is not attainable by even a hundred explanations

- not by the studies of countless ancient scriptures
- not by relying on intellectual knowledge
- not through scrutinizing our memory
- not by learning the Vedas
- not by severe austerities
- not by knowledge about the components this world is made of and their interactions (*Sankhya*)
- not through the discipline of Yoga
- not by observing the four stages of life

nor through any other such means can awareness of the Grand Self be attained.

Subala Upanishad IX.15

Much of what we think would work, may somehow function in an environment of matter, space and time, - but not in an awareness-centered world.

Yet this doesn't mean that people aren't trying such unsuitable methods by the millions. The world is full of

seekers following time-hallowed paths described in multitudes of weighty books that promise to lead somewhere, but never fulfill their pledge. Many of these seekers do not want to see that - if such methods would actually work, - the world would abound with enlightened people. And this - obviously - is not the fact.

So take the above list as information which strategies will never work, and waste neither heart, time nor effort on them.

- Second - and even more important -

In this venture of expansion only actual results are valid; mere attempts, or token efforts, or only stating the intention of 'wanting to grow' never count.

To put it bluntly - if we are not enlightened now - and we'll know for sure once this is the case, - then something within our actions, thoughts or emotions isn't working as it should, - because we plainly do not experience this very special result.

The applause of friends, or followers, or disciples, or devotees, or the media, or an admiring public, or even the world as a whole - none of this counts; - if we truly pursue ultimate freedom, only reaching that highest state really matters. Everything else is temporary, - possibly enjoyable, sure, - but definitely not lasting.

The childish-minded go after short-lived pleasures, yet as they pursue this, they walk into the wide-spread traps of death.

The wise know that only the Grand Self - The Imperishable - is steady. They never seek this steadiness within the fleeting impressions of this world.

Katha Upanishad II.1.2

And a heads-up before the actual directives start: -

Arise !

Awake !

Realize that gaining access to this vast knowledge is a rare and exceptional boon !

Understand and make full use of this insight, because the path before you is not easy, - like walking on a sharp razors edge, it's tough to pursue and easy to fall, -

as the wise who know this path said.

Katha Upanishad I.3.14

It might not be a cake-walk to reach the highest goal - the stanza states. Thus be prepared to focus attention, to dedicate, to invest substantial energy into this venture, and at times to hold on with dogged persistence to reach continuous perception of your Grand Self - to then experience the ultimate freedom, power and sovereignty this offers.

So, how to actually stabilize and expand perception of the Grand Self ?

To Steer Our Thoughts

is the central key.

Through *mind alone* can this be obtained. ...

Katha Upanishad II.1.11

Through mind alone ...

This is the special flavor expressed within the world we currently focus on. This is '*The Story of Man*', the very essence of the tale we explore in depth at present: - to find out how far our mind will reach, to discover the full power and breadth of our thoughts' potential, and to test its limits - if there are any.

And further - '*Through mind alone can this be obtained*' - is also the solid assurance that there's the actual possibility, the genuine chance to reach back to our grand origin through the very instrument of our mind, - to regain deliberate awareness of the immense power residing secretly within us.

Here's how to handle our thoughts to experience such expansion: -

- 1 Even in a mind that seeks the truth and thus has quietened down, flawed ideas may arise once our senses become misled by unfulfilled desires rising from our past.**

- 2 It is our very own thoughts that create this world of appearances. Thus make the effort to cleanse your mind of such limited, short-lived desires that don't lead to expansion.
- 3 What a man thinks, that he becomes,
- this is the eternal mystery.
- 4 Therefore - free yourself of ceaseless, pointless, short-lived, limited longings, no matter whether they appear to you as good or bad.
- 5 Steer your mind to perceive your Grand Self, assume its immense serenity and power (which actually is *yours*), merge with the imperishable bliss that is your Grand Self's very nature.
- 6 Once you decide to direct your thoughts as intensely towards your Grand Self as you *now* direct them towards the objects of *this* (physical) world, - then nothing will ever stop you from breaking free of all restrictions.
- 7 The mind functions in two distinct modes:
 - influenced by desires - which limit its scope, and
 - free of any such limiting desires.

- 8 By freeing your mind from the cocoon the world pulls over our eyes (from drowsiness while being awake), - by freeing it from the confusion and distraction caused by ceaseless action, you become free of mind, your focus shifts to what is *beyond* mind,
- and then you see it, - the state of your very own supreme existence.
- 9 It is your *heart* - i.e. your longings, your fears, your emotions - that restrains your mind and limits its scope.
- 10 Steer your life to release such longings
 - by *fulfilling* them
 - or by *growing beyond* them
(like we did while growing up)this process - then - becomes knowledge, becomes liberation.
- 11 All else only extends the knots that bind us to the limits this manifested environment imposes upon our awareness.
- 12 The happiness of a mind whose restrictions are washed away by insight into The Highest, and who is permanently aware of his Grand Self, cannot be here described by words, - it can only be grasped by our inner organ called mind.

13 ... For mankind *mind* is what really causes all limitation, all restrictions, all attachment,
- but also it is the very tool to reach liberation.

14 Mind in its limiting mode is bound to and restricted by objects.

In its limitless mode it is free from desiring objects and thus able to reach liberation.

Those who do *not* ignite and then stir up that fire - that burning desire to reach liberation, - to those wanting to stay ignorant, who do nothing to grow, to expand, the remembering of the path towards that subtle sphere of the **Grand Self** remains obstructed.

Maitri Upanishad VI.34

Now, - in our modern times we easily assume that steering our thoughts, let alone our emotions is quite impossible, because we were taught to believe that it's events we can't control which trigger - sometimes violent - feelings and thoughts within us.

Yet in reality steering mind is not as difficult as we imagine, - except that no-one ever told us how this works, and we thus simply are not familiar with this process.

Like when we are exercising a muscle the first time, e.g. to lift some heavier object than we are accustomed to, this also appears difficult, strenuous, - and in the beginning we may not even succeed in raising it from the ground.

To steer our thoughts and emotions we face a similar situation. We need to train our 'thought-muscles' and 'the power of our emotions' for a while, until they support our intention to steer them with sufficient strength to really 'move', to really achieve that thrust in the direction we want our life to progress.

Here a brief insight into one of the mechanisms how to steer our mind, how to train its innate strength, and how to activate its deeper powers. Though it's an unusual approach, it really works: -

Anger, fear, worries, regret, insecurity, boredom and other 'undesirable' feelings steal much of our energy and zest of life. - And yet they are nothing other than challenges we ourselves willingly accepted into our current existence - to grow in the process of overcoming them.

Anger, fear, worries etc. are intense emotions only we ourselves feel. It's our readiness to engage in this type of emotions that causes them to occur. They never are caused by any outer event of which we typically believe that they would bring them about.

Events trigger feelings that exist dormant within us. If no latent 'negative' feelings lay dormant within us, then there also is no resonance within us and thus no event has ever the power to trigger them.

We notice this, when e.g. situations we usually associate with either positive or negative emotions, sometimes trigger entirely different feelings within us. And we notice this when something that moves us deeply does not stir other people in the least.

Events have no absolute connection to the emotions we feel while we experience them. There's no cosmic law that we always have to get angry when the car in front of us drives slower than we would like to go.

By separating the (physical) events from our emotional reaction to them, we gain control over these feelings - and become able to dispel them.

We simply decide which emotions we want to feel, and intentionally choose not to sustain negative feelings.

And if we again sense such feelings rise within us - as it is bound to happen, - then their intensity will be less, so we can neutralize them more easily until within us all resonance of this kind is gone for good.

Certainly - this concept is far from our current understanding. Deeply programmed to accept external events as the only cause for negative feelings, we might even get irritated at the suggestion that our own emotional reaction may be the very source of it - that we are responsible for it - and that can't possibly be.

Unfortunately the prevalent view that events cause problematic emotions offers no effective mechanism to fundamentally stop these irritations. Removing only the physical cause of one particular annoyance does little to prevent future occurrences of similar events. It would take loads of money to eliminate all possible physical causes for all possible irritations, - yet such strategy would limit our life to an annoyingly sterile environment.

And even if initially it takes considerable power of will to intentionally steer our feelings, this ultimately frees us

from an automatic reaction that in the long run would cost us far more energy.

Freeing ourselves from such deeply entrenched, habit-driven responses raises the strength-level of our will so we ultimately become able to use its immense power to expand our life.

This briefly sketches *one* single strategy how to steer thoughts and emotions effectively. Going deeper into such strategies would far exceed the main theme of this book. '*Unlimited Horizons*' by the same author covers this subject extensively.

Almost all Upanishads emphasize the immense power our mind has at its command. The ancient seers - the *rishis* - treat it as a sure fact that we are capable of using mind exactly in the expansive, boundary-breaking manner they describe. Thus we too should have all confidence in the vast, yet unexplored abilities we were born with.

By the mind alone can this be perceived. ...

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.4.19

Mind is not weak, - just untrained.

Yet Mind Is Unsteady

'If we are careful we will acquire it; if we are careless we will lose it.'

Mind is liable to fluctuation and therefore we should be extremely careful.'

Rangaramanuja

It is the nature of our mind to jump from object to object, to attend to multiple situations with lightening speed.

And it is the fundamental nature of our body to appear steady, continuous.

As we would not like our body to change form every second, so also we would be in deep trouble if our mind became as steady as our body. Just imagine driving your car with a 'steady' mind glued to the rearward mirror, ignoring all other functions. It would take only seconds till the accident.

No, - we want our mind to be flexible, attending to multiple happenings round the clock, watching e.g. the situation outside our car for danger-signs from any direction, judging speed, road-conditions, engine-sounds and so much more, to guide us safely to our destination.

Thus - any attempt to force our mind to give up its fundamental nature and to become steady during meditation or for any other purpose, is as bound to fail as asking our body to change form every few seconds. Both these ambitions are impossible to achieve in this world.

To reach inner steadiness actually means - to move beyond mind, - to shift focus to the layer higher than mind, - a layer not influenced by mind's fickle flickering. Shift focus to the layer of truth, there you find steadiness.

How to Shift Our Focus Beyond Mind

9 It is your *heart* - i.e. your longings, your fears, your emotions - that restrains your mind and limits its scope.

Unfulfilled desires (and fears) attach our focus to limiting objects or situations. The urge or thrust of our emotions towards such restrictive longings is what actually captures and restrains our awareness.

Yet never think you need to renounce, to give up such desires. Such strategy never works. Denial always leaves some subtle residue of longing behind that keeps on influencing subconsciously. A monk who always thinks of not having sex, is a very sad monk.

10 Steer your life to release such longings

- by *fulfilling* them
- or by *growing beyond* them
(like we did while growing up)

**this process - then - becomes knowledge,
becomes liberation.**

Neutralize limiting emotional attachments to events, persons or objects either by fulfilling them, or by growing beyond them.

Fulfilling them makes you aware of their limited scope, and then your interest in the experience naturally and automatically drops off. This way you neutralize attachments.

Growing beyond them means to shift focus to a higher, more advanced level. Entire groups of such emotional challenges fall off once we permanently shift focus to a higher layer. The broader and more comprehensive understanding of the new level automatically dissolves all emotional attachment to more narrow themes of life, - which then dissipate without manifesting much of an effect.

This sounds like magic, but is nothing other than what we experience while growing up. Tasks that e.g. needed all our energy and attention when we were in the playing pen - like setting three wooden blocks on top of each other - entirely cease to occupy our attention once we grew out of them.

Both strategies are well within our power to achieve.

'*Unlimited Horizons*' describes in detail how to shift focus to higher levels.

**See the Grand Self as lord of the chariot and
your body as the carriage.**

**Know your intellect to be the charioteer,
with your mind being the reigns.**

Paingala Upanishad IV.1

This is one of many hands-on parables the ancient seers used to tell us that we do have the power to purposely steer our life, - and definitely should do so.

Sure, - in our times we'd rather use cars, - but the key image is clear, - as clear as it was 3000 years ago.

Use Mind for Expansion

Yet mind possesses far greater abilities than merely neutralizing attachments to limiting events or objects.

Mind - above all - is a mighty tool of expansion. It has abundant power to open doors to other layers, to other dimensions, to knowingly connect us to the intense strength and fascination residing in our very origin.

And mind is able to stabilize and expand perception of our Grand Self.

By mind alone this is to be obtained.

Whatever is here, that is there.

Whatever is there, that also is here.

There is no duality in this world.

**Whoever experiences variety (duality) here,
never progresses beyond the cycle of embodi-
ments within the physical world
(goes from death to death).**

Katha Upanishad II.1.10-11

There is no duality in this world.

To gain stable perception of your Grand Self it's crucial to become aware of Its all-penetrating nature.

So - consciously pursue the thought that all you now perceive is non-duality.

Simply play with the idea that there's one single awareness beyond and within all the diversity you see, - as there is only one person beyond and within all your

dreams, and that person is you. - And although you seem separate from your environment as you experience it in dreams, - no matter if you like or dislike what you confront, - that all is also only you.

Similarly just become aware of this all-penetrating nature within your current environment. You already sense this now, ever since you had had first insight.

As you are creator and main actor of your dreams, similarly the Grand Self is present within all your current reality. - And YOU - the central experiencer of this reality - you actually are this Grand Being as it manifests here. In recognizing this, you just acknowledge an existing reality.

To explore awareness of this to ever greater depths is what you equipped yourself with mind for.

For those who had first insight into their Grand Self, this is one important deliberate step to make perception of the majestic foundation of ourselves permanent.

And for those not aware of their Grand Self, these words may trigger an archaic longing, - a notion that this fantastic expansion might just be possible, - a remembering of something long and thoroughly forgotten.

Never think that you are too small, or not worthy of experiencing this, or because you've done something bad you're not allowed to expand, or that there is any other obstruction you put between you and the perception of your Grand Self.

This magnificent being is here within you now. And you even sense this at times when you all of a sudden become

aware of The Noble, The Grand inside of you. These however brief insights tell you that you are so much greater than any of the restrictions that may surround you currently.

In all of us times past exist in which we didn't quite live up to our expectations. - But all this is past, is not today. Today we have the chance of going there. Today we have this chance because this very knowledge of the way to reach there is right before us now.

It's just a matter of starting.

Intricate Creating

The Grand Self - your Grand Self - is nothing bland, or faceless, or flat, or boring, or inert. There's immense vitality in it, a deep fascination with creating, an intensely colorful expanding awareness, manifesting the most intricate details of beauty, art, music and deeply satisfying relationships. - And there is more, far more than we could ever imagine while we're still focused on our current, rather limiting environment.

It pays to finalize the challenges we set before us in this '*Story of Man*', - to then grow far beyond its bounds.

It's with the mind one truly sees.

It's with the mind one hears.

Desire, formative will, doubt, confidence and lack of confidence, steadfastness and lack of steadfastness, shame, cleverness, fear, - all this is actually (nothing other than) mind.

Born of pain, the mind tarnished by torrents of impressions, unsteady, wavering, bewildered, full of desire, distracted, one (easily) strays into the (deceptive) state of self-adoration.

In thinking '*I am he*' ('*I am this limited person only*'), '*this is mine*' ('*this belongs to me only*'), he binds himself with himself as a bird entangled in a snare.

Hence any (ego-driven) person thinking that he is in control, who is marked by self-adoration and formative drive (determination), is bound.

He who is the opposite of that is liberated.

Thus free yourself from the (deceptive) thought that you'd be steering much of your life now, that you'd be in control, - free yourself from formative will (determination focused on the material only), become free from self-adoration.

This is the mark of liberation.

This is the road to the *Grand Self* - to *Brahman* - in this world.

This is the opening of the gate here in this world.

Through this gate we pass beyond darkness (to enter the shores of light), - and here all craving (for encountering this world of matter) is lifted (from our soul).

Maitri Upanishad VI.30

This physical world is our (mental) creation. Like when we create a dream, so also here all we see, feel, sense and interact with is also all ours.

Much of the restrictions and problems we face while being immersed in this - *our* - physical environment stems from our tendency to approve and prefer some part of our creation, while rejecting other parts, and regarding all the rest as kind of 'unimportant', as mere 'background'.

This causes distortion within our (mental) creation which throws our perception out of balance.

Similar fault-lines we observe e.g. in our relationships within groups of people, like family or friends. If while interacting within such groups we explicitly prefer one particular person over another, this easily triggers jealousies, craving for attention, competition and other destabilizing behavior.

Once we stop this imbalance of energies by accepting all we perceive as fundamentally ours, we free ourselves from the restrictions of the dreamlike appearances of our present environment and get through to our real Self.

Yet again we don't need to 'give up' any feature of our current world of focus, but just see it from a different, more sovereign and free perspective.

It's more a matter of seeing everything we experience as an integral part within the fabric, within the tapestry of our life - one as exotic as all our other surroundings. This helps us to dissolve artificial and pointless distortions and contributes a great deal to our inner peace.

We don't stop acting and we don't forego any important objectives, but uncluttered by distorting emotions our activities now become far more effective and also yield more satisfying results.

And if all this takes effort, because to progress we may have to overcome

- our lethargy - which prevents us entering new, unfamiliar thoughts and unknown territory
 - our pride, since - in truth - we aren't really as fantastic as we'd like others to believe
 - our laziness, - which makes us stick to suave opinions we aren't long convinced of any more
 - the anger and arrogance - we throw upon others to bend them to our will
 - our urge to possess ever more
 - and much other ballast that weighs us down and stops us from expanding -
- if neutralizing and discarding all this takes effort - then - *join the club.*

The Grand Self cannot be attained by one without strength, nor through recklessness, nor in haste, nor through austerity without an aim.

But he who strives with strength, with attentive care, focused on dissolving limiting attachments,

- if he is a knower, an awakening self (*Atman*),
- he will enter the sphere of the Grand Self - *Brahman*.

Mundaka Upanishad III.2.4

And if this seems quite an exclusive club, - even the better. Because it's the real thing based on real insight, real comprehension, real grand perception. A club whose members never carry cards, but recognize each other instantly - by eyes that are awake, - by inner light they radiate, - by the compassion and assistance they show those also on the path and others.

A club without administration, no by-laws, no fees, - a club you cannot buy into, cannot even locate if your self is not awake or striving towards this goal. An exclusive club where only what you really are does matter.

Potential Impediments - An Ancient List

The wise seers of old identified types of obstructive people who are keen on impeding or altogether frustrating our efforts directed towards expansion.

These are the ones in our immediate environment who rob us of time and vigor, who deride this path, who argue about it with the aim of destroying all our enthusiasm and intent. - An ancient list of highly acute value.

This here obstructs inner expansion: -

Persons pursuing solely egoistic ends (often) cast a net of delusion that traps, confines and misleads seekers of true insight.

The ones weaving that net of delusion are those

- who cling to the low shrub though they are shown the luscious grove ahead of them
- who always are hilarious, always abroad (crazy), always craving (attention), always mimicking someone else
- who ply the towns by begging
- who honor persons of low character
- who are disciples of the ignorant, seeking to learn higher truths from those only *pretending* to know

And there are others

- who are wicked
- who dress up flamboyantly to mask their lack of character
- who are pretenders, mercenaries, traveling mendicants, actors, and those who have been sentenced by the king

And there are those

- who say that they - for money - are able to dispel evil influences of ghosts, demons, devils, serpents, imps and the like
- who pretend to be holy, wearing the outward robes, insignia and posture of something they never inwardly achieved

And then there are those

- **who love to distract the seekers of true insight by juggling false arguments, pointless comparisons and entangling them in artificial, irrational, hairsplitting disputes.**

With all these one should not associate.

These persons, obviously, are thieves (of our time and energy) and far from true insight.

This world - bewildered by doctrines denying the Grand Self, - confused by false assessments and proofs, - is unable to distinguish between true wisdom and flat, empty learning that leads nowhere.

Maitri Upanishad VII.8

This catalog is roughly 3000 years old, but still rings true in our times. From personal experience I'd add politicians as well as lawyers to update this list to present-day conditions. Feel free to include further categories we'd better be wary of.

Yet compared to 3000 years ago, modern technology gives us one huge advantage that makes it easy to identify, - and disconnect from all such creatures.

In our times such time-robbing people, all these pretenders, beggars, actors, are checked into a little box in our homes. This little box displays these characters in well-planned sequence on a glass pane. The box needs

energy to function, - and thus is easy to switch off, - and I am talking about your TV set(s).

TV carries such huge attraction for all these actors, politicians, beggars and pretenders, for all those addicted to wearing flamboyant costume, holy robes and dazzling emblems, they hardly ever stoop to mingle with us 'normal' people. All they're trying is to just get into that box. And if we simply switch it off, they lose all might to steal our time.

All it displays TV accompanies with music, - to thump up frenzied hype as it never occurs in 'normal' life. Many willingly take in these sounds to mask their loneliness. Yet what they really do, is staring at a piece of glass, - illuminated, colored, and with moving shapes, - sure, - but still nothing more than a flat piece of glass. And all this while there's a 3D world out there, with even more dimensions if we only search.

It pays to heed the warning.

Time-Frame

Now there's the question how long all this will take, how long until we are securely aware of our inherent powers, of widened awareness, able to employ our immense abilities, and - last not least - taste the intense bliss that's our Grand Self's very nature.

Most other texts like to avoid this question, yet The Upanishads state clearly that this can be achieved in half a year.

...

**Whoever is continuously aware of his Grand Self
for six months,**

**while having neutralized all limited longings, thus
being free of this world's bounds,**

**then that infinite supreme, mysterious union is
accomplished.**

Maitri Upanishad VI.28

**... while having neutralized all limited longings,
thus being free of this world's bounds**

It may sound difficult, almost impossible to rid ourselves of all impeding attachments in such short time, - yet in practice, - once we really engage in this process, - it's not that hard to reach.

When we receive that very first glimpse of our Grand Self, something happens to our drive for more money, recognition, status, for ever higher position, and that bigger car. All this starts looking more like child's play now, like not really warranting all the energy and money we'd need to spend to acquire it. The 'Greater', 'Wider', 'Higher' we sense close by, attracts us far more than buying ever more toys to impress people we - in all truth - never really like that much.

People we truly connect with, we never need to impress. They accept us as we are, - as we accept who they are. Real love and real respect is only ever given freely, it never can be bought or bribed.

So with our widening vision, as we re-evaluate what's really essential, what we really need for our life, what we really want in our life, quite a number of things lose their importance. We simply realize how trivial they are, and don't feel any more necessity to spend our precious time in buying, polishing and showing them off.

We never renounce any experiences or objects, they simply fall off, - as we stopped playing with the toys of our childhood long time ago because the grown-up world looked far more fascinating.

And as all this slowly dissipates, something happens to our perception. The more uncluttered our life becomes of things irrelevant, within us gradually dawn new dimensions, - of insight, - of comprehension, - of how our world truly functions, - and of what is actually important on that 'higher' level.

And this accelerates the neutralizing of limited longings until perception of the Grand Self gets firmly anchored in our life, and we begin to actually steer the world we inhabit, - and then a new page begins, whose orientation is entirely ours to shape.

Sure, - it takes intention and willpower to start this process, - and to maintain it. But as we progress, and learn by doing, we soon notice that our wakening awareness begins to amplify expansion.

The rest is easy.

When all limited longings that dwell within the human heart are cast away (are wholly neutralized), then a mortal becomes immortal

and attains the Grand Self - Brahman - even here in this world.

Katha Upanishad II.3.14

... attains the Grand Self even here in this world

And this affirms that we don't need to give up our body first, before we gain firm hold on the immense abilities embedded deep within us. There's no need to die first to connect to the magnificent alertness within - that's ours anyway.

Dying first would kind of spoil the game, would sorely prevent us from exploring this present physical environment from our new perspective, would not be in tune with that inspired, colorful nature of the Unlimited Supreme inside, would not agree with all the inspired creativity we're manifesting in us and around us.

Certainly, - our body will drop off eventually, because it simply carries an expiry date.

But if - by then - we are connected firmly to the underlying awareness within, to that foundation of all our manifested expression, - then what's alive within us, the I, the center of all our perception, that essence of what we consider to be WE continues to stay awake, will not blank out, will see its outer shape as merely a redundant shell we grew out of. - And that I will carry with it all our experience, everything we gained within, all our inspiration, all we really are to new shores.

101 Generations

And we don't do this only for us alone:

**A seeker for liberation genuinely striving
to free himself of limiting attachments
carries twenty-one generations
of those whose life he touches
safely across the ocean of worldly existence.**

**(Yet) once he becomes a knower of the Grand
Self, he carries with him one-hundred-and-one
generations (to ultimate freedom).**

Paingala Upanishad IV.1

Striving for ultimate freedom all by itself creates a 'ripple-effect', a surge of inspiration, awakening others far outside the circle we know now.

And this is even more pronounced in those conscious of their Grand Self.

So be aware of this momentum, which feeds back and reinforces your personal thrust again.

People we inspire - directly or indirectly, voluntarily or involuntarily - channel back energy to our inspiration, augmenting our speed of growth, perpetuating its driving force, - until a great many progress towards this goal, - some walking in front of us, many alongside, and more and more becoming awake and starting. -

A grand purpose well worth pursuing.

• **Connecting To The Grand Self**

I first hesitated to write this section because there seemed no direct way, no particular action, no instrumental thing we may do to trigger insight into the Grand Self -

'And even if we seek throughout all the material worlds, - the Exalted, Pure Awareness cannot be found except in our mind.

Who does not know this and seeks the Self outside his mind won't find it there.'

Padma-Sambhava

- The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation -

- *'... except in our mind'* - And yes, I'm certainly aware that Padma-Sambhava declares mind to be the very tool for achieving this grand insight. - But unfortunately he left no tangible instructions how to employ mind for this specific purpose.

Then - while scanning The Upanishads - I stumbled upon numerous instructions and references how to establish direct, intense contact with our Grand Self exactly through meditation.

It took a while to find the cause for this odd discrepancy between both scriptures: -

During ancient upanishadic times access to the Grand Self was evidently fairly widespread, and meditation was used as an effective tool for intensifying that highest perception. This is what the twelve oldest of these scriptures strongly convey.

Yet as the centuries passed, this knowledge must have deteriorated until the existence of the Grand Self was still somewhat remembered, but the actual way to open these portals, the very methods to contact and interact with the Self, had fallen into oblivion.

Thus when *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* was written - roughly 1500 years later - the author could not present a workable process any more by which to gain access to this precious insight.

Sure, - Padma-Sambhava perceived his Grand Self, - yet he probably did not attain this prized connection by any kind of method, but far more likely through personal intuition or by chance.

Spontaneous Breakthroughs

Quite a number of people seemed to have reached this grand perception in a similar fashion. During the past two millennia numerous reports surfaced that document such 'miraculous' insights in many cultures and all over the world.

An analogy may illustrate the mechanism behind such sudden, unpremeditated expansion: - Picture awareness to

be a cloud-covered sky. Erroneous ideas, preconceptions, limiting desires and fears basically make up the clouds that pretty persistently prevent us from perceiving the prime energy of our current existence.

Yet once in a while the clouds part briefly and we take in the radiant presence of the sun. This brilliant sight impresses us profoundly. Though we don't know what actually removed the clouds and cannot replicate this riveting experience, our life changes fundamentally.

This being the case - it nevertheless is quite probable that the great majority of these spontaneous, natural breakthroughs went unreported because those special individuals were unwilling to communicate their insights. Quite possibly they could not relate to or explain what they perceived because their current model of the world did not allow for such widened perception, - or they were scared of their novel experience, - or feared repercussions and isolation within their social environment, - or interpreted and expressed it only in terms of the religious framework they were familiar with, - or may simply have been unable to write.

The kaleidoscopic flavors of the reports that reached our time speak of the many different intuitive routes by which those select beings became aware of their Grand Self.

Some of these spontaneous insights sparked off crusade-like fervors and even widespread movements to propagate this special perception. Yet this was always short-lived. Once the initial inspired individuals passed on, or got suppressed by the prevailing hierarchy of power,

their inspiration and movement usually died with them - often without leaving much of a trace.

The highly transitory nature of such campaigns is basically caused by their persistent lack of relevant, sound instructions how to methodically shift focus to that highest state. Once the 'surge-effect' - that charged exhilaration the initiators of these movements always emit - is gone, subsequent followers lack any reliable way to also reach this grand perception, and then one or two generations later the originators' inspiration is forgotten.

Had Padma-Sambhava known any method that truly worked, he surely would have described it in *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*.

To locate such instructions, we thus need to retrace the trail back to an era where this knowledge was still alive and very much in use.

An Ancient Pathway to Unknown Regions of Our Mind

The Upanishads describe a type of meditation that - in all probability - might primarily be destined for those already aware of their Grand Self.

So if we perceive this grand presence within us, - and even if we experienced it only once during first insight, - then that ancient type of meditation easily connects us to the Self. We simply know where to look, know intimately how our Grand Self feels. We only need to reawaken awareness of this subtle presence within us.

And as we bring the Self's broadened vision and sweeping comprehension to the forefront of our awareness, we then can start to explore, deepen and to engage this intricate power for our current layer of manifestation.

But even if we do not perceive our Grand Self yet, this ancient way of meditating may work for us as well. As Padma-Sambhava wrote -

'... we nevertheless should not forego meditation; - for when we meditatively experience the Great Awareness's quiescence unmodified in our mind, the clarity of non-created Wisdom instantly shines forth as the result.'

But be aware that you are entering uncharted territory. The Upanishads' instructions are certainly for those 'sitting close' to *Brahman* - close to their Grand Self. The ancient scriptures offer no specific method or technique to reach this special insight in the first place, - as also *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* does not present any such practice.

So understand that you are experimenting, and that you might encounter obstacles: -

As long as our awareness is still deeply mesmerized by the thrills and trappings of the physical world, we tend to focus pretty exclusively onto the two (lower) layers of senses and mind. We do not really want to alter our perception or the way we interact with the world around us (yet). And this very unwillingness to - even temporarily - question the fascination these regions extend on us, in effect disables all 'spiritual tools' at our disposal.

The emotional energy and the intent we put behind our (meditative) efforts is the major force that really effects changes. Thus - if we carry such reluctance deep within us, if we hang on to subliminal attachment to the layers we are familiar with, this simply cancels out the power of any technique we may practice. We might outwardly profess to the intention to expand, but inwardly our restrictive emotional disposition thoroughly prevents us from generating sufficient power to truly shift focus to a more advanced level.

Thus we need to become clear about the objectives we indeed carry within, and what themes we absolutely still want to experience within a material context, - before we go for truly widening our awareness beyond the range of matter.

Another factor may also hamper our efforts: - What we expect of our meditation and our very ideas how it 'should' work (but actually doesn't) may easily influence and limit what we experience as outcome.

So be aware that - to really perceive the dimensions beyond the two low layers - you need to enter uncharted territory, - you need to progress beyond the cocoon of attachment to 'the familiar' that overwhelms senses and mind on both these layers.

Selecting a System of Meditation

Meditation requires re-allocation of one of the most precious resources we have in our present circumstances, and that's our time. Since its practice involves a sizable chunk

of this asset, it would be well worth to check in advance whether a technique we want to use does actually produce results.

Judging the effectiveness of 'spiritual' systems, methods, practices or beliefs is easy. Simply look at the people propagating or 'selling' such techniques, and you'll intuitively sense how far these protagonists have come. Direct attention to what they radiate after their many years of practice, - whether unrestricted expansion is the true theme of their life, or just money-making, or self-aggrandization, or making you adhere to a restrictive way of life.

Tune in if they are aware of their Grand Self, - i.e. if they truly know what they are doing.

If the energy-makeup and insight of the teacher(s) does not genuinely impress you, then wisely evaluate if you really want to invest similar time, energy and money into such exercise.

Or bluntly put: - If after 20 years of practice the teacher looks dull and formal and not anywhere near perceiving advanced layers, then you may safely assume that you - after spending two decades of exercising this technique - might have 'achieved' exactly the same dullness.

Most traditional, or well-known, or socially accepted systems and beliefs are little more than rigid doctrines how meditation or other practices '*should*' work, - but in effect never do. Here one either finds taciturn compliance that it e.g. would be insolent to claim any true breakthrough (as in Buddhism), - or wide-spread 'make-believe'

where the adherents do claim command of higher powers and perception they never actually have (as in most other 'spiritual' organizations).

Choosing a system of meditation or any other method aimed at shifting focus to 'The Subtle' is not a matter of how much money we spend or whom we pay, - or how intensely we believe in a particular technique, - or of sitting at the feet of a charismatic teacher, - or being part of a social group of similarly attuned souls.

Even if a particular system sports masses of followers, most these 'movements' quietly disappear after several years, usually leaving behind a small group of zealous die-hards who resent to admit that their cherished practice doesn't yield lasting results.

So let your own experience be your key guide.

Get familiar with the mechanisms of your practice to be and then sincerely try it out. If it doesn't yield tangible results within a reasonable period, then forget about it and test the method next in line.

Yet if a particular technique makes you truly break through to the regions beyond senses and mind, - if you are thrilled and ever more enthusiastic for further and higher insight and clarity, - then it's worth pursuing what you are doing to further depths.

Now, - the instructions on meditation found in the Upanishads are vastly different from our present-day ideas how meditation should work, the techniques cur-

rently en vogue, and the results their practice is supposed to generate.

Actually the upanishadic ways of meditating may disagree so fundamentally with all you've learned and are used to think about meditation that it may easily irritate you.

But bear with me, - becoming familiar with this new (but actually very ancient) approach spotlights all modern techniques from a remote and exclusive perspective. It allows you to evaluate your expectations, your techniques' scope and claims, and the results you were promised to reach through them in an entirely new light.

And it hands you a powerful tool to access layers beyond your present focus.

The Core Instruction

**What we think, that we become,
- this is the eternal mystery.**

Maitri Upanishad VI.34

Life is where our attention is. - Whatever event, subject, emotion or thought our attention is drawn towards, that is what the spotlight of our focus illuminates. Within this focus we act, react, interact, think, feel and communicate. This is the stage where our life takes place.

During normal days we usually direct our attention towards limited objectives, - to complete a job, to get together with the person(s) we love, to attend to our body's needs etc., - or we drift along random events and

themes our environment, intuition or instinct present us. Our typical day is a mixture of both these facets.

Yet the mechanism behind this is simple: - wherever our attention is aimed, that part of our environment becomes lively, immediate, dynamic, gets energy, becomes our life.

Now, - as easily as we channel attention towards limited objectives, as easily are we able to direct our focus towards yet unknown regions of our awareness, - to enliven these hidden parts of ourselves and bring them to the forefront of our attention.

And in exactly the same way can we also apply that very mechanism to contact and interact with our Grand Self.

Meditation is basically the intentional directing of our thoughts towards those parts of our being we want to enliven.

Once we decide to direct our thoughts as intensely towards our Grand Self as we now direct them towards the objects of this world, - then nothing will ever stop us from breaking free of all restrictions.

Maitri Upanishad VI.34

How To Direct Attention

This is the part where The Upanishads unfortunately are not very forthcoming. Though the scriptures provide sufficient details where to direct our focus and even spread

out an intriguing overall picture of the dimensions we'd be entering and interacting with, the very mechanism exactly how to do this focusing is missing. Such information must have been regarded as so natural, so commonplace during the ancient days that nobody ever bothered to actually note down these basic directives.

Yet - the cavalry to the rescue - there exists another body of scriptures of almost identical antiquity which provides exactly this missing link: - The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

The Yoga Sutras present deep insight into intricate layers of meditation, coupled with practical instructions essential for utilizing the directives The Upanishads provide. Thus we'll branch out briefly to this other ancient text.

After the excursion we'll return to The Upanishads.

This section presents two select parts of *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* which offer insight how meditation works.

Most experts agree that the scripture is a collection of texts probably written during 300+ years from ca. 200BC onwards. Patanjali is named the author associated with this scripture, yet he most likely just condensed separate texts into one single work.

My translation takes into account the differences in expression between the period the Sutras were written in and our present time.

It brings to light the Yoga Sutras' focus on practical instruction.

Since it declines to interpret the work as a mainly philosophical text, it is regarded as controversial by scholars.

Yet the translation is true to the original.

**The
Yoga Sutras
of
Patanjali**

Book I - Sutras 42 to 51

Book III - Sutras 1 to 5

A Brief Excursion Into Archaic Yoga

Yoga is widely seen as a system of gentle Indian exercises aimed at balancing body and mind. Yet these exercises are only a minute part of an ancient scripture that carries far more powerful instructions.

The current, almost exclusive focus on '*yoga postures*' originates in one single element (*asana*) within this work that describes how to position the body in preparation for meditation. The exercises associated with this element mushroomed into the concept of Yoga we presently are familiar with in the West.

The entire rest - and that's quite a lot - is almost completely unknown.

An Ancient Manual of Meditation

The Yoga Sutras are thought to contain one of the six classical systems of Hinduistic philosophy.

Yet as one starts reading, the work looks more like a handbook for a training session than a philosophical treatise: - The sutras present copious practical directives how meditation works and how to prepare the ground for optimal results.

And the directives are of such clarity that it's just a matter of actually trying out the instructions, - without the need for outside guidance.

What About A Guru ?

Meditation as we know it today is mainly used for reducing tensions and bringing calmness to people stressed by their jobs or by life in general. Such relaxation-techniques are fairly easy to learn and mostly taught in a non-esoteric, down-to-earth way.

Yet meditation aimed at inner expansion is somewhat shrouded in inscrutability, with the taciturn presumption that - if received by mystic, secret instruction from a guru connected to the supernatural - it would be more effective.

But the very secrecy surrounding such instructions is actually indication of a major problem.

Secrecy is always installed to hide the fact that there's no real knowledge, - that the magic teacher, the lead guy doesn't have a clue, - or that there's an even more sinister agenda.

Sure, sure, - he or she is highly charismatic, looking sacred and radiating tangible mystery. But then, - if the guru has true insight, - why does he set up artificial barriers - *secrecy* - in the process of gaining insight.

What knowledge we have access to depends only on how much we open ourselves to the infinite source of wisdom existing readily within each one of us.

We cannot comprehend knowledge that is still blocked by prejudices, misconceptions or erroneous beliefs we maintain, - even if our ears hear detailed descriptions of it.

Access to higher knowledge thus depends entirely on how much energy we ourselves invest into removing these - our very own - individual obstructions (pride, rigidity etc.).

And thus the genuine comprehension and widened awareness we experience after we neutralized our inner blockages is always the outcome of our very own efforts and intentions.

This inner widening can never be controlled by giving or withholding any formal information.

Attachment to a guru, a particular technique, a hierarchy of secrets, or a social group surrounding these three is just another obstacle in the expansion into wider freedom, - an additional obstacle we absolutely need to remove before we can progress further.

It pays to be aware of such 'secrecy mechanisms' not to get trapped in any pointless, subconscious manipulation in the first place.

Meditation of the ancient, upanishadic kind is neither mystic nor complicated. We only expand abilities we already employ and are familiar with, and thus do not require outside guidance. We just need to become more aware of these mechanisms and find out how to steer them towards wider sight.

Questions that may arise during practice are answered by individuals progressing along the same path, who solved such issues by their own experience. The community of these individuals can be contacted on the internet (see '*What to do ... ?*' at the end of this book).

The title '*Yoga Sutras*' essentially means: -

**The aphorisms
on how to connect our present existence
to The Origin**

Yet I prefer to name these select passages according to their content -

Perception of the Grand Self through Meditation

(Sutra 42 - Yoga Sutras - Book I)

Meditation that employs sounds (mantras), meanings, (mental) images of objects or emotional themes, attaches us to further material experiences.

This sutra alerts us to the consequences of visualizing - meditating on - limiting themes.

Meditation of such type directs our focus - however subtly - towards further encounters within the realm of matter - and thus prevents us from real expansion.

Sounds (mantras), meanings, images of material objects and emotional themes are firm parts of our present manifested reality. Visualizing such limited objectives and channelling energy towards them - as it happens during meditation, - attaches our desires (or dreads) to exactly the limited realm to which they belong. This attachment

re-enforces the bond between us and our current material environment and thus causes further (continued) involvement of our awareness in physical reality.

As the sutra mentions - using mantras (sounds) during meditation also restricts expansion. Since mantras are the mainstay of many contemporary systems of meditation, a section further down deals with the range within which mantras can have effects, what kind of results they may produce and the limits of their usage.

But there are other ways to meditate:

(Sutra 43)

Yet there exists a type of meditation that does not generate attachment to further material experiences.

If we - during meditation - detach our self (our identity, - i.e. what we regard as I) more and more from memories of our physical existence, we reach a state in which no petty thoughts or emotions disturb the widening of our focus towards illuminating (higher) perception.

Initially this state manifests as a mere vague notion, as an exquisite subtleness we feel inside as we proceed in this direction.

(The second passage selected of the Yoga Sutras describes in detail how to bring about this subtlety - page 195.)

(Sutra 44)

From this (initial sensation) arises a more conscious and determined exploration of our new perception, - which consequently leads us to even higher, subtler insight.

These (two) types of meditation - which do or do not generate attachment to further material experiences - are essentially distinguished (characterized) by the subtleness of our focus during the process.

The key is to direct our innermost thoughts and emotions towards ever subtler perception beyond the images and memories of our material existence. This makes us systematically progress towards higher sight.

(Sutra 45)

The focus on ever subtler aspects of what we think and feel ends (culminates) in the perception of the unmanifested.

The unmanifested is a kind of cloud that surrounds the physical sphere we currently focus on. It contains cravings (and dreads) that will manifest in our future, and which we have not yet encountered.

While presenting The Grand Self I named this layer of yet unexpressed, yet unmanifested longings - '*desire-structure*' (page 114).

As our perception expands beyond the realm of senses and mind, we begin to recognize this structure of unmanifested desires as a vast domain containing sublime and highly powerful structures which are in a state of constant fluidity and filled with explorative energy.

Once we apprehend the desire-structure in its entirety, we realize that it is finite, - that all variety and fluctuation we may experience within our current manifested reality - all we think, feel and do - is contained, is enclosed within this structure.

Yet we also notice that our awareness doesn't end there. What ends at the structure's boundary is (merely) that part of our consciousness we focus onto and express within material reality.

(Sutra 46)

As long as our focus (during meditation and outside of meditation) remains within the limits of the unmanifested (within the boundary of the desire-structure), we are unable to progress beyond.

To truly perceive the grandeur of unrestricted awareness, we need to break from the bounds of the desire-structure. Only beyond this 'cloud of limited desires and dreads' do we begin to discern the true unlimited majesty of our consciousness. Experiencing this widening of our perspective feeds back vast energy to our being.

(Sutra 47)

Once we progress beyond the unmanifested (once we leave our attachment to material objects and memories of them behind), - the purer our cognition becomes, - the clearer are we able to discern the higher sphere, - the more intense grows our perception of and orientation towards the 'Grand Self' - (called) *adyatma* (in the Yoga Sutras).

(Sutra 48)

This (increasing purity) makes us experience a special state - *ritambhara* (lit.: 'the impact of truth') - in which we recognize the true nature of reality (the Grand Self - *adyatma*) and its incessant flow towards expansion.

The experience of *ritambhara* - 'the impact of truth' restores - re-establishes - our conscious connection to this eternal expansive current.

Ritambhara is actually the shift of our awareness onto the layer of truth.

Above the mind is truth (is recognition of truth).

Katha Upanishad II.3.7-8

- page 112 onwards -

We experience this special state as a kind of 'space' where no limiting thoughts, desires or dreads disturb us.

Ritambhara initially feels like a fragile equilibrium in which we simply are, - where our senses and mind cease to

feed impulses (of physical origin) to our awareness, - yet which contains a lively alertness that far surpasses any sense-perception or mundane thought.

This state is highly powerful, and what we visualize while experiencing it has sufficient power to manifest in our life.

(Sutra 49)

This special experience is so obviously different from anything we ever felt before that we can easily distinguish it from any knowledge gained through e.g. scriptures, verbal instruction or reasoning.

(Sutra 50)

Through this experience all bonds that currently connect us (our awareness) to our (limited) material existence, and also all our latent desires and fears that are not currently manifested, become dissolved (neutralized).

(Sutra 51)

And once even this (process of) dissolution ceases, our restrictive, intense and exclusive focus on matter-related objects and meanings (which currently severely limits our perception) ends.

This enables us to take in (perceive) that (vast universe) existing *beyond* all material objects.

Here ends the first book of the Yoga Sutras, -

- presenting the fundamental mechanics of meditation and how to progress and expand our awareness beyond our present sphere of physical manifestation.

And Even Deeper Instructions

Yet Book III of the Yoga Sutras offers even more advanced instructions: -

Three factors need to come together to achieve real and ultimate results in meditation:

- 1 Aiming thoughts (and emotions) into one exclusive direction is '*alignment*'.
(Sanskrit: '*dharana*').
- 2 While being immersed in that state of '*alignment*', - i.e. while (one-pointed and purposely) directing our thoughts (and emotions), - the continued flow of our thoughts is '*meditation*'.
(Sanskrit: '*dhyana*').
- 3 When the object (or theme) onto which this '*meditation*' is directed, shines forth in our mind exclusively and undisturbed by any other thought, - taking over our entire attention to the point where we (virtually) 'merge' with the object, - this state is called '*absorption*'.
(Sanskrit: '*samadhi*').

4 Fixing these three components

- '*alignment (of thoughts and emotions)*'
- '*meditation*' and
- '*absorption*'

simultaneously onto one object
is called '*steering (of mind)*'
(Sanskrit: '*samyama*').

5 Once we mastered this, the light of knowledge dawns on us.

Yoga Sutras - Book III, 1-5

Alignment - *dharana*

Alignment of thoughts and emotions - as these sutras portray it - is different from what we normally do when 'concentrating on something'.

Concentration - as we know it in daily life - usually involves effort to keep our focus trained on the chosen subject. Yet effort of such kind thoroughly prevents the rising of *ritambara*, - prevents us from experiencing '*the impact of truth*' (described above in Sutra 48 - Book I of the Yoga Sutras).

Effort would also fundamentally disrupt our perception once we experience that precious yet fragile state of immersion into the layer of truth.

When we concentrate, we direct energy onto one particular point of our reality. In stark contrast to that the '*alignment of thought*' as described in the sutra, does not bundle our focus, but lets it rest easily on the selected

theme in our mind, allowing it to naturally expand to deeper, unknown aspects and features of the subject. It is a kind of accepting, of assimilating, of smoothly integrating into our awareness that what exists at the fringe of our focus, - a kind of 'peripheral vision' of the edge of what the spotlight of our attention illuminates.

Meditation - *dhyana*

Meditation is the continuous alignment of our thoughts and emotions.

To bring about this continuity we need to coach our awareness to stay trained on the object or theme we selected. And this means to choose - at one point or the other during meditation - to let go thoughts unrelated to what our focus rests on.

Yet this choice is effortless and easy. We do not fight unwanted thoughts, but rather give preference to the theme we chose.

The exhilarating subtleness of what we perceive in this expanding state of our awareness, the delicate, yet highly stimulating energy flowing from the layer of truth into our being, the ever deeper aspects and layers we detect in our chosen object attract us far more than allowing our thoughts to drift to other subjects.

That flow of exhilarating energy strengthens our foothold on the layer of truth. Initially our moments of insight may be short, but as we repeat our practice, they become clearer and more stable.

This is not some kind of 'training our perception' as we would exercise in a fitness studio, but more an unhurried,

non-strenuous repetition of the experience, - to simply get used to it, - to acquaint ourselves with how this yet unknown feature of our awareness feels like, - and to effortlessly discover ever new depths and attraction within it.

It may require different amounts of time for each individual to stabilize this delicate state. Perseverance certainly helps. After a while you then become able to summon this subtleness at will during meditation, - and tap its power for your life.

How to deal with disruptions

If unrelated thoughts start to disturb the practice, it helps to affirm that you decided to explore one select theme through meditation. So simply stay with this decision during the time you allocated to meditation and steer your focus back to the subject you originally chose.

And if irritating thoughts persistently keep interrupting meditation, it almost always is not the content of our thoughts, but the strong emotions associated with the intruding theme that fuels the disruption.

If we now pit '*the strength of our mind*' against '*the power of our emotions*' in a kind of heads-on battle, we won't succeed. Trying to '*meditate away*' the strong intrusion also doesn't work. Since the disturbance originates on a 'lower' layer (senses, mind), such 'battle' makes us focus on exactly that lower level, and thus effectively stops us from regaining perception of the 'higher' and far subtler layer of truth.

So simply stop what you are doing and allow your attention to be drawn to the physical sensation that always accompanies such intense emotional flare-ups. The physical sensation usually manifests as a kind of 'raw' feeling in the solar plexus region, but may turn up in other areas of the body as well.

Now let your attention rest lightly on this physical sensation of 'rawness', - and only minutes later the emotional storm will have diminished to a point that you may continue with your meditation. Once (new) thoughts (unrelated to the intense earlier emotions) start rising within you, simply give preference again to the particular theme you want to meditate on.

It also helps to deal with the upsetting subject outside of and before meditation to neutralize strong emotions that may accompany a particular theme ahead of time.

'Let's bring our life (our house) in order, so calmness may enter it and we perceive more of our union with the Grand.'

- The Gospel of Truth (18) -

Absorption - *samadhi*

In our times *samadhi* often gets equated with 'enlightenment'. But there actually are several kinds of *samadhi*-experiences which reach into successively higher layers of perception and differ substantially from each other.

[In its highest form - *nirvikalpa samadhi* - awareness merges completely with the Grand Self, while in *savikalpa*

samadhi there still exist differences between *Brahman* and the experiencer.

Other types of *samadhi* are influenced by the emotional intensity and inner motivation in which meditation is pursued.]

Samadhi as defined in this part of the Yoga Sutras we experience when - during meditation - we enter a state of deep absorption into the theme we select to focus on -

'... taking over our entire attention to the point where we (virtually) 'merge' with the object'

This does not mean to become 'enlightened' or to lose ourselves in something so much bigger than we are, - but to simply extend our awareness to intentionally integrate this particular object or theme into our being.

After some practice such absorption becomes deeper so that the subject we chose to meditatively 'visualize' is experienced in vivid detail in our awareness. We then are able to distinguish far more and subtler details of the theme than in the waking state.

It's easy to recognize whether we have entered such deep absorption: - Experiencing this depth during meditation is highly energizing, we feel remote from the hustle-bustle of daily life and all our 'normal' ideas how this world functions, and are infused with feelings of fascination and enthusiasm that stay with us even after we left our state of immersion.

Outside of meditation there's growing clarity of mind and comprehension, a more sovereign vision of our life's objectives, intenser and more satisfying emotions, a sense

of deeper purpose and many other benefits that cannot all be listed here.

Deep absorption - *samadhi* - of this kind may or may not be accompanied by a vibrant inner (3D) image of what we meditate on.

Ultimately *samadhi* means to meditate in such fashion on our Grand Self, to thus widen our focus to the true majesty of our awareness. This special approach to meditation is explained once we return to The Upanishads.

Steering (of mind) - *samyama*

Bringing together these three components is called '*steering*' or '*controlling*'.

Yet this is not limited to meditation exclusively. In time *samyama* extends to conscious steering of all our existence within physical boundaries - and outside of it.

And one brief word of advise: - Take your time to establish solid recognition of the state of *ritambhara* - '*the impact of truth*'. Find out first how this new feature of your awareness feels like, - instead of projecting limiting expectations onto it before you perceive it steadily. Be aware that you are activating a subtle mechanism of your consciousness that has no equivalent in the material world you currently experience.

The Light of Knowledge - *prajna*

Darkness is a feature of the desire-structure that does not reach beyond its bounds. Once our awareness awakens

to the dimensions outside this limited sphere, it there discovers an irresistible bluish shine extending in ever-increasing subtlety into its far horizons.

There's infinite fulfillment in moving further and deeper into the heart of everything we ever had desired, unveiling an inner, brilliant clarity we now know we never really lost.

'... so that you - children of understanding - know that above (in the Sublime) day never becomes night, - that there is light that never goes out and which is perfect.'

- The Gospel of Truth (26) -

What we perceive while in this state offers us deepest understanding of why we really are experiencing our present material existence. And this abundant insight hands us an unerring compass to find our way out of the labyrinthine mazes physical life confronts us with.

Thus the Yoga Sutras tell us how to utilize mind for expansion.

What kind of content to visualize during meditation for reaching this highest perception The Upanishads present in great detail and clarity. -

The Upanishads

- continued -

As the Yoga Sutras opened insight into the mechanism of meditation, we now need to find out where exactly to direct our thoughts, - what images, what themes to project and maintain during meditation so our awareness connects to perception beyond our current range.

And if we want real expansion in our life - and not just play with yet another technique, - we'd also like to know exactly where we are going, once changes in our life truly start.

Fortunately, in this regard The Upanishads are very thorough. They cover the full range of directions into which we may move during meditation, - and also what kind of effects we experience in our life as the result of our choice of direction.

Four Channels

While meditating - no matter what method - we essentially proceed into one of four directions. Each of these 'meditation-channels' generates results that are worlds apart from those of the other three channels.

Into which one of these four directions we move we ourselves determine by the very theme we project while being immersed in the meditative state, and - even more important - by the intent and the emotional intensity we put behind these projections or 'visualizations' to energize them.

And our choice of direction not only influences what we experience during meditation, it also shapes our life in general, - which is why we meditate in the first place.

There exist four fundamental types of meditation: -

- **constructive meditation**
- pursuing non-egoistic, 'virtuous' objectives
- **destructive meditation**
- pursuing cruel or violent intentions
- **desire-driven meditation**
- pursuing ego-centered, selfish goals
- **irrevocable meditation**
- pursuing liberation (total perception of the Grand Self) ...

Subala Upanishad - XI.1

The first three types of meditation channel our focus towards limited objectives within the framework of our

current material existence. Proceeding into these directions keeps our attention - and consequently what we experience in physical life - within the limits of the desire-structure.

Thus the first three channels are not suited for reaching liberation or for fully perceiving the Grand Self in its original, magnificent state.

The fourth channel - *irrevocable meditation* - leads beyond the boundaries of the desire-structure. It shifts our focus fully onto the Grand Self, raising our awareness above our current fascination with restrictive ideas and emotions. The fourth channel is the very key to liberation.

Since we'd be well advised to know where we are going in a new venture, let's look at the characteristics of these four channels in detail: -

Constructive meditation

- pursuing non-egoistic, 'virtuous' intentions

To pursue *constructive meditation* we essentially align our awareness towards non-egoistic themes.

These themes may be altruistic in character or simply focus on our personal expansion, e.g. on visualizations that expand our awareness.

I put '*virtuous*' intentions in quotes because different societies interpret this term in distinctly different ways. Yet irrespective of such diverse readings we enter this channel when we - during meditation and outside of it - focus onto non-egoistic themes of growth that neither obstruct nor hurt other beings.

This does not mean to help everyone at all times, or spending our time solely in the service of others.

It means to assist others in experiencing their particular themes of life. - And this - at times - may even require not to extend a helping hand, but rather to enable that person to master his challenges on his own, thus stimulating his or her own strength and confidence.

Pursuing this meditation-channel does not directly trigger perception of our Grand Self, yet it prepares the ground for breaking out of the cocoon of restrictive (matter-oriented) desires and dreads that surrounds us on the physical level.

And here is why: - *Constructive meditation* moves our focus beyond selfish goals, thus making us aware of the huge network of interconnectedness between us, our environment and all entities also pursuing growth within this manifested world. It awakens consideration for the needs of others, which consequently expands our cooperation and assistance, - extending as well as receiving it.

And exactly this highly successfully neutralizes the distortion the egoistic pursuit of limited and limiting goals always creates within the flow of energies of this - our very own - material manifestation.

Once we recognize the entire physical world as 'our own' creation, we have no more need to (over)emphasize one particular part of it. We begin to see it in its entirety. We begin to see that WE ARE ALL we perceive, - that everything surrounding us, and all we feel within us, somehow relates to what we truly are, what we truly want to experience, to explore, to learn, to understand. And

this comprehensive insight effectively prepares the ground for us to break through to the huge world beyond the limits of the desire-structure.

Destructive meditation

- pursuing cruel or violent intentions

Destructive meditation is the aligning of awareness towards hurting other beings, - or towards harming ourselves in any way.

This means delight in throwing anger or rage onto other beings and enjoying their frightened and confused reaction; - or to feel glee at the success of any deception or manipulation, - or to enjoy taking or having taken from others what they did not freely give, - or taking pleasure in dominating others, restricting their freedom, - or in inflicting pain.

Destructive meditation leads those who project such thoughts or emotions during meditation (and outside of it) to an environment populated by beings with similar intent and action.

And this manifests in exactly the same way as all else we intensely focus emotions and thoughts on becomes enlivened, becomes our reality.

Desire-driven meditation

- pursuing ego-centered, selfish goals

Desire-driven meditation is the aligning of our awareness towards attaining pleasurable objects or interacting with persons we presently feel separated from, - or towards unpleasant objects or persons we want to disconnect

from, - or towards being free of any unpleasant situation we personally experience, - or being overanxious to enjoy objects we may not obtain in our present life, - or to have contact with persons currently not interested in us.

Desire-driven meditation simply leads to further encounters within the world of (physical) manifestations. The strength of our emotions and thoughts during such projections and visualizations determines how deeply we anchor our desires - and thus our awareness - within the world we focus on, - and how intensely we then experience this world of focus as a result.

Irrevocable meditation

- pursuing liberation (and total perception of our Grand Self)

Irrevocable meditation is the actual key to extract our awareness from the limits of this manifested, physical environment.

This does not mean to leave our body behind (to let it die), but to shift focus to the far wider dimensions we always carry within, and which we never really lose.

The Upanishad calls this channel '*meditation of no return*' since it triggers changes within us that cannot be reversed: - Having perceived our Grand Self, our true fantastic origin in all its splendor, majesty and power, we simply are unable to diminish the scope of our awareness back to our previous 'small' self once we return focus to physical reality. After such splendid insight, the limits of our material environment prove far too confining for what we now know we really are.

Irrevocable meditation is not something we enter spontaneously. It takes intention and preparation to make this forth channel work.

And we build up to it not only by meditating. Our progress in this direction significantly depends on how we behave with ourselves outside of meditation.

To prepare our awareness for breaking out of the cocoon of restrictive (material) desires and dreads, The Upanishads recommend to choose non-egoistic, expansive intentions as described in *constructive meditation* for the conduct of our life.

The section '*Meditating Directly on the Grand Self*' explains in greater detail how to approach *irrevocable meditation* and make it work (page 238).

The Scope of Contemporary Systems

Now, if you are practicing one of the contemporary techniques employing the '*natural flow of thoughts and mantras*' or any similar method, you might begin to feel concern whether negative thoughts and feelings arising within you during the exercise may not propel you into directions you do not want to experience.

But don't worry, meditation as Upanishads and Yoga Sutras define it, is the conscious, intentional steering of thought into one deliberate, carefully selected direction. And this is worlds apart from what most modern systems are doing. What you most likely are practicing is a kind of induced drifting of your thoughts and emotions, allowing them to proceed into any which way they want to move.

Since I practiced such techniques for extended periods, I certainly know of their relaxing effects and the greater tolerance for stress and tensions they induce.

Yet though this might be called meditation, it really is *not*. They are relaxation techniques which can serve as precursors to effective meditation as the Yoga Sutras depict it, but all by itself their practice is unable to bring about sustained insight into more advanced layers of this reality, let alone perception beyond it.

Thoughts or emotions arising during such drifting do *not* have the strength to deeply change our existence and perception into something entirely different, - but then you know this from your own experience.

Many techniques of such trendy type employ mantras whose meanings are unknown or kept secret, and whose inner workings never really are explained.

Since we are going to use one specific mantra during upanishadic meditation, here a brief - non-mystic - introduction to what these enchanted words are all about.

The Mysterious Mantras

Most people imagine mantras to be some kind of mystic word, an elite verbal sound endowed with secret, magic powers which somehow affect physical reality - if one only pronounces it correctly and - of course - knows the right word for the desired task.

So we use mantras for meditation, recitation, chanting, ceremonies and other purposes, - all without the slightest

clue what they mean, what effect they really set off behind the scene and only a vague idea how to apply them.

So far, so good, - except that all this doesn't produce much of a result.

Sure, we feel relaxed after a session of such hazy drifting, but that sort of effect may easily be produced by any word we'd be comfortable with.

This being the general situation, here's how mantras really work: -

Phone Numbers

Let's take an analogy easily understood in our electronic times: - Mantras are like telephone-numbers. By dialing a number (i.e. applying a mantra in a prescribed way) we reach and activate a precisely defined inner function of the desire-structure.

The ancient Indian sages personified these functions, associating them with subtle beings possessing delicate powers (Sanskrit: *devas*). So, if you want, equate them with such *devas* if this feels more comfortable and makes the process more easily understood.

Personifying powers and functions is widespread even in our times and extensively used in physics, electronics, medicine, mathematics and other modern sciences. When handling Volt, Ampere, Watt, Tesla, Gauss etc. we in fact use names of actual people somewhat associated with one highly specific function.

Exactly the same happens when we employ mantras - with the only difference that the person in charge of, or

handling the particular function we call, is alive - though on a different level than the one we currently focus on.

Now, - when we call someone on the phone, we usually have a fairly clear idea whom we call, and why we phone him or her. We know that random dialing of numbers, or calling without an actual idea why we do this, won't produce much of a tangible effect.

Similarly, if we want to stimulate, enliven or repair particular features of our life, we need to know exactly whom to address and also what we want to accomplish. To call a plumber when we need a doctor wouldn't do the job.

The same mechanism applies to the effective use of mantras: - we need to know what part, what function of the desire-structure we want to enliven, - and we need to know the exact 'number' - i.e. the name associated with that particular function, or - if you prefer - the being handling it. Only then do we have a real chance of experiencing a tangible effect in our physical life.

Repetition

is believed to play an intricate part in the current use of mantras. Yet this is just a contemporary misconception born of our present (technical and materialistic) fascination with quantity over quality.

In fact, it's entirely sufficient to repeat a mantra only once - if done with adequate inner drive and power, - to trigger the flow of energy. It then produces the effect which no repetition will ever enhance.

Just transfer this mechanism to our present time: - if we want a plumber to come and repair our faucet, it's of no use to phone him 108 times (considered a holy number in India). He either comes and does the job, or he doesn't. And if he doesn't want to do the job, or is unable to do it, it's also of no use to dial his number that many times.

Conference Calls

The subtle functions of the desire-structure are organized in tiered, organic hierarchies, comparable to contemporary corporate administrations, - but with nicer people.

Thus - at first sight - phoning the boss might seem more powerful than negotiating with a low-level employee. Yet more often than not it's the very low-level employee who actually will do the job. So it's a case by case decision which level of functions we want to activate, or - if you like the *deva* version - whom exactly we want to contact.

The ancient Indians developed an intricate technology around this task: - a kind of 'conference-call' to entire groups of functions (or *devas*). This combines effects on multiple levels without the need to address each single function in a separate, rather cumbersome way.

Such 'conference-call-numbers' are called *bija* mantras. They simply use abbreviations of the functions' names - in the same way we use shorthand 'UNO' while meaning 'United Nations Organization' with all its powers.

Which mantra would produce the best result depends first on the individual employing it, and then on the

specific task to be accomplished. To explain though which mantra to use for what function etc., would need a different kind of book.

The Add-on 'Namo' or 'Namah'

Almost all mantras position the word '*namo*' or '*namah*' either before a mantra, or as a kind of 'coda' at its end.

The translation - if it is then supplied - either reads '*I adore ...*' or '*I bow down to ...*' or something alike. Though this is not wrong, it doesn't address the far deeper purpose of this ever-present, seemingly superfluous 'add-on':

'Namo' or *'namah'* corresponds to the English word 'name' in sound as in meaning. When we - out of our own volition - assign a unique name to an individual or object, we basically adopt or integrate this person or object into our very life, - and this only in a positive way.

We never willingly bestow a special, personal name to something or someone we don't like, or regard as negative, or want to get rid of, or dissociate from. For disagreeable subjects we use generic terms like '*that person*' or '*that thing*' or - as heard in recent movies about a young boy studying to become a magician - '*the-one-who-must-not-be-named*'.

So, when using '*namo*' or '*namah*', this actually means to adopt the respective mantra and function (or *deva*) positively into our life.

'Namo' or *'namah'* is not a mantra or even part of one, but it kind of packages our positive intention and energy together with the 'telephone-number'. This positive acceptance and spirit directed towards the subtle function

(or *deva*) is actually the very key which ensures that what we want to accomplish by this exercise will get done, - as we would oblige any person who politely asks us for assistance that's within our power to give.

To use '*namo*' or '*namah*' in a solely formal way, or without knowing what it really means, or without empowering it with the positive emotional 'push' to make work what we intend to achieve, won't do the job.

Of course, - none of this would ever be accepted by contemporary science, - as is the case with so many other crucial features of our life which function beyond material explanation, like intuition, inspiration, love, inner drive, motivation etc. But then science doesn't know, or doesn't want to know about more subtle mechanisms of life in the first place, let alone consider the Grand Self or *Brahman*.

The Limited Scope of Mantras

Since mantras only address functions within the desire-structure, they also only operate and work exclusively within this framework, - none of them leads beyond its borders.

[Formulas like '*aham Brahmasmi*' ('*I am Brahman*') or '*tat tvam asi*' ('*You are all this*') are no mantras, but *mahavakyas* - 'great sayings' - which encapsulate in brief statements essentials of The Upanishads.]

Yet there's a trick. The Upanishads describe how to employ one specific mantra exactly for this 'impossible' task, - and that's the most famous of them all: - the sound '*AUM*' or '*OM*'.

AUM is the lead-in for almost all sequences of mantras. It is mostly defined as '*the cosmic sound*', '*the all-encompassing reality*' or '*the uniting of all energies*', - which is not far from its function as The Upanishads utilize it.

And since we already are into analogies of 'telephone systems', - AUM is like a country code. It's a kind of (humming) sound the desire-structure as a whole emits, just like big cities give out a characteristic clamor of their own.

So - if we employ AUM as The Upanishads describe it, we sort of address the structure as a whole. It is as if we'd be dialing the country code all by itself to call everyone within that number's range, to call that entire nation. And since this won't produce results in a telephone system, that particular analogy clearly reached the end of its usefulness here.

Yet for the desire-structure this works, - making us aware of its entirety, letting us see its limited range, its boundaries. And once awareness of these limits starts to dawn within us, we can encapsulate the structure and all its features - and then move beyond.

And this exactly is what the *Maitri Upanishad* describes as the first theme to visualize during meditation: -

Piercing the Desire-Structure

The body is a bow
the arrow is AUM
the mind is the point
darkness is the target, -
aim at (piercing the) darkness.

Having pierced through what is thus enveloped,
one sees The Grand Self - *Brahman* -
who sparkles like a wheel of fire, of the color
of the sun, full of vigor, beyond darkness,
that which shines in yonder sun, and also
in the moon, in the fire, in the lightning.

Be assured - having seen This Grand Self, one
goes to immortality.

Maitri Upanishad VI.24

The body is a bow

Our body anchors our awareness to this physical reality.
It's our very tool for perceiving and interacting with it.
This is the base, the starting point - like a bow - from
where to propel our focus out to greater dimensions.

The arrow is AUM

Anchored to this foundation now direct attention to
sensing the humming sound of AUM - saturating, repre-
senting the entirety of the physical world.

Once you begin to feel this humming sound within you, expand it outwards until it encompasses all longings (and dreads) surrounding and influencing this physical manifestation. Widen your awareness to take in the desire-structure in its entirety.

And as you encapsulate this comprehensive perception and rally it behind you, - you thus create your very own arrow of dynamic expansion.

The mind is the point

On the tip of this arrow visualize your mind to be its point, - mind being the sharp edge of your awareness, - the essence of our 'story of man', the very specialty we came to explore within this manifestation, the focus of our current existence. So at the point of this arrow position that part of your self you call 'I', - the center of all your perception.

Darkness is the target, - aim at (piercing the) darkness

Darkness only exists within the context of material conditions.

Darkness exists only as long as we keep our awareness bound to longings within material existence.

Thus aim the arrow of AUM - encompassing all the desire-structure - all your desires and dreads, - at its tip the sharp point of your mind, - aim this arrow at piercing that darkness.

'*Piercing the darkness*' stands for: - be aware that outside all material longings there is light.

Thus rise beyond your longings that bind your focus to material existence, to darkness, to smallness, - break through these boundaries.

Expect light to be beyond these limits, - visualize, perceive this light.

It's not with physical eyes you take in this brightness, but rather with the radiant sense of sight at the foundation of your being.

Now pursue this light spreading before you towards its far horizons, - and - as you move deeper into this soft-bluish shine of spacious clarity - its growing subtleness becomes ever more enchanting.

**Having pierced through what is thus enveloped,
one sees The Grand Self - Brahman -**

**who sparkles like a wheel of fire, of the color of
the sun, full of vigor, beyond darkness, ...**

Light that never goes out and is filled with exhilarating, vibrant energy, permeates all consecutive dimensions outside the desire-structure.

What was enveloped in darkness is behind you now. Follow this ever increasing light and radiance as it guides you to ever greater inner clarity.

**Be assured - having seen This Grand Self,
one goes to immortality.**

And this is why it is called *irreversible* meditation, - having gone up once, having seen this brilliant light once, one never comes back the same.

Step-By-Step

How to actually employ these images and visualizations
The Upanishads offer detailed directions: -

(To meditate) select a clean place with a serene undisturbed (pure) atmosphere,

be pure yourself - (in your intention to expand, and in your dealings within this limited manifested world),

be established in (orienting towards) truth, studying the real,

speaking what is real,

contemplating, meditating on the real,

sacrificing (the unreal) for the real - (banning illusions from your life, giving preference to what is real).

Maitri Upanishad - VI.30

After selecting a suitable place for meditation, position your body in an upright position, resting comfortably.

It is not necessary to maintain a special bodily posture during meditation. Such postures are counterproductive to experiencing deeper layers of awareness since they divert substantial energy just to maintaining the pose.

Then close your eyes.

How to Visualize AUM

First meditate on AUM by focusing *on its letters* (by slowly repeating the word in your mind).

Then *without* focusing on its letters.

Finally realize what *the essence of AUM* stands for (encompassing, permeating the desire-structure in its entirety).

Thus rise beyond the distinction of ignorance and knowledge, beyond the world of name and form,

to *become the Grand Self - Brahman.*

Amritabindu Upanishad - 7

Manifest AUM during meditation first by slowly repeating the word in your mind, then focus on its single letters.

Once this becomes familiar, manifest AUM as humming sound, combining the three letters - A - U - M - sounding in parallel, like three notes played in unison on an organ.

Visualize this humming to extend up to the outermost and subtlest edge of the desire-structure.

Then - as your awareness takes in the desire-structure in its entirety, - as you absorb its multicolored, kaleidoscopic contrasts of ignorance and knowledge, of form and name, of ambition and indifference, of love and fear, of boredom and excitement, -

- rise beyond all this to become the Grand Self you really are.

Thoughts Unrelated

Now, - during the first and second phase of visualizing AUM unrelated thoughts may intrude into your meditative state, distracting and deviating your attention towards themes distant to what you want to focus on.

And exactly in this situation the instructions of the Yoga Sutras come in handy: -

If we - during meditation - detach our self (our identity, - i.e. what we regard as I) more and more from memories of our physical existence,

we reach a state, in which no petty thoughts or emotions disturb the widening of our focus towards illuminating (higher) perception.

From this (initial sensation) arises a more conscious and determined exploration of our new perception, - which consequently leads us to ever deeper, subtler insight.

Yoga Sutras - Book I Sutra 43-44

While meditating simply give preference to those thoughts and perceptions that amplify and deepen the subtleness of your focus.

Decide against giving attention and energy to thoughts, images and emotions attached to or stemming from the material world.

Avoid images and thoughts that feel familiar, habitual to you, - this makes your focus break from the circle of your known life.

Once thoughts or emotions arise that dwell on themes you've seen or felt (so many times) before, take this as the signal to leave exactly such impressions behind. Follow instead the faint impulses dawning outside these narrow themes which offer to guide your awareness beyond these limits.

These impulses - or notions - or impressions - or insights - are very faint at first.

Hold onto their subtleness and pursue this to even subtler yet more energetic, more interesting, more invigorating levels - until you feel deep inner serenity unfold within your heart.

Here we reach the place of tranquillity for the mind. ...

And - as fire without fuel becomes extinct in its own place, - in a similar way *thought*, as its activities cease, becomes extinct in its own source.

Maitri Upanishad - VI.34

If we stop fueling thoughts of mundane orientation and longing with our energy, they altogether cease to rise within us after a while, because they simply run out of power to capture our attention.

Then, - in this subtle space where no more latent thought or movement or impression appears to be, - *a new kind of perception rises.*

This (new perception) makes us experience a special state - *ritambhara* ('the impact of truth') - during which we recognize the true nature of reality (the Grand Self) and its incessant flow towards expansion.

This special experience is so obviously different from anything we ever felt before. ...

Through this experience all bonds that currently connect us (our awareness) to our (limited) material existence, and also all our latent desires and fears that are not currently manifested, become dissolved.

And once even this (process of) dissolution ceases, our restrictive, intense and exclusive focus on matter-related objects and meanings ends.

This enables us to perceive that (vast universe) existing *beyond* all material objects.

Yoga Sutras - Book I Sutra 48-51

This sequence of meditation-images pursues the channel of *irrevocable meditation* - the only channel leading towards ultimate freedom.

Yet since in any new venture it's always better to know more than one single approach, the following presents two further ways of visualizing which also are directed towards irrevocable insight. Such alternatives may provide valuable additional orientation on what to actually do.

Breaking the Shells

This image-sequence visualizes *breaking the shells*, the crusts, that currently enclose and limit us, - so that perception of the Imperishable, the Grand Self becomes able to unfold all by itself.

The chain of images guides our focus to progressively fainter, subtler mechanisms of our emotions, thoughts and intentions. Step by step it leads us to rise beyond our current exclusive focus on the world of matter.

The sequence is more complex than the previous one. It lists mechanisms we may feel unfamiliar with at first, but which nonetheless affect us on deeper levels. Getting to know these (new) factors brings the additional benefit of making us aware of previously hidden, subtle features of our life we then become able to steer consciously.

As visualizing begins, - allow each stage to unfold naturally out of the one preceding it, - never strain.

Dwell on each single step until you get a vivid image, or feeling, or notion about the theme of the respective shell. Begin to sense how this particular cover of your awareness manifests within your emotions, in your thoughts, and how it consequently shapes your actions and the direction into which your life progresses.

Take all time necessary to identify these influences in your life as they become increasingly more subtle at each single step. Never rush, never try to reach the ultimate state in a kind of race to get there first before all others. There are no others in this race - as you will come to know as you progress. So take your time to thoroughly

identify the character of all that limits, all that affects you, - and then detach, rise above what is ultimately not your awareness, but just another subtle shell that covers - and confines - it.

And if you forgot which step is next, simply stop visualizing and acquaint yourself with the new one. Then restart the sequence to get into the flow again.

Though it might look complex at first reading, it's not that hard to realize the entire sequence.

And if you drift away to unrelated thoughts during your meditation, gently come back to the original image you've been visualizing.

**(First) break through the (five) outer cover(s)
(that restrict the full scope of your awareness)
- then break through the crown of your head.**

Five covers encase our awareness: -

- our physical body, essentially built up of food
- the function of breathing, movement and vitality
- I-identification (equating our being with our physical body), - causing desires, pleasure, pain, beginning, end and change
- the faculty to gain knowledge from the interaction of our senses and environment, - willpower, - and the ability to steer life.

This shell seems sentient and intelligent, but in reality only appears to be so. It conveys

this impression because it mirrors features of the Grand Self, but its range extends only up to the boundary of the desire-structure.

- the capacity to experience happiness and pleasure within this limited world. - This shell echoes the supreme bliss that's our Grand Self's essential nature. - Yet as long as we focus exclusively on the waking state, this bliss is only partially able to manifest.

Most people identify exclusively with one or more of these limited covers. They think they only are the body they inhabit, - or the emotions they feel, - or the knowledge they command; - or they believe the I, the identity they currently perceive is all they possibly could be, - or they only feel alive when they experience some kind of ecstasy. - Yet in truth these shells only envelop, only conceal that Magnificent, Grand Person we really are inside.

Extend your awareness beyond these outer covers. Extract your focus by recalling that your essence is far greater, far broader than these five shells. Never fight the limits of these shells, - just steer your awareness towards widening your focus.

... then break through the crown of your head.

Rise above identifying with your body, above all its adherence to limited thoughts, emotions and the exclusive focus on 'the small I'. Picture yourself leaving your body in an upward motion through the top of your head.

**Having broken through the crown of your head,
- break through (your attachment to) earth.**

Rise above wanting to experience earth, feeling, standing on it, smelling it, - rise above expecting it to sprout green plants, to extend towards the horizon, to always be the base on which you move and rest.

See this longing as only a small part within the boundless scope of your awareness, - then integrate that part into this unlimited broadness.

**Having broken through earth,
- break through (your attachment to) water.**

Rise above wanting to feel water in form of drinking it, washing and swimming in it, - to experience it in form of rain, lakes, rivers, oceans, waves, surf and any other such manifestation residing as subtle longing in your soul.

**Having broken through water,
- break through (your attachment to) fire.**

Rise above the *sense*-perception of fire, heat and physical light. Shift focus to the perception of inner light and brilliance.

**Having broken through fire,
- break through (your attachment to) air.**

Rise above wanting to feel air, wind and movement.

Having broken through air,

- break through (your attachment to) space.

Rise above wanting to experience your I, your identity, your desires only in the 3D-environment of physical space.

Having broken through space,

- break through (your) mind.

Mind is what we currently explore in our 'Story of Man - narayana', - in this very desire-structure. Yet intellectual 'thinking' and analytic functions are only half the story of our mind's vast abilities.

Intuition is the second half. Intuition opens insight into strata of knowledge intellect and analytical mind are unable to access. Intuition steers far greater parts of life than most people think.

Merge intellect and intuition into one.

Rise above the conviction that analytical mind can explain all, - above the pride in your intellect to provide all answers, - see beyond the indecision, disorientation and wavering that characterizes analytical mind.

Recognize the infinitely wider range merged intellect and intuition can access.

Once you discern this, break from your exclusive focus on this 'unified' mind.

There's no need to 'give up' mind to achieve this, but just to rise beyond your present exclusive,

'single-minded' engagement in it; - to then experience the far vaster, majestic awareness, - in which mind as we now know it in our current material environment, plays only a minor part.

**Having broken through mind,
- break through the subtle elements.**

Rise above the subtle mechanisms that manifest the longings and fears residing yet unexpressed in the desire-structure.

Rise above faint, hardly perceivable hopes and dreads focused on limited themes within this world of matter.

**Having broken through the subtle elements,
- break through the root of the intention
to experience this manifested physical world.**

This means the initial rise of passion directed towards experiencing yourself, your desires, your fears, your intelligence in material form.

This shell manifests within you as wanting to be in action, to move, to feel physical shapes, to touch matter, to hear sound, to take in smells, to see forms, to experience time and its passage, to interact with other beings in this manner, to learn and to intelligently comprehend.

It's this subtlest longing that causes the total immersion of our awareness into the world of matter, - in such captivating fashion that it excludes all other perception.

Thus to proceed further, identify the signs of this subtlest longing within yourself - and then rise above desiring its manifestations.

**Having broken through 'the root of the intention to experience this manifested physical world',
- break through the unmanifested
(go beyond the limits of the desire-structure).**

Picture the (yet) unexpressed longings of the desire-structure as limited, as occupying only a small part of your awareness in its true magnitude and infinite breadth.

Then rise above all these longings and fears that bind your focus to material existence.

**Having broken through the unmanifested (the desire-structure),
- break through the imperishable.**

All desire-structures - and the spheres of action they contain in their center - are finite in their scope, no matter how huge they appear to us while we are immersed in them.

The structures cease once we have learned what we desired to learn from them, and once we sufficiently experienced their character.

Yet all these structures are embedded in an even deeper layer called 'the imperishable', - a layer that stays on indestructibly while within it desire-structures appear and dissolve again.

This stratum of the imperishable is not the Grand Self itself, but its immediate expression that facilitates manifestations in all their multitudes and variations.

Rise above this precursor to perceiving the Grand Self.

**Having broken through the imperishable,
- break through death.**

Rise above any connection to death.

Rise above wanting to experience change, decay and disappearance - for others and for yourself.

Detach from the drama, the void of someone or something missing in your present world of focus, from the intense emotions that accompany the rending of deep attachment.

Rise beyond your attachment to death, -

- then death becomes absorbed by the Supreme.

In the Supreme there neither is existence, - nor non-existence, - nor existence and non-existence.

This is the instruction relating to liberation, - as given by the Veda, as written in the Veda.

Subala Upanishad - XI.1

This sequence of images aims at freeing our awareness from restrictive covers, - not by denying these shells, but

by integrating them into the infinitely wider scope of our
- and their - origin.

We are not rejecting, not negating these covers, but simply rise above their range, - as we rose beyond the rails of our playing pen once we grew out of them. We do not renounce these rails - as they served purpose in their day, - but look upon their existence as an integral part of our progress, as something that helped us try out and exercise activities while being sheltered from outside influences we weren't capable of handling yet.

Similarly here the Great, the Magnificent we want to set free by this exercise provides all shelter, all the (manifested) tools required for realizing our inherent greatness in our own way, in our own time, and out of our own volition, - giving us abundant space to explore all avenues we carry within in form of subtle and not so subtle longings -

- to then leave these railings, these shells behind, - to then widen our focus until we regain awareness of our real strength, our vast creative power, our deep wisdom, our infinite loving compassion. And as we reclaim these abilities we are enriched by what we explored while imposing boundaries on our awareness, - boundaries, we now notice we don't need any more.

**Having broken through the spheres of the sun,
the moon, the fire to the pure being (as you
realize your oneness with the Grand Self),
then - being purified yourself - you now (are
able to) discern the intelligence residing in the**

pure being - in the Grand Self, - immovable,
 immortal, indestructible, enduring, ...
 the ultimate abode, - endowed with passion for
 truth as well as omniscience, - independent, -
 that which stands in its own greatness.

Maitri Upanishad - VI.38

It may take time to reach the highest intensity of this visualization.

And it may be necessary to exercise the sequence until its central power truly manifests.

Master of the Cosmos

Within the Katha Upanishad (II.3.7-8) the Grand Self is called '*Purusha*', which means '*the Supreme Being*' as well as '*the Soul and Original Source of the Universe*'.

And this image - '*Master of the Cosmos*' - is the third selected theme for meditation. The image derives from many parts of the Upanishads that set the Grand Self into a star-studded universe which radiates light from innumerable heavenly bodies.

Picture yourself within a vast universe showing a multitude of stars and planets which are all conscious, and glittering in vibrant, brilliant light.

Picture yourself as part of this universe, having a body made up of these wide-awake stars.

Visualize the outline of your star-body in brilliant light against the dark sky.

Position yourself - your center of perception - in any part of this 'body of stars'.

Picture each of your body's bright pinpoint stars to be your very own cells, each of them sparkling with individual awareness - and radiating intense power.

Realize that you are master of this brilliant body, - that you direct these multitudes of cells and that they await your orders.

Then realize that far wider, far richer dimensions are all around you, abounding with creative energy, - and that these dimensions are yours to shape, to act in and to explore.

And as you sense energy flowing from the Grand Self into your cosmic body, you also send energy to your cells, - lifting their being into multidimensional formation.

Take time to visualize this image in your awareness. As simple as this picture appears to be, as powerful it is.

And if you feel any area of your life or your physical body needs enlivening, use this image to direct energy towards this region.

Signs of Progress

I encountered two distinct experiences that mark the progress of meditation: -

- The first is the sudden (or gradual, but powerful) rolling out of broad, majestic comprehension, - an

experience of deeply satisfying insight wider than ever before, going into depths never entered previously, and accompanied by intense, electrifying sovereignty.

The feeling is highly agreeable. It enables us to see and evaluate the components of our life *outside* of meditation, and also the course our life takes, from a fresh and extensive perspective, - so we may change these factors, - if we only have the courage to transfer this insight into our daily life.

- The second experience arises only after the first one occurred, - either immediately after or at any later time. It is the appearance of an intense bluish-yellow flame in our inner vision. Within this flame other colors are also present, but to a much lesser degree.

The flame engulfs all erroneous concepts, ideas, opinions and preconceptions we still maintain even if on a subtle, almost subconscious level, - and burns them without residue to free us from the hold they ever had on us.

The flame radiates sheer ecstasy and the burning of our flawed ideas is accompanied by feelings of greatest relief.

And here also we have the option of bringing these insights into our daily life to go for the real.

These images may or may not arise within meditation. I record them here, so you are able to identify what you experience once you encounter them.

Length of Time of Meditation

We did not immerse our awareness into this physical world to only meditate. We came here chiefly to experience this world's material character, - to face and interact with our ideas, desires, dreams and fears as they take physical form.

Thus in your visualization aim for a balance between physical activity and meditation.

Experience shows that meditating 15-20 minutes twice a day proves OK for many people. But there's need for careful individual evaluation.

Visualizing any of these three images can be quite vivid, intense, and shake your life. Thus it might be entirely sufficient to project one of these themes for five minutes only, or even less, if their intensity rivets your being and leaves you with more energy than you know how to spend.

There is no race, no additional benefit in meditating longer and more often than others.

And there's a warning sign: -

If you begin to withdraw from physical reality, if you avoid interaction with other people, or with your daily work, or with the material world in general, - if you withdraw into your home and don't want to come out again, - then its high time to substantially reduce the length of your meditation, - or leave it entirely, - for whatever time you need to stabilize again.

Thus observe carefully, - and react to these signs before this starts to interfere with your life.

Otherwise the experience is entirely yours to shape, - what depths to venture into, - what avenues, what dimensions to explore, - what elation you feel, - and what other beings you meet on this fantastic journey into the unknown.

Meditating Directly on the Grand Self

When I first came across *irreversible meditation* in the context of ancient Jaina philosophy and scriptures, I had no clue what this meant. Of course it wasn't called '*irreversible meditation*', but '*white*' or '*bright*' or '*pure*' meditation (Sanskrit: - *shukla dhyana*).

When I then asked what '*white meditation*' actually involved, I got the cryptic answer that this was 'meditation on self'. And since at that time I was aware of only my own limited self, I wondered how meditating on something that small and familiar could possibly open up higher dimension within me.

Years later I realized that 'Self' should actually be written with a capital 'S', - and that what was truly meant here was '*meditation on the Grand Self*'.

So, how do you meditate on someone or something that's present everywhere around you, within you and anywhere else you could possibly imagine?

And here again the ancient texts provide extensive guidance on how to visualize *single qualities, aspects and characteristics* of the Grand Self to gain access: -

**One should meditate on this (Grand) Self
which is devoid of old age, - free from death, -
fearless, - sorrowless, - endless.**

Subala Upanishad - V.1

And: -

**The knowers perceive the Grand Self of
unfathomable (mind-boggling) appearance,
- transcendent (not perceivable in its entirety
as long as we focus on the material), - divine, -
unattached, - pure, - of brilliant radiance, -
formless, - the master of everything, -
unfathomable, - not encased or limited by any
body, - abiding secretly within our body, -
immortal, - with bliss being its essence.**

Subala Upanishad - VIII.1

But be aware that this really is ultimate and irreversible meditation. So if you still - however faintly - long for physical, material or limited emotional experiences, satisfy these longings first before setting out on this ultimate, supreme venture; - there's no turning back from the Great we then transform into.

**Absorbed this way in the Grand Self - in
the real *Brahman*, - he who (truly) longs for
The Real, transforms.**

Maitri Upanishad - VI.30

And though The Upanishads provide no further instructions from this point onwards, ancient Jaina scriptures of equal or even greater antiquity fill in exactly this missing

link, - as they also corroborate much of the directives given earlier in this book.

The ancient Jains describe four consecutive steps in the process of becoming fully aware of our true, abundant, incredibly creative Self: -

- 1 Absorbed in meditating on the qualities of the Grand Self, we involuntarily allow its different attributes to replace one another.
- 2 Absorbed in meditating on one single quality of the Grand Self, we do not change that particular aspect during meditation.
- 3 As we become deeply absorbed in Ourselves - in the Grand Self, (already perceiving all aspects of the Self simultaneously in Its entirety), - there still remain very fine vibratory movements within us (as last remnants of our attachment to matter).
- 4 Total absorption in the Grand Self. We now are steady and undisturbably fixed in Ourselves, beyond any physical attachment.
(Thus completing the process of becoming fully aware of who we really are.)

Tattvarthasutra - IX.39

And from here onwards it's your very own story.

The dimensions you now enter are beyond words born of our limited material environment. No image or depiction rooted in the physical world can ever capture the

intensity and wideness of what is now unfolding within your very own being.

Instant Enlightenment

In ancient India three men were walking along a rural road, when they saw a saint of deep wisdom sitting beneath a wide-crowned Banyan-tree. They approached reverently and then asked him when each of them would reach enlightenment.

The saint smiled and told the first one: "It'll be four more embodiments, then you'll become enlightened."

The first man blanched, turned away and muttered angrily: "*FOUR MORE LIVES!* - And I thought I'd reach enlightenment *THIS* very lifetime!"

Then the saint addressed the second man: "For you it's ten incarnations until you'll be free of this limited world."

Crestfallen the second man stumbled back onto the road, sadly uttering to himself: "*TEN LIVES!* - How horrible. - And I thought, I'd be even more advanced than my companion."

The third man the saint told: "For you it'll be as many lives as this birch-tree has leaves."

And that birch-tree showed an abundance of tiny leaves.

Yet as soon as he heard the answer the third man jumped up in intense joy and exclaimed: "*Fantastic!* - *Absolutely great!* - *I'M GOING TO BE ENLIGHTENED!* - *THERE'LL BE ENLIGHTENMENT FOR ME!!* -

- And at that moment that man became enlightened.

To gain actual access to that Grand Magnificent Being residing deep within us is what is truly relevant.

It's immaterial whether we attain this state in any systematic, or 'logic', or reasonable way, - or in a certain, prescribed fashion, - or by following a specific religion, - or by believing in a particular doctrine only.

None of this matters once that grand inner vision really unfolds, because -

- then a new chapter begins for us, - beyond time, space and matter, - beyond any meaning, purpose and direction we pursued while our focus was fixed exclusively on physical environments, - a new chapter of total freedom, fabulous insight, strength, wisdom, love and sovereignty - our true heritage.

Time

To *Wake Up*

Many I talked to about such widening of their awareness, of activating the extensive abilities hidden deep within us, voiced deep-rooted doubt that they'd ever be able to experience anything higher, anything greater, anything more expansive than what they live now. There seems to be a widespread, surprisingly unyielding conviction that everything is ever getting worse, that the world is trapped in a downward spiral of deterioration we are caught up in.

But this is not the case.

Let me explain: -

The *rishis* - the seers of old - knew far more than just that the Grand Self existed and how to interact with It. Amongst much other deep knowledge how this world of matter functions, they were aware of a broad time-cycle influencing all life on earth. - And they knew the characteristic 'flavors' the different phases (*yugas*) of this cycle subjected its inhabitants to.

These 'flavors' range from a long period of 4800 years, in which man's perception, comprehension and ethics are at their highest and in which life is easiest, without conflict, and lasts longest, - called '*The Age of Truth*', or '*The Golden Age*', Sanskrit: *satya yuga*, -

- to the 3600 years of the *treta yuga* - a period of increasingly lesser comprehension and length of life, -

- to a period in which technical knowledge is introduced to replace the declining comprehension how to directly handle this world of matter by the power of mind alone - the *dwapara yuga* of 2400 years duration, -

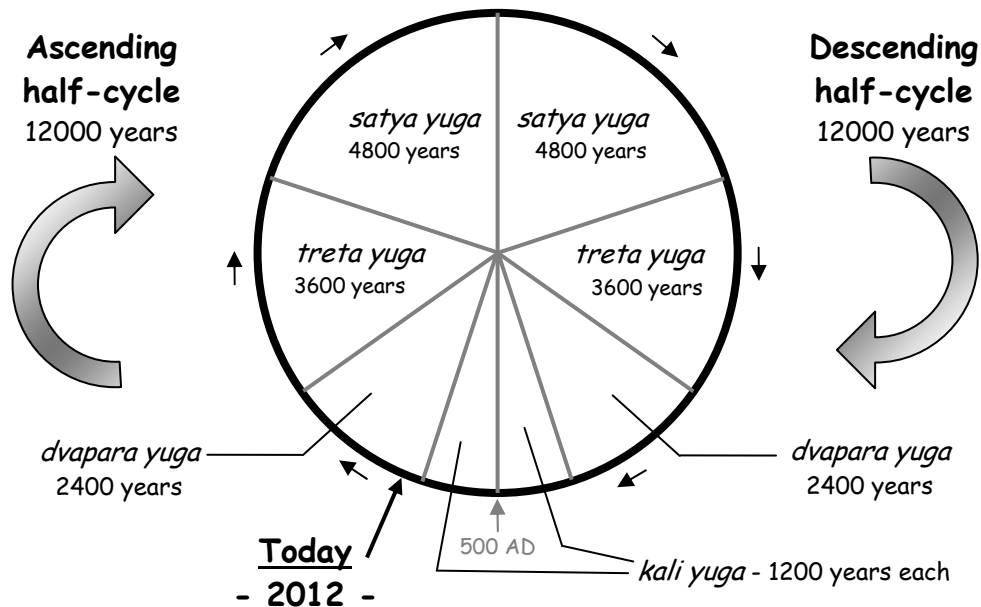
- to the period with the shortest duration of 1200 years, in which perception, ethics, comprehension and length of life are at their lowest, where living is hardest and where egoistic endeavors that care not whether they hurt, kill or obstruct other beings, have a chance of dominating the world for a while, - called '*The Age of Darkness*', Sankrit: *kali yuga*.

These four periods advance in two half-cycles of 12000 years each -

- one of them declining, as described above, with awareness *decreasing* in its powers
- the other one rising with more and more comprehension, till *The Age of Truth* is reached again.

(A different way of calculating these eras currently much en vogue in India is commented on page 261.)

A picture makes it easy to comprehend the entire cycle: -



- The cycle of eras the ancient rishis described -

The purpose of these periods of distinctly different character is to provide a wide range of settings for those wanting to experience their desires and dreads in material form, so they may confront the challenges they set for themselves in the most conducive environment.

Since we ourselves choose which period to experience, the question that's always asked is: '*Why not permanently incarnate in The Golden Age, where our comprehension is greatest and our life entirely trouble-free?*' -

Well, the answer is easy: - The Golden Age - *satya yuga* does not satisfy all we want to experience in these material surroundings. Fear, anger, greed, deception etc. are not present in *The Age of Truth*, because everyone understands perfectly well what's in the mind of any

other person, and reacts entirely naturally in a positive and supportive way. Thus we simply wouldn't be able to experience 'negative' emotions, or any egoistic ambition in that particular period.

And then, - in a golden age where everything is as perfect as it possibly could be, we'd take much longer to learn what we intend to learn, than in an age where challenges abound, and life is chaotic and wild at times.

The second question is always: - *'Where are we now?' - 'Which point in this cycle are we experiencing at present?'*

And here the answer is simple math. According to Hindu astronomical almanacs the last *Age of Darkness* of the declining half-cycle began 700 BC, lasted 1200 years till 500 AD, at which point the world was at its lowest, effective communication almost non-existent, groups of people fighting each other much of their time, sickness abounding and life's duration at its shortest, lasting hardly ever longer than 30, 40 years.

Then the rising half-cycle began, starting with another 1200 years *Age of Darkness* that lasted till 1700 AD.

And from 1700 onwards we now live in the next age, - the *dwapara yuga* - lasting 2400 years,

- which puts us *in the rising part of the cycle*, in which perception, comprehension, communication and ethics are increasing, - and in which *nothing is really declining any more*.

And yes, I've heard of global warming - if you believe in it, - I've heard of nations fighting, the world's resources coming to their end, of huge corporations trying

to poison us, of young generations being so much shallower than older ones, - there's no end to this list. - But it's ever only a media-circus, it's only media attempts to hijack our attention, - to then make us watch commercials for lousy, overpriced coffee, for dog food claiming to be 'royal', and for soapsud-brands one as unremarkable as the other.

Yet the evidence of increasing comprehension, of expansion, of rising ethics is right before us, right in our present life, if we only direct attention towards it and interpret it from facts and not from media-hype.

So just look at the long period of peace we enjoy in major parts of the world for the last 65+ years (or 140+ years within the US), peace that by now stayed longer than ever in the last three millennia, and which gave rise to huge prosperity for all.

See the unprecedented expansion of our knowledge of technology and electronics since 1700, providing comfort and luxury to the entire world, - totally inconceivable at any time before.

Famine - a major recurring problem in the dark ages - is something entire generations now never experience. Sure, this progress is not completed yet, but we're closer to a worldwide solution than in any previous century (→ Global Hunger Index 2011).

There's the increasing life-span rising from about 30 years average in the Middle Ages to more than double - 67+ years (2010) - with the clear tendency to increase further.

There's worldwide communication with instant connectivity between virtually everyone, and more and more knowledge made available everywhere and for free.

Entire nations now wake up to their natural rights and rid themselves of megalomaniac dictators and power-groups, who took whole countries to be theirs and to be reigned at whim.

There's the advances in medicine, e.g. providing everyone a functioning set of teeth for their entire life, - the speed and comfort of our present transportation, - the proliferation of democracies and personal security, - the increased efforts for a clean environment, - the luxury of our own lodgings not even kings enjoyed in previous times, - all this entirely unimaginable a mere century ago, -

- all this - and much more - powerful signs of a fundamental, robust, self-amplifying, positive transformation, if we only want to see this development in a new light.

Sure, there's fallout still from the dark ages, - of animal reflexes, egoistic themes and the assumption of a 'god-ordained' right to dominate others - either within individuals or still holding entire nations at bay. But then we only are 310+ years into the *dwapara* age, coming out of altogether 2400 years of darkness and chaos that installed deep egocentric mechanisms within humankind it only gradually is shaking off.

Rising Tide

Let's - just for fun - project this expansion two hundred years into the future to see what's about to happen.

- Technical advances will lose much of their luster, - to be replaced by far more fascinating explorations of *awareness*-dimensions we can directly experience within us - without the help of any machinery. The insights we bring back from these 'journeys' will then enrich our entire material existence.

After we achieved optimal physical comfort, new-fangled gadgets will seem like mere distractions. We'll cease to regard them as something with which to prove that we - just by having a new toy - would be so much farther advanced than others.

- Medicine will shift to mainly preventing sickness in a holistic way, instead of merely patching up parts of the body gone array - as they do now. Since people will be generally healthy, any medical service will be uncoupled from the monetary considerations and the hugely inflated costs that trouble us today.
- Knowledge and art will be freely available, its dissemination not hampered by corporations who never generated it, but only siphon off the lion's share of profits without giving the originators their fair share.
- Religion will turn into what it really is supposed to be: - inspiring us to re-connect to our Grand Origin and switching from mere belief to really experienc-

ing this Magnificent Existence deep within everyone, - alerting us to ways of encountering our material desires in a much smoother, far more efficient way.

Individuals will connect directly to their Grand Self without any intermediary. And those in need of assistance will be able to freely choose from a wide variety of groups catering to their exact needs.

The ceremonious priests and pompous officials of today's churches will have disappeared altogether because they became obsolete, - a self-accelerating process that actually started already three hundred years ago.

- Fun and recreation will be by far more satisfying since they focus more and deeper on our emotions - the very seat, the very center, where all our joy, ecstasy and happiness is generated in the first place. This doesn't mean we won't have discos any more, but that experiencing them will create far intenser feelings and satisfaction within us.
- The children - or children's children - of people presently amassing huge egoistic wealth by taking money from those scrambling to get by, will be of a different ethic disposition and right the wrong their forefathers inflicted upon society.
- Life in general will become much more cooperative, - making it increasingly easier to experience all we intend to confront in material form.

Yet while experiencing matter, we'll have clear parallel awareness that our real existence beyond our 3D environment is far greater than what we physically perceive. And this inner awareness will offer far better guidance than any outside theory, dogma, belief-system or scientific finding can ever provide.

All during the past 300 years a different type of people than in the previous two millennia took on material existence, - seeking inner and outer expansion, ever clearer insight, deeper ethics, technical advancement, intenser communication and widening cooperation. Despite world wars, genocides, restrictive or destructive ideologies, economic collapse and constrained freedoms there's an inevitability in this expansion that fuels its rapid growth ever anew.

No individual nor group could ever stop this overall development, - couldn't even slow it down for a brief time, since this broad rise continues to manifest in all other parts of the world not subjected to such influence; - until the egomaniacs' 15 minutes are over and the region under their sway clicks back into overall progress and expansion.

As the aristocracy controlling the world for more than two millennia became obsolete and lost all influence within a mere few decades, - as the power of religions and priests fades as ever more people decide against their life being dominated by repressive religious dogmas, - in the same way other current restrictions will fall away all

by themselves simply because our children and their offspring will recognize them as empty and superfluous.

Future generations will inevitably think, feel and act in far more expansive ways than we do now, - as our present thinking, emotions and desires command abilities and ways of action markedly different and more expansive than anything previous generations ever deemed possible.

The evidence for all this is right before our eyes: - We only need to recall how uniquely different we shape our world today compared to only sixty years ago.

It is - of course - entirely your decision which view you want to adopt -

- going for growth, - and be supported by the powerful expansion the rising cycle naturally provides,
- or believing in the decline the media propagate, - to then encounter this very deterioration in your life.

What you experience is entirely your choice, since -

**What we think, that we become,
- this is the eternal mystery.**

Maitri Upanishad VI.34

My personal recommendation is - you might already guess - to take advantage of this rising cycle and go for expansion.

But then, - if you desire to experience themes within your current material environment that won't allow for such expansion, - you may want to neutralize such longings first, before other themes will open up for you.

Yet being aware of that huge potential within you just waiting to be actualized, - being aware that beyond any current material desires you really are this fabulous Grand Self, - may assist you immensely in confronting these longings, - so that new dimensions and meanings will ultimately reveal themselves, - if this appeals to you.

How to Transfer Knowledge In Highly Adverse Circumstances

Now let's go back roughly three thousand years. This was the time when wise people knew the time-cycle to soon enter a period in which all knowledge concerning inner growth would be entirely forgotten, where people would be at each others throats for the most immaterial reasons, and where they - because of narrow belief or creed - might easily wipe out the most valuable information crucial to the expansion of future generations.

How to transfer knowledge to a generation 3000 years into the future, when you know for sure that all people manifesting in physical form in the intermittent period would be incapable of grasping even the smallest part of what you now know.

How to go about it? -

- Write it all down? - Script definitely existed in those days, but writing materials were scarce and certainly wouldn't last millennia. And then there always was the danger that fire, natural catastrophes, mad leaders, indifference or simple neglect would destroy the written information. And even if

you stored the scriptures in supposedly 'safe' places at multiple locations, these locations might easily be forgotten during a long three thousand years.

- Chisel it in stone? - Well, - apart from being hugely cumbersome, you'd then also need to shield these stones from natural erosion, so your script wouldn't be washed or worn away. Thus there'd be the need to build elaborate protective structures around it, - possibly temples, - to emphasize the preciousness of the inscribed knowledge. Yet what about earthquakes, dilapidation, collapse, rising sands covering it in future desert-like periods and other calamities that could not be foreseen and may render all such efforts useless.
- Electronic storage did not exist in these ancient days, but this was rather of advantage. If already today we are incapable of reading data stored on tape a mere 50 years ago, - if CD's and DVD's begin to deteriorate after only two decades, with the likely unavailability of compatible reading devices in 20+ years time, - if the current en-vogue 'cloud' storage can be (and is) switched off, deleted, blocked or distorted by one single political, technical or monetary decision, any electronic 'securing' of invaluable knowledge is far too fragile and always open to attack. And after thirty centuries of decline the technical basis for electronic storage might not even exist any more.

The solution the ancient *rishis* came up with was ingenious: - To keep this essential knowledge alive, - to transfer it to us, - they created a living chain of people, who generation after generation learned the information by heart, knowing its importance if not their content, transferring it to their offspring, - and who thus were able to react in real time to inevitable catastrophes, to then intelligently escape, avoid ravages by war, insane rulers, famines, epidemics and other calamities, always while carrying this invaluable knowledge within.

And within this tradition the handing over of knowledge was an essential part. Its main focus was communicating the wisdom, never keeping any of it secret.

An ingenious solution that really worked: The knowledge of the ancients how this world really functions is all before us presently and in pristine condition. It's now our generation's task - during this rising tide of the time-cycle - to decipher this information, to pry it from the domination of dry, scholarly translators who almost succeeded in rendering these most valuable insights unintelligible and irrelevant. It's now within our power to reactivate this information, to test it in real life, to apply it, - and to communicate this to others.

And it is also our prospect to take part in something truly expansive, in something that makes our life so much greater, - something that prompts us to actually become what we ever wanted to be - and more.

The people currently choosing material existence command enormous creativity, a keenness for ever greater

visions of this world, a readiness to throw out obstructive power-structures and docile behavior of the past.

And ever more of these '*rising tide*' people will incarnate, actively shaping their world for intelligent growth instead of stagnation, - for universal comprehension instead of holding back knowledge, - for compassion and collective assistance instead of egoistic amassing of wealth and resources in the hands of few to the detriment of many, - for expansion into unexplored regions within themselves instead of sticking to a particular creed.

There's grand adventure ahead for those intent on venturing into this new phase of their existence, - to actively employ the immense abilities dormant deep within, - to explore the rich, yet unknown dimensions this world offers us on top of everything we presently are aware of.

It's all happening now, - and all around us.

We just need to click into it.

The Upanishads *Not* Mentioned in This Book

Since I selected only a small number of stanzas from the entire volume of upanishadic texts, the question naturally arises, what kind of information the remainder offers. Since the main theme of the scriptures is the Grand Self, an abundance of further insights might still be hiding in the work.

How to get an overview? - How to chart a map of an extensive, complex body of scriptures, written by hundreds of authors over a period of more than 800 years?

To proceed along the '*evolution of intellectual reasoning*' - as most scholars love to do - doesn't generate any useful clue, as will become clear further down.

Thus - for an effective approach - I looked at the way the main theme was portrayed from the oldest Upanishads to the youngest, - to see whether there'd be any change of character, style or aspect.

And here I found something: - The oldest texts merely list how the Grand Self - *Brahman* - connects to the physical world, - the middle field attempts to provide a logical framework, - while the texts written closest to our times present numerous themes unrelated to *Brahman*, with intellectual arguments of sometimes pompous reasoning thrown in.

There's an obvious shift from powerful evocation - to attempts of logical portrayal - to overemphasizing minor points and irrelevant quibbling.

To try to explain these distinct changes with any '*evolution of intellectual reasoning*' would rather document intellectual degeneration than an increase in lucidity. Would the texts indeed portray an '*intellectual evolution*' then the young Upanishads should get more comprehensive, more brilliant, more proficient, - which they don't.

Yet if we consider the declining comprehension as it occurred during *The Age of Darkness* - *kali yuga*, - this strange shift begins to make sense: - Understanding was still intact as the initial Upanishads were composed, but deteriorated more and more as The Dark Age deepened, until humankind totally forgot that within they carried a fantastic key to an entirely different type of life.

Thus the Early Upanishads

mainly list numerous features of our life and describe how they connect to *Brahman*.

The absence of any instructions how to gain access to the Grand Self tells us that at that distant period most people probably had fundamental insight into the Self, and thus merely talking about It, merely mentioning, merely evoking It was entirely sufficient to enliven the listeners' vital link to the Majestic Being within.

Many of the early texts list complex chains of factors required to 'create' our material world. They describe in intricate detail how desires actually manage to manifest physically, - thus telling us that those ancient people were far more familiar with these mechanisms than we are now.

Upanishads written 500 to 200 BC

present elaborate narratives and some complex cover stories to embroider what the older Upanishads described. These decorative tales add nothing to the core content, but probably made the texts more palatable to an audience increasingly less aware.

Also at this time a trend towards intellectual explaining set in, - which renders the texts more easily accessible to our present generations, but which actually is just another sign that true comprehension was on the go: -

Intellectual argumentation - as much as we treasure it currently - tends to stir up multitudes of differing views, rather than conveying clear insight into the very content the author wants to communicate.

Intellectual presentation and reflection is certainly en vogue today, but our actual life we steer mainly by mechanisms far beyond rational or logic thought.

When we e.g. need to cross a street, we intuitively sense whether any car traversing our path could possibly harm us, and decide with lightening speed and in the fraction of a second whether to start walking or not. Yet if we would solely intellectually think about this, our process of decision would be by far too slow for fast everyday life. Using intellect and reason alone, we'd probably still be standing at that spot without ever getting to the other side.

The 'Young' Upanishads

are generally very short. They mainly concentrate on clarifying minor points - sometimes using highly exotic arguments in this process, - and deal with many themes utterly unrelated to *Brahman*. Many of these texts appear entirely superfluous at first sight.

It seems as if from the oldest Upanishads onwards consecutive generations added ever more details to the main body of scriptures to adapt and take into account the differing developments and changing ways to express within society, -

- thereby involuntarily documenting the deterioration of comprehension as it occurred in The Dark Ages.

Exploring The Upanishads Yourself

- A Kind of Warning -

Yet the above depiction of three upanishadic phases provides only a rough, first orientation of what to expect.

If you are interested in studying the Upanishads yourself, here's an indication of what's ahead of you: -

Let's fictionally jump ahead to the year 5000, roughly 3000 years in the future.

The technological advances of our current time would be long lost and forgotten for at least 2500 years.

Now, - in this future time a religious minded archeological scholar unexpectedly discovers something he never encountered before: - the manual for a computer.

He mulls over this for a while and then comes to the conclusion that that ancient book contains some unknown pre-historic philosophy expounding how to handle and amplify mysterious, entirely unconceivable powers, - and translates it accordingly.

The outcome of his efforts certainly neither explains the use of a computer, nor would it ever generate a sensible philosophy.

As fictional as this sounds, as applicable it is to present interpretations of most ancient Indian scriptures. Pretty much all available translations sport severe shortcomings since the scholars of the last two centuries attempted to impose academic, theoretical concepts upon the texts, thus turning them into lifeless doctrines, - while in actuality the texts simply portray practical mechanisms

how to expand and employ awareness, - mechanisms thoroughly forgotten for at least 2000+ years.

The earliest of these translations were much inspired by religious orientation and are actually quite readable, though far from any real comprehension.

Yet some of the newer interpretations are so totally garbled that one wonders why the writers ever bothered to put this down in print, - and also whether they had any tangible grasp of the language they were translating into.

Nevertheless, there's timeless content still to be discovered. The Upanishads and other scriptures of similar antiquity still conceal such an abundance of valid, deep and powerful instructions that it would be worth the effort to decode further passages in a new perspective.

This certainly would bring to light highly precise, subtle mechanisms to manifest intricate features of the very world we experience today, and may open insights into fields entirely unknown at present.

Some knowledge of the Sanskrit language does help to locate alternative, more suitable readings of the original words, but I wouldn't in any way want to suggest to learn that language prior to reading the texts.

A Disagreement in Calculation

There's a controversy between modern and ancient ways of interpreting the length of the 'yugas' or 'eras'. One contemporary reading currently quite popular in India is that the shortest epoch, 'The Dark Age' - *kali yuga* - would last 864.000 years, while 'The Golden Age' - *satya yuga* - would be 1.728.000 years long.

Yet it's actually a miscalculation that gave rise to this 'long' count: - As 2700 years ago The Dark Age - *kali yuga* - began, nobody dared to tell the reigning Indian king about this fact. And since at that time no-one really knew how to calculate the *yugas* any more, his scholars simply extended the duration of the previous, less menacing epoch - the *dwapara yuga* - to keep him happy.

Centuries later other scholars noticed the error. But instead of reverting to the original calculation, they arbitrarily defined one year of a *yuga* to be 365 human years, thus giving rise to the 'long epoch count' interpretation as it is popular today.

Yet the original scripture which actually introduced the calculation of the *yugas* - called *Manu Smrti*, - or 'The Laws of Manu', - clearly mentions only human years, and defines the eras as having 4800, 3600, 2400 and 1200 = 12000 years for one half-cycle, making up 24000 human years for one full cycle.

'The Laws of Manu' is of similar antiquity as The Upanishads, with the knowledge contained in it originating in an even farther distant, almost entirely unrecorded history.

[And just for the indology-minded: - Amongst many other features how to comprehend and intelligently steer life, the *Manu Smṛti* introduces a way of defining intervals of time (chapter 1, sutra 64 - 68), - starting with 'one twinkling of the eye' (*nimesha*) - which roughly compares to a second, - to units resembling our minutes, hours, days, years etc. - to very long periods like a 'day of the gods' and a 'day of Brahman' which are similar to our way of labeling extended periods 'Ice-age', 'Pleistocene', the Middle-Ages etc.

During the Age of Darkness scholars arbitrarily selected the unit 'day of the gods' from this universal time-scale to define the length of the *yugas*. But they neither recognized that this unit was merely one item amongst the definition of many other time-units, - nor that nowhere the text indicated that this particular unit should be applied to *yugas*, - nor that the *Manu Smṛti's* original Sanskrit mentions nothing other than human years in this context.]

Yet apart from the (intentional) miscalculation at the root of the 'long age count', such 'long' time interpretation would hardly be of practical value for us, since time-spans of 864.000 to 1.728.000 years are simply far too long to help us understand and steer life in our present circumstances. Furthermore such huge time-spans are not at all in harmony with all other highly useful, real-time advice *The Laws of Manu* offer throughout its text.

To declare the 'long count' as originating in the divine would relegate the entire question to a sphere of religious belief, which by definition is beyond discussion.

And A Few Stray Thoughts -

Why I didn't translate all the Upanishads

I present selected parts of The Upanishads to provide insight into what this body of scriptures is all about.

It's like breaking a first trail through a thick forest considered impenetrable before. Once one reaches the other side though, one can always go back and investigate all the rest at leisure.

So if what I portray helps you to truly access the gist of The Upanishads, - if you are able to utilize this new perspective to expand your life, then that's infinitely more than reading or translating the entire body of scriptures (as many scholars are ambitious to do) - and understanding nothing.

Sure, the Upanishads contain more topics and details than I could possibly cover in this book, but then, once we gain access to the Grand Being, - *Brahman*, - the central theme of this group of texts, - and in this process become aware of who we really are inside and have been all along, - then we've found the very master key to the entire spectrum all other parts may unfold.

Too Simple ?

And I've heard the objection that my way of depicting these ancient scriptures is too simple, that this body of texts would be by far more complex.

But then, - why should it not be simple?

Things we now do as grown-ups, we admired as almost godlike abilities when we were at the age of three - e.g. observing an adult operating a car; - yet today this feels entirely normal and easy.

So why should advanced, more subtle, more powerful ways of conducting our life be complicated in the first place?

All things we do well we do easily.

Something we regard as difficult only indicates that we do not truly understand it yet, - or that the person defining it as incomprehensible does not want us to gain access to it.

Sure, - if we want something to be not simple, then nothing written or said could ever divert us from this opinion.

Yet if someone firmly intends to think that life is difficult, this doesn't mean that all others have to follow this same belief and that they too would need to complicate their lives in a similar way.

This is for YOU !

This book was written for *YOU*, and only concerns *YOU*. Never read it with the question in mind whether your neighbor, or the plumber down the road, or someone of a different country may understand it as well, or if it could have helped people in the past.

Never make your understanding dependent on whether other people may comprehend it as well. Just test if

these ideas give you insight how to steer your life now, - this helps others more than you may think.

Purpose of Life

One surefire way to discover new dimensions and the greater context behind our immersion into our present environment of matter is to seek to know why we experience this intense, not always pleasant world.

- Now there are those who sense purpose behind their existence, but never get around to actually thinking about it, to really explore it. -

For them it would pay off to invest energy into finding that essential motivation, - to direct mind and emotions towards enlivening their vague notion.

And once they identified their deeper purpose, they then may start an even greater journey of discovery to reach and test that goal, and to deepen its experience.

- Then there are those who feel they came here involuntarily, got transferred to this world without their actual consent, thrown into this cauldron of kaleidoscopic encounters they feel they couldn't possibly have entered of their own volition.

Well, for those it's even more important to find what or who actually caused them to enter this strange, incessant, sometimes dreamlike, chaotic sequence of events, thoughts and feelings.

They absolutely need to locate what - in fact - brought them here, - and, - if they don't like this world, - to find out how to extract themselves from it, - and, - even more important - what 'place' to go to once they succeed with this extraction.

- And then there are those who think there couldn't possibly be any reason behind them experiencing their present circumstances, - that living beings are mere chemical cocktails gone haywire, which then rather inexplicably became aware.

Well, -

**What a man thinks, that he becomes,
- this is the eternal mystery.**

Maitri Upanishad VI.34

So for as long as such people remain convinced of this particular idea, - no matter if they thought it out on their own or adopted it from others, - there won't be any other purpose to their existence than to experience flat material life, ultimate irrelevancy, no deeper insight, no fantastic venture of discovery, - till they get tired of this concept.

Abiding in the midst of ignorance, wise in their own esteem, thinking themselves to be learned, fools, afflicted with troubles, they go about like blind men led by one who is himself blind.

Mundaka Upanishad -I.2.8

The Way is NOT the Objective

The much publicized tenet '*The WAY is the Objective*' is nothing more than a grotesque glorification of 'trying', - which in effect means to never reach a goal.

Tell this to someone on his way to meet his lover. Reaching the beloved one, being together with him or her is certainly the goal here, - and nothing short of this will ever satisfy.

Yet many contemporary 'spiritual' practices promote exactly such never-ending 'trying', - by endorsing mindless mechanical repetition where repetition all by itself is the objective, but never the ecstasy of attaining, never the excitement of unfolding new dimensions after the way is over.

Many enthusiasts of modern methods believe the more regular they perform their technique, the faster they grow. And even if after years of the most diligent practice they haven't achieved any real breakthrough yet, they still cling to their sacred process of glorified trying.

'But when I'm skiing, it is not my objective to reach the bottom of the slope, but to intensely enjoy all of the path leading there,' I often heard as counter-argument. - But then, when we are skiing, our objective is the very process of skiing, and as long as we are doing it, we fully reached that goal! In such case arriving at the bottom station was never the main objective.

And never infer from your experience of the path how the goal might be like. The reality of the goal is always entirely different from any of the ways leading there.

And only after experiencing the goal do we become able to see what lies beyond it, - only then do we discern the new and even higher dimensions lying ahead and waiting to be explored.

Sure, - shifting from 'endless trying' to really going for the goal might unsettle much cozy social set-up and suave lifestyle, and disturb beloved habitual practices we got ourselves trapped in, - but, - what gets dismantled is only our stagnant illusion that we are progressing well, - where in truth we only tread on the spot.

For me personally the goal is the only objective. And - from what I have seen of that ultimate aim so far, - would I be offered the choice between experiencing the intense bliss, power, wisdom and compassion of that goal, or - only the way leading towards it, - I'd always choose experiencing the goal in all its grandiose majesty.

Feeling Mystic

And then there's the question of mystery, - whether my rather 'hands-on', matter-of-fact way of depicting this world's 'higher' dimensions would not dissolve all magic that much surrounds 'spiritual' settings.

Well, - here too the answer is easy: - If you truly want mystic experiences, don't search for this on the levels of senses and mind, - here you only get shallow make-believe that's far from anything real.

Go higher, leave the pretense of any social 'esoteric' circle. There's far greater magic ahead once you truly experience higher dimensions, - enough powerful mystery

to satisfy all your desires, - and far more out of this world enchantment than you could possibly imagine now.

It's just a matter of going.

What to do if you personally experience this expansion

- Well, first of all, - connect to others with similar insights. Exchange experiences, meet new, inspired friends and find out how to advance together.

Our website

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offers a first meeting place for sharing experiences and exchanging know-how

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The book shows how to shift focus to broader, more advanced levels. - It provides practical strategies how to handle the challenges this path presents.

And it offers an entirely new vision how this world really works.

The book is available online. Read it at our website

unlimited-horizons.de

download it for free (as pdf-file), or order the print-version.

We also intend to publish further documentation and scriptures as they become available.

Hermann Kuhn

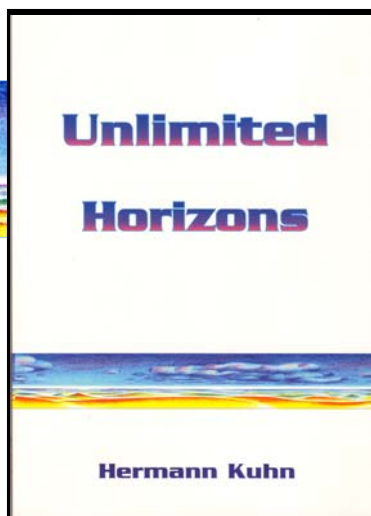
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