

The Eckhart Tolle: Essential Teachings Podcast PDF Transcript

Essential Teachings by Eckhart Tolle will provide a path to discover an enlightened state of consciousness.

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Oprah Winfrey is delighted to introduce a new weekly podcast series from one of the great spiritual thinkers of our time: Eckhart Tolle, author of 'Power of Now' and 'A New Earth' books. Eckhart Tolle's wisdom will help you learn to quiet your mind, separate your ego from your true self and live a fully present life. Essential Teachings by Eckhart will provide a path to discover an enlightened state of consciousness. Oprah Winfret says Eckhart Tolle's teaching transformed her life and hopes these Essential Teachings will inspire you to seek your own higher purpose.

Transcribed with ChatGPT AI Whisper in August 2024.

Eckhart Tolle A Peace That Surpasses All Understanding [e965a134-ce0a-4137-ae5f-74ff87177557]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 1:00)

A piece that surpasses all understanding. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the deep eye and the surface eye, two ideas he uses to teach spiritual development. He says the surface eye is our personality and is connected to the horizontal dimension, the realm of our everyday lives.

And he explains when things start to break down, we see how unstable life can be, that all that looks solid one day can begin to crumble, like losing a job, going through a divorce, getting older, or losing a loved one. Eckhart says in those moments, our lives are suddenly full of loss and suffering. He explains why this is the perfect opportunity to get in touch with the aspect of ourselves that he calls the deep eye or the vertical dimension.

He says life's crises are meant to push us towards transcendence, where he says we will find a peace that surpasses all understanding.

[Speaker 1] (1:03 - 30:24)

I mentioned earlier the term the deep eye contrasting with the surface eye, the surface eye, the deep eye. The deep eye is what in traditional Hindu teachings, we call the self or the Atman. And what in Buddhist teachings is called spaciousness, the no self, basically, it's called the no self.

So that can lead to confusion. One tradition called it the self, and the other called it the no self. But the self, of course, is different, it's not the surface self.

The surface self in itself is not the ego necessarily, only in the absence of awareness of the deep eye, which is the awareness, the surface eye becomes the ego, because in consciousness identifies with the surface eye, then through this complete identification, it becomes the ego. When you realize the deep eye, the surface eye is still there. But it's no longer egoic.

So there's no longer identification with it. Although for many humans for quite a while, they go back and forth between reverting to identification, the loss of awareness of the deep eye, which is loss of awareness. But basically, important thing to realize is there are, one could say there are two of you, not in ultimate terms.

But only in the same way that there's the ripple and there's the ocean. So the ripple exists on the surface of the ocean. In that sense, there's two.

But of course, ultimately, there's not two because ripple and ocean are one. So one could

also say the surface eye, which is a conditioned mind, the mental emotional entity conditioned by the past, the surface eye is a personality. That is what people refer to usually when they use the pronoun I, me and my story.

And there's two of you, there's also you as the transcendent consciousness. And that discovery is wonderful. And that can then be in the background of your life at all times, if it's possible, sometimes perhaps very much in the background, and then more in the foreground, fluctuations, but it's always there.

Awareness remains. I am, you see, that realization that refers to the deep eye, not to the egoic eye. Ramana Maharshi, the great Indian sage and spiritual teacher, he said that the best definition of God that he had come across anywhere, and he was a teacher obviously of Hinduism, the particular branch of Advaita Vedanta, the teaching of non-duality.

And he said the best definition in words or concepts that he had come across anywhere appeared in the Bible, in the Old Testament, with God's self-definition of I am that I am. It can be translated slightly differently too. My favorite one would be I am the I am.

Moses in the book of Exodus in the Old Testament meets God, whatever that means, and asks, who are you? And the answer is, oh, what's your name? Who are you?

And the answer is, I am the I am. And then he said, Moses said something like so, but he was on top of the mountain, whether it could be a metaphorical mountain or an actual mountain. And he said, what shall I tell my people when I go down to them?

What shall I tell them? Who sent me to them? And God says, tell them the I am sent you.

And then we have a very interesting and profound references to the I am also in the New Testament, more particularly the Gospel of John. For example, the profound statement of Jesus, before Abraham was, I am. In other words, I am is timeless.

He's not saying I'm older than Abraham, or I was already before Abraham, I was already there. No, there is no past in the I am, and there is no future. Before Abraham was, I am.

The innermost identity, that which is beyond form, but is indwelling, so to speak, in the form. It's the space at the center of your being. And then we have another interesting statement, I believe, again, in the Gospel of John, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

I am is the only way. In my view, you may not agree, but that's okay. There's only one very small word missing.

Maybe it got lost in translation. I am the way, the truth, and the life. The little word missing would be is.

I am is. The way, the truth, and the life. So I am is the realization of who you are prior to

anything else, nothing beyond the form as which you appear.

And it's a sensing within, particularly it's accessible when the mind stops, because that obscures it. And it's the remaining awareness. And in that awareness, you know that you are.

In other words, I am. But that's all you know, but that's very profound. It's not knowing in the conceptual sense.

It's a direct knowing. That's the source of all knowing. It connects you with that which is not part of this dimension.

It's transcendent to this dimension. So you are a multidimensional being. Even your thoughts and emotions already exist in a non-physical dimension.

Yes, there are reflections of them. There's a correlation between thoughts and emotions and the physical form. But in themselves, thoughts and emotions, you cannot find them in the realm of physicality, no matter how hard you look.

Where is he? Let's cut open his brain. Where are the emotions?

So even there already, the level of mind is already not this dimension. And then it goes deeper. So the personal still persists even beyond the physical form.

So let's just imagine it's a sphere and you exist on the surface. Exist means stand out. So you stand on the surface.

And just underneath the surface is the thoughts and emotions and there's the unconscious stuff that's happening in you. And then in that sense, you as a personality kind of continues even there. And if you choose to believe in reincarnation, that part that is still the personality unaware of ultimately a deluded form of delusion, a dream entity, it still continues to exist.

The dream self is still a surface self, although it's a little bit below the surface. It continues to exist and seeks another life to experience further thirst for sensory experience. And even the need to suffer and have drama.

And eventually at some point, there is an awakening. And the awakening is you realize the depths of you because who you are goes to the very center. And let's use this analogy of the sphere.

The depths of who you are, your identity, your deep eye goes very deep. It's not in space and time. It's trans-dimensional.

It goes to the very center of the sphere. That's where your essence identity originates and is. And that is one with the essence of the universe too.

So it's the realization of the center of it all. So one could say, yes, reincarnation exists. But ultimately, it's just a continuation of the same dream that you're dreaming now.

In the absence of awakening. In that sense, it's an illusion. And it exists as a kind of illusion.

And even this existence here is somewhat illusory. But as you begin to awaken, lucid living happens. Not lucid dreaming, lucid living.

Because this is a bit like we've been speaking about it. And as awareness comes in, there's another dimension that you can stand back and observe. But not only observe through awareness.

Awareness can also flow into the mind and use it as an instrument in this dimension. But it originates in another dimension. That may sound a little complicated, but it's not at all.

Only when you start to think about it. One of the favorite questions of the human mind is why. So but why is this happening?

And then if you give an answer to that, there will be another why. And another. And another.

But the true answer is we don't know why. You can glimpse, have glimpses of it, but it's beyond conceptualization. Impossible to understand through the intellect, the human mind, completely impossible.

And of course, if the I am is refers to the being of you, the being of you. To be and I am is the same word, basically, for some weird reason. It's the first person singular and the others are all different from the infinitive.

With most other words, you have to speak is the infinitive. I speak is the first person singular. But to be is the infinitive and I am is the first person singular of the word to be.

So it's about being. The being of you. I don't know why we don't say I be.

It really should be I be. That perhaps still persists in German, where the I am is Ich bin, the bin, B-I-N, is probably etymologically related to the word be, to be. The being of you.

So there is being, which is found in the vertical dimension, the depth of you. And there is the existence, which is the horizontal dimension, where things exist. Ex means out.

They are manifested in this physical dimension. They stand out, exist. In that sense, of course, one could say that God does not exist, because that would imply if God exists, God would have be manifested in space and time somewhere.

Where is God? Traditionally, people point that way. So for hundreds of years, they've

always looked upwards, looking for God there.

And then we learned a bit more about the earth and space. And then we began to realize that ultimately, there is no up and down. If you leave this planet, you go into space, you suddenly realize up and down have disappeared.

There is no up and no down. And there was even a Russian astronaut, still at the time of the Soviet Union, which tried to eliminate all religious beliefs and so on. So the astronaut, perhaps the first one that went out in space, then he got back and said, I didn't see God anywhere up there.

Okay, now we have the proof that God does not exist. And so all we can say then is the consciousness that is the essence of who you are, that you can be aware of as the awareness. When you don't add anything to the statement I am, but be happy with a silent space after you've said I am, there's a silent space where you're not trying to figure out who or what you are.

That silent space, there's the entry point, that's the beginning of the answer. When things break down in your life, which is the horizontal dimension, when you see how unstable ultimately everything is in the horizontal dimension, things collapse, break down, the physical body too. And as your life is crumbling, that is often a great opportunity for realizing the deep I, when the surface I becomes extremely unsatisfying or a source of suffering.

And traditionally, it's been often the case that humans who experienced great loss on the horizontal dimension, often after enormous, almost unbearable suffering, were able to suddenly realize the vertical dimension, the deep I. And that is what is called in the Bible, the peace that passes all understanding. You suddenly enter a realm of deep peace in the midst of all the turmoil and collapse.

Suddenly you go, wow. You can't figure out why you feel peace. This is why it's called the peace that passes all understanding.

Except that I'm explaining it. So now you can actually understand it. So the loss and collapse of forms around you provide a potential opening into the depths dimension, potentially.

There's no guarantee that it'll happen to a human being because in quite a few, many cases, when there is great loss and collapse all around you, it can actually have the opposite effect too. It can strengthen the egoic self that becomes very bitter and resentful or dreadful that everything is in blames and accuses and feels deeply unhappy. And that could be the opposite of the opening.

The opening is then missed, unfortunately. However, you don't need to wait for that anymore. Many of you have probably already had experiences of great loss.

Have become aware of the insubstantiality of the seemingly solid things around you, including the body. So you already have had perhaps your experience of loss or suffering of one kind or another. And that's without that, you wouldn't be here.

That has driven you deeper. Will you have it again? It's possible.

There's no guarantee that you will not have it, but it won't be that bad anymore because it will not reactivate the ego in you. It could, but it's unlikely because there's already, you already have now voluntarily gone deeper. So life doesn't have to necessarily push you into it.

But although the deepening will also happen through encountering. If you encounter it again, some kind of loss. And you will, of course, obviously, because at some point death will be approaching.

It's coming, it's coming. And then the deepening happens. But you don't need the disaster necessarily anymore to take you there.

I had an interesting brush with death three months ago. I've never seen a doctor. I have very rarely seen a doctor in my life.

Never been to a hospital as a patient in 73 years. This is my 74th in 73 years. And there was an irregularity in my intestinal bowel stuff, whatever the words are, for two years already, but I didn't want to see a doctor.

I said, it'll go away. That was a mistake. It didn't go away.

And finally it was getting worse and there was some blockage and I saw a doctor and he said, you must immediately have a colonoscopy. That was in January. And I went, had a colonoscopy.

Not pleasant, but not that bad. And I expected him to say, well, you have, I suspect it might be colitis or this or that. Or he might say, we need to take some tissue samples, just we'll make sure that you don't.

But immediately after a colonoscopy, he said, you have cancer. Oh, interesting. Kim was there and I told her and she tells me that I'd looked a bit shocked.

But by the time we reached the car, she said, we observed I was totally at peace. And that is true. My mind was even more silent than it normally is in the following weeks or days.

Just intense gaps of eye, beautiful. Maybe I'll be dead in a few months, I thought. That's okay.

I don't mind. And then strangely, sometimes people complain about Canadian health

care, that you have to wait a long time for operations. But in my case, after the diagnosis, 10 days later, I was already undergoing the operation where they removed a section of the colon and then was examined again, whatever the machine is called.

And they said, fine, there's no metastasizing has happened, or maybe it did happen and it disappeared. I don't know. But anyway, that was, they said, you're okay.

That was a good experience of depth. It can come at any time. There's no necessary correlation between spiritual realization and things going wrong in the body.

Ultimately, things will go wrong somewhere because you'll die of something. Some organ will fail, whatever, something will happen. And great teachers have died of cancer.

Ramana Maharshi died of cancer and so on. It is true that in many cases, dysfunctional mental emotional states can lead to many, many illnesses. Because it reduces the immunity and even mainstream medicine accepts that fact, stress and so on.

But there are many other factors that we don't know of. Perhaps when I was poor for many years, had perhaps certainly not excellent nutrition during those times, lived on baked beans and toast for years in England. So who knows?

But when the thinking mind stops, and there's just the depth of presence, basically you've died already. There's nothing to fear because the person has already receded. So there's just intense presence, but death really becomes insignificant.

But for all of you, there may be some of you who also have that similar illness. On the one hand, you accept that death may come, it's fine. But on the other hand, you can also be as present as possible during the day.

We are absolutely and intensely present. Particularly helpful have consciousness in the inner energy field of the body as much as possible. Another very interesting statement by Jesus that nobody understands from the Bible.

The translation is also a little questionable. If your eye is single, or if your eye is sound, or if your eye is one pointed, I referring to this eye, but it's a metaphorical eye, then your body will be filled with light. He says, your body will be filled with light.

If your attention is one pointed on the body, I suppose that's what he was talking about. Nobody in the church, they don't know what to do with that statement. Your body will be filled with light.

But that is inner body awareness. There's great healing there. It may not necessarily heal everything, but if it heals the physical body, fine.

If it doesn't, it's still the most wonderful thing to be realizing that intense aliveness that's there, that is beyond physicality, but sustains the physical. So I told you that I have, or I

already have many identities, and after the encounter with this young man and his girlfriend, who told his girlfriend that I was a famous YouTuber, so that's, I have acquired that identity, and now I have another one. I'm a cancer survivor.

And so that's another nice conceptual identity, can feel good about myself. Until the next thing happens. They're all surface identities, but that's okay.

You can play around with surface identities. They're not, of course, who you are, but some sort of purpose in this world, to simplify communication, and so on. Especially when you sometimes, when you go into another country, and they say, why are you coming to our country at the immigration control?

Well, I'm a writer, and I am delivering a lecture. Oh, okay. That still works better than I teach the essence of self-realization, and that, oh, we need to question you a bit further.

You seem to, you seem mentally unstable. There was actually a Canadian spiritual teacher I heard of. Years ago, he was traveling, attempting to enter the United States for talks, and he was stopped by immigration, questioned, and he was not familiar with simplicity of conventional identities.

So when they asked, what are you here for? He said, I'm a teacher of truth. He was not admitted.

And he hasn't been able to come back since. Let's see if there are any questions left. I am not allowed to choose the questioners, because it wouldn't work, unfortunately.

I can point who I'm appointing, and you wouldn't know. But here we have, maybe I'll get out my glasses.

[Speaker 2] (30:27 - 30:28)

Hello, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (30:28 - 30:28)

Hello.

[Speaker 2] (30:31 - 32:41)

Okay. Thank you for all that you do. My question is, aren't there times when you have to say no?

I have two examples, brief. I am a writer. A man asked me to write a script for his spiritual film.

I agreed to this. Subsequent to this, I visited his Facebook page. I discovered that it is likely that this man was at the Capitol on January 6th.

I told him that I had changed my mind, and why. And he explained that he didn't like what was happening in the world, and wanted to learn more about the left from me. At the time, I was listening to Michael Singer's lecture on surrender, a subject that you have spoken much about.

I did not want to do it, and would have been embarrassed, really, in front of everyone that I know. Not only that, but it was a dangerous proposition for me, given that I am Black. Briefly, the second example is that I have two grown daughters, and my neighbor has five very young children.

She is married, but her husband is, euphemistically speaking, not helpful. I helped her when I could, voluntarily. But most of the time, I was being requested to help, as she was becoming dependent on me.

But I was not interested in being a second mom. So those are the two examples. But finally, in a semi-related question, how can Black people not identify as Black, when the world around them tells them that they don't matter, because they are Black?

And did you know Stuart Wilde? I've been wanting to ask you that for a long time. Stuart Wilde.

[Speaker 1] (32:41 - 32:43)

What was the last bit you had?

[Speaker 2] (32:43 - 32:46)

I said, did you know Stuart Wilde?

[Speaker 1] (32:46 - 32:48)

Oh, not personally.

[Speaker 2] (32:49 - 32:51)

Oh, okay. He's one of my other favorite teachers.

[Speaker 1] (32:51 - 33:32)

Ah, yes. He passed away a few years ago. Yes, yes.

Well, thank you. You're very welcome. Thank you.

I love you. Oh, thank you. I don't want to keep you necessarily standing for too long.

The answer might be a bit long or not. We don't know. We'll see.

So you have, there are basically two questions. One is a question about the no, and the

other is a question about identity, identifying with your race, racial identity, and how can you not, and so on. So I'll answer both.

[Speaker 2] (33:32 - 33:34)

Okay. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (33:35 - 38:36)

Without my glasses. So I often say, say yes to the present moment. Or I say, make the present moment your friend, not your enemy.

So to say yes to the present moment is a powerful teaching, but it can be misunderstood and has been misunderstood. Sometimes it needs to be explained what that actually means. So to say yes to the present moment does not mean that you accept everything that people ask of you.

In some cases, you have to use the no, but not in an angry way that denies the present moment. I call that a high quality no. So let's say in your case, can you look after my children?

Because I need you. You're so good with children. They feel flatter.

You feel obliged. You're such a wonderful person. I love you.

Can you do it again, please? And at some point, you have to, I'm sorry, I can't do it anymore. But without any negativity, a simple statement, it is not a reactive statement.

You don't make her into a bad person. You want to take advantage of me. I'm not doing it anymore.

That is a low quality no. Even if perhaps she was trying to take advantage of you, but that is not, that may be then a dysfunction in her egoic self. Many humans do that.

The world is full of people who perhaps are trying to take advantage of you. That's what the egos do. And so it is not who she truly is.

But you do not speak to the ego in her. You simply say, I love your children. They're just wonderful and I enjoyed my time, but I can't do it anymore.

I'm sorry about that. High quality, no, no, no, I can't do that. A person says, can you lend me another thousand dollars?

And he's, well, I've already lent you 2,000 three months ago. And last year I lent you 5,000. I haven't got anything back yet.

And then he's, I'm sorry, I have to say no. But you don't say, you're just trying to use me.

And I'm not going to do that anymore.

I'm not going to be used anymore by you. This is it. That's it.

I'm no more. That's another kind of no, but it's a low quality no. And the high quality, no, I'm sorry.

That's it. I can't do that anymore. It implies there's a presence behind what you say.

It's not reactive. And with the same, the person who asked you to write something, you say, I've seen the background. I'm not in agreement with that.

Therefore, I'm sorry. I need to say no to this. I can't do this.

Thank you. High quality. No, it's beautiful.

And quite often you may have to use that, make sure that it's not reactive and then becomes low quality. So that's the answer to the no question. The next question is, how can I not identify with being Black?

Of course, being Black is part of your form identity. So you do identify to some extent with being Black, but it is not the main ingredient of your identity. It is part of your form identity and you accept it as your form identity and you come, you honor it as your form identity.

There are other form identities. It could be your nationality, your gender, many types of form identity. You honor the form also.

You honor that and accept that. So you have both. You exist as this form, which also needs to be honored, not denied, but to be rooted in something that is far deeper than anything that makes up your form identity.

To be rooted in the being of you. There, you are neither Black nor White, nor are you man or woman, nor are you young or old. Those no longer apply in the depths of your being, the consciousness that you are.

The deep eye has no time to it, has no form to it. So you are rooted in the deep eye, then you can honor your form also, but you're rooted in something more essential and more real than that.

[Speaker 2] (38:36 - 38:38)

Thank you. Appreciate it.

[Speaker 1] (38:38 - 38:38)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (38:47 - 39:06)

I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Accept Each Moment as if You Had Chosen It [3f0b72f5-8293-41a9-9d67-7308a7a2fe29]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:20)

Accept each moment as if you had chosen it. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience about the process of becoming aware. When challenges arise, he says, go with it, learn to accept each moment as if we had chosen it.

Then, what looks like an obstacle becomes an opening into transcendence.

[Speaker 1] (0:23 - 49:07)

So, first of all, I'd like to ask you, as you sit there, to become aware of yourself. Now, what does that mean? Usually, to become aware of yourself, you would go into thought, because what you usually identify with as yourself consists of thought, plus some emotions that accompany the thoughts.

So, usually, when people refer to themselves, myself, they're talking about the me that consists of thought and emotion, mental, emotional entity. And so, when I ask you to become aware of yourself, you would usually make reference to your name and your history, your general life situation. But if you look at it more closely, your name, your history, and your general life situations, right here and now, only exist as thought.

Your entire life situation, which includes your relationships, all the things from your past that have brought you into your present situation, your health situation, or other aspects of your life situation, whether it's great at the moment or dreadful at the moment, whether you've lost your job and your money and your home, and here you are, or you've just bought a mansion and just got your new private jet, and you have a trophy wife or trophy husband, identify to feed your ego. So, whether in the eyes of the world or your own eyes, you're at a wonderful point in your life situation or a dreadful point in your life situation, it's still thought, because right here and now, then now here we come to what I'm talking about when I say, become aware of yourself. I'd ask you to become aware of yourself without reference to thought, without referring to your name or your history.

You don't need to remember right now what you did in the past, what happened to you in the past, or what might happen in the future, which, again, does not exist except as thought. Isn't that a weird thing? The future, what you call future, you can only experience it as thought.

Otherwise, the future has no reality. Isn't that weird? Is that true?

Yeah, well, if it were not true, one of us at least would have experienced the future at some point, but nobody has ever, because as such, it doesn't exist as a thought, yes. But

when the so-called future comes, of course, it can only be experienced as the present moment. So, become aware of yourself now without reference to thinking, which means let's just let go of looking for ourselves, or I'm talking to you, let go of looking for yourself in thought.

Okay, let's let go of that. Is there anything that remains or what remains? What is it that remains if you don't go into thinking in order to become aware of yourself?

And now, don't answer that question by saying anything, because that's thought. So, when I ask, is there anything left of you, if you don't go into thought to find yourself, say anything left of yourself? And of course, resist the temptation of going, let me think.

No, don't go there. Are you even still there without thought? Are you still there?

Okay, I'll do it for myself now. Let's see, I'll tell you in a minute if I'm still here. You have to do it for yourself.

I'm still here, I don't know about you, but what it is or who it is that's still here, I can't say, but there's certainly a presence, a consciousness. If there were not a consciousness, this entire room wouldn't even be here, it wouldn't be perceived as a room. Maybe there would still be molecules and atoms floating around that make up those bodies, but there wouldn't be a room and there wouldn't even be people.

There's a consciousness, there's an organizing principle. Without the consciousness, there would be no perception of this room. So, definitely, what you know for sure, but not just knowing, but sensing yourself as a conscious presence.

You can only sense yourself as a conscious presence if you are not thinking, just aware, just present. Another pointer, stillness. You have to become still inside.

Maybe that's not the right way of putting it. You have to discover or find the stillness that's in you as the presence. And that's amazing.

In a way, you could say there's nothing there, and yet there is a presence that has no form. And then you can still perceive everything, but instead of perceiving it as a person, which is when you label things with thoughts, instead of perceiving things as a person, you perceive things as a conscious presence or an awareness in the background of your sense perceptions. And the analogy I sometimes use for this is a canvas.

All the things you experience through your senses are a continuously changing painting on this canvas. That's the life that you, the sensory perception that is your life. And there's a canvas, and there's a sensory perception.

And mostly you would be so in it that you don't realize that there must be a canvas, otherwise there could be no sensory perception, no painting. So if you were this painting,

you could suddenly become aware of yourself as more essentially the canvas that makes the painting possible. So you can sense yourself as the awareness behind the sense perception.

And you can walk around and look around, listen, look, touch whatever sensory perception there is, move the body, and just be the presence for the sense perception. And at that moment, the person isn't really there. Something more vital is there, something deeper than the person is there, consciousness itself.

And it doesn't mean you don't go back to being a person, but you no longer go back and completely identify with a person. Of course, you go back into thinking after a while, you go back into thinking, but less and less do you identify with the thinker as yourself. That's an enormous liberation.

And then another version of what we just did is the Indian, especially practiced by Ramana Maharshi in the middle of the 20th century, first half of the 20th century, spiritual teacher. The question, who am I, is the same thing. He recommended this as a meditation to ask yourself, who am I in your mind?

You ask yourself in your mind, who am I? Eyes open or closed, doesn't matter. Who am I?

And of course, any answer that you can think or speak is not it. So one could say there is no answer, but that's not entirely true either. There is an answer, but the answer is not in thought or word.

It's not a thought, it's not a word. It's what's left when you let go of looking for yourself in thought. That's an incredible liberation.

The liberation of your identity from being trapped in thought to suddenly realizing that beyond thought, there is a depth to who you are where you merge with something very deep and vast and you realize you're only the outermost manifestation of that which you truly are, which is deep and vast. And then that depth and that vastness can actually, through you, come into this world, shine into this world, can use your mind, can look around and say, wow, I created all this and I'm creating all this. Isn't that great?

And then what happens to you as a person in your life, your so-called life, it's not your life, it's just life. You don't have a life, you are life. If I say my life or I have a life or my life is no good or my life, you create a duality, you say, my life.

Here I am and there's a life that I have, but who am I without the life? So it's a mind-created duality. Are you happy with your life?

No, I don't have a life. So what happens to you as a person is still has a certain importance. You would probably rather be healthy than sick.

You would probably rather have a nice place to live than a dirty place to live or whatever, noisy, dirty. Maybe you would rather have a vigorous body than a body that's not doing so well anymore. You'd rather have a live with or work, live with nice people, but it doesn't happen all the time.

These things shift. What happens to you as a person, you still can be pleased when so-called good things happen and so-called bad things happen. You might be, oh, that's a bummer, but it doesn't go that deep anymore.

Although it may still be important what happens to you, it's no longer absolutely important. So there's a certain detachment from the person, which is very pleasant. Also, your mind, your thinking mind, no longer has the ability to make you unhappy by thinking unhappy thoughts that you completely believe in, saying, my life is awful.

It's a thought. Where is your life? Show it to me.

What's awful? You're sitting there breathing, looking. Isn't that your life?

No, no, my life is that. Let me tell you about it. And then that, what's going to come, and that, and all that.

I'm on my way to see the lawyer because my business has gone bankrupt. My wife has left me, has taken the children too. The house has just been repossessed, couldn't pay the mortgage anymore.

And I have a health problem. I'm going to see the doctor about it. But right now I'm going to see the lawyer for bankruptcy and divorce proceedings.

Awful, awful, dreadful, dreadful. Okay. Sometimes I ask people, I say, if you think you have problems, where's the problem now?

What problem do you have now? And then sometimes the first answer you get is, well, I just told you I've gone bankrupt. My wife has left me.

And then after, no, no. Now, you're sitting on this bus and you're going to see a lawyer for the divorce proceedings and then you're going to see another lawyer for bankruptcy. But right now I'm asking, what do you have a problem now?

Now. And sometimes that can bring about an awakening. And that same person who carried this enormous burden of undeniably very challenging situations, no one is denying that these are challenging situations, but a person who was so burdened with a life situation that he or she could not look beyond the burden they carry, this enormous burden of their life situation in their mind, that's where it lives, because it's not here now.

It's in the mind and carrying this enormous burden. Say, what's your problem now?

Sometimes you have to hit the people, hit them to bring them into the now.

What's the problem now? Now. That would be, I don't do that, but the Zen master sometimes does that.

And then say, okay, this moment, and this is the power of the present moment. This moment, tell me what is the problem? And then they look for it.

Are you breathing? Yes. Are you still alive?

Can you sense the life energy in the body? Yeah. If I get it out of my thinking enough, I can feel it some.

Can you see the flower? Yeah. Well then look more closely.

Okay. Wow. For a moment, you say, wow, it's amazing.

So beautiful. Oops, I forgot to think about my problems. Can you see the, if you're outside, can you see the sky?

Look at the sky. And are you still breathing? Yes.

Look around. This moment, that's now, it's alive. You are alive.

Can you feel that you're alive in your body? Yeah. That you're present and breathing?

Yes. The underlying consciousness? Now?

Just now? Yeah. So where's your problem?

Don't have one. Wow. Of course, it may not last very long because then the mind will come in.

Yes, but, and of course, life can be lived in that way because then when the moment comes, you enter the office of your attorney in order to initiate whatever the attorney has to do. That's still the present moment. And you're walking there as that presence into that situation.

What can we do? And you look at the situation and you're still present. And the whole complaining entity, thought-generated complaining victim, victimized entity, mental entity, is recognized as ultimately illusory.

So you can still deal with situations without the illusory self, which would fuck things up anyway. Sorry. But that's how it is.

The illusory entity, when it deals with things, it creates more of a mess. I mean, you can see how sometimes how certain divorce proceedings are just absurd. The conflict, it

grows and grows and grows and grows on both sides.

Crazy. So there's an enormous power in continuously bringing your attention back to the present moment. And ultimately, all you ever have to deal with and all you ever can deal with is whatever arises right here and now.

And that's, you certainly have the capacity to deal with whatever so-called problem, challenge arises in the here and now. But you cannot deal with, and you do not have the capacity, nobody could have the capacity to deal with problems that are entirely mind-generated. And then deriving an identity from that whole set of problems, and it's not a pleasant identity, it's a terrible identity, but a very heavy me suffering identity.

So to get out of suffering, to use that term that comes from Buddhism, it's just the Buddha said, wherever you go, whatever you do, you will find dukkha. Translated as dukkha, the term is translated as suffering, but it means unhappiness, it means misery, it means unsatisfactoriness, and just generic unhappiness. So that doesn't sound like good news.

And so the academics who study Buddhism say Buddhism is a nihilistic or life-denying religion or creed. Why do they say that? Because they don't understand it.

Why don't they understand it? Because all they do is trying to understand it through mental concepts. So when the Buddha says, whatever you do, wherever you go, sooner or later, and usually sooner, you'll find dukkha, which means you'll find certain unsatisfactory elements at the very least.

Whoever you are with, you will find certain unsatisfactory elements in that person. Wherever you go to live, any place, you will find certain, at the very least, certain unsatisfactory elements in that place. Whatever work situation you find, whatever new job or career you find, you will find that the greatest career has unsatisfactory elements at the very least.

If not, it causes you a heart attack and kills you because it's so stressful, because your job is so important. You're stressed out because of the importance of this great job and can't enjoy life anymore for 10 years and finally collapse and die. Joe, that was a great thing.

Great job. I made it. So the Buddha said, what they don't see is, if you look for yourself in situations, if you look for ultimate satisfaction in places, in situation, in people, then you will find unsatisfactoriness and suffering.

But if you don't look for satisfaction, ultimate satisfaction or happiness in a place, in a situation, or in another person, if you don't look for it, if you don't demand that a situation, a place, or another person should make you happy and fulfilled, then things suddenly are very different. So if you're not looking for yourself anymore in all those

things, then you can become aware of yourself directly as presence, and that's the source of all satisfaction. And then even in the time when you lose everything, you can suddenly go even more deeply into that place of pure presence or beingness and then deal with it.

But you can go more deeply into that. And this is why people, this always happened throughout history, people who lost everything, I described this imaginary or hypothetical case just now of the man who went bankrupt, the wife left him, he lost his home and all that thing. But these things do happen to people.

They're probably happening to a certain number of people in this country and other countries, and in some places collectively to groups of people. Suddenly 100,000 become refugees, have to leave home and country. This is happening and has happened throughout history.

Huge challenge. There's no denying that this is a huge challenge for every person, but it is also potentially a huge opportunity for discovering that dimension within yourself. And there have always been many reports throughout history of people who have gone through great loss, not due to any spiritual teaching, simply by experiencing great loss in their lives, which at first, my whole life has gone to pieces.

It's all gone. It's all been taken away from me. And first I became unhappy.

And then at some point, some realization arose and they were forced into the present moment. And there they sat and said, wow, that is incredible. Suddenly everything that they had identified with was taken away.

So what do you do then? Who are you if all the things that you thought you were, all the things that you derived your identity from, of course, it's not the things, it's the thoughts about these things, taken away. Who are you?

So life sometimes forces you into asking this question. I have nothing that I can identify with anymore. Who am I?

And so what is left when these things are taken away from you? And many people are not, nobody has shown them or taught them the possibility of that situation, but potentially it's an opening into transcendence. It potentially, any great loss is an opening into transcendence.

You have to accept the loss. So it's like a chunk of you has been removed. And then another chunk and another chunk.

And then you don't know who you are anymore because you can't identify with stuff anymore. You can't say I'm a husband because the wife has left you. You can't say I'm a business entrepreneur because the company has collapsed.

You can't say I'm a homeowner because that's gone. Now, what the ego can do, however, in that situation, it can strengthen itself enormously by saying, I am a victim of other people, of life. So the victim identity can replace, and often it does, it replaces in many cases, the ego identity that no longer works because you've lost it all, but that can be replaced because the ego is very resourceful and can then say, okay, I'll identify with something else.

What's that? Well, I'm certainly been victimized by life, certainly been treated unfairly by life, by the goddess of fortune. If you were a Roman, you called it the goddess of fortune, fortuna, or you can say God.

God, you've gone too far this time. God, why are you against me? Why do you treat me like this?

I hate you. Or you can say, I believed in God, but when this thing's happened, now I don't believe anymore, okay? Victim identities can often replace any other kind of identity, and the ego can remain in place that way, but it doesn't have to be like that.

And you don't have to wait for loss either because here we are voluntarily, without life forcing us into it. Well, some of you are here because life kind of forced you here. One way or another, discover who you are beyond all the identifications as pure presence.

Now, you may have heard the term God realization, which is used sometimes in various spiritual traditions. God realizations, what does that mean? God realization is quite simple.

It's realizing who you are beyond the person, consciousness. Now, does it mean consciousness is God? Does it mean you are God?

This is dangerous territory. Yes and no. If God is the source that emanates the consciousness and then shines into this dimension, like the ray of sunlight, the ray of sunlight that touches your skin, is that the sun or is it a ray of the sun?

It's just how you use language. Of course, it's connected to the sun. It emanates from the sun.

You can't say there's no point that you reach when you go back, if you were able to travel back to the sun on this ray, there isn't a place where you say, here's the sun and here's the ray. They merge. Here's the sun and then it becomes the rays of the sun.

And in the same way, the consciousness emanates from the source of all life and then manifests as beings. And when the consciousness becomes conscious of itself, that is the awakening of consciousness in this dimension. So God in you is consciousness.

What's left when you let go of form, identity, and what's left when you let go of

identifying with form is spaciousness, what the Buddha called spaciousness, translated as emptiness, but spaciousness, presence, stillness. The kingdom of heaven, somebody used that expression. My translation is kingdom is dimension, heaven, sky is spaciousness.

So when Jesus talked about the kingdom of heaven, he's pointing to something in the sense-perceived world in order to get people to sense what he's talking about on the inner level. So he shows the sky or heaven because it's the most spacious thing there is. And it is not, the sky is perhaps the only thing in this dimension of sensory perception.

The only thing that you can see that's not a thing because the sky doesn't exist as a sky. There is no such thing as sky. You can never touch it or be in it.

Or if you're going up in a rocket, you go through a cloud, but you can never say I'm now in the sky because there is no sky. It's just a way in which we perceive spaciousness. And so he used that analogy in order to point to something within you, the dimension of spaciousness, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness that is within you, that is consciousness, pure consciousness.

That is the only thing, the most important thing, he said, the most important thing for you to be concerned about. Find that within you. Everything else will fall into place.

It's a free translation of what he said. Everything else will fall into place. Just your primary task as a human being here is to find that dimension of consciousness in you.

Then you have fulfilled your task as a human being. Not that necessarily your life will then come to an end because you can then be here in a much more beneficent capacity because something else expresses itself through you, no longer the egoic, the limited ego identity, and it can speak and act and do or just emanate through you into this world. You become an expression of the transcendent dimension.

I don't use the word God very often because it's misleading. First of all, it's because it's been misunderstood and misused over so many centuries. And also because the term itself seems to encapsulate it as if it were something that is a finite thing, God.

Almost everybody imagines some kind of entity when you say God. Where, where is he? Oh, he, you see, most people still call him he.

A slightly better pointer would be to say, for example, well, what I said just now, the dimension of the transcendent. And even what they used in Star Wars that became so popular, again, is a term they used that is not as encapsulated as the word God. The force, may the force be with you.

Okay, where's the force? It's everywhere. There was a slight spiritual message in that.

And this is why so many people loved, because they're all looking for it somewhere. They loved it. May the force be with you.

The divine, you could even say, this is less enclosed than the term God. The divine is more of an open concept. God is more of a closed concept.

And inevitably, because of misuse, people inevitably imagine some kind of male entity still. You can't get away from that. And a controlling one, a patriarch.

Or somebody who has not done a good job. I could have done better than God. Therefore, God does not exist.

You hear that sometimes. Of course, it's all based on a complete misperception of what God is. God is, one could say, the divine is incarnating into form continuously.

And no form is autonomous. You are not an autonomous being that is separate from the totality of consciousness. You're an expression of the one consciousness manifesting temporarily as a person.

And then it's another, and another, and another, and another, continuously changing, shifting. But it's always the one appearing as the many. And it's a strange image in Christianity.

You have the image of a man nailed to a cross, which is a central image of Christianity, which to Christians is deeply meaningful, and to non-Christians does not make any sense at all. But there is a transcendent meaning to it, which you can understand if you're a Christian or not a Christian. And that is that the divine is incarnating in form, fallen into form, one could say, almost.

And it points to the figure of Jesus is an archetype of the human archetype. It points to the purpose of suffering as suffering as an opening into the transcendent dimension. And every human suffers, every life form suffers because life is hard and challenging and precarious for every life form.

From the moment life comes into being, life is challenging and precarious for humans, for animals, for plants. Every life form encounters obstacles in its attempt to grow and expand. And it continuously encounters obstacles to its expansion.

Every human in one form or another, if you come into this world, very quickly you'll find obstacles, seeming obstacles to your expansion and growth and wellbeing and flowering. I think you can all, if you think about your so-called life, how many obstacles life seems to have put in your path towards happiness. And some people perceive life as life continuously is sabotaging my attempts to find happiness.

Why is that? And then they have these strange theories that God is against me or

whatever the theory is. But it does seem like, and this is related to the Buddhist term dukkha or suffering, wherever you go, you will find life is sometimes helpful and then obstacles again.

Some people believe if you only practice positive thinking continuously, you will no longer encounter obstacles. But that unfortunately is not the case. Positive thinking is a great thing, can be extremely helpful and bring about certain shifts in you, but it does not free you from experiencing the obstacles that life will put in your path and the challenges that come.

So those obstacles, whether they come in the form of loss or illness or relationship problems, many of them arise from their own mind because your mind creates an enormous amount of problems that are quite unnecessary, but the mind doesn't know that. So the mind creates an enormous amount of conflict that is unnecessary in your life. That's one kind of obstacle is your own mind.

And again, you need to experience the consequences of the obstacles that your own mind creates, the conflicts and the unnecessary problems that your own mind, because you're identified with the mind, creates. You need to experience the suffering that you create for yourself out of that unconsciousness. Unconsciousness means completely identifying with the mind, the egoic mind, which in many cases transforms challenges, which could be solved easily into much bigger problems.

So you have your mind created obstacles that you ultimately create yourself because you're not conscious enough, and then you encounter suffering. This is one level of suffering. And you need to experience the suffering that comes through unconscious use of the mind in order to awaken.

It's only through the suffering that eventually you go, I can't take anymore. As it happened to me when I was in bed one night and said, I can't live with myself anymore. And then somehow I realized this myself that I couldn't live with anymore was an illusion, an illusory entity, and very unhappy mind created entity.

But before I realized that, I had to go through this suffering for years and years. So the suffering worked. It fulfilled its purpose.

And then you have another level of suffering or obstacles. Obstacles come to you seemingly from the outside that suddenly you have an accident, an illness that's a kind of outside. Something seems to happen to you that you have not contributed to.

Something happens, somebody close to you dies as an accident. Many things can happen, but you see, I haven't created that, of course. In new age, it's very normal to say when things go wrong in your life, the typical new age person will say, how did you create that?

You slipped on a banana skin and broke your leg. Why did you create that? How did you create that?

It's an interesting question. I don't want to go into this, whether even those obstacles or challenges that come to you, not seemingly, not from your own mind, but from the outside. Did you still create that or not?

Let's leave that aside. I don't want to convince anybody one way or another. I have a much more simple recipe here, which goes like this.

Instead of telling people, you better look at your life and see why you created that or how you created that. I say, accept each moment as if you had created it. Accept each moment as if you had wanted it or caused it, wanted it to happen.

I can't remember my own writings. It's always not good to go into memory. Don't quote, just present moment.

But if you live, whatever happens, you accept this moment as if you had chosen. That's the one I wrote. Accept each moment as if you had chosen it.

That's a good recipe for working because if it already is the case, you might as well accept whatever is as if you had chosen it because it's already here. So I'm not telling people you chose it. Maybe you did, maybe you didn't, doesn't matter.

It's still accepted as if you had chosen it. That shifts things, that your whole attitude to it shifts and it dissolves more quickly than whatever the obstacle is. But let's go back to the suffering.

First, the suffering that arises from your own mind creates conflict and all those things that create suffering. And then at some point you awaken. And then what remains is the suffering that comes with having a body, for example, because eventually the body gets older, no matter how much you go to the gym every day, no matter how fantastic your nutrition is, no matter how many pills for longer life you take, which is all fine and good.

But of course, every form eventually dissolves and a time comes when the body can be perceived as a burden almost. The older you get, the more likely it is to happen. And so, of course, you might then say old age isn't so bad if you consider the alternative, which is you die younger and then you don't have to experience the body getting fragile and old.

But if you get old, the body can become problematic, a source of suffering potentially. But those challenges, if approached correctly, don't have to turn into suffering. Accept each moment as if you had chosen it.

If you can go with the isness of things, there's no complaining entity that says something

about being a victim and complaining how dreadful things are now. I wish my mother had learned that lesson when she suffered in that way, because she had always identified very much with her body, good looking, always nicely dressed going out and liked to be looked at, very normal thing for many people. And then the body got older and older and then hip problems and other fractures and this and got worse and worse and the unhappiness grew and grew.

Not so much limited movement, but the identity. So much was in the body that those tremendous suffering, I tried to free her. And occasionally there were moments when she could disidentify from body, but very, very brief.

And that is the destiny of many humans. But the suffering is really that every life form encounters, the obstacles that every life form encounters, whether they come in at a younger age, older age, middle age, in whatever form, these things are absolutely necessary without which there would be no human evolution whatsoever. And no life form would ever evolve if the life form did not encounter obstacles.

So that which looks like an obstacle is actually or potentially an opening. Potentially it, that seems to stop your progress in life always potentially can make you more conscious. So you can use every obstacle that arises in your life, works especially quickly if you accept each moment as if you had chosen it.

And when it looks, this moment is an obstacle, you go with it instead of complaining or running away from it and then accept and then act if action is possible or don't act if no action is possible. The image of the man on the cross is the archetype of the tells is a teaching about the role of suffering for humanity. It shows that the cross, the torture instrument, which the cross is, it's a weird thing.

The torture instrument is also a symbol for the divine. Isn't that weird? The cross, which is a torture instrument at the same time is a symbol for the divine.

And that's the essential teaching of Christianity that is teaching in images, myth in the deepest sense, that the teaching of myth is a deeper truth that otherwise perhaps humans would not have understood over the centuries. So everybody, one could say, and this is a medieval way of speaking, everybody has their cross in life. That's what they used to say in medieval times.

So there was some wisdom there. Everybody carries their cross in one way or another. If you don't have a cross right now, just wait a little, then you'll have another one.

Everybody carries their cross, but the cross is not only a torture instrument. The cross is that which seems to obstruct you, but it's not only a torture instrument. It's also potentially an opening into transcendence.

It can make you more conscious if approached correctly. So you can be grateful for all

the things that look like impediments, obstacles, and difficult challenges in your life, whether it's of a physical nature, a relationship nature. Relationship, many people through experiencing conflict in relationships have eventually become more conscious of their own minds and their own contribution to the conflict and unconscious mind activity and ego and so on.

In every area of your life, use the obstacles and the challenges of life and realize you would not evolve without, there would be no growth of consciousness. So your comfort zone, which is not a bad thing, I mean, to be in a comfort zone from time to time, I must admit, is quite nice, but to look for a comfort zone and believe that your ultimate purpose in life is to find a comfort zone for yourself, the bad news is your comfort zone is not the most likely place where you will find spiritual awakening at all. Oh, that's a pity.

That wasn't supposed to be like that, comfort. And there are people who don't want to leave their comfort zone, so they are in a relatively small niche of relative security and they don't want to step out because they would step out of their comfort zone. And unfortunately, life eventually will rip you out of your comfort zone.

If you don't voluntarily step out of your comfort zone and accept the challenges of life, life will destroy your comfort zone. And, oh my God. So work with, remember the cross, whatever your cross is, you don't have to be a Christian to understand the symbolism, the deep symbolism of the cross and see that the torture instrument, that which is in the way is the way.

That's amazing.

[Speaker 2] (49:08 - 49:28)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Acceptance Is the Way To Transcendence [086883ea-9811-40be-985b-33dd5c4e7b87]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 1:00)

Acceptance is the way to transcendence. In this podcast, Eckhart answers a variety of questions. A woman asks about identity at the soul level.

She asks, do we in our most transcendent form retain some aspect of individuality, even though we all emanate from the one universal consciousness? Another woman shares a story of her granddaughter who has a life-threatening illness. She requests a few moments of presence with Eckhart to bring her joy.

A wife shares heartbreaking details about her husband who's dying of cancer. She questions if it's possible to remain conscious with compassion and care. Eckhart explains that even though it may seem strange, being in the presence of death is actually an opportunity.

He says we learn to suffer consciously and surrender completely. Eckhart says that even in the midst of life's most painful challenges, acceptance is the way to transcendence.

[Speaker 5] (1:03 - 1:58)

Thank you for taking my question. It's about my husband is severely ill with brain cancer and I'm struggling to stay conscious because of all the needs around me and we are struggling with the communication. So I spend a lot of the day guessing what he's saying and trying to meet his needs and I feel like I'm almost getting more and more unconscious perhaps because I'm tired.

I get very little time by myself which I need. So a lot of grief because we have been married for 36 years. He is my best friend and I'm losing him and he's losing himself every day.

[Speaker 1] (1:59 - 16:01)

Yes well thank you. On a practical level that's a secondary of course but let's start with that. I don't know if it's possible for you to get some help so that you don't have to do it all by yourself so that you have some little bit of time left that would be a desirable thing to do to try and get some help or some of the time at least.

But that's secondary what you can do. There's something one can do on a practical level that can be helpful but that's not the ultimate answer of course. It's still the suffering is still there and it is very painful to see that this human being seems to gradually be disappearing.

A similar thing by the way can happen if somebody suffers from Alzheimer that is a similar thing happens. The person that you knew suddenly seems to go away. It is very painful to witness that unless you can totally surrender and begin to understand what is happening to some extent.

The way I see it is that the consciousness that this human being is can no longer express can no longer manifest through this brain because the brain is damaged. So the consciousness which is the essence which is not the physical, the consciousness is not physical. The consciousness can no longer use the brain to express itself through that.

So it is a slow process what is normally called death. It's a slower death. It's a slow process of withdrawing because it doesn't work anymore.

It's like if a computer, a little analogy, if a computer becomes defective because something happened to it, it no longer works well. It gets harder and harder to download something. Let's say you can download things from the cloud into your computer.

There's a cloud where data is kept. And then at some point, what you download is hardly recognizable anymore because there's something wrong with the computer. But everything is actually still there, but it can no longer express itself through this form because the form has become, the form is dying, it's beginning to dissolve.

In this case, the brain is dying before the body dies. So if you can see that it's a withdrawing rather than the essence of that human being withdraws from this dimension. It's a slow death that you witness.

And the only answer is you recognize this process and the death will come to, for most people, the death comes in a different way. For most people, the brain and the rest of the body simultaneously come to an end when you die. But for some people, the brain begins to go first and then the body then follows and then finally death happens.

So it is an opportunity, it sounds very strange when I say opportunity, to witness, to be in the presence of death because it is a long, long death. And your practice needs to be one of complete surrender, complete surrender every moment. And then there's an expression that is very helpful by belief in spirituality.

I don't know who first used it. Maybe it was me or somebody else, it's all the same anyway. Conscious suffering, conscious suffering, when you suffer, it is almost inevitable that when you witness what is happening to your husband, that you suffer.

And then there's the possibility, instead of feeling I have to go beyond this suffering, stay with the suffering, but suffer consciously, accept the suffering completely. As if the suffering were something that's completely, if you accept the suffering completely, it actually burns up your ego very rapidly. One of the most powerful practices is to suffer consciously.

Not to say you're unhappy, it's so hard to suffer consciously to completely accept that this is what it is. In that suffering consciously, there's no longer anything saying in your mind, this should be different. You're completely accepting the suffering.

In that, the ego cannot survive in that state in you. So you would, the ego will die, you will die with your husband, so to speak. But in you, the ego will die.

And then through conscious suffering, it's a very powerful process of transcending the ego. In Christianity, not so much these days anymore, because most of Christianity these days has also become very superficial, if it still has meaning at all. But in medieval times and before, there was an identification with the archetype of, you know, the word archetype.

There was an identification with the archetype of suffering, which is Jesus on the cross. Jesus on the cross is the human, stands for all humans and stands and represents all suffering. Jesus on the cross is the archetype of human and it shows the way of suffering and the way of rebirth also.

But humans in medieval times and so on who identified completely with Jesus, it's also spoken about by the way in St. Paul and so on in the New Testament, you identify with Jesus and your suffering is the suffering of Jesus. Your and Jesus' suffering become one. It's voluntarily you're undergoing the same suffering as Jesus.

And then this can actually work beautifully for, I'm not saying that in your case, you may not need that, but it helped people in the past. Maybe it still helps some people these days. It helped people in the past to suffer consciously by going, this is the same, the death that you die is the same death that Jesus died.

You and Jesus become kind of one in that death. And then through that surrender to suffering, as shown visually in the figure on the cross, the surrender to suffering, that leads to death and then it leads to resurrection. It's all archetypal wisdom expressed there.

So that's only an example of how in the past it helped people. There's still some lovely books. I don't know whether Christianity is meaningful to you, but you can actually see what I'm talking about, the significance of that.

You don't have to be a Christian to see how this works, what I'm just describing, how the archetypal image can work for certain people. And even if you're not a Christian, you could look at the cross and suddenly understand it on a deeper level without being a conventional Christian. And suddenly see that is the path for humans is suffering.

And then the transcendence of suffering, but the transcendence of suffering does not come until suffering is totally accepted. The suffering that is, you cannot help it, it's nothing, you can't escape this, the suffering, you have to go into it. There are other

types of suffering that are self-generated by the human mind.

There are other types of suffering that are self-generated by dysfunctional reactions to people and situations. Those are types of suffering that they are different. You need to recognize that you yourself create dysfunctional reactions, you create reactivity, you amplify challenges so that they become huge problems.

So a lot of suffering is through dysfunctional use of the mind, and that has to be tackled and recognized there. Then there is deeper suffering such as in your situation. And when this deeper suffering comes, that's where you suffer consciously.

So there's no longer any resistance. So the deeper suffering is that can transform you. It can become an opening, an opening into transcendence.

So the deeper suffering is the situation that you are in now. Similar situations might be somebody who lost, I recently, I met somebody who lost his wife and two children in an accident, all gone all at once. Deep, deep suffering.

Now there you cannot say, okay, there's, you know, there's a dysfunction in your mind, you just have to, you just have to accept it. If you cannot accept what is because it's too hard to accept what is, you accept your suffering. So that's very, very powerful when it arises in your life.

Some of you that may never come such, you may die before that deep suffering comes. But so there are other ways of awakening also, of course. So conscious suffering.

There's a lovely book talking about medieval Christianity and so on, written in medieval times, a book of Christian spirituality. It's called *The Imitation of Christ*, written by Thomas R. Kempis, who was a monk.

Well, in those times, those were the only people who could read and write. So they're all monks or nuns. *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas R.

Kempis, it is very deep. It's medieval Christian spirituality. So to some extent, you have to look beyond the form, but there's a very powerful *Imitation of Christ*, you become one with Christ.

Thomas R. Kempis goes back, I think it was written in the 13th century or so. Make sure you get a good translation, not the more recent translations, get an older translation, because there are quite a few more recent than that are not very deep.

It's just something came to me. It's one of my favorite books. So when deep suffering comes, suffering that is not produced by a dysfunction in the egoic mind, but comes from a deeper place, then conscious suffering is the answer.

So until you reach a point where you even welcome that, it seems impossible, but when

you even welcome it, you burn, your ego burns up in this through conscious suffering, your ego gets consumed in that, and what's left is then you, beyond ego, the transcendent being. That is the opportunity, if you're able to use it. I hope this makes sense to you.

You have to, every moment needs to be a surrendered moment. There's no longer desire to get rid of suffering, suffer, you surrender to the suffering as it arises. Every moment, surrender, surrender, surrender.

That is also the best, most wonderful thing you can do for him, because that part of him that's no longer here will still know that. You may not realize it, but as you become transformed through this, it will reach him too, because he's already disappearing from this dimension, but it will reach him where he is, which is not in this dimension anymore. It will reach him, and so that is my advice to you, and I hope it makes sense, and I wish you well, and your husband.

[Speaker 4] (16:02 - 17:10)

Thank you. Hi Eckhart, I'm wondering, is there something personal or individual about a human's spirit or their soul, like something that's not form, it's not conditioning, it's not unhealthy identity, but a part of someone's essence that's more individual, unique, something that's different than the common source that we all share and emanate from, because I sense that there's to each person something truthful and innate that's not conditioning or not ego, but I question attributing it to universal source, because it feels different in every person, so I wonder if there's an intermediary level that's not source, but not form, but that's a person's essence, and I recognize this might be the ego trying to hold on to identity somehow, like a little bit of it, and I'm just not sure, and I'm confused, and I just hope you can talk about it.

[Speaker 1] (17:11 - 29:31)

Oh, thank you, thank you. The surface of reality that most people live on, which is where the physical body exists, the physical body is on the sense-perceived, this is part of the sense-perceived world, your thoughts and emotions already are not, they do not exist in the sense-perceived realm, the sense-perceived dimension, because nobody could find a thought in your brain. There is a correlation between brain activity and thinking, obviously, in the same way there's a correlation between the computer and something that you download from the cloud into your computer, so there is a correlation, but the physical being is very, very little, it's less than the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, you know, with an iceberg you see 10% on the surface, and 90% you don't see, it's under the water, but with humans, the physical is even, it's less than 10%, so to speak, so most of you exist in the realm of, one could say, invisibility, most of you is invisible, that begins with your thoughts, thoughts are not visible, no scientist has ever found a thought, and you're, I mentioned before in previous sessions, probably, there are countless things in

your, accumulated in your mind, countless memories, probably millions of things that are accumulated, you're not aware of any of these things, most of these things at any given moment, because they exist, where are they stored, all the memories of your grandparents, let's say, people who know who passed away, where's your memory of the house you lived in when you were seven years old, you still remember, although suddenly, now that I mention it, suddenly you remember, I can think back, and I can think back when I was 10 years old, we moved into a new apartment and got some new furniture, and that I can still, I can still, tactile memories of opening a cupboard of an armoire, there was a little key, I still have the tactile memory of how it opened, what it looks like, sliding door, a glass door, there were some books behind it, where are these stored for over half a century, and this is just countless, countless, countless things, are they all stored in the, well, they talk of neurons, which are electrical impurities, are they stored in the atoms and molecules in your brain, how is that possible, are there some atoms in your brain where your grandmother is, memory of your grandmother is stored, no, I don't think so, all those things already exist in a different realm of non-local consciousness, but they can be accessed through the brain when they are needed, in the same way that the computer can access things from the cloud when they're needed, so in other words, the most significant part of you is invisible, but that's still form, it's still form, so when I say you have a form identity, and then there is an essence identity, the form identity is not just the visible form, part of your form identity is also all the accumulated thoughts in your mind, and the emotions that go with the thoughts, all that is part of your form identity, and there is a person there that even if the physical body dissolves, there is a form identity that still continues underneath the surface, so to speak, underneath the surface in the realm of the invisible, a form identity continues, not forever, because nothing continues forever, everything is subject to change and metamorphosis, but for a while, there's an accumulation of thoughts and emotions that still is there as a person, and this accumulation of thoughts and emotions can resurface as another person, and then disappears again, withdraws, what it does while it disappears is another story, we can talk about another time where it goes and what it does, now to what extent that being that disappears, the form, if you are, if you awaken here in this lifetime, at least to some extent to your essence identity, then that remains with you, that you are not completely unconscious as you, and just the process of reincarnation is then not a completely unconscious one, because you're becoming aware of something that is deeper than the form, imagine a sphere, like a globe, you exist, we all exist as physical beings on the surface of this sphere of this globe, then that's the visible part of you, underneath the visible, just below the surface, there is you as the karmic entity consisting of thoughts, accumulated thoughts and emotions, the person, the question is to what extent in this lifetime, while you're still here as a physical body, to what extent I have been able to become aware of something that is deeper than, not only deeper than the body, but also deeper than thoughts and emotions, now you have to go back to the image of the sphere, so you are on the surface, underneath the surface, there are thoughts and emotions, that's you still as form, but no longer the

visible form, but then you can go deeper towards the, you're traveling towards the core of this sphere, the inner center of the sphere, now what I'm saying now, what I'm representing here now visually, and what we're really talking about is other dimensions, deeper dimensions, so underneath the surface, there's other dimensions, you go very, very deep where the personal disappears and you become aware of the light of consciousness itself, this your awareness then moves towards the center of the sphere, then if your awareness goes there and remains in the center or close to the center of the sphere, then you have transcended identification with the form, both physical form or the other form, the karmic form, that is non-physical, whatever shines through the form emanates from the center, which is the core, which is the one God, whatever you want to call it, the form however, is not separate or different from the light of consciousness, one could say it's frozen light, let's use those words, you are frozen light as form, as a physical form you're really frozen, and as a non-physical, you're still frozen, but maybe a little bit less, but still it's frozen consciousness, so to speak, now if you look at water, a piece of ice looks something very different from water, but basically it is water, and you can have different pieces of ice with different appearances and say, oh, you can have actually beautiful things, snowflakes, every snowflake, as you know, every snowflake is different, there are never two identical snowflakes, and they are all beautiful formations if you look at them under a microscope, so you can honor these beautiful manifestations, what are they manifestations of?

They're manifestations of the one, the one in this case, in this analogy is water, so the essence is still water, but you can still appreciate and honor the beautiful form that it can take, it doesn't last forever, the snowflake of course is fairly short-lived, except in Canadian winters where it stays for a long time, but the forms are short-lived, that's fine, and they are, again, they are, they change according to the evolution of consciousness, to what extent they are aware of the deeper essence, so let's come back to human beings, if you then look at human beings as frozen consciousness, assuming lovely forms, like beautiful snowflakes, but infinitely more complex, of course, than snowflakes, so you don't, you don't need to say this snowflake is really just water, but it is, but it's also a beautiful form, and you can acknowledge both, you can acknowledge the beauty of this form, knowing and sensing at the same time the essence beyond it, which is beyond the form, because the form, no matter how beautiful, is not going to last as this form, it is subject to impermanence, it's subject to metamorphosis, to change, every human being, we can't even imagine what the destiny is, the evolution of every human being has an infinite destiny in this universe, and so you have an infinite destiny in this universe, in the evolutionary process, at some point, the physical bodies will no longer be there, even, and so on, we will move beyond the physical, of course, but your question then is really to honor both, yes, there is something beyond the physical body, every human being that is particular to that form, like snowflakes, all different, and you can, you can love that, you can love the snowflake, which is a human being, and you can, at the same time, love that which is the essence of the snowflake, which is, in that

case, it's water, simultaneously, so that, I believe, could be the answer to your question, is it?

[Speaker 4] (29:33 - 29:39)

I, I think it is, so there is something, yes, there is something, okay,

[Speaker 1] (29:40 - 34:37)

but it's not separate from consciousness, it is, this is why the Buddha said, form is emptiness, and emptiness is form, emptiness meaning the unconditioned consciousness, form is emptiness, emptiness is form, they are ultimately one, but it's perfectly fine that they exist here as, as form also, this is the ability to honor all life forms, not only the physical aspect of all life forms, but the deeper aspect of all life forms, because beyond the physical, form continues, form is still there, now, at some point in the evolutionary process, there comes a realization, and the form then dissolves as form, becomes part of God, it always was part of God, but it's a process in which the universe, the entire universe, is becoming conscious, it's, we are part of that process, in this dimension, where this universe exists, the universe is moving towards greater consciousness, it is an awakening universe, there is a transcendent dimension, where there's no time, so that there's no awakening, but there's a connection between this universe, and the transcendent, this universe is an emanation of the transcendent, now, I cannot go any further, because language fails, and nobody could understand, because you can ask the question, why did the universe emanate from the one, why did the one create this world, there's a very deep answer to that, but all I can say is, it is an awakening process, the universe is awakening, and for some reason, the one wants that, anything else we can say is just, we can't go there, because we are moving to something that is totally impossible to comprehend through the human mind, especially conceptually, non-conceptually, there can be very deep realizations, but you can't talk about them, after all, talking is sounds, your vocal cords produce sounds, the other part of words is, I don't know what the expression is, there's vowels, and there's, the vowels are the a, i, e, o, u, these are vocal, they're made with your vocal cords, the others are, are they called diphthongs, I don't know, consonants, consonants, yeah, okay, so they are produced through air pressure, so a combination of sounds produced by your vocal cords, and sounds produced by air pressure, how can that explain the nature of the universe, it's impossible, how can you produce a few sounds, interspersed with a little bit of air pressure here and there, and you think you can explain the universe with that, no, so we have to recognize the limitations, the limitations of language, the limitations of conceptual thinking, which is basically words in their mind, still language, conceptual thinking, very, very limited, it's a miracle that I can even talk about these things using language, it's just a miracle, so we have to recognize the limitations of that, but other than conceptual thinking, there is a deeper consciousness that is non-conceptual, and that's where true intelligence originates, and on that level, beyond conceptualization,

there is a lot that you can realize, but not understand, because understand means through concepts, there can be very deep realizations about the essence of the universe, because you've gone deeply into yourself, and you've discovered the essence of yourself, which is no different from the essence of the universe, so you discover self-discovery, which you cannot put into words, which you can't talk about, so there's a deep knowing that is possible, but it is always, it is non-conceptual, and it cannot translate into concepts, as concepts, you're very, very limited, so that's how it is.

[Speaker 4] (34:38 - 34:41)

Thank you, thank you very much, thanks.

[Speaker 2] (34:44 - 37:17)

Thank you. Hi Eckhart, it's such a pleasure to meet you, I've been following you for, since about 2006, and I'll ask my question in a minute, but it rang a bell on me on suffering, because of course, that's what brought me to you, and of course, it was a lifetime of suffering, you know, from abusive childhood, but what really pushed me over the edge was a granddaughter with Rett syndrome, I don't know whether you've ever heard of Rett, R-E-T-T, but it happens mainly in girls, and it's really just a spontaneous genetic, but they're about a year and a half old, they just start losing everything, and I mean everything, and I went in, of course, pure hell, where my mind, you know, went 24-7, I'd wake up in the middle of the night, you know, thinking I couldn't get out of that, and so you were the one that held my hand, and finally walked me through it, to the point where now, you know, she's out of it most of the time, she only weighs about 70 pounds, and she's 27 years old, and I help out with her a lot, and a lot of times she's really spacey, and seizures, but when she's not, sometimes she has excellent eye contact, and a beautiful smile, and a laugh, and I mean, it's just like my consciousness meets with her, is where I really find, you know, tremendous joy, you know, from the biggest pain, that you know, of course, I wish that wasn't like this, but as far as where she is now, and you know, I never thought people could be happy with a handicapped granddaughter, but there's no bigger thrill than sitting with her, and just being present, gazing at each other's eyes, and like I said, I still, I carry your book around, I have to carry it to bed at night, I don't read it, I just set it there, because I know, you know, when I run into a problem, I've read so much about you, that I, you can hear your answers, and I thought, you know, when I have this just moment, I would just like to spend a moment of silence, or not even a full minute, really, just 15 to 20 seconds, of just being present with you, is what would be my joy.

[Speaker 1] (37:18 - 44:46)

Oh, thank you, that's a wonderful non-question, and it's quite appropriate, as we're approaching the end of this session, so it comes at the right time, and again, as I want to remind everybody, that when you join with somebody in the act of looking, sometimes

called gazing, as much as possible, be free of thinking, if thoughts come, dismiss them, they're not important, and don't get the sense that, let's say, when you're looking at me, or you do it with a partner or friend, you're not looking at another person, because the other person only arises when there's some conceptualization, if there's no thought, the sense of a separate other isn't really there either, because it's thought that separates, conceptualization separates everything in this world, the moment you let go of that, where do I end, and where does the other begin? There's no longer a sense of separateness. I'm reminded of the book of Genesis, at the beginning of the Bible, there was a tree, and these first humans, as they are called, this tree is called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the first humans ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that is regarded as something bad, because in this mythology, God had said, don't do that, because if you do that, you will get very unhappy and you will die, and of course that's what happened, they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the way I interpret that is, it points to the beginning of thinking in humans, the beginning of differentiating between this and this, and instead of seeing life in its totality, like an animal still does, you see life in its totality, this is good, this is bad, differentiate, intelligence is defined as the ability to differentiate, so it speaks of a beginning of a new evolutionary stage for humans, the beginning of thinking, and then strangely, it says in there, don't go there, says God, because it's a very strange mythological story, don't do that, because you will become like one of us, that means nobody knows, you will become like one of us if you go there, and you will become unhappy and you will die, and that was paradise, the end of paradise, beginning of thinking, the beginning of persons arising, and an amazing evolutionary journey started, and then another strange thing God said about the garden of Eden, Eden I believe, etymologically the word goes back to the root is joy, the garden of Eden has another tree that's called the tree of life, and God said you have to go out, you can't come back in, because then you will eat of the tree of life, and you can't do that, so through eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it became impossible for humans to eat of the tree of life, the tree of life became something inaccessible to them, the tree of life is, the way I interpret it, is the tree of life is the next stage in human evolution after the transcendence of thinking, which was the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and it's mentioned again at the very end of the Bible in the apocalypse, that humans are then able to, after the terrible destruction, humans are able to have access to the tree of life, so wonderful, wonderful images, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that was the evolutionary, this new evolutionary stage, we are coming to the end of this huge evolutionary development of where thinking is paramount, where we become completely identified and completely possessed by thinking, the next stage is transcending thinking, which doesn't mean we can never think again, transcending means it still operates, but you're no longer trapped in it, something else has arisen, the tree of life, the awakening beyond thinking, so I'm just, this just came to me, because the important thing when you look at another, to be in that state of not thinking, and in the state of not thinking, there is no other anymore, you're just, it's just consciousness

joining, and that's really consequences of the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, thinking, it was a necessary stage to go through, and then the next one is transcendence, then we have access to the tree of life, which is awakening, access to source, who you are, the essence, tree of life is an image for source, the essence of all life, so when you look as we're doing now, you're looking at me in this case, but if you're not thinking, just be present and aware, then there is not you and me, you're not looking at another person, it's just the looking, and it's just the consciousness behind the looking, and in that we are one.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 3] (44:48 - 45:07)

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Eckhart Tolle Accessing the Dimension Beyond Thought [57e9df3c-8c52-4553-a422-1584e7e90b72]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:31)

Accessing the dimension beyond thought. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience. He explains their goal is to learn to access the deeper part of themselves, beyond thinking.

Most people have no connection to that until some crisis pushes them to dig deeper. Eckhart says we must find spaces of awareness between thoughts. Eventually, we reach a state of being that is connected to the soul of the universe.

[Speaker 1] (0:34 - 34:29)

The essence of our retreat is accessing the dimension that is beyond thought. That's the most important thing here, to learn that it is possible, that it is not all that difficult, although the mind may tell you that it's difficult. And so one way of putting it, and that may be helpful to have that perspective for a while, although it's not the ultimate truth, is to say that there's two of you.

It's not the ultimate truth. It's a way of looking that is temporarily helpful. There's two of you, the person and the unconditioned transcendent being.

And that being is inseparable from the being that inhabits all life forms, that is basically, one could say, the soul of the universe. So if you can sense that within yourself that there's these dimensions, this dimension of, one could say there are many dimensions, but it's all how one looks at things. All divisions are ultimately only arbitrary, not arbitrary, but temporary.

Not the ultimate truth, it's just the truth of oneness. But I'm talking now to the ripple on the surface of the ocean, and that's you. If you are VIP, you are a wave.

But it's basically the same, doesn't make much difference, ripple or wave or tsunami. So I'm talking to the ripple and saying, that's how it is, basically. There's two of you.

There's you as a ripple, and there's you, the ocean. And that's in your life, so-called your life. There's no your life.

Anything one says, the moment you start to speak, you're wrong. So, obviously, I sometimes say, your life, that's how one speaks. There's no such thing as your life, unfortunately, but why not?

Because if you say, my life, you have already created a division. There's you and there's your life. Obviously, you are life.

So you can actually learn to sense which dimension is uppermost at any given moment, the unconditioned, which is there when you are present, alert, still, or the conditioned, the personality, the mind. So when you express an opinion, then already you can know whether you are completely identified with the opinion and then become defensive and angry when somebody has a different opinion. Or if you are completely identified, you get very emotional when somebody puts forward a different viewpoint or opinion.

So they are totally in the personality, the person. Or you may be able to discuss something that is the art of living in a conscious way, living consciously. I highly recommend this practice whenever there's a discussion about whatever it may be.

In a discussion, the tendency to be drawn into mind identification is huge. So there's a gravitational pull that immediately exerts itself and it draws you into mind completely. But if you are present enough, you're able to discuss whatever it may be without self-identification with your opinion.

So here's the, this is what I think, but that's not what I am. That is a mind formation. I think it's important that I state that this is the reason why I think this is this and this and this.

Another important thing is when you have a self-identified, it creates a lot of emotion, egoic emotion, and the emotion actually rises into your mind and makes you confused. Then you get emotional thinking, which very often is irrational. That's not uncommon.

And once you're trapped in that gravitational pull of emotional thinking, you're basically, it always means you're defending yourself in this, that, trying to enhance yourself, diminish the other. Then once you're in it, it's not easy to get out. You may have to wait until the momentum exhausts itself.

So then you will compulsively and emotionally talk about something, in many cases, totally insignificant, and it becomes important to you because your sense of self is in it, and it can lead to a breakdown in relationship, a different opinion. Somebody has a different opinion becomes your enemy because he or she has a different opinion. And as you're present, you practice with, but so you need to be able to sense this, the deeper dimension still present within yourself, the deep I, and then the surface I can discuss things.

So there's an alertness in the background while you're speaking. That means there's a spaciousness even while you're discussing something, and you don't confuse the mental position of the other person with who the other person essentially is. That's a continuous practice, everyday life, almost any situation that arises can become part of your spiritual practice so that whatever you do in your life, any activity, anything you do, if you can realize from now on, the rest of your so-called life, there's always something that is of primary importance, although you may easily forget that for a while.

Your primary importance is the state of consciousness, your state of consciousness at this moment, not whatever it is you're dealing with at this moment. Now, it's very seductive, the world will try to tell you, and your mind, which is inseparable from the world, will try to tell you that this is of primary importance. Now, it could be that there's an emergency, somebody has fallen into the water, and you're going to jump in to save him or her.

Hopefully, you can swim. There may not be time to sense the unconditioned within yourself, but what actually often happens in situations when people do courageous things, where people afterwards say, oh, you're so, you're a hero, and the person says, well, I just did it. So, if there's a real emergency, it often happens that the thinking faculty is totally switched off, and you may find yourself taking right action.

You may not sense the spaciousness, but it does come. In a true emergency, the thinking function stops, and you go, oh, you cannot think about, hmm, what am I going to do? This really is a problem, because then you become paralyzed.

If a wild animal comes through this door, running towards me, let's say it's a bear, because they are around here somewhere. It's a grizzly bear, they're huge. Then it's coming towards me.

Is that a problem? I really have a problem. I wonder what I should do.

It's too late. So, in such situations, you don't think. Thinking stops, and then nobody can predict what you will do.

You can't predict what you will do. I can only guess that I might run away, or I might try and make myself bigger than I am, and make threatening sounds in the hope that it will think I'm stronger than it. Don't know if that will work.

That's what is sometimes recommended when you come across a bear while you're out hiking. Make yourself bigger than you are, and then you go, ah, ah, ah. They say, however, it works with brown bears or black bears, but it doesn't work with grizzlies.

The other option is you play dead. That's highly recommended, and that might be what I would do. And we could all do that.

I don't know how I got to the bears, but... So, if it's not an emergency, and most things are not an emergency situation, then the two dimensions, this is something you learn gradually. Many times you will forget.

That's fine. Some spaciousness remains in you while you're dealing with the things of this world. When you are sitting quietly in your room or out in nature, then the spaciousness, the stillness, the presence emerges a bit more fully, and the personality recedes.

When you go back into the world and deal with things, you need the personality. Sometimes people ask me, don't you need the ego to deal with things in this world? Well, you need your form identity, which is the person or the personality to deal with things in this world, because otherwise you couldn't...

It's very hard if you didn't have a form identity, then you would just be the... You would become like the moth, the God-intoxicated people in certain parts of the world, that they have a deep connection with source, probably, but totally unable to deal with the things of this world. So, you don't want to go that way.

And in the West, they won't think that you are a holy man or woman. They will put you away. So, if you have to go there, move to India somewhere first.

So, you need not your ego. There's a difference between your form identity and your ego. The difference is complete identification with your form identity, which is the body and the psychological form of you, complete identification with the form identity is ego.

But when you're no longer completely identified with your form identity, you still have a form identity, but it's no longer ego. That's the difference. So, you still, you have a person, a personality with opinions and viewpoints and abilities and certain flaws, some of which, as presence becomes more integrated with the personality, and that takes time, some of those flaws will dissolve, especially serious flaws that cause you and other humans suffering.

And there may be a few other idiosyncrasies in your personality that may remain, but most likely, they would be things that are not huge things that cause suffering to yourself or others. So, there's the difference between form identity and ego. You don't need your ego to function in this world, but you need your form identity to function in this world.

But the only way you prevent your form identity from becoming ego is to be present while the form identity operates in this world. And it operates in this world not only when you are actively doing something, your form identity is also your mind, or actually, fundamentally your mind, even when you're just sitting somewhere, then your form identity is probably still operating when you're thinking about something, it's there. And so, a very subtle art then is to be able to think, but not be a hundred percent drawn into this movement of the mind.

And this is something that is practice, perhaps having been here for several days is helpful. So, there's a remnant of the other you, the deep I, as I sometimes call it, that's the other half of you. So, one could say there's the two halves, there's a form, form half, and there is the formless deep half, so to speak, you are both.

So, you don't want one to take over completely, probably not, but most humans, of

course, in this world, for most of them, only one half exists, and that's the surface dimension of them, and that's a great pity that they have missed the very purpose of human life. It's a little bit like a seed that never sprouts, because in a way, every human is a seed, a potential for the flowering of consciousness. But if you look in nature, nature is infinitely abundant.

One tree may shed thousands and thousands of seeds, and out of those, maybe one or two grow into another tree, if that. So, while you are acting, or even just thinking, practice having some spaciousness in the background. And another thing that helps is not to get drawn into an uninterrupted stream of thought.

This also applies when you're having a conversation with someone. We all have met people that talk uninterruptedly, one thing leading to another, and it's like having a passage in a book without any punctuation. Such writings actually exist.

I personally am not very fond of those writings. It's called stream of consciousness writing, like James Joyce and others. I could never get into that.

By the way, it should not be called stream of consciousness, it should be called stream of unconsciousness. So, you've all met people who, it never ends, this one subject, and it emerges with another subject, and then they get off in that direction, in that direction, and you sit there, and it's time to leave, but you cannot say, I need to go now, because you're waiting for the gap that never comes. And you don't want to be rude, so, but at some point, you may have to be rude.

Oh, oh, oh, that may help. So, there's an element of surprise when you suddenly go, oh, I have to go. But this could happen in your own mind, even when you're alone, it could happen that your thoughts go in the same way, and there's no gap.

It just goes on and on, when people worry and have this fear. Worry is also a, I mentioned just now, emotion contaminating your thought. The emotion rises into your thinking, and tends to make your thinking irrational, and not very intelligent, dysfunctional kind of thinking.

So, when fear rises into your mind, fearful thoughts arise, which fuel the emotion of fear even more, and that emotion comes back into your mind, and you get into this vicious circle, and your mind talks and talks, it becomes like that person that you couldn't get away from, but there you can't even say, I need to get away, because it's, you're there, and you may not even know, you may be so identified that you don't know that there's a possibility, in fact, you have lost, you're lost in your mind, you don't, you're not even there, you're asleep somewhere in the background, who you are is actually somewhere asleep, and in the foreground you're dreaming the dream of unconscious thinking. And there are humans who spend their whole life in that state, dreadful fate, dreadful.

So there, a very helpful thing, when you are thinking or speaking, let's say just a normal conversation, when you have said something, you come to the end of a statement, and go back for a few seconds into alert stillness, and then either the other person will say something, or you will just start another sentence, but there's a small gap, always come to the end of a statement, so that you prevent a stream of unconscious thinking from taking you over, this happens to humans continuously, so you don't want to be taken over by your mind, kidnapped, possessed, mind possessed. So the practice is, find little spaces, always spaces, spaces, spaces of awareness, even if it's just three seconds. For example, looking at something, and you may notice, it's not actually that you have to create awareness, you just have to be alert, and then the awareness is there.

Now, if you're very alert, you may notice something very interesting, and that is, whenever your sensory perception, which is mainly visual and auditory, but it could also involve other senses, whenever they register something new, so it could be that you're walking out of a door in a building, you open the door, and then a totally different vista is there, just a moment ago you saw a room and a door, now you open a door, you take one step out, and then the first thing you look at, whatever is there, it could be a beautiful mountain landscape, like here, or it could be a city street, but then you may notice, if you're really alert, for two seconds or three, you're not labeling mentally what you're seeing, you're just perceiving it, and there's always a little, very small gap between the act of perception and the mental labeling of your perception, but if you can catch that little gap and become aware of it, because usually people are not aware, they just, they look at something, and then the mind interprets it, and says something about it, usually, if you can catch the gap and become conscious of it, you prolong it, it prolongs itself, and then you may be able to take several steps out, without any interference of thinking, you're just present, there are also strange things you can do, you may sometimes find that you can know what you have to do next, for example, or know what you have to do next, without any verbalization in your mind, so you can look at a situation, and then the situation requires some kind of action, but you develop the ability of looking, and then knowing what you have to do, without mentally formulating anything that says, oh, no, you should be doing that, I need to do that, what can I do here, especially if it's problematic, what action can I take here, then if you can face a situation in alert stillness, then it's much more likely that your action will be intelligent, and will be just right for that situation, that's a response, the other is a reaction, which relies on the conditioning of your mind, and so we all know people who, you know exactly how they're going to react when you say a certain thing, if you've lived with somebody, you know when you say this, they're going to react that way, or when that situation arises, they're going to react that way, this may happen to you too, if you can isolate certain pockets in your life, it's very important, certain pockets in your life where you tend to become unconscious, there may be certain situations, whenever that situation arises, it tends to draw you into unconsciousness, it could even be certain people, whenever you meet that particular person, you act more unconsciously, you get

drawn into an old reactive pattern of the ego, this could be, for example, if you're an adult, you're going back to visit your parents, and some people experience it like that, whenever they visit their parents, they're drawn into old reactive patterns, and the parents probably too, and that becomes their relationship, and it doesn't work very well, and therefore of course, it's highly recommended as a reflection to see how far you've come spiritually to visit your parents, famous statement by Ram Dass, if you think you're so enlightened, go and spend a week with your parents, but it doesn't have to be parents, it could be other people, often it's people with whom you share a lot of past, or it could be other people who trigger you, maybe at work, just looking at them triggers you, and if somebody triggers you, means he or she makes you unconscious, you become reactive, so if you know that in your life, so either people or situations, or it could be, sometimes it happens when money is involved, people become very unconscious, then let's say you're trying to sell your condo, or your house, and then you're talking to the realtor, and these difficulties are arising, and suddenly the spiritual person who has been to 10 retreats with Eckhart, gets very angry and upset with you, what happened? It's often people like realtors or lawyers, they often meet people at their most unconscious, so those professions could potentially be extremely enlightening, because you really need to be present to deal with all those people you meet in unconscious states, all the people who go to court, observe yourself, see where are the situations where I tend to become very reactive, and then when you go into those situations, or meet those people, you need to know before, okay, here we go, and then stay very, very present, turn up the light, the dimmer switch, it's a bit like that, how do you do that?

How do you turn up the light, the dimmer switch, feeling intensely the energy field of your inner body helps to anchor you in presence, so when you go into situations like that, okay, now I'm going to talk to my stockbroker, if you have one, I don't, but you know from past experience that every time you talk to your stockbroker, you become reactive, because you have in your mind, fear is associated with money, and money is associated with the idea of scarcity, and scarcity from your, perhaps from your childhood is associated with the idea of survival, and all kinds of things are unconscious thoughts that still live in you, and so before you go into that situation, okay, I'm now calling rest, this is my spiritual practice, the primary goal then in that, in any situation, is to stay present, but when you go into a situation where you're most likely to become unconscious, then turn up the light of presence just before you go in, and while you're in it, and as I just said, it is very helpful to be intensely present within your inner energy field while you're talking, and then you realize there's a spaciousness, because that is the doorway, a very good doorway into presence is the inner body, is the doorway into presence, can be a very helpful doorway into presence, there's also the doorway into presence, of course, of totally accepting your experience of this moment, so if you can talk to your, with whoever it is you're talking to, and just totally accept whatever he or she says in this moment, that's fine too, there are various doorways into presence, but

it's presence, or you meet your ex, as they call them, I'm meeting my ex about something, so all the stuff that happened, that accumulated before the divorce happened, all those years, it's back in your mind, and there's your ex, and you have a very clear image of who he or she is, and it's not pleasant, you're a very unconscious ex, and then you have to be really, really present so that you don't go into the old reactive mode, and then you're meeting this person, it's almost without the past, that's an amazing thing, yes, you know the past, but in the moment of meeting that person, there's only you, there's not you as the personality, when you become really present, what emerges is the other half of you emerges more, the personality becomes relatively unimportant, the other half, the unconditioned presence shines through, and then you're able to meet another human being, even you might have shared a lot of unpleasant pasts with him or her, but you can meet this person when the other, the deep eye shines through you, you meet the person through the deep eye, which means you meet this person without reference to the past, you have that ability, well, not you as a person, but that ability is in you of meeting a human being, even a human being with whom you share a lot of unpleasant past, without reference to the past, so there's, you're meeting that person in the present, fully in the present, that's an enormous thing, I know people who have practiced it, and many of them have reported back and said that sometimes, not always, and you're not doing it in order to achieve something else through it, it is sufficient unto itself, however, almost miraculous transformations have happened in the other person, when you met the other person without reference to the past, so it's not that you want the other person to change, all that falls away, you're just not bringing the past into this encounter, and then it is not uncommon for the other person also, without them realizing what's happening, becoming freed, at this moment at least, from their heavy personality, and something beyond the personality in them also shines through, and that's a miracle of transformation, that's why sometimes people, when one of the two who share a lot of unpleasant past, one of them becomes conscious, it can lead also to the transformation of the other, not necessarily, if it doesn't, it's fine too, at least you are free, and you don't need the other to be free too, to be feeling that you are free, and so it can also happen with your parents, that suddenly the way in which your parents relate to your changes, when you meet your parents without reference to the past, and in absolute presence, that's an amazing experience, so I suggest you try it out, you have quite a bit of time to practice, and then Thanksgiving is still a long way in the future, and that's where to try it out, when you sit around the big table, well that's for North Americans who celebrate Thanksgiving, you sit around the table and there's the, you basically, this is the past, the past sitting around the table, some people dreading it, Christmas too, oh no, because you're facing the living past, so it's a miraculous thing, and again, one could say that is the real meaning of forgiveness, it's not so much a mental act, mental acrobatics, they'd say, okay, you've done dreadful things, but I'm so spiritual that I forgive you, I forgive you, at least I'm trying to, at least I'm trying, you're not even trying, why do I always have to be the first, it's always the same, you're lost again, so forgive you is not so much a mental, to formulate certain things in your mind,

and then trying to live up to a certain thought in your mind, which is very difficult, if not impossible, but the real forgiveness is to enter that state of presence, so that you're not the personality that's conditioned by the past, and then you can meet the person, even the person who did something to you, if you choose to meet them, you don't have to meet a person who did bad things to you, but the question is, does that person still exist in you as a mind form, as a thought form, as a mental emotional entity, does this person who did bad things to you still live in you, they might even have passed away already, but they live in you as a mental emotional entity that you carry, it's actually like a little gremlin that lives in you, and it's not pleasant, and so forgiveness means to recognize that for what it is, it's not really the other person anymore, the person maybe passed away 10 years ago, it's not the other person anymore, it's something you carry still in your mental emotional field that lives there, and so that is, again, something to recognize, and if you recognize it as something that lives in your mental emotional field, then it's much easier to step back from it, and by no longer getting drawn into it, so that's something to do with something that lives in you, and you recognize it as something that you no longer want or need, and then it gradually dissolves as you're no longer reacting against it, so you have one, you have a split in you, as long as it's there, there's that mental emotional entity, and then there's you, there's another pattern in their mind that reacts against it, it's a bit crazy, but forgiveness then is really meeting the other, if the other is still there, and you're actually now meeting them in person without reference to the past.

[Speaker 2] (34:31 - 34:51)

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Eckhart Tolle Addiction to Thinking [19e7b057-0539-4f6a-8d99-8e78aa87a2ef]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:36)

Addiction to thinking. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions on several topics including one about addiction. He says people are addicted to many substances but the greatest addiction of all is thinking.

It's like a drug and people cannot stop. They resist letting go because it shields them from the painful part of their lives. Eckhart says the solution is presence.

Becoming aware slows down an overactive mind. Our confusion dissipates and thinking loses its ability to wreak havoc in our lives.

[Speaker 4] (0:42 - 1:00)

When I try to become present using one of the portals like following the breath, I very quickly fall below the level of thought and I either fall asleep or I kind of fall into a dull calm that doesn't have any alertness. Do you have any suggestions?

[Speaker 1] (1:00 - 11:03)

Thank you. Thank you. That is the case with many people.

When you step out of thought, here's, let's say, here's the level of thinking and then you have a vastness below thinking, so to speak, and a vastness above thinking. And when you rise above thinking, it can happen that suddenly you plunge back into thinking and then through thinking and end up below thinking. So this is a case with even many Buddhist monks who meditate.

Many years ago, I occasionally visited Buddhist monasteries and I saw the monks who meditate early in the morning. Of course, it's five o'clock in the morning. They sit very present and then after 15-20 minutes, as you can see some of them, I must have probably wasn't meditating because I was watching them.

And so some go, they never actually fall, but they have fallen below thinking. Your practice then should be not so much practicing when you are sitting still, but to incorporate the practice of presence into activities rather than like this. And that can be done in many, many ways.

You can make a conscious choice to use a certain activity and make them short at first. If it's too long, you won't keep it up probably. But begin with short activities and use the activity as a vehicle for presence.

So the activity becomes an excuse, one could almost say, for being present in the doing.

And that means the doing is not primarily any longer a means to an end. It is an end in itself.

And so that could be a simple thing like walking across the room from here to the door and being just present with every step. And it doesn't need to look funny, like walking on eggs, not like that, just a normal walk, perhaps a little slower than usual, maybe, or maybe not even that. And they simply, you're present each step, you're present in each step.

And that means in that space, you can use an activity and regard it as a temporal space in which you're not thinking. You can go for a walk, you see a lamppost, well, not in LA, because nobody walks, but if you're somewhere else, don't walk here, you get arrested. But if you walk, unless you're jogging, or you have a dog, that's okay.

But if you're just walking, you're not jogging and you don't have a dog. I did that with a friend in Santa Monica, we walked around some blocks and a police car followed us at night. You're walking, and there's a lamppost a few yards away.

And between here and this lamppost, you practice presence. And that becomes a space of not thinking, just alert presence. And then you reach the lamppost and then you're free to think again, or to look at the next lamppost and see if they another space of not thinking.

Beautiful practice. And before, if you'd gone for a walk, it might have been a purely physical thing. I want to exercise, I need to go for a walk.

That's good, that's helpful. But your mind would have been somewhere else. Which is the case for most people who are either walking or jogging, their mind is somewhere else.

And I often walk in the forest and occasionally meet people, and very few are actually present where they are. Some actually carry things in their ears, noise-making machines, as if the noise-making machine in their head wasn't enough. They carry an electronic device that puts noises into their ears, or they're talking to a friend while they walk about their problems.

With occasional brief glimpses of, oh, that's a beautiful tree. And then he said to me, then any activity that you start with something very simple, like wiping a table with a cloth, which you have to do occasionally, like dusting. And as you wipe the table, you're wiping your mind.

Beautiful thing. Or I also recommend, I believe I said it somewhere in a book, waiting. Whenever you're waiting, you're standing in line somewhere, at a store, at the airport.

Use that time, rather than to indulge in useless thinking, to be present. You can use your breathing, feeling the inner body, or being acutely aware of sense perceptions, without

judgment, just looking around while you wait at the supermarket. Not complaining, just you look at the cashier doing her work or his work, or the other customers looking around.

Acutely aware of sense perceptions. Like a little child hasn't been here for very long, so the little child looks like everything is new. You don't have to just, nobody will notice, you're just there.

In fact, the most likely thing is, I call that practicing being invisible. I often practice that, but less successfully these days, unfortunately. Going into a public place, in the state of presence, no thought, no judgment of anything or anybody, and then it is quite likely that nobody will look at you.

In other words, you become semi-invisible. You attract no attention whatsoever. So I use the example of being a valley as opposed to being a mountain.

So if you go into a place not as a mountain, looking around, noticing people, thinking about, are they noticing me? That's a mountain. Either or being afraid of feeling self-conscious.

You're still a mountain, but you're feeling you don't want to be seen, but they are all looking at me. You're still, you're a mountain. But do that, can you go into a public place being a valley, which means no thought, just presence, simple, alert presence, no judgments, and then people don't see you.

It's beautiful, and you become invisible. Now, to the ego, that's not necessarily pleasant, because the ego wants some recognition, at least recognize that I'm here. And if you can't say something good about me, say something bad, at least somebody acknowledges my existence.

The ego wants to be acknowledged, but that's a very powerful, extremely peaceful way of being there in a place is to be there in an invisible entity. That reminds me of the time when I was with Kim in Miami Beach in a cafe, and perhaps we must have been quite present there because, and of course, surrounded by people with wonderful bodies. And we sat and sat, and the waiter just did not see us.

And after a while, I said, let's just stay and see how for how long we are invisible. And there was no end to it, didn't see us. Now, you might say, well, perhaps we look too puny in that place, but surrounded by people with beautiful bodies, but I believe it also has something to do with just being still.

So that is a beautiful practice, public places, being still in public places, if you want to practice with that. And all kinds of activities that are short that you would do anyway, cooking a meal may be a long thing. If I say be present while you, depends how long you're cooking, the cooking time is.

If it's two hours, then you might lose it. But you still could start with boiling an egg, which takes maybe three minutes, and see if you can be present as you put it in the pan, fill it with water, switch on, and watch it as it comes to the boil. Or anything to do with movement, any movement.

I often give this example, probably because I have a glass of water next to me when I talk. Picking something up and putting it somewhere else, or as I pick up this glass. Now, this can be a presence practice, and this is then when you couple it with movement, you're not going to fall below thinking, because if you fall below thinking, the glass will drop out of your hand, perhaps.

While the glass travels from the table to the mouse, can you be present, so that it's not a means to an end, but just a movement. And then the glass travels back to the table, and while it travels back to the table, can you be just alert, no thought. So you use that movement to create a space of no thought.

So this is a space of no thought here. This is the movement, and then because it's so beautiful, you do it again. And then the thought comes and says, I can do it.

[Speaker 2] (11:08 - 12:33)

I've read all your books, and I listen to your recordings pretty much on a daily basis, and I don't say that to build up an ego that doesn't exist. It leads into my question. What I find in trying to practice the power of now, trying to be conscious without thought, is a very heavy inner dialogue of all the principles and things that I've read.

How should I do this? What would Eckhart say? And actually my thought process starts getting more active, and I think I'm losing the presence by that thought process.

And then I think of your latest book with the cartoons, which I love, which I think there's one with a little bird in the tree. He's talking to the dog, and he's very upset, and the dog says, what's wrong? And the bird says, well, you know, I'm thinking about yesterday, and this and that, and I'm worried about what's going to happen in a week, two weeks, about the future.

What do I do? What do I do? And the dog just looks at him and says, stop thinking.

So it seems you try to stop thinking, and you read all this, and you try to practice it, but yet in any given situation, I find that in order to get closer to practicing it, or even practice it, it's causing a lot of thoughts to happen. So it's that different kind of thoughts, or those thoughts that I should break that kind of habit, and if so, how? Okay.

[Speaker 1] (12:34 - 43:38)

Thank you. Thank you. There's a lot of talk these days about, not just talk, actually, it's

happening, addictions.

Many people are addicted to all kinds of things, substances, but one of the greatest addictions, or one of the greatest addiction, never actually, you never read about it in the papers, because the people who are addicted to it don't know it, it's the addiction to thinking. It's actually addictive. Can't stop thinking, it's like, can't stop drinking, can't stop smoking, can't stop eating, can't stop thinking.

Thinking is the greater addiction than any of these, and it's an addiction because it's, first, it's been a drug, or it's just been around for so long, and it's a pseudo sense of self. So it's a great reluctance on the part of most people to let go of thinking, which is equated with the state of sleep, to let go of thinking. There isn't that much to understand in this teaching.

There's a little bit to understand about how the ego works, but even that is just mainly a self-observation. The main thing about it is presence, presence, and presence is a space of no thought, but presence can also be there in the background, even when thinking is happening. You can still be not completely involved in the thinking.

Thinking loses the ability to create havoc in your life and confuse you. So your choice, then, is not to understand more or to bring some intellectual analysis to the practice, but to practice the state of not thinking, which can be arrived at by various ways, as you probably know. If you don't think about it, just do it.

Becoming more aware of the present moment and accept it as it is slows down the overactive mind, is one thing, because a lot of the overactivity of the mind is an attempt to get away from the is-ness, the simplicity of the present moment. So to become more aware of the present moment as a practice, have perhaps little pointers in your office, at home, in your car, let's say, present moment or whatever, or a symbol for it. And there are different entry points into the present moment.

Present moment awareness means thinking subsides, may not disappear completely, but something else arises that is primary. We call it presence or awareness. Buddhists call it mindfulness, which I don't use because it implies your mind is full of things, but it isn't, of course.

It's just a mistranslation. To be present, first of all, use the present moment. But how do you become conscious of the present moment?

Now, when you get it, after a while, you can actually sense the presence of the present, so to speak, directly, and there it is. But helpful things are sense perceptions, take you out of thinking, if you're not judging the sense perceptions, labeling, naming, looking around. Anywhere, wherever you are, look around.

Practice sense perceptions without this compulsive interference of naming what you're

perceiving. Oh, that's a beautiful flow. I wonder what it's called.

I don't know what it's called. Oh, that helps. I can be free of thinking.

If I know what it's called, I can say, oh, that's such and such, and then drop that and see what it means to perceive without the interference of concepts, words. At this moment, for example, you're looking at me now. Let's say, between now and now, were you thinking?

No. Okay, and again, between now and now, were you thinking or present? No thought.

And while I speak, do you need to think to understand what I'm saying, or can you just listen and understand it? And this is what you're doing. And so that's part of the teaching and the function of the spiritual teacher.

Imparting information is secondary. What I'm telling you now is secondary. What is primary is the underlying state of consciousness, which is presence.

That's the teaching. But you can't talk about that. It's underlying.

But a sign that it's working is that while you listen, there's no thought. There's just an alert presence. And when the so-called teacher stops speaking for a moment, the alert presence remains.

It does not need to be filled with anything, like now. What is there to think about? Nothing.

Now, if we do this for longer, at some point, your mind will probably start up and think, how much longer is he going to sit there? And when that happens, you can allow your mind to say, how much longer is he going to sit there and say nothing? And then come back to presence.

And then some other thought will come. What's this all about? And then you can allow that thought to arise and then be present again, which means you're not really, your priority is no longer to follow the thought where it wants to take you, because the thought has a magnetic pull.

It wants more of your consciousness. It wants to grow, because it's a little entity. It wants to grow.

So it wants your attention. And in subtle ways, it tries to get your attention. It might even use a bodily feeling.

It says, gosh, I'm hungry suddenly. Why didn't I need to eat something? And then you think what restaurant am I going to afterwards?

And so the presence is gone. You are gone. You are looking for a restaurant in your mind, which means the thought used as some bodily thing to make thoughts out of it, completely pointless, because you can't find a restaurant because you're standing here.

But it can use all kinds of things to manufacture more, to get your attention. And if you're not careful, if you don't know the mechanism, it's not so much an intellectual understanding, but a simple realization that this is what the mind does. It tries to pull you in.

It's fine. That's what it does. Once you know that, you can allow a thought to arise without following it where it wants you to go, which is into another bigger thought and a bigger one.

So then you become like my dog when it finds a scent. And then suddenly, even when the dog is off leash, usually she's fine. She just runs around you.

But suddenly she picks up a scent and then she goes off completely unaware of surroundings or anything. She just follows it. And she could get lost.

She goes off to the horizon sometimes, just disappears. And that's when you follow a thought, it goes like that. You can wake up 20 minutes later.

And it started with her sleeping a little bit hungry and thinking of a restaurant. And it ends up with thinking about how dreadful your life is. So you don't follow the thought.

You'd say, oh, there's a thought. You don't actually say it. You recognize it as a thought that arises.

And then the difference is the thought arises in the space of your consciousness. It no longer absorbs your whole consciousness. And you're back to presence like now.

And that's the practice. So the spiritual teacher primarily teaches presence. The words are pointers to it.

The more important teaching comes through the space out of which the words come, this formless space of consciousness. This is why it's good to sit here, because somehow we can then share here this beautiful spaciousness that the majority of humans on the planet still don't know about. More and more people are beginning to realize this, but still a minority.

Most humans are still completely trapped in non-spacious, content-obsessed consciousness, completely dominated by every thought that comes in content. No space, only content. One thing after another.

What do I have to think about now? Dreadful state. So the practice is presence.

And then thought gradually loses its power to take you over completely. But choose presence. Sense perceptions.

Become aware of sense perceptions. Listen wherever you are. Watch what sounds.

Don't judge them. Listen. Look.

Touch even. Feel the air on your skin. That's that sense perception.

Acute awareness of sense perceptions takes you out of thinking and makes you more alive, makes you enjoy the aliveness of life much more. Whereas before you were trapped in a dead conceptual world in the head, walking along a beautiful beach. Couldn't see anything, couldn't feel anything.

Not there. But sense perception is not all there is. They're beautiful as they are.

But what is it that underlies all the sense perception? A field of alert stillness. This is why the sense perceptions become so beautiful, because they arise in that field of alert stillness, presence.

That's you. And then you're awake. No thought.

So in nature, every time your car stops at a traffic light, look at the beautiful red light. It's a form of life too. It's light.

It's beautiful. And that can stop your mind. Why not if it can stop your car?

Why can't it stop your mind? Well, that's a new practice. And if it works, if the red light at the traffic light stops your mind, you might want to install some red lights at home.

Everywhere. What do you make of people who walk out on relationships, their families or jobs to sit on the proverbial park bench so that they can wait to awaken? In most cases, I would say to walk out of whatever your situation is in order to awaken doesn't work.

Awakening is usually within where you are right now. If you can't awaken there, it's unlikely that a change of environment will do it. However, for most people to stay where they are and bring presence into where they are, it's a good thing.

It's a good thing for them. Where they are and what they are doing is the right path. There's no general rule, however, for these things.

There are isolated cases. I've known of one or two people who actually left their families. There was such a strong draw or inner impulse and they had to obey that impulse.

They couldn't say no to that and they actually awakened somewhere else. It can happen. It's rare.

Whenever people say, I can't do it where I am now, usually that's not the case. But there are always exceptions to every rule. And in some rare cases, it happens that people do walk out something that even Christ, Jesus acknowledged.

He said, I don't know if he actually said that or whether somebody wrote it down incorrectly. He even talked about hating your family. I doubt that he said hating for your family, but he said, what is absolutely important is your spiritual awakening.

Nothing else is more important than that. But you can't usually separate it out from your usual surroundings. You don't need to remove yourself, usually, unless you're one of the rare ones who do have to do that.

But then it's not a question of deciding. The impulse will be so strong, it won't be a decision-making process. It won't be coming from your mind saying, should I stay or should I leave?

If you can't help it, then it just happens. Do people start becoming nicer as you become more aware or is it just that you no longer get consumed by the anger that arises when in the company of not so nice people? Well, I would say both.

When you become more aware, you're not reactive anymore towards people. You don't personalize things anymore, make everything personal and are always looking out for some kind of hidden insult or look at what's his real intention behind what he's saying, what does he really want. There's an openness and a non-judgmental attitude towards others.

Non-reactive relationships then generate already more consciousness in the other, because two unconscious people strengthen each other's unconsciousness. So if somebody says or does something that may be unconscious and I don't react to it, it does not become amplified through my reaction. If somebody says or does something unconscious and I react to it, condemn it, even if it's just in my mind, I actually amplify it and I myself become part of that unconsciousness through my judgment.

If I can be non-reactive, I can allow other humans their behavior because that's present stage of consciousness. They behave as they have to behave at this moment. So I allow them to behave, to do what they do, I accept it, and then suddenly there is a different energy there.

So I don't amplify that and those people then, I don't condemn them. I don't equate their unconscious behavior with who they are. That's why it's so important not to judge others.

It doesn't mean you kind of go through life saying, oh, they're all, everything is fine, that you don't see unconscious behavior. You see what they do, you know what they do, but you don't equate that with who they are. You know it is an overlay on, it is human unconsciousness they're expressing that.

It's not who they are in their essence. If you confuse the unconscious behavior with who they are in their essence, then that's called judgment. If you see that somebody is doing something extremely unconscious, that's not judgment because you don't equate it with who that person is.

And so you don't say he is evil. That statement would be wrong of anybody because in essence, nobody is evil, but they manifest extreme unconsciousness, which we can call in many cases evil. So that's important then not to strengthen that and to get trapped in illusion because when we believe in our own judgments, it's not only we trap others in the judgments, we ourselves get trapped in the judgments.

Also people become nicer, which is true what the questioner says. People become nicer when you're present and aware because they can feel the absence of judgment in you. Even if they don't, they can't, they may not be able to tell you, but I can feel the absence of judgment.

They only feel it as a certain goodwill flowing out from you towards them or an acceptance flowing out from you towards them. And humans can feel that. Even unconscious humans unconsciously can feel that.

And everybody's grateful for that. Underneath all their madness, they feel grateful because somehow in that acceptance, in that goodwill that kind of flows out in that space, through that space of acceptance, they feel a little bit more themselves than they usually are. And when a human feels a little bit more at ease in themselves, when they come to you, they like you and they are very nice to you.

They don't know why. And their usual ego patterns, not all of them are operating anymore. Some may still come up, of course.

So the ego is less, the ego doesn't feel threatened. It feels, oh, there's no need to be that defensive here. The ego feels it can kind of relax a little bit.

It's still there in the background, just like a little, like a dog. But it's not in its usual state, like the rottweiler. So you just, okay, can relax a little now.

And then they, they like you. So you become a nice person to them. That's perhaps all they know.

When they ask him, oh, he's such a nice guy. Like to see him, like to go to him and that's a nice, okay. So yes, you do experience that.

So partly simply because presence, acceptance is there and is recognized. And partly because there's the absence of reaction. When somebody suddenly blames you, for example, says, you left that door open.

You shouldn't. And say, oh, I did? Yeah.

The usual ego thing, of course, is to say, no, I didn't. Whether you did or not, because it's regarded as the ego feels diminished when somebody blames you. You did that.

No, I didn't do that. You did. And it starts from there and then escalates.

Why do you always blame me? Look what you did yesterday. That's called reaction.

Defensiveness. And that's not there. So then it's just you're stating the facts.

You left that door open again. No, I didn't. And then there's no further arguing.

Yes, you did. Well, maybe that's what you believe. Or say, yes, you're right.

I did that again. Sorry. You don't feel diminished when you were wrong.

The ego feels diminished. Just to admit that you've been wrong is a dreadful thing. So the ego can't do that.

It's like a little desk to say that you've been wrong. And if somebody proves to you that you've been wrong, it's even worse. And then some people will start hitting you.

That's how an ego can easily do. If it's so obvious that you've been wrong and somebody proves it, then you start hitting them. That's the big argument.

And if you knock him out, the ego still wins. Yes, there is a general improvement in relationships, of course, with presence. Another question here about daily life.

Those are very useful questions to everybody. They're basically everybody's question. How do you balance just being on a moment-to-moment basis all the time with having to make a living and paying bills?

That has been the only difficult part for me. How do you balance just being on a moment-to-moment basis all the time, all the time, with having to make a living and paying bills? That has been the only difficult part for me.

Yes, in other words, how do you balance or bring together being and doing? Otherwise, you can only experience presence and being when you're sitting absolutely still or you're not being disturbed by anything. That's fine, too.

At least you have it then. But it's not enough. So as you rightly say, the question is a good one.

How do you balance that with paying bills and so on, in other words, activity in daily life? How can you have that awareness in your daily activities rather than lose yourself in the doing? Well, as a practice, any practice that we now talk about presupposes that there is

a minimum of presence in you, because without that, you can't practice.

If there's a minimum of presence in you in any situation, then there's something that you can do. And a minimum of presence or awareness means you're not totally lost, but you can be aware at the beginning of an activity so that you don't get drawn into it so totally that you lose yourself in it. And usually, it means the future becomes more important than the present moment.

That means you're becoming lost in doing. That's a good indicator. The future moment becomes more important than this moment, and you need to deal with that.

So as a conscious practice, you can do, what do I need to do now? Okay. Well, you mentioned paying bills and having to make a living, whatever it is that you do.

The present moment, is it a means to an end for you, or are you honoring the doing in this moment so that it is not primarily a means to an end? Are you trying to get to the future moment more than you want to be in the present moment? That's usually the case with unconscious living.

And usually, people are stressed because of that continuous movement of the pull of future, which is no more than the pull of a thought of future, because there is no future out there. I've never seen it. So the future is the thought of future.

So the balance between being and doing is done by being present in the doing, by giving your fullest attention to the doing, rather than believing that you need to get to the end of the doing. Give your fullest attention to whatever your activity is in your daily activities. Don't make it a means to an end that includes any human interaction.

Low quality human interaction, we've all experienced that. Low quality human interaction is when you meet a human being who is treating you as a means to an end. And so you become reduced to, if you see somebody in a restaurant, you become reduced to a customer.

And so he's not a human being. If you see a doctor, you become reduced to a patient. He doesn't see you, unless he's aware, or she doesn't see you, you become a patient.

You become reduced and only wants to get it over and done with. The person who's trying to sell you something, to this person, you are a means to an end. He wants to, he or she wants to get to the future moment where the sale is completed.

If you refuse to go along with it, and you're not going to buy what he's offering, he's going to be in a negative state. And the negative state in him is already present, even while he's talking to you and still wanting you to sell something, because there's a strong desire for you to finally come to the end of it already. He is using you as a means to an end so that he can get to the future moment where he thinks he needs to be.

And you can feel that, and you can feel that this is not a high quality human interaction. And a lot of interaction between humans in our society is of that kind, because they're all just wanting to use the other in their desire, compulsion, compulsive desire to arrive at the future point where they need to be. So life gets reduced to something unpleasant, superficial.

Nobody's here, they're not there. So instead of demanding that these people should change, of course it needs to start with you. Don't make this moment into a means to an end, because it's precious.

It's all you ever have. And whatever appears in this moment is precious. It's the form that this moment takes.

So if you're with another human being, it's a precious moment. It's the form that this moment takes. Don't make it into a means to an end.

Honor the form of this moment. Honor this moment. If you're dealing with another human being, let's say in business, you're honoring this moment.

You're honoring this human being. You give, in other words, you give this moment your fullest attention. You give the other human being who happens to be there at this moment your fullest attention.

Your attention isn't 50, 60, 70 percent in the future where you want to be. No, it's here completely. And then if you are a waiter, you will see that your tips increase a hundredfold if you give every guest your fullest attention and not treat them as a means to an end.

If you're a salesman, you'll be extremely successful because the people will love you because everybody loves to be given fullest attention. So you realize the second, it's second the situation that every life situation is secondary. Whatever it consists of is secondary.

Primary is your practice of presence, of attention, of awareness. So you use whatever life gives you to do, bring that element of attention to it, of aware presence, and do it with infused. The doing becomes infused with presence and it shifts.

If you thought your job was boring, well, there was most likely not enough presence in the doing. Even menial jobs, you can become transformed through presence. I have occasionally witnessed, not very often, people at a toll booth where cars stop every few seconds.

A car stops and they say, two dollars please. Now, one would think that's not an interesting job where you can be present, but very rarely, once or twice in my life, I have seen somebody there who emanated awareness or presence and everybody who

stopped there, every driver, was given fullest attention in that moment. The words didn't matter, thank you, two dollars, thank you, have a nice day.

But the energy behind it, again, what we said earlier, situations are secondary, whatever happens. So treat your whole life as an excuse, whatever situation arises, it's an opportunity for bringing the dimension of presence or awareness in. Don't believe that the situation is what absolutely matters.

What absolutely matters is your state of consciousness. Secondary is what you do. In other words, who you are, or what you are, your state of consciousness is primary.

The doing flows out of the being. It's a practice. Daily life is spiritual practice.

One way of talking about what is Zen, one Zen master, simply defined Zen as doing one thing at a time. That's Zen. No, you can't get a more simpler definition than that.

People spend years trying to figure what Zen is all about in monasteries and still can't figure it out. And this Zen master says, doing one thing at a time. Is that it?

Yes. Well, that stops your mind. And then what's left?

What's left for you to do is doing one thing at a time. Not be over there, but be here, be present in the doing. And already you are practicing presence one thing at a time.

This fullest attention to this one thing is only this moment. And this moment then becomes different. It changes.

Its quality changes from low quality to high quality. The doing changes. The relationship changes to high quality.

What I call high quality implies there is the awareness becomes part of the situation. You bring in a new dimension.

[Speaker 3] (43:40 - 43:59)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Alchemy : Transforming Our Difficulties into Spiritual Gold [6cf11acc-3cff-4fa8-bdef-70b5b5eabfec]

[Speaker 5] (0:01 - 0:56)

Alchemy, transforming our difficulties into spiritual gold. In this podcast, Eckhart answers a variety of questions from a live audience, including a man who says he's legally blind from drug use and wants to know how to manage his fearful thoughts. Another audience member reveals he's made great strides in his spiritual development, but his 25 year marriage is ending as a result.

The man asks, how do you know when it's time to leave a relationship? Also, a woman in the audience explains to Eckhart that she wants to stop sabotaging herself with her addiction to technology. Eckhart explains to her how practicing presence can aid in recovery.

He reveals in this podcast how our partners and our friends who are stuck in unconsciousness can often be our greatest teachers because oftentimes they point to the places in us that still need to be healed.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 1:11)

We have two people who are the omnipotent ones who select the questioners. We are not in a hurry.

[Speaker 3] (1:21 - 1:37)

It's an honor listening to you for over a decade and, you know, dream realized here right now. So thank you so much. Thank you.

I am legally blind. So if it looks like I'm not looking at you, I am just in my own way.

[Speaker 1] (1:37 - 1:52)

Well, I use this occasion to tell you that I'm also suffering from a dysfunction in my eyes, right? It's deterioration. So I'm not blind yet, but it's far worse than it has been before.

[Speaker 3] (1:52 - 1:53)

I see.

[Speaker 1] (1:53 - 2:10)

If I put on my glasses, I can see more of you. Let's try this. I'm getting old.

Ah, slightly better. Okay.

[Speaker 3] (2:11 - 4:04)

Thank you. Maybe I can get a few things into a single question of sorts. For me, this process of awakening is very physical and that I feel energies very strongly and viscerally in my body.

I guess I've kind of had this for a while, but there's like a fear that comes that I'm going to like lose control or, and a lot of this is honestly stems back from drug use many years ago, but just sometimes listen to things or, you know, to talks or I get into this place where there's just as such a strong fear that comes and it feels very much like an obstacle. And I kind of have to, you know, just find some way of moving my attention into my breath or whatever else. And it kind of just passes over time.

But I was wondering if you could comment on that and kind of another thing I experienced, if I could add to it, I have a very difficult time sometimes trusting my own experience or the way I frame things. And if I could give an example of this, just often you say about meditation that don't fall into the trap of seeing it as something that you're doing. But for me and my experience, it very much feels like I am doing a meditation and it doesn't necessarily seem like an obstacle and it can be peaceful.

And I understand it may just be a word thing, but it's a pattern that comes up a lot. So I was wondering if you can comment on any of those things.

[Speaker 1] (4:04 - 13:30)

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

I don't like wearing these glasses, but it's when you feel relatively undisturbed by inner phenomena that arise, whatever they may be in your head or in the emotional field or physical phenomena. I'm sure there are times when you feel relatively periods when you're relatively undisturbed by otherwise sometimes disturbing phenomena. Use those times to establish a deeper connection with the awareness that is behind all phenomena is not part of the arising phenomena.

The awareness is the ability to contain and to accept whatever phenomena arise instead of being drawn into a reactive mode towards whatever phenomena arise in your body or in your mind or your emotional field to be able to step back, so to speak. This stepping back into the field of awareness, do it in good times because when the disturbances arise, because they arise and then they pass away I believe that's usually the case. As the Buddhists say, all that arises passes away.

I talked to a Buddhist monk once and he said, all I've learned in my 35 years as a Buddhist monk is this, all that arises passes away. Not bad. It's a good learning.

That is not an intellectual knowledge. It points to a deeper place of connectedness where

you can allow what arises to arise without having to adopt an attitude towards it or wanting to get rid of it. You have to be deep enough.

You have to be the space for it so that it does not control you. You needing to be in control probably does not work, the desire to be in control. If you go deep enough inside and practice in good times to go into your body, to become still as much as you can, so that presence, power, so to speak, grows in you more and more.

And then when the disturbances arrive, as they will still will, the disturbances arrive, then they are met in that space, that aware space. They're still, they may not be pleasant, but they are met in the space of awareness. Presence, power, you need to cultivate this.

Cultivate is a term that also Buddhists use a lot. So you cultivate presence, power in the good times. Don't wait for the bad times.

By the way, this is a useful lesson for everybody because many people only become interested in spirituality when things are going wrong in their life. Oh, I need to do something. When things are going well, the stock market is doing well, my shares are doing well, and then the next week there's a crash and the whole thing is probably collapsing anyway.

Oh my God, I'll better meditate now. It might be a bit late, too late, especially if you're getting older. Cultivate presence, power, go to that place so that it grows, so that you can meet the disturbances from a place of power, not personal power, but from the place of the power of awareness or consciousness, because that is beyond.

Consciousness itself is not a phenomenon that arises and passes away. Everything arises and passes away within the space of consciousness, within that, that you are the space for it all. Another way of putting it, you are not what happens, but you are the space for what happens.

You are the space for it. So increasingly then become familiar with what that means, to be the space for it, so that when disturbances arise, they don't overpower you anymore, and you don't even need to necessarily do anything. You meet them, they arise in the light of awareness.

The light of awareness tends to dissolve things that if presence power is not strong enough, the phenomena will obscure the light of awareness because it's not strong enough. Then you have a reactive mode then towards the phenomena. But if the light of awareness is strong enough, phenomena rise, including, for example, the pain body, which, and part of it may be the pain body, part of the things that arise in you.

The pain body, which means the accumulation of old emotion from your past, residues of old emotion going back to childhood, and perhaps even beyond, but we don't need to go

there. The accumulation of old emotion that still lives in you as an energy field that one could virtually say has a life of its own, and sometimes it needs to come up and move into your mind. The pain body is an emotional field of a negative emotion.

It feeds on your mind. It rises up into your mind. It has dormant periods, as you know.

Sometimes you don't feel it much. Then it rises up into your mind. It makes you think certain things.

It then controls your thinking. A person is deeply involved in negative thinking. The thinking is being done by the emotional field of the pain body.

It's rising up into the mind. Then every thought you have is of a negative kind. It's horrible.

I'm losing control. These are all thoughts that arise that are not true. But if there's not enough awareness, then you believe in those thoughts that arise.

So the pain body also needs reactions from other people. It wants an emotional reaction from your partner. That's a favorite person.

Give me some unhappiness. I'm unhappy, and I'm going to make you unhappy too, says the pain body. Not you.

The pain body in you is speaking. I'm going to say and do exactly the things that I know are going to make you unhappy. I'm going to push those buttons.

And usually it works. That's how drama in relationship happens. Then the other person's pain body responds.

Complete unconsciousness. And so there was not enough presence there. Build up the presence in the good times.

And so that there's enough presence that you can contain the disturbing phenomena and just allow them to be in the light of consciousness. And then the light of consciousness does something. It tends to dissolve, not immediately.

It could happen immediately, but mostly not. Gradually it dissolves the disturbances that are there. If you continue to shine the light, so yeah, be the presence for what arises instead of having a reactive relationship with what arises.

There it is. It's like whatever. You can look at it like weather.

Whatever happens in you, let's say there are meteorological, if that's the word, phenomena. It's an analogy. Let's say, okay, there comes a strong wind suddenly.

And dark clouds suddenly appear. And suddenly you see flashes of lightning and

thunder. So the weather is changing.

Now the weather is trying to do this. I'm using weather as an analogy here, but by the way, I love observing weather phenomena. They're just wonderful.

And so thunder comes, lightning comes, a tornado may come. Yes, you may have to seek shelter, but it's still, these are, they come and then they pass. And then suddenly there's the sun again.

So you have inner weather phenomena happening. Don't personalize too much. So that is the key, is not to personalize the emotions, just to see there is an, it's an energy field, not to personalize even a thought, not to personalize anything that arises.

It's an energy field that arises in you. It's not you, but you are the space for it. And so that is the answer.

And the practice is use the good times in order to grow in presence power, so to speak. Thank you so much. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (13:40 - 13:41)

Hello, Eckhart.

[Speaker 6] (13:41 - 13:41)

Hello.

[Speaker 2] (13:43 - 13:50)

First I wanted to say how grateful I am. I had read the Power Now, something like, when it first came out, maybe 20 years ago?

[Speaker 1] (13:50 - 13:51)

Yes, something a bit more, yes.

[Speaker 2] (13:51 - 16:00)

And then this time around, maybe three years ago, after having that meditation, that time period of meditation experience, it had a totally different effect. And I say that I went from being 90% in my head to now living 90% of my body. And the question I have is, along that process over the last couple of years, almost every one of my relationships is God, including my relationship, my marriage of 25 years.

It's like hanging by a thread at the moment. And I can't tell if it's judgment or it's

discernment, because it feels like I can no longer engage in some of the behavior. And so I'm with a crowd of people that I no longer relate to.

And so what has happened is my partners, our friends have become my partner's friends, where I no longer kind of engage. And so it's caused a lot of distance. And early on in my personal growth, somewhere along the line, I had heard the line, only someone with low self-esteem stays in a relationship that doesn't meet their needs.

But it's now come to the point where it feels like any need that I think this egoic identity has is going to cause suffering if I try to, even as something simple as, what you're saying is offensive, it's hurting, can you please rephrase it? Even something like that seems like it's going to be misinterpreted. It's going to feel like an attack.

And maybe it's riding on judgment that's just slightly beneath my consciousness. I suspect that's probably true. Like there's some, whenever you speak about spiritual superiority, it brings some kind of, it's like, oh, you better pay attention there.

So I don't know how much of that over the course of our lifetime, trying to get my partner to do some kind of spiritual growth work has had the exact opposite effect or, anyway, that's where I'm at. She actually was coming. I finally got her to come and it didn't happen.

It blew up before. Yeah. So.

[Speaker 1] (16:01 - 16:03)

But you are still together.

[Speaker 2] (16:04 - 16:19)

We're, in the last year, we had a big windfall. I did some, one of your manifestation processes, a big house just showed up and we're in two different houses now. I'm in a big house by myself.

I don't want to, I don't want the house. I bought the house for her, basically. Anyway.

[Speaker 1] (16:21 - 16:23)

Well, yes, that's an interesting story.

[Speaker 2] (16:25 - 16:27)

The emphasis on the word story though.

[Speaker 1] (16:32 - 16:38)

So could you, before I speak, have you already asked a question or not yet?

[Speaker 2] (16:39 - 17:02)

I think the question is, well, number one, how do I know when it's time? If it was up to me, I would never throw in the towel. For me, what's coming up is supposed to come up.

It's an opportunity to plant my feet, but the other person doesn't seem like that's their agenda. So when do you say it's time to let go? I guess is the question.

[Speaker 1] (17:03 - 17:07)

And other relationships have already come to an end.

[Speaker 2] (17:08 - 17:30)

There's no formal end, just growing away, like not a draw or a lack of connection, lack of ground to connect on, I guess. And at the same time, I feel more connected to everything. So it's like the forms are going away, but the connection to energy, it's like I just see waves of energy.

[Speaker 1] (17:30 - 19:48)

Right, right. Thank you. Often that question is, one form or another is often asked, when is it time to let go of a relationship?

Or is it possible to continue in a relationship, even if there's a huge gap in the level of awareness, for example, in the two partners, if there's a huge gap, usually the best answer comes not through the decision-making process of the mind, trying to figure out what's the best thing to do. The best answer comes as a sudden realization that this is the thing to do. Either you leave or you stay.

If you live in two separate houses, of course, then it makes it a little easier to be in a relationship because you have a lot of space to yourself. And she has a lot of, he or she has a lot of space also. So it often happens that one person, let's say two people meet, they come together, married or not married, they'll start living together.

And at some point, one of them begins to grow spiritually. For some reason, there's this spiritual growth happening, the arising of awareness, some transcendence of ego. And the other person, let's say, is staying behind.

So the communication becomes a little bit more difficult. And also as far as pain body is concerned, because the pain body in couples, for example, pain body needs the other person's pain body in order for the dysfunctional relationship to work. The other already has gone beyond the pain body.

I don't know whether you are still engaged in emotional.

[Speaker 2] (19:48 - 19:57)

I get hooked after if I feel like I'm verbally attacked. If you keep misinterpreting, I'll get hooked. So there's still places where I need to work.

[Speaker 1] (19:58 - 21:33)

So it could be that the other person can provide the training ground for you to be non-reactive. In other words, the unenlightened, so to speak, partner becomes your teacher. That is sometimes the case.

And surprisingly, often assessor does exactly what you need to become conscious in yourself. So there's a reflection. And this can be highly, very useful.

Ultimately, at some point, the other person may experience also the beginning of an awakening, but not necessarily. But in the meantime, a relatively unconscious partner can teach you a lot about yourself when you observe the reactivity within yourself. So unless something else comes to you that is beyond any doubt, and I very rarely make recommendations as far as people's personal lives are concerned, but I'll make one now.

I would continue for a while and allow the person to reflect back to you the things that you need to still become conscious of by provoking you. And often that is the case. And you have some space.

If you can't take anymore, you go to your house.

[Speaker 4] (21:48 - 22:11)

Hi, Eckhart. It's an honor to be here. So earlier when you were talking about the stillness, a question came to me.

How can I stop self-sabotaging and wake up in the parts of my life where the momentum of energy to distract and dissociate from being still feels the strongest?

[Speaker 1] (22:13 - 22:25)

Okay, that's an interesting question. But could you give maybe one example of how or when that happens? Then it's easier to relate to.

[Speaker 4] (22:26 - 23:28)

Like yesterday, when you told us not to engage in our phones and stuff like that, I went back to my Airbnb and noticed very strong impulses to turn on a show while I had dinner or whatever. And I was watching myself. The energy to do that was so strong.

And I did it. And then, yeah, I did it. And then this morning, I was watching that same impulse.

And it's like so strong. And I just told myself, okay, like, just don't do it for two minutes. And there's many things.

That's just one example. But how do you, it doesn't feel like willpower is enough, like that momentum. I think it's from the pain body.

There's something that I, it's too strong, probably past trauma, I don't want to feel or whatever. Like, what do I do with that?

[Speaker 1] (23:29 - 38:29)

Right. Interesting. So it's like there's certain, certain actions take place, you do things, you know, they're not the optimal things to do, but you can't help it.

It's something acts through you, there seems to be some power there that makes you do things that you know are not right, or not good for you. And yet you can't stop it. That seems to be the case.

And that, of course, is often the case with people, with you, it might be many different areas of your life. But this is also the case with addictions, for example, people who are addicted to a certain substance, or who are addicted to eating too much or drinking, there's something that overpowers them in you that seems to obscure the awareness, or the awareness is pushed to the side. And this thing, this powerful thing does it anyway.

And again, my answer is a little bit similar to what I said to the first questioner tonight, the power of presence needs to grow in you so that it is strong enough not to, it's not willpower, because willpower is not the best way of dealing with these things. But it's what I'm talking about could sometimes be confused with willpower, but willpower includes the application of a force to hold something down. Let's say, if your addiction is to indulge in intoxicating beverages, in other words, booze is the British word.

And you can feel it, it comes on, there it comes, you know, the bottles are there, there they are. And you feel you have to go there and you have to reach out and you have to pour yourself a drink. Now, when you're not aware at all, you don't even know what you're doing, you're so unconscious that you're already holding the drink.

And at that point, you even know that you're drinking. The same with food. I've spoken to people who have had addictions to food.

They often say, they wake up in the middle of the night, they've already unconsciously gone to the fridge, taken out the chocolate cake. And they're already halfway through the chocolate cake when suddenly they're like, what am I doing? So awareness comes in at a very late point.

Willpower would be to hold an urge down. Let's say, the example you gave, you want to

turn on the TV and you know it's not right because I'm not here for that. And he actually told us not to do it.

But I can't help it. I have to go. Now, willpower, you would say, I'm going to hold this down.

I'm not going to do it. I can feel the urge, but you're holding it down. And when you hold things down, often after a while, an explosion happens.

It's like a boiling kettle. Can't hold it for that long. And then you have some kind of rationalization in your mind.

You'll do it anyway. The mind will give you a reason. I spoke to a man who was addicted to food and his body was very unhealthy.

He was extremely dangerously overweight. Unfortunately, he's passed away. But he was a wonderful man.

And he talked to me. And often, before he goes to indulge in excessive eating, his mind would say something like, you've had a rough day. You really deserve a treat.

It explains why it's the right thing. I'm not going to do it for much longer. But just today, I really need a treat.

Life hasn't been treating me. But it's the only pleasure I have. What should I do?

It's all I have. There's no other pleasure in my life. Okay.

I attempted to show him that this thought is a deception. And I had a little bit of success. But unfortunately, it was too late to save him.

Well, he is no longer in the body, but that's okay. He's probably reincarnates now into the opposite, perhaps, in order to learn a lesson. Again, what I said to the first questioner, to practice presence power when you're not particularly tempted by anything, and you're just in your room, there's no particular temptation, go into the body, feel the inner body, be aware, be present.

Sense perception, I recommended that practice. Sense perception, feel the presence pervading every cell in your body, the inner body awareness, so that there's enough presence for when this impulse comes, don't say go away or something like that, because it won't go away. It'll do it anyway.

If the impulse comes, whatever it may be, and you observe, you realize it's not a good thing that it wants you to do. And if there's enough awareness, use it every time an impulse of that kind comes. This is your special spiritual practice.

So instead of wanting to get rid of it, welcome when an impulse of that kind comes and see that this is a spiritual practice, specially designed for you. It is. And so how do you transform this into spiritual practice?

First, you realize this is an opportunity for practicing. And the first thing you could do is you practice delaying, obeying the impulse, not obeying it immediately, but delaying it. And you observe then, let's say when you wanted to go to the TV and turn this thing on, or you feel the impulse, or say, okay, here's my next spiritual practice.

I'm now going to delay the turning on of this show on TV for three minutes. And during those three minutes, you observe this, the impulse in you, you observe, it's an energy form and you observe it. Oh, there you are.

There you are. And you feel it. It's like a little gremlin or something.

So this time gap can be a very useful first practice that you introduce a time gap before you give in. You're not saying I'm not going to give in. No, you say, three minutes.

During those three minutes, I'm going to observe you. And you shine the light of consciousness, the light of awareness on this impulse, which is an energy form. It can be an energy form that is in you as a kind of emotion.

It can also dangerously invade your mind. And the explanation I gave just now with this friend of mine, the thought comes into your head that explains why you should give in to this impulse that can happen easily. And there too, you need to be present enough, sufficiently aware, so that you do not believe in every thought, especially those kinds of thoughts.

You don't believe in every thought that comes into your head. You observe the thought because the thought is part of it. And even to the thought, you say, oh, there you are.

There's a thought, and there's a feeling behind the thought. And you set aside three minutes. During those three minutes, you observe that.

Isn't that interesting? Wonderful spiritual practice. But while you observe, you grow in consciousness, you apply consciousness to it.

Only three minutes, three minutes. And then after the three minutes, see how you feel. It may not, it may have dissolved, but probably not yet.

It's still there. And then you can see, can I do another two or three minutes? Am I strong enough for that?

Is my awareness strong enough? And yes, it is. Don't believe your mind.

Stop this nonsense, do it anyway. And then you achieve five or six minutes of, and then

what happens after that, we don't know. It is possible that the impulse has receded, gone back to a dormant state, and you're suddenly, you don't have to do it.

It's also possible that the impulse is still there, and you cannot, after five minutes, there's not enough awareness left, and you have to go and do it. But at least the five minute interval, the time gap was very important. And when anything like that happens, you always introduce a time gap for your spiritual practice, during which you do not hold it down but you observe it.

So you don't push it down, you observe. Oh, there you are. So if it's a gremlin, you don't hold you down.

You look at it. There it is. Oh.

Now the interesting thing, when you apply awareness to something, you shine the light of consciousness on it, the possibility of transformation is also there. It arises as you shine the light of consciousness on it. This is the famous example from fairy stories and so on.

The frog, you don't kill the frog or do something with it. You kiss the frog. And the moment you kiss the frog, it turns into the prince.

So the frog stands for, this is like mythology. There's some wisdom embedded in these fairy stories, which by the way, many of them were not created by the people who wrote them. They were already orally transmitted over long periods of time.

So they are mythologies that often contain a lot of wisdom and certainly a lot of wisdom in kissing the frog, which then turns into something beautiful. So there's something ugly, but you give it an acceptance and love. You look at it and then transformation happens.

So that is the spiritual practice. And after a while you will find that initially, perhaps after the time gap, you still do it. But then gradually this time gap gets longer.

And then you may observe that the energy behind the impulse weakens and it subsides until next time, but gradually it weakens. And all these self-sabotage mechanisms then begin to gradually disappear. If you apply the awareness to it, observe them, there it is.

So think of the frog. These are all the frogs and whatever they are, gremlins, frogs that live in U.S. energy fields. The energies are trapped there.

They are not in themselves bad. They are trapped, like the pain body is an energy that is emotional energy that's trapped. When the pain body dissolves, it's transformed into presence.

It's like a fire. You put a log into a fire or it's consumed and transmuted, perhaps is the word, it's transmuted into presence. And here we have, again, the famous example.

In middle ages, certain philosophers were very interested in alchemy. Alchemy was supposed to be the transformation of base metal into gold through a chemical process of transformation. But the true meaning behind alchemy was the transformation of human consciousness.

They have many images and so on. They could not speak and write about this openly because they would have been executed by the church at the time. So they had to hide all these symbols as if it were to do the transformation of base metal into gold, of something that is, first of all, not very desirable into something wonderful.

And that's the alchemical process of transmutation, which really is something in the human psyche. There's an entire long treatise written by Carl Jung, the psychologist, on alchemy with countless illustrations and just fascinating things. But it's the transformation of something undesirable initially into awareness or into consciousness.

You're lucky to have that. Taylor designed spiritual practice for you. Thank you.

So let's finish with a moment of stillness. I will use the ceremonial bell to finish the session. Beautiful sound.

[Speaker 5] (39:02 - 39:22)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Amor Fati : Loving What Is [c9d92a14-72ae-4683-891d-c66fbff0913a]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:03)

Amor fati, loving what is. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the process of writing his first book, The Power of Now. He says he surrendered to the idea that the book wanted to be written.

He explains he had a vision which inspired him long before he wrote the first word. He shares that he encountered naysayers, people who tried to discourage his pursuits. And he says when an individual or group tries to bring new knowledge to the world, they often encounter resistance.

The book eventually became a number one New York Times bestseller, and I believe one of the most influential spiritual books of our time. And he says that the ancient Romans had an expression for surrendering to something greater than ourselves, which is amor fati. In Latin, it means loving one's fate.

Eckhart believes the true meaning is loving what is. He says when we align ourselves with the isness of the present moment, enormous power is released, connecting us with an intelligence which permeates the entire universe.

[Speaker 1] (1:05 - 41:27)

I was beginning to write The Power of Now many years ago, and people asked me, what are you doing? I said, I'm writing a book. I knew it had, it wanted to be written.

That was the, I had to write it. This often comes to people in the state of presence. You realize what it is that wants to be created, rather than what is it that I want to create?

What is it that wants to be created in the totality of things? And I knew that this book wanted to be created, and it was a powerful impulse came. And I worked quite hard.

I was, there's a high intensity of energy, but it was enjoyable. That kind of, and people asked me, the environment always wants to, or it often wants to discourage you. People ask, what are you working on?

I said, I'm writing a book. What about the present, living in the present moment? People said, I wouldn't do that.

It's been done so many times. Can't you think of something else? So that could easily detract you if people question your vision, because this is a kind of vision that suddenly arises, and that's a beautiful way of creating.

So it's not just what I want to create. No, what is it that wants to be created? What is it

that the universe wants?

And then you are in the service of that. And then people, I thought, I had no idea how many people would eventually read that book. I was still writing it.

And then I talked to somebody else who also, again, somebody who said, well, there's already, there's Ram Dass, he already said it all in this book, Be Here Now. Everybody has read that, so why write another book like that? Makes no sense.

Okay. And I said to this man, it doesn't matter. Even if only a few people read it, it's fine.

And if it sells very few copies, that's fine. Then I'll just go and sell tomatoes. I don't know, I don't know why I said, why selling tomatoes came to me.

And after that, I said it several times to people who questioned what I was doing, and I became sure that perhaps I would have had a market stall somewhere, and would have been happy selling tomatoes in the present moment. And so that means my, the intensity that was there was so different from the intensity that I experienced when I was a student working hard. That intensity was a stressful intensity.

It was an unhappy intensity. It was basically the ego trying to achieve something. And when the ego tries to achieve something, you can always tell the difference.

When you're engaged in pursuing a particular goal, inevitably, certain obstacles will arise on your path, even if it's the totality wants it, even if it is aligned with what the universe wants, so to speak. It does not mean that automatically there will be no obstacle in your path whatsoever. There probably will be obstacles, especially if you bring something new into this world.

There is also a force of a cutting of the word right now that wants to prevent new things from arising. There's a heaviness in sometimes, people don't like it if you bring something new in. And if you put yourself out, let's say you open a YouTube channel to spread spiritual teaching.

Great thing to do. I mean, there are incredible possibilities these days for reaching people through these channels that normally spread unconsciousness, but potentially could, and sometimes do, also spread consciousness. So there are incredible possibilities there for you.

But of course, the moment you do, the obstacles will arise. For example, in the form of comments that people leave about your YouTube channel, there will be 90% of people will probably love it, and 10% of people will try to pull you down. And they say, what a dreadful person and a fraud you are, and you should be doing this.

How dare you talk about happiness when all these people are unhappy. You're so selfish.

Whatever they say.

I stopped reading comments several decades ago. Because the strange thing is, the human mind, you read comments, the positive ones you can read, oh, nice, nice. And then you come after reading 10 positive ones, you read one spiteful comment about you.

Now the strange thing about the human mind is the negative things have a stickiness to them, and they tend to stick in your mind for several days. You've forgotten all the positive ones, but you remember the spiteful ones. So obviously, to totally disregard comments may not be right for everybody, but not to have an ego that feels offended when you read negative comments about the wonderful work that you're doing on YouTube or wherever you're doing it.

As you know, I have become a famous YouTuber. And my next ambition, obviously, is to become an Instagram influencer. You might think I'm too old for that, but there are lots of filters you can use.

And even I will look good with these filters. So whatever you do, obstacles will arise on your path. And again, when it's ego-motivated, when you encounter an obstacle, you react to it, and you become either angry or stressed or fearful, antagonistic.

Sometimes often the obstacle appears in the form of people not wanting you to do what you're doing, or whatever it may be. Obstacles will appear. In the new way of doing things, you look at an obstacle, don't complain about it, you just you face it, and you become still.

And then you either circumvent it, or you turn it around and it becomes something helpful. In the same way that a martial arts, in certain martial arts, you use the force of your opponent and transform it into something that is no longer attacks you, but it's turned around. So the force of your opponent throws him, and not you.

So the way in which you approach difficulties and obstacles changes, you don't get discouraged, you don't complain about obstacles, about these delightful people that are preventing you from achieving whatever it is you want to achieve. So there's a different way in which you approach these hindrances, obstacles, and so on. This is part of acceptance of the present moment.

This is an essential part of living, aligned with, because often in the present moment something appears that does not look optimum, not the best thing, and there you come to, all is the acceptance of the is-ness. You will notice that then you stop complaining about people, because in the other, if you're egoically possessed, then you will continuously be complaining about other people, how they are, they're not doing what they should be doing, or they're doing the wrong thing. And that goes, and then you tell the stories of, you're supposed to do that, but did he do it?

No, and then you do it totally wrong. You have stories, after story, after story, to strengthen your ego. That goes away, the complaining drops away.

There's just the is-ness of the present moment. Talking about ancient Romans, there was quite a bit of wisdom in antiquity. The Romans and the Greeks, the Romans adopted many things from the Greeks.

There's a famous saying, again in Latin, which is, well it's just two words, Amor Fati, which means the love of, Fati could be translated as fate, but really it is the love of what is. Amor Fati, F-A-T-I, the love of what is. That is again inspired by stoic teachings, to love the is-ness of the present moment, no matter in which form it manifests.

And with that comes enormous power. The ego thinks that by fighting against something, that is power, but that is pseudo-power. The true power comes when you're aligned with whatever is arising in the present moment, because that is an important aspect of what we call the power of now, or the Tao Te Ching, which is the same thing, to be aligned with the Tao.

Tao is the intelligence that pervades the universe and also dwells within you. So, intensity arises, but not stress. And I believe there are some people who have great enterprises, who are somehow able to conduct their business in that way.

I haven't met them personally, I think. And also you don't know, just by meeting people, you still don't know how they actually conduct their enterprises. Are they aligned?

I don't want to mention any names. Some names come to me. Maybe they act in that way, but I'm not sure if they do.

You don't really know until you observe a person in action. Then you can learn a lot about their state of consciousness. You can also learn a lot about their state of consciousness when you observe a person being confronted with a challenge.

What then? The person, a moment ago, was so spiritual. And then the challenge comes.

Sometimes people can be effective spiritual teachers, relatively effective, can give good talks. And yet in their private life, it's not happening. Still unconscious.

So, the good test, how do you, if you want to learn about your state of consciousness and not deceive yourself, it's not to do with how good a meditator you are. The real test is, how do you face challenges? And another test is, how do you act when you are given power in an organization or whatever it may be?

How do you act when you are given power over other people through rising in an organization or whatever it may be? Again, the ego comes most strongly through facing challenges or through giving power. There can be a very seemingly egoless person, and

suddenly this person is given power.

It could be within a spiritual organization to a disciple of a great master, seemingly no ego whatsoever. And then the master gives him or her a powerful position. And suddenly this meek person, the ego blows up and you see total transformation.

This happened to, I don't know if you are familiar with Osho Ashram, it goes back a few decades. There was a woman in his ashram and he gave her power over the organization. And she was wonderfully spiritual before she got power.

And she went crazy when she was given power. The overblown ego doing the most absurd things and eventually the whole organization dissolved through madness. This implies to be very careful then even in yourself.

It's always easier to recognize the ego in others. A bit more difficult to recognize the ego in yourself. But self-observation is vital.

So self-observation is when how do you face challenges. By this the world can give you continuous feedback about your state of consciousness, how you face challenges. Or if you have power, how you use power over other humans, what does that do to your ego.

So that's a similar example one can give concerning power. In certain parts of the world, it is almost customary for periodically the government to be overthrown in a coup d'etat because people become so unhappy with the corruption of their government that finally they overthrow the government and some idealistic, perhaps idealistic new person comes in and takes over with their followers. And often the person who had the best intentions of creating a better place, the moment they achieve power, suddenly they turn again into the same person that they've just overthrown.

The moment they achieve power, all these things come in. So that's vital for self-observation. How do you conduct yourself in the face of challenges?

How do you conduct yourself when you have power in any capacity? So the coming back to the example of writing the book, then the book got written and it was satisfying that the book got written. I was satisfied that it was.

A few thousand copies were printed and then I spent several months putting always a few books in my plastic carrier going from bookstore to bookstore and saying, would you like to take two or three copies of this book that I wrote The Power of Now? If you don't sell them, I'll take them back. And some said yes, great, and others said no, not interested.

Okay, it's fine. I wasn't attached to the outcome and then something happened and it grew and grew and first slowly and then as everybody knows, then Oprah came in. But if I honestly compare my state of consciousness and my state of happiness or satisfaction

when the so-called success was achieved, the worldly success, and before when I was just writing the book, there's no difference.

I wasn't any happier. It was satisfying to have the success, but basically I was not any happier having been successful in this endeavor than when I was engaged in creating it. It was just as beautiful, one could almost say, more beautiful, the act of creation, even more joyful than tasting the fruit, the final outcome.

In fact, probably even more joyful. If it had not achieved much, maybe only had had 10 readers or something, that's fine, 10 people, maybe one of the 10 had experienced a change in consciousness through it. That's good.

Would I really have sold tomatoes? I don't know. And the outcome always brings up a new situation.

When everything grew fairly quickly, it doesn't mean suddenly life doesn't challenge you anymore. The other big challenges suddenly come in. So, and limitations too.

Every situation has its opposite. You gain something here, you lose something there. The first few retreats I had were great.

I could hug everybody after the retreat. We had hugging sessions. It was wonderful.

If I do that with you, I'll be here for several days probably. So, the intimate interaction with people as the groups grew and grew was no longer possible. That is a limitation.

I always enjoyed that so deeply. And yet, far more people were being reached. So, you gain something here, you lose something there.

So, with any success you ever achieve, you will find the polarities. So, there is in this world no absolutely satisfying situation on this horizontal dimension. There cannot be an absolutely satisfying situation.

There's always gain and loss, gain and loss. The true satisfaction is derived only from the vertical dimension, only there. And if that is your point of departure, then whatever is created out of that is enjoyable, particularly because you no longer demand situations or achievements to provide you with absolute satisfaction.

You no longer demand that you enjoy, yes, but you don't place a demand on them that they cannot meet. So, whatever you achieve is maybe enjoyable, but it will always have another side to it. And sometimes the very thing that people achieve gives them satisfaction for a while and then it turns into its opposite.

The very thing that makes you happy then makes you unhappy. So, knowing that, make the primary focus of your life the now. Be rooted in the vertical and then the purpose of your life, then there are two purposes in your life.

Your personal purpose, whatever you want to achieve as a person here, and your deeper purpose, which is the alignment with consciousness. The deeper purpose is the fundamental one. The deeper purpose is whatever you do to be conscious in anything, whatever you do, to be aligned with only universal consciousness, whatever term you want to use for it, the deep eye, as I call it often, to act from the deep eye.

Your primary purpose is to be aligned with that, to embody that. The rest is secondary purpose. So, it's all bearing in mind primary purpose and secondary purpose.

Primary purpose is your state of consciousness in this moment, no matter what you're doing or even if you're not doing anything. Primary purpose continues to be there until you leave this body. So, if you are 95 years old, there's still the primary purpose of your life.

It is less likely that age of 95 you will still have other purposes on the horizontal dimension. Probably not, but who knows, maybe at 95 you can take up some new, learn something new, but it becomes less and less important as you grow older. Primary purpose, secondary purpose is to do with you as this form identity here on this horizontal plane, which is not to be disregarded.

It has its place. It also has a certain importance, you as a person, it has a certain importance. It is not primary though, it's secondary.

The two need to come together. So, whatever your purpose is on the horizontal plane, the primary purpose must flow into it, so that are not separate. It's not enough to be a good meditator and then the rest of your life conduct as unconscious everybody else.

They have to come together. Now you know what your primary purpose is. If you don't know what your secondary purpose is yet, because I know there are some people here who don't know what the question they often ask, what am I supposed to do in life?

I want to find my purpose. Not everybody has found it already and perhaps not even everybody has some big purpose that they need to pursue. Not necessary for many to embody the primary purpose in whatever activity you engaged in, even if it is seemingly insignificant, may well be enough.

Although it is totally possible that a seemingly insignificant activity could grow into something bigger, but it doesn't really matter. For some people, whatever they are doing is fine. It's not for everybody to create something big and new.

Maybe you do, maybe you don't. The volume, so to speak, of whatever your personal purpose is doesn't matter that much. If you don't know, if you feel there is something for me to do but I don't know what it is, then I suggest you meditate on it.

You become still and don't ask yourself what is it that I really want to do, but ask yourself

what is it that the universe wants me to do that could point you in the right direction. And then you might get a vision of what may be helpful to the totality of life and other people. Your secondary purpose almost inevitably has something to do with other people.

It will connect you with people, and so your primary purpose flows into that and changes the way in which you deal with with other people. All your interactions change. What is my purpose?

What is it that the universe wants me to achieve, to create? Is there anything? And nothing may come immediately.

If you feel strongly there is something, you could use an affirmation. I used an affirmation after awakening. I was beginning to counsel people, spiritual counseling individuals for several years, and I knew I had an important truth that was coming through.

It grew and grew through the counseling sessions. It developed more and more. But I was only reaching a few people and then I was beginning to do workshops, occasional weekend workshops.

Sometimes ten people came. Once I had a workshop when one person turned up. I did it anyway.

It was good. But I felt this is moving very slowly and I'm not very reaching. It was enjoyable to do the sessions, but I could see I wasn't reaching many people.

So I found myself in a church in a village in Somerset where I was living at the time, and so an ancient village church, and I was alone in their 1,000-year-old church. I loved those. Every village had one, beautiful.

So I sat in the church and I was contemplating the situation, and then I said, suddenly it came to me, I want acceleration. I visualized acceleration for my work. My work is becoming accelerated.

Please give me acceleration. And then I could feel that it had already been granted in that moment. Yes, I want acceleration for my work, and I'm getting acceleration for my work.

It was a strange feeling it was already happening. And then I left. I went back home.

Nothing much changed. Weeks passed, and three or four months passed, and then suddenly one morning I woke up and I knew I had to leave England and move to the west coast of North America. I didn't know what the purpose was, and I didn't know that was part of that purpose, the acceleration.

Later I realized I needed the energy field of the west coast to even be able to write that book. The energy was necessary for me, but I didn't know that consciously. It came just, I knew I had to do it.

Later, much later, I realized that was part of the acceleration that was beginning to happen at that point. So sometimes an affirmation can also point you in the right direction. For example, you could affirm all the things that I need for my work and fulfillment are coming to me.

All the things I need for my work and fulfillment are coming to me. The things that I'm meant to do in this world, the service that I'm providing in this world, it's coming to me now. Whatever the realization, what I need to do is coming.

Or you affirm that it is already happening, that's the most powerful type of affirmation. Then you may find after a time gap, things begin to move. You have to find your own affirmation, what works best.

Use it in the present tense. It's just a thought form that you put out into universal intelligence. These things work especially, they're much more likely to work if they're not egoically dominated.

So it's not, you're not asking for something to satisfy your ego or to remove your sense of lack or not being enough. It needs to come out of a sense of fullness, not a sense of lack. Many people want to attract something into their lives to fill a sense of lack that they feel.

That is not an efficient way of manifesting circumstances. They need to come out of the sense of fullness of life. There's an expression that Jesus used.

Jesus said, I want you to have the fullness of life. What is the fullness of life? It's the realization of your essence identity in the now.

That is the fullness of life. It's amazing that he said that. In some translations it says, I want you to have abundant life.

In other translations it says, I want you to have the fullness of life. Fullness is better than abundant, because abundant could mean many, many things, but it's not to do with many, many things. The fullness is the one thing, the one thing that is of absolute importance, and it's not a thing.

So the fullness of life is to already, the experience of that is the satisfaction that is inherent in the essence of your being. This is the eternal, the invincible summer in you, Connie, to have that. And that is the departure point for manifesting.

Then whatever vision you bring into the fullness of life is then empowered by the fullness

of life. And this sense of fullness, of deep satisfaction that is in the present moment, they come together. And then the vision is empowered by this.

So you feel that not only do you already have, you feel as if you already had it. It's not going to make you any happier, really, if you do attain it. Jesus said it all in just one sentence, the entire secret of manifestation.

You don't need any more books. Just that one sentence, Jesus said, all the things that you pray for, believe that you already have them, and they will be given to you. Believe that they're already yours, and then they come.

So he never said believe that you will get them. Believe, but what is this belief? This belief is not a thought.

It is also a thought, but fundamentally it is the faith behind the belief. There are these two words. Faith is a thought thing that has its place too, but the faith is the power behind the thought that comes from the realization of your essence identity.

Your essence identity is the power that then empowers the thought, which is the thought is the belief. Faith is something deeper. Faith is immediate power.

Faith is what in the Tao Te Ching is mistranslated as virtue, is faith. Faith is the internal power that is inherent in your being, the essence of your being. So belief is the thought structure.

Faith is that which empowers that particular thought, and then you experience that as a reality already here and now. I kind of, I had that vision even before I wrote The Power of Now. The vision came to me what it was that wanted to be created, and I even wrote it down.

It was not so much an attempt to manifest as almost a realization that that was going to be manifested. There was already that certainty it was going to be manifested. So that is the, play around with that.

It's not, nothing is deadly serious. You play around with forms, creating new forms and so on here in this dimension. It's not the seriousness.

I must have that. I must, and I'll be unhappy if I don't get it. I must have it.

No, you play the lila, the divine play. You play around with forms. You enjoy the play of forms.

There can be an intensity behind it, but not stress. And enjoyment, there is that. Sometimes the intensity comes when you touch upon something that's now being created.

Power, you can feel how power flows into your action and even into your mind, and that's beautiful, but it's not serious. Don't take anything too seriously in this dimension. It's a play, and it dissolves after a while, whatever you create, except the growth in consciousness.

Behind it is consciousness. Consciousness evolves and grows, and that remains, the forms dissolve otherwise, that everything has a certain lifespan, everything is fleeting. Eventually, of course, things leave you, or you leave them, and then it's fine.

Oh, that's, it's quite an adventure. But once you know the secret, which this is what it is, it becomes enjoyable. The journey becomes enjoyable, and gradually the world gets better, too, after it goes through a period of a little bit of chaos where we're going now.

And that's fine, too, because that will add to the driving force behind the awakening. As things begin to dissolve collectively, the awakening intensifies the awakening of consciousness, and that's a beauty of it. There's nothing to fear at all.

Well, the end of our retreat has come, but the essence of the retreat is within you, so you carry it with you, and then the scenery around you changes as you move away, and you're always, consciousness is the space for whatever happens, the space of consciousness. It's been wonderful to share the presence with you. It's not my presence, it's not your presence, it is divine presence manifesting through each of us.

And now comes the rest of your life, and I predict that for the rest of your life, the person that you are, also the person, the personality, recedes a bit more and more, and becomes a bit more, more and more transparent. For the the personality I call the surface eye, the surface eye begins to gradually recede more and become almost transparent for the light of the deep eye to shine through the surface eye, and that is the process of transformation. The personality is still there, it'll be there until you die, there is a personality there, but the surface eye, but more and more the deep eye shines through, and when you reach the end of your life, the so-called your life, yes, there's no your life, but because you are life, you don't have it, you reach the end, and then there's the deep eye manifesting powerfully, and the personality begins to and as death approaches, just the light of consciousness of the deep eye shines through you, shines through the personality and through the physical form, and that's beautiful, and that is you have fulfilled the purpose of human existence, the flowering of human consciousness, it doesn't matter when death comes, whether it comes next year or in 50 years time, when it comes it'll be the present moment.

So I thank you, and I'd like to say goodbye to you, and also I believe and hope Kim is waiting backstage to also say goodbye to you, and I love you all.

[Speaker 2] (41:38 - 41:58)

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Eckhart Tolle Ask For Inner Peace [11e2887f-c4f9-4662-988b-29f0b9d36e6f]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:43)

Ask for inner peace. In this podcast, Eckhart takes the audience through his renowned inner body awareness meditation, encouraging everyone to sense the aliveness in every cell. He believes that this is one of the tools which can free us from the ego.

He also discusses asking for guidance during meditation. He says, we may be asking for material possessions or the solution to a difficult life situation. And he says, the important thing to notice is what comes after we ask, we become still and surrender to receive wisdom.

He believes only then the answer will arise from a place of alert stillness and inner peace.

[Speaker 1] (0:45 - 10:53)

Thank you. Welcome, everybody. It's wonderful to be back with you all.

I'm looking forward to the next hour. So looking forward to it. In the present moment, of course.

I suggest that you close your eyes. I may do the same. And get in touch with the sense of aliveness that pervades your inner energy field.

If you can't get there immediately, feel the aliveness in your hands, a sense of animating presence, one could almost say. So you suddenly realize that your hands are there without looking at them or touching them. There's a feeling of hand, but there's no visual image attached to it.

And before we go into the rest of the body, I can already show you by showing you the example of hands, how to let go of a visual image. Because as we go into this meditation, in a couple of minutes or so, I'll be asking you to let go of the image of inner body. And let's just do it with the hands to start with.

So you can feel the energy field in your hands, but your hands are resting on the table on your lap or wherever they are. And you can sense the aliveness. And at this moment, you may still have a mental visual image of hands.

And let's just see if you can just let go of that mental image and focus attention entirely on just that sense of aliveness. So it's hardly almost not hands anymore. It's just somewhere in the in your inner space.

There is that sense of aliveness. And now we go to other parts of the body. Can you feel

your feet?

Perhaps not as strongly as the hands, but they are alive to the legs. Take two or three conscious breaths. Breathe into the abdomen.

So as you breathe in, the abdomen expands slightly. At the end of the in-breath, there's a very brief pause where you can sense the energy field in the abdominal area of the body. And then you breathe out.

And at the end of the out-breath, there's a brief, very brief pause before you start breathing in again. Feel the abdomen and then hold the, as if the abdomen were filled with air almost, it feels. So you're holding it for two or three seconds.

And then you can feel this energy expanding into other parts of the body from there. And we'll do it another two or three times, a conscious breath into the abdomen. Feel the energy expanding from there and spreading into the rest of the body.

And now you can sense the entire body as a single field of energy, a single field of aliveness, and your attention is there. And you're holding your attention on it. It's actually a very pleasant feeling, the feeling that you are alive, that there is an animating presence in every cell of the body, an energy field that is the organizing principle behind the physical form.

So you're becoming aware of this invisible you or the invisible eye. There's ultimately only one eye. And now, let's see if you can let go of the mental image of body and not even think of in terms of legs and so on.

Just give your attention to the sense of aliveness. And as the next step, realize that there is no longer two of you, there is no longer the one that is observing that aliveness, but the observing presence and the aliveness that it seems to observe is a single, a single phenomenon and single energy field. So it's not no longer that you are observing internally, that sense of aliveness.

But you are that sense of aliveness. So the observer and the observed merge and become one. And that's a beautiful realization.

Once you get there, that sense there's no longer two of you, there's just one presence. And it's not that you know that presence, that presence knows itself, that presence is essentially you. That presence is the being beyond the human.

That presence is the ocean. The human is the wave. And that presence is your true self, your true identity.

It's not a form identity, it's essence identity, it's one with everything. It's not a separate self. That is your connection to source, your, the source awareness, the source of all life.

You are an emanation of that source and one with the source. You can call it God if you like. It's so wonderful.

I'd love to spend the next hour with you in this meditation, but you can do it for yourself. At least once a day. It doesn't have to be long, twice a day might be better.

And so that awareness, that power of presence grows in you, so that when you're facing life situations and challenges, then it doesn't leave you. You won't feel it as strongly perhaps as you do now, but it'll always be there in the background. And that is the awakening.

Let's just stay there just a little bit longer and then we will open our eyes. And again, suddenly the sense-perceived, visually perceived world is there. And yet, you haven't lost touch completely with this unmanifested dimension.

So you are present, you're able to perceive without losing a sense of being or beingness, the sense of the I, the I am, that's there. And yet you're able to perceive you're present within and present without. And you know who you are now, you are not essentially the person, you are essentially the presence.

And once you know that, there's nothing wrong with the person, you can continue to be a person for a while without being a troublemaker to yourself and others, which is the case for every person who is not in touch with the deeper dimension. So that's a wonderful meditation that is so easy that becomes second nature to you. And you may even find that in certain situations, you may spontaneously slip into that meditation.

You might be sitting waiting for something in a waiting room or wherever it may be, and you might just go in there just for a little while. And it may even be quite strong, even if you keep your eyes open. That's important to go into that pure awareness dimension so that you don't lose it when you go about your life.

So you don't lose the being when you are engaged in doing, which is, and the doing is important, because the doing challenges you. There are problems in this world, one after another challenges, and then you need to do to overcome or transcend the challenges, but without loss of presence, otherwise, you contribute to further challenges. So but let's not go there now.

[Speaker 4] (10:54 - 11:23)

Now Eckhart, we had one question that was specifically about this meditation. The person wrote in, I'm able to feel my inner body as a field of energy and aliveness. However, I'm having difficulty merging with it as awareness.

Are there any more pointers that you can give to help through this next step?

[Speaker 1] (11:24 - 16:10)

Well, it's, you have to just practice. The one point I gave at the beginning of this meditation, when I said even when you just begin to feel your hands, and your eyes are closed, that sense of aliveness, just practice letting go of the image, mental image of hand. And then all that's left is a sense of aliveness, which still you might feel, it has a certain location still in space, but it's not not a very precise location anymore, it's just in your energy field, there is that space of that feeling of hand.

And then, once you're in touch with the entire body, then that is the entire consciousness that you are pervading the body, and dismissing the to let go of the image of body just requires a little bit of practice, there isn't much that I can say now, in addition to what I've said, except that practice it and I believe you will quite easily be able to become free of the mental image of body. We are talking about things we're using language for something that one cannot really talk about, because all language is derived from the sense perceived world. So when we talk about these inner realms, it's very hard to use language, one can use analogies and so on.

So just practice and as long as there's any kind of thought in the background, then you will still be there as a separate observer, because the moment there's a thought, then you are a separate entity. It's when when you're able to arrive at this point of cessation of thinking, then the merging is easy. What really most likely keeps you from being able to merge is there's still a certain thought activity there.

So as we focus on the sense of aliveness, so completely that you cannot think anymore, you're just giving your complete attention to that, which is also deep stillness and deep alive stillness. And the moment you are in that state of no thought, then the merging almost happens automatically. Because thought creates a sense of separation, thought is needed, of course, to function in this world.

And for many things, but thought is a great hindrance for knowing who you are. It's the greatest hindrance for knowing who you are is the conceptual thinking mind. So if you're able to let go of all thoughts, then the merging happens almost automatically.

It's a practicing it's one can, it's almost as if one were asking me to describe how to ride a bicycle, how do you keep yourself from falling off the bicycle? I cannot quite I can give a few hints. But ultimately, it's only by doing it that you suddenly there's a knowing there that is beyond the conceptual mind.

Nobody could understand to ride a bicycle by reading a manual about it. Or any kind of guidance is ultimately you have to get on it. And then you may fail a few times.

And then suddenly, there is a suddenly it becomes second nature and you never lose it again. It's a it's a shift into the depths of who you are. So that and many people are

disconnected completely from who they are.

So it's not why are they disconnected? Because all their life they've been identified with the conceptual mind, or that they've derived a sense of self from the conceptual mind from the narrative in their mind. So they are disconnected from their essence.

And so as long as the conceptual mind is still operating, even just little sentences, you, you cannot merge. So, but the body awareness is very helpful, because it's a wonderful tool for becoming free of the conceptually, it becomes an I call it, I believe in the power of now I called it an anchor for presence. So it's the best place, the best entry point into that transcendent dimension.

[Speaker 4] (16:11 - 16:29)

We have a question here, Eckhart from someone who wrote in, when one asks for inner guidance or help, who's asking? Is it the ego that's asking for guidance or help? If this is the case, is it better just to observe what is going on inside?

[Speaker 1] (16:31 - 24:04)

Well, the, let's say you're asking, I don't know what you're asking for, you might be asking for awakening, or you might be asking for some material possession. But let's assume you're asking for inner peace, or you're asking, or maybe you're faced with a problem, and it is no solution to a difficult life situation, you're asking for help. This is a pointer, the asking is like sending a little, it's a conceptual pointer.

It's a thought, the asking is still a thought. But what is important is what comes after the thought. When the, when you're asking for guidance, let's say in your life situation, that is means I am ready to step into spacious awareness.

So the asking is the signpost. It is a sign that you are ready to become still, because only there can the answer arise, can only arise from stillness. So I'm asking for guidance.

And the moment you've asked for guidance, if it works as it is meant to, then you are still, there's an open spacious presence, guidance. And suddenly there's a stillness, there's an alert stillness that is, you may immediately sense the entire energy field of your body, and all the things that we have done in this just practice in this meditation, may happen in one moment, when entire sense of physical self, separate self collapses, and all that remains is an alert stillness. So the entire thing that we did step by step just now, as you become more attuned to the transcendent dimension within yourself, this can happen in an instant, and can happen in an instant after you ask for guidance.

And after asking for guidance, there's no longer any thought. It's just spacious awareness. There's no longer any you, you are not there anymore.

There's nobody left to ask for anything. And suddenly you realize the fullness of life that is already there. And that sense of completeness that is inseparable from who you are in your essence.

And then at some point, it could be maybe just a minute, it could be five minutes, we don't know. You start thinking again, you're back. And it is possible that then an answer suddenly arises in your mind, as a thought, yes, but it didn't come before.

Or guidance may come in another way, because by going deep within, you found your connectedness with all life, with your sense of oneness with all the connectedness with all life. So the answer could come seemingly from without. Suddenly your phone, the phone could ring, and something has arisen, and the answer is there.

And you said, well, this person has perhaps who now offers me the solution to the problems had been planning to call me for two hours. Although I only did my meditation 10 minutes ago, seemingly miraculous things like that can happen where you could explain away why this helpful thing has suddenly come into your life, but it is connected, even time is no longer operating in the normal way. Often when you when synchronistic events happen, they almost sometimes happen can happen as regressively, so to speak.

And many strange things can happen when you connect with the with source. So the essential thing when you ask is, the asking is simply an expression that you are ready to enter that state of spacious awareness, and you're ready to let go of your individualized sense of self, you're not a person anymore. And then the person can receive the answer.

Suddenly, it can also come as an event, something that happens, and it may not come immediately. And it may be that the answer that the problem is not solved. This is another possibility that the problem, whatever it may be, is not solved on the external level.

It could be that you just internally transcend the problem where it no longer matters to you that there's another way that which has guidance can happen in various ways. Sometimes the situation becomes resolved. Sometimes you suddenly have inner resources that you didn't have before, so that you can do something to resolve the situation.

So that's possibility one. You suddenly have inner resources, especially creative ideas, a sudden realization or a strength that wasn't there before, so that you're able to deal with the situation and change it. Or it could happen that something happens almost by itself, so that the situation resolves itself, or somebody does it for you, or it evaporates into nothingness.

That's another possibility. The third possibility is, and these are all things that happen when you contact your essence, your essential self. The third possibility is that the

external situation does not change.

The situation that before presented an enormous amount of pain to you, or an enormous amount of upset, or conflict, or whatever it may be, suddenly you find internally you have transcended that situation. It is no longer causing you suffering, because you have connected with the transcendent dimension within you. So the very same situation remains, and yet inside you, you have transcended it, and you're totally at peace.

They're all miraculous things. We don't acknowledge these things as miracles, but these are miraculous things. So you can overcome a situation through increased consciousness, inner strength, or you can bring about a seemingly synchronistic or coincidental event that changes the situation, or you just simply internally transcend the situation.

So for example, as physical healing is concerned, it could be that physical healing actually happens spontaneously. It could be that you take the right steps to make the healing happen by changing your life habits, and your diets, and everything else, and the ways in which you think. Or it could be that healing does not happen, but the physical condition that you're faced with has brought about a very deep awakening of who you are, in which case how much longer you live no longer matters.

You have transcended the situation. So all these things are possible.

[Speaker 2] (24:07 - 25:19)

Hello Eckhart. Hello. Here's my question.

I have a relationship for almost two years. I love her, and she loves me, I think so, but she's not interested in meditation, presence, or any other related areas. So it's hard for me to share my experiences or my state of consciousness, what I go through in this process.

I mean, sometimes I tell her, like, she's asking me, how do you get so calm when we argue, or after our discussions? And I told her that I'm not my mind, and I tell her about pain, but she looks at me, is it Eckhart's stuff, or it doesn't make any sense to me, or etc. So it's very challenging for me to share this journey with her.

And I don't know how to balance my relationship, and my question is, is it possible to maintain such a relationship, or how I can, how can I balance my relationship if it is a situation? Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (25:20 - 25:35)

Right, thank you. You are not the only person who is experiencing that challenge. What are your feelings towards her?

Are they deep, or do you feel love towards her?

[Speaker 2] (25:36 - 25:36)

Yes, I love her.

[Speaker 1] (25:37 - 29:47)

Right. You have not, you don't live together, do you? No.

Well, only, you have to allow a little bit of time to see whether there's any opening in her, and it is not likely that if there is an opening in her towards spiritual awakening, it is not likely that it will come through your words. And I would give up trying to explain to her what it is that we're engaged in, and then being disappointed when she doesn't get it. Instead of trying to explain anything, just live it, live the teaching, be as present as you can when you are with her.

If a pain-body episode should arise between you, if you observe it in her, don't even try to explain, don't use any of these terms like pain-body, she's not ready to hear it on that level. But just practice not getting yourself being drawn into it, so that you don't feed it. It's your presence practice.

And it's just as an unconscious person can pull somebody else into unconsciousness, and it often happens, the reverse is also possible. A conscious, a present person can pull the other into presence without talking about it at all. It is actually counterproductive for you to try to explain what you're engaged in.

So just live it, be as present as you can when you are together. And it is possible that at some point in the relationship, you will ask a question, it will arise out of a practical situation, perhaps living together, it'll be a true question. And then you will answer the question not by repeating something that you've read in my books or anything like that, but you answer from your own realization.

It could be a simple question, but this could be a slight opening shows itself to you. So I don't know what that is going to be. It is also possible there are some humans who are absolutely not ready for any kind of spiritual awakening.

Now, they may need to suffer much more. I have had many accounts of people who were given one of my books, giving to a friend or relative, and the friend or relative said, I don't understand a word. Why did you give me this book?

It's completely meaningless. And then they put the book on the shelf. And this story was told to me by those people who were given those books.

They put the book on the shelf. 10 years later, they had gone through a certain amount of suffering in their life. They picked up the book again, and suddenly, it made sense.

And suddenly, it became extremely helpful. So I don't know what stage she's at. Only you can know by spending more time together.

I don't know. Are you able to go on vacation together? Or in your country, probably it's not common to live together before you're married.

Is that right? Yes, that is right. That makes marriage a little bit more risky.

Because you don't really know the person until you start living together in daily life. They say so. So I would give it a little bit more time before you make that final decision.

But realize that any kind of explanation is not helpful with her. But you practicing presence may be helpful.

[Speaker 2] (29:48 - 30:08)

Actually, I tried it many times. When we are spending time together, I practice presence, I get interested. And she's like, it's like you are not there, she says, when I practice presence.

What does she say? It feels like you are not there, she says. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (30:10 - 31:42)

Okay. Well, then you have to practice presence in a more natural way. You can practice presence just by engaged in normal conversation.

And yet you're this, the presence is in the background. You don't have to show that you're that you're present by any kind of visual, facial expression or eyes or when you whenever you look at her, let's say she will be talking. See if you can be free of thinking.

You look at her and you're free of thinking, but she it's better if she does not notice it, not on a conscious level. So you don't intensify your look, you don't, you don't look, you don't stare at her. So she doesn't notice that.

But you are not thinking while she is talking to you. And it's beautiful, because then you can sense her, her deeper being. And the more you can sense her deeper being beyond the person, the more the opportunity is there for her to realize that within herself.

And suddenly she feels it can often manifest simply as her loving to be in your presence. She doesn't know she because she just loves you. She doesn't know she doesn't realize that there's something in you that is deeper than the person.

But that's fine. She doesn't you don't need to explain anything, but give it a little bit more time before you make a final commitment. And give up your explanations.

Don't talk about Eckhart Tolle again to her.

[Speaker 2] (31:45 - 31:46)

It's very hard for me.

[Speaker 3] (31:50 - 32:10)

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Eckhart Tolle Awakening From The Dream State : Finding Balance Between Being And Doing [ca016b80-f2c2-41f4-b16e-3c64f8a1d185]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:11)

Awakening from the dream state, finding balance between being and doing. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the importance of finding balance between being and doing. He explains, so many of us get lost in the doing because we're so focused on external achievements, getting ahead, chasing after what we think constitutes the perfect life.

Eckhart adds that when we get lost in doing, we're also propelled by thinking. He teaches us that thinking is not voluntary. Instead, he says, thinking is something that actually happens to us and the movement of thought quickly takes on a life of its own.

Eckhart says, the unfortunate result is that we're rendered semi-conscious and living a half-life, as if in a dream. Eckhart reveals there is a deeper part of us beyond the dream and also an alert, brilliant state of consciousness just waiting to be realized. Miraculously, he says that the consciousness that is you is the same consciousness that underlies the entire universe.

[Speaker 1] (1:15 - 39:24)

So the vital thing is to find the balance in your life between being and doing. Here, we focus on being because most humans are suffering from the dreadful affliction, which we may call forgetfulness of being. And because there's forgetfulness of being, they are lost in doing.

They lose themselves in their doing. Or if they're not doing anything, maybe they're hanging around at street corners, then they are lost in semi-consciousness. They have moving below thinking, or they're trapped in very dysfunctional mind patterns.

And even the thinking, we could even categorize as, that's also a kind of doing. Doing is not just activities that you're engaged in in daily life, but underlying this external doing, there's the doing of thinking. The thinking is happening and that belongs to the realm of doing.

And although in most cases, it's not you who does the thinking, you are not doing it. It is a doing, but really, thinking is something that happens to most people. It's not something they do voluntarily as a choice.

So thinking happens to you, one could say. So I sometimes say, you don't think, you are being thought. You're being created by the involuntary and compulsive movement of thought that is conditioned by the past.

And this involuntary compulsive movement creates a mind-made kind of entity, a sense of self. And this entity is the ego. And for most people, that's who they perceive themselves to be.

And so you live with this entity. There's a good analogy one could use, that is that you, as the deeper consciousness, are asleep, and you're dreaming the dream of your life. Occasionally, you might wake up briefly, and then you fall back into the dream state, which is whatever drama is happening in your life, whatever situations are happening in your life.

So there's a personality or a person that's a dream-like entity. From the point of view of the awakened consciousness, you can clearly see that when you, retrospectively perhaps, as you awaken, you look back on your life, and you can see how many unconscious things happened that you were involved in, that you participate in, and so on. There was a whole drama unfolding, sometimes not so bad, and at other times, really dreadful, and a kind of nightmare in some cases.

And if you go back in all traditions, whether you go to Western philosophy or Eastern spiritual traditions, there's often the comparison of unawakened existence with a dream state. Many Western philosophers also have questioned it, and is life a dream? A famous play by Spanish playwright, Calderón de la Barca is, *La Vida es when your life is a dream*.

It's an ancient play. So the extent to which you are still identified with you as a person, you may still be trapped in the dream. It is possible that as you sit here, or wherever you sit or stand or lie, the awakened being is emerging, has emerged partially or maybe fully, and so there's a, you might be a hybrid between the dreamt entity and the one who is doing the dream, which is the consciousness.

You've probably heard of lucid dreaming, which means this is actual dreaming when you're asleep and you dream. It can sometimes happen you're in the middle of a dream, you suddenly realize that you're dreaming. It's a very interesting point.

Oh, it's all a dream. And then you might think, okay, I could do anything now. What can I create in this dream?

In most cases, this doesn't last very long because the state of wakefulness in conventional terms is not really compatible with dreams. So it's very brief. If you become aware in the dream, it's most likely that very quickly you'll wake up out of the dream, then it's gone.

And then you wake up into normal wakefulness, which is another, spiritually speaking, another kind of dream. Now, let's assume that this right now, this room here, a man speaking, you sitting there with your history, with your person conditioned, created by your history. And we could perhaps assume, could this be a dream?

Could you be dreaming this? Were you in the middle of the dream? You're dreaming of a man who says you may be dreaming.

Oh, and let's assume for a moment that that is the case, that you're actually dreaming this very place, situation, everything. Is your part of your dream? We don't know.

It could be the case. It depends how you look at it. From a certain perspective, it is.

From another perspective, it's not. Let's assume that it is for a moment. But even if it is a dream, there must be something that is more real than the dream, without which the dream could not be taking place, could not be.

And this prerequisite is, of course, there must be a consciousness in which the dream happens. So it becomes of secondary importance whether you're dreaming this moment or not. Even if you are dreaming this moment, there must be an essence within that dream that is real.

And that essence is the light of consciousness in which the dream images appear. And that light of consciousness is creating the dream. But the moment you realize that light of consciousness within you, that's the same thing as awakening within the conventional dream, the normal kind of dream, which I just talked about right here now.

Let's assume that this is a dream, a dream-like thing. In many ways, it is because dreams evaporate very quickly. They come, and then something else happens.

After this retreat, you might wake up the morning after and say, did I just dream of this retreat? Or did it actually happen? So let's assume it is.

And suddenly, you become aware of something within this dream, if that's what it is, of something beyond that, something that transcends the dream, is not separate from it, but without which the dream could not exist. And that is the sense of beingness or presence of I am, of consciousness, the realization that you are conscious. Or rather, language is very deceptive.

Mistakes can easily creep in the moment you verbalize something. When I say you are conscious, it's not quite right. You are consciousness.

The essence of who you are is consciousness. If I say you are conscious, and there's two of you, the you and the consciousness. So in the dream, if you suddenly realize that which is beyond the dream, by becoming aware, not becoming aware of something that arises, because everything that arises would be part of the dream, not becoming aware of any new form that arises as a thought or sensory perception or an emotion, but becoming aware of awareness, which is not something.

You can't say, there it is, I got the awareness, there it is. Oh no, it's over there. I just had

it, but it's gone now.

So awareness or consciousness cannot become an object of consciousness. Everything else is an object that arises in consciousness. But if you attempt to make consciousness into an object, then you're lost again.

You cannot make consciousness into an object because consciousness is the very thing. If you're looking for, let's say you're looking for yourself beyond the person, where's the real me? Where's the real, I want the being behind the person that I'm looking for it.

If you're looking for it, waiting for an experience in which this thing happens, that would be very misleading, because you would be waiting for some experience, fireworks, spiritual fireworks, the ultimate vision, as you see in some ancient paintings of Christian mystics, and they go, and you can't have that for that long. I mean, the vision is there, how long is it going to last? So if you're looking for yourself in the realm of experience, or in the realm of manifestation, phenomena, object of consciousness, you can't find it there, because the very thing or no thing that's looking for yourself is you.

It's like a flashlight, you use a flashlight to find the flashlight. I'm looking for the flashlight. And this would also apply to God.

You have to be careful when you use that word. You're looking for God. Can you find God as an object in consciousness, an object that arises in consciousness?

If God is an object that arises in consciousness, God must have a location in space or time somewhere. It must be, if it's an object, it must arise somewhere at some point. There it is.

He is, she is, whatever. But could it be that you are an emanation, an extension of what is conventionally called God? A bit like a ray of sunlight is an emanation that originates in this unbelievable thing in the sense-perceived world that we call the sun.

There's a ray of sunlight that can reach down here. It's not the sun. It's connected to the sun.

It's part of the sun. Yes, but it's not the sun. How do you describe it?

And that's an analogy here. Could it be that you, the consciousness that you are, is an emanation from a transcendent source into this dimension? And if that's the case, then you can become aware, as you become aware of yourself as the awareness, you become aware of your deeper connectedness.

It extends into infinity, one could almost say. There's a depth to who you are that extends to the very source. And you can sense your connectedness to a vast power that transcends who you are as a person infinitely, and yet is not really separate from you,

transcends who you are, but is not separate from who you are.

And there is an evolution of consciousness in this dimension of space and time. What is evolving is the, can observe that the universe that we seem to inhabit is gradually exhibiting increasingly complex manifestations of consciousness. Even on this planet, you can see there is an evolution started from very simple life forms.

And before that, there was just minerals or fire. There was a gradual evolution. Evolution, more consciousness was coming in to this dimension.

And more consciousness is coming in still. Humans are not finished. Humans are not a finished product yet.

Because if human evolution had already come to an end, that would be bad news. Then you could say there's something wrong with the universe. The universe is here to grow in consciousness.

Why? The whole thing nobody knows. You couldn't possibly understand conceptually, but you can only, you can sense that this is the case, especially by looking within yourself.

The most important answers concerning the universe, you can find if you look deeply within yourself, because you are a microcosm of the macrocosm. So in this dream of this room, you become aware suddenly that you're dreaming. Or you become aware that it might be a dream.

That it might all be insubstantial, which kind of it is. It's all insubstantial. There's nothing that lasts very long.

All the bodies here within a few years, by a few I mean, let's give it, there may be some very young people here, but let's be generous and say 80 years. Let's be even more generous and say 90 years. Within 90 years, at the most, definitely less in the case of the man sitting on this chair.

Within that, all the seemingly so real and solid bodies and personalities attached to the bodies, or the bodies attached to the personalities, whatever, will have popped like soap bubbles and dissolved. And this is called in Buddhist terms, impermanence. Important term used by the Buddha.

Everything is subject to impermanence. It's fleeting, very much like a dream. So these seemingly solid bodies and seemingly solid personalities, bodies, and everything seems so solid and important, and suddenly the thing pops.

All the things that were so important. So if we could see a speeded up version on camera, if we could speed up the movement of time and put 90 years into two minutes, and these bodies, you would see one body after another would pop out of existence. And

this one gone.

And then after two minutes, which is 90 years compressed, there's nobody left. Nobody. Where are they all?

Where have they gone? So in that sense, everything is insubstantial in this physical universe, the physical part of it. And so you become aware within this dream of yourself, not as the participant in the dream, but as the awareness in which the dream happens.

That means it's a very significant thing of great importance that transcends who you are as a person. When you become aware of that suddenly, you are not separate from the universe. The consciousness of you is the consciousness that underlies the entire universe.

And that suddenly becomes self-aware in you, through you. Suddenly at this point, the universe obtains self-awareness. That's an amazing, amazing thing.

It's nothing to do anymore with you as a person. The person was helpful. The person was the, one could say, if you have a seed, the person was the seed, and then suddenly the seed sprouts.

Or another analogy, the person was the caterpillar, and the caterpillar was attached to its existence as caterpillar for a long time until it got more and more painful. It became more painful because the caterpillar was destined for something beyond, something else. But for the life of the caterpillar, it became really unpleasant.

I can't stand it anymore, the caterpillar said. Oh, I can't even walk anymore, crawl, whatever they do. And there's something very wrong.

And then the caterpillar becomes interested in those last moments of imminent transformation, becomes interested in spirituality. Maybe I'm more than a caterpillar. And then suddenly the transformation happens, and something opens up, and this incredible thing comes out, this beautiful butterfly.

But this analogy is not to be taken literally. It's an inner realization, so that your identity suddenly shifts. You're no longer identified with a dream character, although the dream continues for a while.

But you are rooted in a deeper dimension, which we could call the I am, the being of you, the human being. Remember what I said, the human is the person, the being is the transcendent consciousness that then awakens in the person. So the universe, one could say, has been engaged in this dream, and still is, but its destiny is to awaken.

And that doesn't necessarily mean that it's the end of the world. Eventually, that comes too, but we don't need to go there. In the same way that you can awaken in a

conventional dream, as the universe awakens in you, the consciousness of the universe awakens in you, then you can continue in your dream, but no longer totally attached to the dream.

And whatever happens in the dream, the dream no longer determines your identity. That's a liberation. You continue, the dream continues.

It may even continue beyond the death, so-called, of this physical form, because underneath the physical form, you are still there as a thought entity and an emotional entity that is invisible, that is not physical. The thoughts within you are not actually physical. Nobody can find them in the realm of physicality.

No scientist would be able to detect any of your memories, for example. The greatest surgeon could open your brain, looking for you, but wouldn't find. Nothing that makes you you would the surgeon be able to find, including the memory of your grandmother that's been living there, and hundreds of thousands of other memories, that where do they live?

Do they even live in the brain, or do they live in the cloud? And then the brain downloads them when they're needed. That's amazing.

So this entity may well, especially if you've been very much identified with the dream character, then the physical form dissolves, but the psychological form, this mental-emotional conditioning, still has a form, and this form is still there. It hasn't realized anything beyond the dream. It hasn't gone deep enough beyond the conditioned consciousness that makes up the dream character.

And then there would be this entity, according to many ancient teachings, and if you look deeply enough within yourself, you can kind of sense that that is the case. The entity seeks another physical body because it needs more drama. I haven't had enough yet.

I want more sensory experience. There's a thirst, there's a Buddhist term for it, there's a thirst for sensory experience on every level. And so you get involved in another, another dream happens.

Now there are some people, there may be quite a few here, and if you ask, would you like to reincarnate again after, would you want to go through another one, another lifetime? Some people might say, yes, because I don't want to disappear. Well, and others might say, no way.

I can't go through this again. Just imagine another childhood. And so some, I definitely don't want to come back.

I don't want to come back. But is that really, do you really not want to come back?

Because the next day after making that statement, the phone rings and somebody says, there's a problematic situation with your stock investments.

And you get very, very upset. But yesterday, the day before you said, I'm done with this world. It doesn't attract me anymore.

I don't want, I don't need it anymore. I'm done with it. And then the next thing happens the next day, and the world draws you in completely.

You're not done at all. You get very upset about the slightest situations. So it means you want to continue the drama.

You're still attached, attached, attached. So if you awaken in this lifetime, as you are, then the dream continues. Of course, this particular dream, as long as the physical body is here, it continues.

And then there's a consciousness there. The consciousness has awakened in you, through you. And that means the compulsion to reincarnate will not be there.

Now, do you know that? How do you know whether the compulsion to reincarnate will not be there in you after the physical form dissolves? You can know that by self-observation in this lifetime, while you're still here.

Is there in you the compulsion still to identify with every thought that arises? That means you reincarnate. Reincarnate means to take a new form into your identity, reincarnates into each form that arises.

This is a compulsion to identify with rising forms, thought forms and emotional forms. So the Buddhists strive towards the end of the cycle of compulsive reincarnation. And some say, I think I may need another, at least 25 lifetimes.

And then I'll awaken then. Okay. That's, you got plenty of time then.

Perhaps not realizing that the reincarnation happens every moment in your life. Because what is reincarnation? Consciousness identified with form.

So you are born into, every time you are completely identified with the arising thoughts and emotions, your consciousness is asleep and is born into these forms, thought forms. That's the compulsion to reincarnate. So if you're not free of complete identification with thought forms, then there's a guarantee after your body dissolves, that the compulsion to reincarnate will still be there.

And you have to go through it again. Another problematic lifetime of drama and suffering. So the answer, of course, to the end of reincarnation, the compulsion to reincarnate must be here and now.

You cannot find the end to this compulsion at some future point. By observing yourself, are you attached to every thought form that arises, every emotion that arises, or is there an aware space in which they arise? And you are that.

That's the awakening. And then this, according to Buddhist teachings and others, as this physical form dissolves, the compulsion to reincarnate is no longer there. So you don't have to, if you don't want to.

But it could be that, so the story goes, out of compassion for humans, you do reincarnate. You voluntarily accept the sacrifice and you incarnate in order to bring more consciousness to humans, to free them from the dream state, from suffering. Not that you do it, but you bring, you're a bringer of consciousness.

And so you sacrifice yourself. And that would be, I believe the Buddhists have the term bodhisattva, is the term for those who voluntarily reincarnate to help others. And then there are others in Buddhism who are arahants, who say, no, I've had enough.

They are free, but they disappear into other dimensions. They don't want to reincarnate as humans. They are a bit more, they've said, I can't, no, not again.

I can't do it. Don't want to do it. I'm done with that.

I'm done. So that's the, the awakening within the dream. Then your life continues.

But the attachment lessens more and more. The attachment, not just attachment to thoughts and emotions, they're still there. It's fine.

Identification with thoughts and emotion, but also attachment to all the things that arise in life situations and so on. There is a spaciousness that makes your life easier. You relate to things in a more spacious way without the grasping that you don't need really any form in order to make your sense of identity more complete because you're no longer looking for a more complete sense of identity on that level, on the level of form.

And then the world of form becomes a more benign and quite often quite enjoyable place because you don't need to hold on to particular forms, whatever they may be, situations, possessions, achievements, people. You don't need to hang on and incorporate them into your sense of identity. That's me.

You identify with the possessions, you identify with the, whatever it may be. And it's never enough. And things very quickly, you identify with something and suddenly it leaves you and that leaves, brings more suffering.

But primarily what you always identify with, yes, you could say, let's say you identify with a possession. It means you have more than most other people than it works. So depending where you live, if you live in a very wealthy place, then you need more to

give you a heightened sense of identity.

Let's say you have a, okay, now you drive your Lamborghini. What's that called? Lamborghini, Ferrari, Ferrari Testosterone, no, Testarossa.

Testarossa, it's called. It's a very powerful Italian car. So you identify with that or you have a private jet, even better.

Or it could be you have a beautiful body, better looking than most, and then you can easily identify with, that's me. And you live with an image in your mind and you call it, that's me. And it's projected outward.

But whatever you, ultimately everything becomes a thought form because even the Lamborghini or the private jet or whatever situations you identify with like social recognition or whatever it is, maybe you get, every time you tweet something, you get thousands of likes and it gives you an enhanced sense of me. You have thousands of Facebook friends. I have some, nobody knows you, but they, and everybody likes you.

You get these likes. But whatever you identify with, you experience them as thought forms. So in ultimate terms, you're not really identified with a car because the car, you experience the car as a thought form, my car.

You don't really know, that's another philosophical question. What is actually out what I experienced as the external world? To what extent does this correspond to the way in which I perceive what's out there?

Is there a thing in itself? We, lots of us ask beyond our interpretation of our perception. So perhaps I'm dreaming up the whole thing.

Perhaps there is no Lamborghini. Maybe I'm dreaming it. It doesn't make any difference.

Even if there is a Lamborghini, it becomes a thought form. And ultimately you don't identify with a possession or anything. They are all experienced in your mind as thought forms.

So the ultimate identification is always thought. And then thought is imbued with a sense of self. And that is the delusion when you're seeking for yourself in and through thought.

[Speaker 2] (39:26 - 39:46)

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Eckhart Tolle Awakening Is Necessary for Our Survival [a8d4f249-7788-4ad9-a50b-728122b7f0e6]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:49)

Awakening is necessary for our survival. In this podcast, Eckhart elaborates further about finding freedom from the bondage of self. He says the first step is to confront our thinking and resist the urge to identify with every thought we have.

Eckhart says rising above thinking paves the way to liberation. He warns that we are quickly moving towards a crisis point for humanity and the planet. Eckhart believes this pivotal moment does not have to spell disaster because it is precisely during a crisis that we have the greatest opportunity to evolve.

He says many people are ready for a shift in consciousness. He says awakening is no longer a luxury. It is a necessity for our survival.

[Speaker 1] (0:51 - 39:52)

Now at first, this space of pure awareness seems to be nothing. And in a way it is nothing in the sense that it is not a thing, that it is not an object of consciousness. Because everything else is an object of consciousness.

Every sense perception becomes an object of consciousness. Every thought is an object. In other words, you could say it is a form that consciousness temporarily takes.

It incarnates into a form. And that form is a thought. Or it could be a sense perception.

And so that is the incarnation of consciousness into form. Sometimes Buddhists argue, how many more incarnations do I need before I no longer need to incarnate? You can do it right here and now.

Don't incarnate into thoughts. That's the end of incarnation. Which means don't identify with the rising thoughts.

Be the awareness behind the thoughts, which is what you are. And so at first it seems like, let's say, what we call it stillness. By the way, I wrote a little book that some of you might not know.

It's called Stillness Speaks, which is a little paradox, of course. Stillness Speaks, it's a book for meditative reading. You just read a few lines and you kind of become still.

That's what it's for. So the stillness is one way of putting it. But that's just a term, of course.

Stillness is the inner equivalent of silence in the outer world. Silence in the outer world is

the absence of noise. Stillness in the inner realm is the absence of thought.

In the absence of thought, what remains is you do not fall asleep. In ordinary existence, when thinking stops, you very quickly fall asleep. So the only way that humans who are not awakened or awakening can experience the cessation of thinking is when they move from the wakeful state into sleep.

Then there comes a moment of you cannot remember your problems anymore because you're so tired. Five minutes before you were thinking about your problems, the problems were your identity. And now you get very tired.

You can't remember your problems anymore. But you're not totally asleep yet. And it feels so good.

You're moving towards sleep, and it feels so good. And temporarily, briefly, you're free of yourself. And then you move into the unconsciousness of sleep.

Ah. Now, most humans, without knowing it, are looking for becoming free of themselves, of themselves. And then again, they look in the wrong places.

Some humans find temporary relief from themselves by taking substances. And for some humans, it can be a good thing to have, especially those who are totally mind-possessed, that can give them a glimpse of something that's beyond their mind. It may temporarily stop their mind.

But don't become dependent on anything. And I don't recommend it. You don't need it.

But if you take humans, they love that smoking these dried leaves that were illegal for many years for some reason, but now you can smoke them. Well, I don't know about here, but it temporarily calms the mind. It's like your mind becomes a bit...

I tried it once when we were visiting Amsterdam. And it kind of dulls your mind a bit. That's how I experienced it.

But I can see what it does to people whose mind is very active. They go temporarily, they become free of themselves, their mind-made self. And they've become, oh, happy, so happy.

I can't stop laughing. That's how happy I am. I'm free of myself.

So the way I put it is, with this, yes, you are becoming free of yourself, but you're falling below thinking. You're going to a state prior to the arising of the ego. You're falling below thinking.

Yes, you are free of the mind that tortures you every day. You're falling below thinking. This is not the awakening path.

Otherwise we would call it the sleeping path or something like that. The awakening path is the ability grows in you to rise above thinking. That's what it is.

You are actually conscious without thought. And that is the simplicity of it. And then you find, at first, it's just an absence of thought, in the same way that externally silence is an absence of noise.

This is the absence of inner noise. And then at first, okay, and then you stay with it, and it comes back again at the end. Once you get a glimpse of that state of pure awareness, you may want to invite it into your life more often.

From the point of view of time, one could say that this power that manifests through you grows stronger. Not that the power itself grows stronger, but this dimension where there's time, it manifests more fully through you, so to speak. So the power, present power, as I sometimes call it, grows in you.

That is the power of life itself. That is the pure, pure intelligence, you could call it, pure consciousness, the very primordial thing that is behind everything. It is, am I talking about God here?

Am I saying that this, the consciousness itself is God? Well, yes and no. The analogy I like to use that is maybe helpful is the sun.

The sun emanates light. The light of the sun is the life-giving thing here that enables life to be. The sun pours out light continuously, energy.

There's the sun. Now this light, of course, is still connected to the sun. It's not separate from the sun.

It emanates from the sun, but it's not the sun. So it is and it isn't the sun. The sun itself is vast and inconceivable form of energy.

This is only an analogy. So what I mean then is God is the source from which consciousness emanates into this dimension. This is the closest, as far as I'm concerned, it's the closest in words to explain that which cannot really be explained.

So it's more like a poetic description of something that ultimately cannot be put into words, which after all are just sounds produced by the vocal chords. I cannot explain the universe by using sounds produced by the vocal chords. There are not that many sounds.

Oh, oh, ee, oh, psh, psh. That's about it. You put them together, and then you expect an explanation of the universe.

But nevertheless, I'm attempting it. So in the same way that the sun emanates into this world and it's the life-giving, the source of all life, this physical realm, God, the

transcendent one, the transcendent source that does not exist in space or time, but is transcendent to space and time, you cannot understand it. That emanates what you experience as consciousness into this dimension.

So what you sense, and here we come to a point, realization, when you sense this consciousness in yourself as yourself, that is your connection with the source, which we make on God. And it's not just your connection. It's the realization that there is an ultimate oneness with the source.

That is the realization, and that is total liberation from believing yourself to be this limited little person with its limited and ultimately silly problems that all dissolve the moment the body dissolves. And then you have on your gravestone the date of your birth and the date of your death, and in between there is a little dash, and that was your life. And that's on the level of the person, all the problems, heaviness of problems.

Oh, oh. It's all gone, and that can go before you die. There's the ancient saying, die before you die, and realize that there is no death.

Let's put it like this. It's a misleading question, but I'll tell you in a second why it's misleading, but I'll ask it anyway. Can you be aware right now?

Can you be aware that you are aware? Can you be conscious right now that you are conscious? Now, I'm saying it's a misleading question because the moment I formulate the question, I have created a duality that says, I am aware of being conscious.

That's only because we are using language where every sentence is a subject and an object. But what it really means is the awareness that you are aware of itself. Can you be aware of yourself as the awareness?

So there isn't you and the awareness. There isn't you and consciousness. There isn't you and life.

Because consciousness is life. Primordial life is consciousness itself, and then consciousness manifests in life forms. Everything is a manifestation of it.

One could say that material things are consciousness at a certain frequency of manifestation. Matter is consciousness. One could say consciousness asleep or consciousness frozen consciousness.

You can say the mineral world is consciousness that is asleep. The plant world is consciousness that is dreaming. The animal world is consciousness that's beginning to awaken.

And the human is a potential of consciousness to realize itself that's in this dimension, in this dimension. So consciousness is the essence of it all. Consciousness is who you are.

Consciousness is what you are. Consciousness is life. So people have this strange thing.

I wrote that in, I believe, in Stillness Speaks. People say, he lost his life. Or they say, I don't want to lose my life.

No, of course not. Because you don't have a life. Not in the normal sense of the expression, you don't have a life.

In a deeper meaning, you don't have a life because you are life. So you cannot lose something that you don't have, but that you are. Nobody has a life.

You are life. You don't have it. Because if you have it, who are you and what is life?

This is a duality created by the human mind in this dimension. You can't help it in this dimension. But don't be trapped in that duality.

So can you sense that you are conscious right now? In other words, you are conscious of being conscious. You're conscious of yourself as consciousness.

I mean, it's not complicated. The mind might tell you, no, no, I can't do it. That's a lie.

Because there's nothing to do. There's no doing involved. It's a realization of being.

But the realization of being, the realization of being does not involve any doing. Because any doing would detract from the realization of being. Doing, being.

Doing belongs to the horizontal dimension of life, of course. Being is the vertical. Now, for a fulfilled life in this dimension here, you need to be rooted in the transcendent dimension.

Again, the intersection of horizontal and vertical. So it's the dance between doing and being. Doing, doing, also thinking is doing too.

Doing. But don't lose yourself in the doing. That's important.

To be able to do without self-reference, without seeking yourself in the doing, including the thinking, which is the primordial doing. So at first, for humans in whom this awakening happens, for most, at first they have then two separate compartments in their life. They have them involved in their daily activities, and then they go out into nature, or go into their room, and they sit, and they're able to, whether you call it a meditation or not, it doesn't matter.

The realization of being. In nature, sometimes it's easier than in the city. Cessation of thinking, but not falling asleep.

Very alert. Looking around. Sense perceptions, but no labeling.

No naming, labeling, let go of that. Just the awareness is perceiving this world. The trees, the lights, or if it's man-made, human-made, fine too.

Beautiful flowers, of course. Awareness is perceiving this, but not you as a person. When you are perceiving without naming, the person isn't there.

The person is receded, and consciousness is perceiving. So you're aware of yourself, and you're aware of what's being perceived. But at first, you have the two compartments.

You can become still when you're not being disturbed, and you go, ah, ah. And then you have to go back into daily life. And then your phone makes all these sounds, ping, ping, ping.

Text messages come in, ah, ah. It's being pulled out of you. What's happening now?

Somebody's posted something there. One of your many friends whom you have never even met, Facebook. Posting something, they're having a meal.

Look, oh, what a person. And so this world pulls you out. And then you look at someone who's posted a photo of themselves.

It's almost better looking than me. Not realizing, of course, they just have better filters than you. Filters are great for the externalized ego.

Everybody can look beautiful now, even me. They did it to me, too. So you're back into the world.

There was a famous French philosopher, Pascal, I believe, who lived in the, I think, 17th century. He had an interesting saying. He said, all the ills of humanity are due to a person's inability to sit quietly in a room.

All the problems, all the ills of humanity are due to a person's inability to sit quietly in a room. That at first seems a little strange, but there's a deep meaning behind that. Because to be able to sit quietly in a room, quietly means without being disturbed by your thoughts, because then you're not sitting quietly in a room.

To be sitting quietly in a room implies that you are connected with that transcendent dimension of consciousness. Then you actually love the being itself. You love this realization of being.

And then you sit quietly in a room without needing distractions, without needing to think about this or that, just to be, just to be, to be. That's really what he was talking about. Because everything else, all the troubles of humanity arise from being disconnected, not realizing their connectedness with thoughts.

So then you only have the ego. And the ego creates all the dreadful stuff in this world,

both on a personal level and on a collective level. It dislikes, actually it talks about peace, but it dislikes peace.

It loves its enemies because it defines itself through the other. It needs to emphasize the otherness of the other in order to strengthen its own fictitious identity. And that's what's happening on a personal level.

It's happening collectively in the world. Entire nations needing to emphasize the otherness of the other. And then the egoic identity gets strengthened.

The ego loves its enemies. It needs its enemies. Without enemies with the other, its fictitious sense of identity would begin to become loose, begin to dissolve.

I need my enemies. All this is dysfunction that humans have inherited, that we are here to transcend. We need to now.

It's been a relative, one could almost say, a luxury for human beings in the past few thousand years to awaken. Only a few here and there have been able to awaken. Probably more than we realize because many of them you will have never heard of.

They never perhaps said very much. They didn't write anything. But still, relatively few.

We are now moving into a point of crisis for humanity and the planet. And it's at a crisis point where the possibility of awakening is greatest. It's when we really need to awaken.

Then it happens on a larger scale than just a few here and there. So it's no longer a luxury. It's a necessity for survival of the species.

And now we have reached this critical point. And that is not a bad thing. That is a good thing.

And many humans are ready for it. And many humans are already, almost all of you are here, because you are already part of the awakening of human consciousness, which is a next step in the evolution, one could say, in the evolution of humanity. It's one way of looking at it or putting it.

It is a shift in consciousness, the next step. Because humans, I would suggest, are still a work in progress, not a finished product. I mean, humans are a finished product?

That would be a terrible mistake. Somebody made a horrible mistake. If humans are not evolving but they're already finished in their evolutionary path, then God made a big mistake.

But humans on this dimension of time, they are evolving. On the horizontal level, yes, humans can do and achieve and become, becoming, becoming, becoming this, becoming that. But the awakening, it transcends all that.

The awakening is a realization of a dimension within you, but ultimately it's not within, it's also without. But it's a realization of a dimension within you, where you are already absolutely complete. On that level, you're already fully and completely yourself.

Not in a limited sense of self, but you are the self of the universe, which the Buddhists say is a non-self, and Hindus say it's the transcendent self. A little paradox again, the world is full of paradoxes, especially when we talk about these matters that you cannot really talk about. There is an evolutionary process here.

Humans are awakening, but the moment you awaken, the human realizes the timeless dimension of consciousness. And then you can still operate here and achieve and do things, no longer looking for a sense of completion or satisfaction through the doing, simply enjoying the doing, like a dance, a beautiful dance, or whatever analogy you want to use. You're not looking for yourself anymore in this world, because you have already found the transcendent dimension that is inseparable from who you are or what you are.

That is the I am, without adding anything to it. So you're not looking for yourself anymore in the doing. And then even the quality of the doing changes when you are connected with the dimension of depth within you, which is you.

Then the way in which you experience this world changes too. Yes, you as a person, of course, have certain idiosyncrasies and certain limitations. No person can be perfect as a person.

And yet, you realize that the deep I, there's no evolution in the deep I. So you're connected to the timeless dimension, the transcendent dimension. But you continue to operate.

Your ability to operate in this world has not become diminished, and your ability to think has actually not become diminished either, because thinking is no longer self-serving now. You can engage in thinking, but not self-seeking thinking. So thinking can become an inspired tool of the deeper intelligence, that is, the consciousness itself.

It can flow into your mind. It can use your mind. And then you have actually original thoughts, and you have original insights, because you're in touch with the transcendent intelligence itself.

One word you can use, transcendent intelligence, to talk of consciousness. That is another thing that happens as you're connected. The way in which you relate to other humans changes also.

There is a dimension of depth in your relationship with other humans, because you no longer just see the personality, the body and the personality, in the same way that you have transcended body and personality in yourself. When you look at another human, or they are speaking, and you listen to them, you're still, you're alert, and you look. The

compulsion to name, to judge, and to label isn't there anymore.

You just, you look at them, you listen to them, and you can sense, beyond their personality, that timeless essence that is one with the essence that you are. Covered by the personality, yes. You accept the limitations of the personality.

Nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness, so that's how it is. Remember that if you have somebody to forgive in the past, nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness, and you can see, perhaps, their limitations, but beyond that, beyond the person, you can sense their consciousness, which is not theirs, of course, not yours, but what you sense is that which, ultimately, what you sense is your oneness with the other. Not as a belief or some concept, but you can sense, and that, you feel that as, what word are we going to use?

Let's use the word that's been misused so much, love. You feel that as love, but not egoic love. Come to me.

Don't you dare leave me. Not that love. Love is the recognition of oneness.

So, ultimately, you see yourself, you sense yourself in the other, and then that is love. So, ultimately, you always love yourself, in a deeper sense, because yourself is no different from the transcendent self in the other. Love is ultimately only one.

It's only one of us. And that recognition, then, you're free of having to react to the personalities, because the personalities, you might have noticed, can be really obnoxious. Oh, my God.

So, you encounter lots of obnoxious personalities in this world, but you're able to transcend that in your perception. And also, the judgments go out where you put people into little mental boxes and conceptualize every human, imposing a conceptual identity on every human being, because if you haven't gone beyond the conceptual identity in yourself, then you automatically impose a conceptual identity on every other human that you meet. And imposing conceptual identity ultimately means you're dehumanizing them.

You're reducing them to mental concepts. And this is how, very easily, violence can happen, when humans do it to other humans. They attach a label to the other human, and instead of sensing the humanity and ultimately the divinity of the other, they can't sense it anymore, because they have deadened themselves to that by imposing a conceptual reality, having some kind of name for the other.

He is, she is, such and such. Or a collective term, whatever you want to. He's, oh, he's a this and that.

So, you are dead now to their deeper, to their reality. And this is how, very often,

violence happens, sometimes on a large scale, because you have dehumanized an entire group of humans by imposing labels on them. For example, in communism, it happened, millions of people were killed.

In National Socialism, a similar thing. In communism, for example, you had to, just a certain term. He's a class traitor and a counter-revolutionary.

Okay. Class traitor and counter-revolutionary. He imposed that conceptually, there's nothing left to this human being, but a class traitor and a counter-revolutionary.

Awful. Not a human at all. That's how millions got killed.

My God. One can only say, last words of Jesus on the cross, forgive them, for they know not what they do. In modern terminology, of course, he would have said, forgive them, for they are completely unconscious.

They are completely unconscious. Oh, my God. So, we see how important it is to transcend that dysfunctional state of consciousness that we've arrived at the end of it now.

It all had its place. Humans had to go through the phase of the ego, and now it's time to come out, to transcend it. The ego, strangely, creates so much suffering in this world on every level, but strangely, the ego, it ultimately awakens humans.

At first, it seems to do the opposite, but then the weird thing is the ego has a self-destruct mechanism built into it. It eventually self-destructs, and then the awakening happens. So, the ego can create havoc in your life.

If you're deeply ego-possessed, you create suffering for yourself, everybody around you, and you've probably met humans who are like that. If you create suffering for yourself unconsciously through the mind, if you make yourself unhappy, you make many others around you unhappy. But in the end, unhappiness becomes unbearable.

So, I've seen also egoic structures, sometimes spiritual teachings can become contaminated by the ego. Sometimes it starts as spiritual communities, beautiful at first, there's some arising of consciousness, and yet the ego comes in through the backdoor of spiritual ego. It comes in through the backdoor, and then the ego grows in the spiritual communities.

At some point, the whole thing falls apart, a big drama happens. The ego, again, self-destruct mechanism is built into the ego, and so that's a good thing. So, we have arrived at this point where awakening has become possible for many, many more humans than before because it is necessary, and you are all an essential part of that.

So, in addition of being a person with a limited lifespan, not just in addition, but more

fundamentally, you are a manifestation of the awakening consciousness, ultimately of the universe, which is this dimension here. Throughout the universe, the universe is gradually awakening. Don't ask me why and where it's going, that's too much.

But I do know that the universe is gradually awakening. That's in time. Here we have time.

But it all emanates from the timeless dimension, like the sun and the light of the sun. So, you are the universe itself that's awakening in the disguise of a person, a human. And I'm sure the universe is awakening countless other disguises, other temporary forms.

So, you're not just a person, you are the consciousness of the universe, the greatest mystery there is. There's no greater mystery than consciousness itself, no greater miracle than consciousness itself. And you are that.

And you thought you were a little person. Of course, you still are a little person until you finally die, but there's much more than that. And you are free of believing that that's all you are.

It's the realization of the vastness of who or what you are. Amazing, just amazing. But please become more and more familiar with the gap between two thoughts, the awareness itself.

Catch yourself when thinking subsides spontaneously sometimes, when you look at nature. And then you're aware of the consciousness that you are and that which appears in that light of consciousness. And the consciousness that you are remains.

It's timeless. That's why we say, whatever happened in your life, it's always been now. The one thing that never changed is it was always now, it is always now, it will always be now.

And ultimately, that now is a space for what happens. And the space for what happens is consciousness itself. So the now is not what happens in the now.

Sometimes I think when you talk about the present moment, people think the present moment is what happens in the moment. It's not what happens. The reality of the present moment, what we call present moment or the now, is not what happens in the now.

It's the space for it all that is consciousness. It is the light of consciousness. And here, too, it's not two things.

Because what happens is, one could say, if we have to use words, it's a form that consciousness has taken temporarily. This is what happens and then it dissolves. It happens, it dissolves, it takes on a form.

So the now has always been there. This is why when you become aware of the now, you're really aware of yourself as consciousness. That's the deeper meaning of the power of now.

You become aware of the now, it's more than just becoming aware of what's going on. Yeah, that's fine, you're aware of your sense perceptions, that's better than being totally absorbed in silly, problem-making thinking, not constructive thinking, but most of human thinking is problem-making thinking. Yes, to be aware of your surroundings is great, to see the aliveness of it all, that's already a great thing.

But it's not yet the depth of now. It's still the surface of now. And the depth of now is, from there, the next step is being aware of the perceiver of it all, which is the perceiver is the perceiving consciousness, that which makes perception possible.

And that's the essence of who you are. And you can sense that directly. And it's not an object.

The only thing that can never become an object of consciousness is you, because you are consciousness. Consciousness cannot be known as an object. Jesus said it.

You know, he talked about the kingdom of heaven, which in my translation is a dimension of spaciousness, which is an inner dimension of consciousness. Kingdom means dimension. Dimension of spaciousness, vast spaciousness.

The kingdom of heaven is within you. And they ask, when is the kingdom of heaven going to come? Please tell us, where is it and when is it going to come?

And he said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived. You cannot say, look, it's over here, or look, it's over there. What truly I tell you, the kingdom of heaven is within you.

So what does he mean? You can't say it's over there, it's over there. It cannot become an object of consciousness.

You can never say, there it is. You can't say, I have it. You can't have it, but you are it.

This is the secret of the universe, the timeless truth of it all. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (39:56 - 40:16)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Awakening Right Where You Are [41cbdced-a7d8-4997-9122-adab01287f33]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:37)

Awakening Right Where You Are. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience. He urges participants to wake up from the delusion that the things we think will make us happy won't.

Even if we get everything on our wish list, wealth, fame, a life of ease, we still feel unsatisfied. But Eckhart says the world is not here to make us happy, it's here to help us evolve. He says no matter what our situation is, we can surrender to life's challenges and awaken right where we are.

[Speaker 1] (0:39 - 57:12)

The narrative in your mind that you call your life might tell you that your life was a failure. It might tell you your life was a great success, but in this case you probably didn't come here because if you were totally satisfied for your life, why would you ever look for anything beyond the material things and the mental things? Nobody can be satisfied for very long.

So you've all tasted failure, so-called, and some of you might think the whole thing didn't work out. I had such great plans when I was 18. I had great plans for my life, and then it didn't work out, but nothing worked out.

My marriage didn't work out, and then the second one didn't work out either, and then I got a job, but then I lost it, and then I made some money, but then it made me unhappy because I bore it so much and became so stressed out that I had to seek psychiatric help, and that didn't help. Oh dear. In other words, your mind is cluttered by stuff.

Your mind is cluttered, and you can't get out of the clutter. It's like a room full of clutter, and these days it's even more cluttered because all the devices that people use clutter your mind even more. Every text message is more cluttered because 99 out of 100 text messages are not important.

They're just cluttered. Facebook, again, there might be occasionally important things, but you can continuously bombard it, but you need to take it all in, and very rarely these days, for people who are not awakening, it's actually getting worse. For people who are not awakening, you can see there's not a moment when they are, in the past, occasionally when you were somewhere waiting for something, there was nothing to do, and you just had to sit there and maybe look around, but nobody does that anymore.

When was the last time you saw somebody just sit there and look around? No, because you have to get out your phone, and of course, what does that phone do? It clutters your

mind even more.

If you hadn't, didn't have your phone, there would be a chance of having some spaciousness. You could perhaps look at the sky, and go, ah, and appreciate the beauty of it, and the depth of it, and the spaciousness of it, but no, there's a text message coming in. And what does it say?

It says, what's up? And then, of course, you have to reply, of course. When that goes, that space of the naturally occurring spaciousness, not, I'm not even talking about consciously embracing spaciousness, just the naturally occurring spaciousness in a normal person's life, that rarely happens these days, and that's a great dysfunction, and I don't know what effect that will have on the civilization within two or three generations.

Now, there is, fortunately, there is a segment of the population that is awakening spiritually, perhaps to compensate for the dysfunction that many humans are forced to enact, reenact every day. So, declutter your mind is not a process that takes a long time. To declutter your mind, you don't have to go, okay, I'm now taking out this thought, now what's the next thought that I'm going to take out?

Like, if you declutter your room, you have to say, what is it that I don't need? But to declutter your mind is an instant thing. It's an instant thing of withdrawing from thinking and becoming present.

And you can do it, as I just mentioned, one example, looking at the sky. Because there you have spaciousness. The sky is spacious.

And that is why Jesus used the analogy of kingdom of heaven. Heaven means sky. In most languages, heaven and sky are the same word.

In French, in Spanish, in German, heaven and sky are the same word. So, he's talking about the kingdom of the sky. And he said, that's the most important thing.

Just find the kingdom of the heaven, and everything else will work out in your life. That's what basically his teaching was. Now, I offer a new translation instead of kingdom of heaven.

I've already said sky, but there's an even better translation that I found, and that is spaciousness. Because the essence of the sky is vast spaciousness. Kingdom, my translation for kingdom is dimension.

So, the kingdom of heaven is the dimension of spaciousness. It is a dimension of consciousness in you. So, the kingdom of heaven, again, when they asked him, where is the kingdom of heaven?

Because they hadn't understood what he was talking about. Where is it? When is it going

to come?

And he said, and this is, I believe, one of the things that is more or less literally true of what he said, many other things are not literally true that were passed on and written down. But he said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived. You cannot say, ah, it's over here, or look, it's over there.

But truly, I tell you, the kingdom of heaven is within you. In modern translations, it's in the midst of you. Both are true.

The kingdom of heaven is within you. It is the dimension of spaciousness in you. And if you find that, that solves not every single problem of your life, no.

But it gives you access to a dimension in you from where all the problems of your life and the challenges of your life can be seen in their true perspective and no longer have the ability to draw you in completely and make your life miserable. Your ability to deal with the challenges of life, which are inevitable. Life is not easy for anybody.

It's not even meant to be easy. It's not easy for any life form. Every life form is presented with life challenges, from insects to plants to every little, every life form.

Life is challenging, and human life is particularly challenging. The more evolved, the more problematic things get. The more you can start thinking, the more problematic life gets.

So it does not mean when you find the kingdom of heaven within as the dimension of spaciousness, that you are no longer challenged by life. No. But the way in which you respond to the challenges changes.

You no longer amplify challenges. They are just there, and you either take action or you accept what is for the time being. In other words, the challenges of life, the problems of life, no longer make you unhappy.

And that's a huge evolutionary leap forward. So sometimes spiritual people, who are spiritual seekers, have a misconception that when they awaken spiritually, become enlightened, whatever word you want to use, that then they will no longer experience challenges or problems. That's not true.

Life continues. Every situation that you go into has a new set of challenges. You could become famous and live in Hollywood or whatever, and you would quickly find, before you thought, when I attain this, I'll really be okay.

I'll be wonderfully happy for the rest of my life. Please, God, just make me famous, and I'll be happy for the rest of my life. I just need \$10 million, \$20 million, make it \$20.

I just need that, and then I need to be recognized that I'm great by other people. I really

need that also. But then I'll be really happy.

It's not going to happen. Even if you get what you wanted, unhappiness will quickly resurface. This was confirmed to me.

I've met a few people who got what they wanted, and they told me how unhappy they became after a while. After the elation of first having it, I'm the greatest. And then something happened to deeply challenge them.

So the challenges of life remain, and that is a good thing, because by being challenged, when you are awakening spiritually, the problems, the challenges of life no longer pull you into unhappiness and unconsciousness and reactivity and complaining and seeing yourself as a victim, but they force you to be more intensely present. They bring out more spaciousness. When you get challenged by life, you go, oh, there it is, another challenge.

And you look at it, wow, it always comes. The strange thing is, life does not leave you alone. Wherever you go, you could go to a remote cabin, and when I go there, then I'll be free.

You can go to, let's say you have enough money, you can go to the most luxurious resort where you get pampered and treated with massages and the most delicate food every day. And I'll be there for several months, and surely after that, I'll be enlightened. You won't be.

You'll just go to sleep. It's only if you're challenged by life, you go, oh. And the challenges of life, when you are not conscious enough, when you are unconscious, in other words, the challenges of life turn into suffering.

Suffering is a term used by the Buddha. The challenges of life make you unhappy, which means they turn into suffering. Now the big difference, when you have access to the dimension of spaciousness in you, the challenges of life no longer make you unhappy.

All they do is they force you to go deeper into spaciousness, become more present, more intensely present. And then the way in which you deal with challenges, because some things require you to take action, other things just happen and there's nothing you can do, so you can tell the difference. But if you are able to take action, the action will be far more effective and intelligent when you look at a challenge and are present with it, instead of being reactive and complain and or attack something.

So your life does improve, your external life improves, despite the fact that you will not be free of challenges. Nevertheless, the way in which you experience the challenges of life changes. And there comes a time when you can almost or actually welcome the new challenges that come, which they come all the...

every day presents certain things that things happen that the mind might say shouldn't be happening. There's this unpleasant person, this and there's that, and I missed my... then I missed my plane, and then I missed the bus, and then I lost the money, and then...

There's always things, always things that seem to interfere with your happiness. And so you leave, leave me alone. I want to be left alone and be happy.

Doesn't work. The world is not here to make you happy. No, because if the world were here to make you happy, the entire world would be a huge, massive failure of enormous proportions, because it's not making anybody happy.

So the entire world would be at one gigantic failure. It's not meant to be... it's meant to make you conscious.

The world is meant to awaken you. The world... Why?

Because the universe wants to become more conscious. There is an evolution of consciousness throughout the universe. And now let's come back to the essence of who you are.

The essence of who you are cannot be defined in words. The essence of who you are is the spaciousness within you, the presence that you can sense when you say, I am. Or when you ask yourself the question, who am I?

Which is actually a meditation recommended by some spiritual teachers in India. Ramana Maharshi recommended it. A wonderful spiritual teacher lived in the first half of the 20th century.

Who am I? Ask yourself that question, he said. Who am I?

Now, what you need to know is, if you answer that question through a thought or word, you're wrong. So the question who am I does not have an answer. The answer is not to be found as a concept or thought or word.

Who am I? The question is designed to bring you to a state of alert presence. And you come completely comfortable with not knowing who you are on a conceptual level.

There's no thought. In other words, when you use it as a meditative tool and you ask yourself the question, who am I? And after you've asked the question, the mind becomes still and present.

And that's the answer. That's who you are. That's the essence, your essence identity, I call it.

Of course, you still have your personality and your form identity. The form identity is the

makeup of your mind, your psychological form, your conditioned mind, your physical body. That's form identity.

And of course, you still have that, but you no longer confuse your form identity with who you truly are. So you can honor your form identity and even accept the limitations of your form identity. On the level of your form identity, you're never going to be perfect.

It's not possible. What you gain here, you lose there. You become good at this and you become bad at that.

You can't be everything. You're limited. Your form identity has limitations.

And you can certainly try to improve your form identity by learning new things, learning new skills, experiencing new things. All those are wonderful things to add to your form. But if that's all you know about yourself is your form identity, which is the conditioned mind and the body, then no matter where you go, no matter who you meet or what situation you go into or what you achieve or attain, you will always very quickly become frustrated and unhappy again.

That's just how it is. Why? Because you have not realized who you are.

Only by realizing who you are can you become free of unhappiness. Not free of challenges, but free of unhappiness, free of suffering. Of course, you can still get a pain.

You can still get a toothache. The pain itself is just, when I use the word suffering, I mean psychological suffering. A me that suffers, an unhappy me.

So who am I is the question that has no answer, and the no answer is the answer. Let's take this interesting room where we are, and you sitting in a chair, and I'm sitting in a chair. Is this really happening?

The other day somebody interviewed me, and there were some prepared questions. And one of the questions the interviewer asked me was, is reality real? Well, nobody had asked exactly that kind of question before.

Is reality real? Now, to answer a question like that, you can't go, let me think. Well, I would say that it's real enough because my unhappiness is so real.

Seems so real. No, of course, the question, is all this real, has been asked by many philosophers and so on, because life has, sometimes it comes to you more than at other times, the life that you experience has a certain dreamlike quality sometimes. Maybe especially if you get older, you can look back and say, is there so much difference between what all the things that I've experienced and that have happened to me, and a dream that I had last night.

And so some philosophers have said, life is really a dream that's happening. Maybe God

is having the dream. Maybe you are being dreamt by God.

There's some truth in that. But, of course, we can question whether this moment, you sitting there, me sitting on a chair, is actually happening, or whether maybe you are dreaming that you are sitting in a room, listening to a man who is telling you that maybe you're dreaming. So you can question whether this is actually happening or not.

Is reality real? But, of course, if you start thinking about it, you can think for the next 20 years, and you can write books about it. It won't get you anywhere.

But there's a more immediate realization possible here, and that is to ask yourself, what is absolutely beyond doubt about this moment here and about myself, which maybe I'm dreaming this moment? That is possible. But is there something else that is beyond doubt?

So you can doubt whether this is real. But is there something else that you cannot doubt? Let's see.

And don't start thinking about it. Is there something else that I cannot doubt? Yes.

Of course there is. And what's that? You cannot doubt that at this moment, right now, you are conscious.

There is a consciousness in which whatever you're perceiving is perceived. If you were not conscious, you would not be perceiving this room or anything in it. And if it's a dream, the same thing applies.

Even if it's a dream, there must be a consciousness in which the dream appears. The light of consciousness in which the dream unfolds. So whether or not it's reality or dream makes no difference to the more fundamental question of what is it about myself that is absolutely beyond doubt, that I can know for sure.

And that which you can know for sure is consciousness. And it's not so much that you are conscious, that's using language that creates a delusion of duality again, but you are consciousness. The essence of who you are is consciousness.

The light of consciousness. Now what that is, scientists have no idea. Most scientists don't mention the word because they don't know what to do with it.

But you can verify at this very moment the essence of who you are is consciousness. And that is the I am. That is the spaciousness within.

That is the stillness. That is the formless, the unconditioned consciousness. Your thoughts are also part of our consciousness, but they are the form that consciousness takes.

I compare to the ocean and the surface of the ocean. Your thoughts and emotions are the ripples and waves on the surface of the ocean. And your entire sense of identity, your form identity, me and my life, is a little ripple on the surface of the ocean of being.

Now when you only know yourself as a ripple on the surface of the ocean, then life is very problematic because you are threatened by bigger ripples and there may be even some big waves occasionally threatening you. And all you look is you see separate other ripples. That ripple looks better than me.

What's that ripple going to do with me? Or come I can't live without you and we need to come together and form a bigger ripple. And that doesn't help either.

But if the ripple could realize its essence identity as, oh I'm actually deeper than I realized. I'm not just the surface phenomenon here. With my thoughts and emotions and stuff going on in my life, I'm actually as suddenly the ripple stops thinking.

And suddenly as the ripple stops thinking, it's becoming aware of a deep spaciousness. And that is the ripple is beginning to realize that it is the ocean. The ocean temporarily appearing as a ripple or wave.

Just a short while. And then the way in which the ripple experiences life is going to change. Because the ripple is no longer fearful of other ripples.

It actually loves every other ripple because it can send its oneness with the other ripple. And so that suddenly life becomes more enjoyable. It's not that sometimes it still gets bumped by other ripples.

That's okay. But life is actually becoming enjoyable because the ripple is connected with something that is far, infinitely vaster than the little ripple existence. But the strange thing is when the ripple becomes conscious, and bear with me just one more minute about the ripple analogy.

As you realize that you are the ripple, I'm sure you know that. As the ripple realizes its identity as the ocean, ultimately it's not the ripple that's realizing its identity. Because when the ripple realizes its identity, the ocean also realizes its identity through the ripple.

Now you can perhaps intuitively sense what I mean when I use that analogy. Because when you become conscious of your essence, it goes far beyond a personal realization. It transcends the personal.

When a human being awakens to his or her essence identity, it's not just a human being awakening to his or her essence identity. There's the ocean of being, the universe itself awakening, experiencing awakening. And the universe wants to awaken.

It wants to know itself. And so you are connected to the evolutionary impulse of the universe. And the reason why you've come here tonight, you can explain it on a personal level.

Well, I came because I read the book, and it helped me, and I became interested, and then I've already been to hundreds of retreats, and I hope that this time I'll finally get it, or whatever. You can explain on a personal level why you have come here, but there's a deeper reason why you have come here, because the universe itself wants to experience an awakening. So this is an evolutionary thing that's happening here, and I would suggest this is not the only place where this is taking place here, but this is far more important than anything you're going to see on the news tonight.

I mean, there's no comparison, because almost everything you see in the news, with very rare exceptions, the news is made up of the main manifestations of human unconsciousness on the planet, and that makes up the news. So you get a wrong impression of what's happening on the planet if you think that what you hear or listen to in the news, if you believe it, those are things that really matter. What really matters is that you awaken, and the world changes when enough humans awaken to who they are.

Then the world inevitably is going to change, because you no longer create misery for yourself and others. You no longer create suffering for yourself and others, and you will be able to grow and continue to grow through the never-ending challenges that will continue to come. So be careful when you listen to the news or read on the internet, wherever you take news, so that you have a sense of while you listen, don't get drawn into the unconsciousness of it all.

When you interact on the internet, be careful also with what you put out there. Make sure that what you put out is conscious. Make a conscious contribution, so that if you make statements there, make sure they come out of presence rather than the reactive mind.

Big challenges are approaching for humanity, and well, whether they're going to be bigger than the first half of the 20th century, which was the first half of the 20th century, was absolute insanity. Hundreds of millions killed, genocides, world wars, unbelievable insanity on a collective, massive collective scale. So do we have to go through that again?

Who knows? But don't underestimate how important you are within the totality, how important your state of consciousness is with reference to the totality. It is extraordinarily important.

There was a time in the 19th century when humans were beginning to realize, well already in the 18th century, they're beginning to realize how small we are in relation to the universe, that we are only a tiny speck which is our planet, and then there are

billions and billions of, not just billions of other suns, but there are billions of other galaxies, and every galaxy is a huge world to itself. A galaxy is, again at least, of billions of suns, inconceivable vastness, and then the human said, we are so insignificant, our life means absolutely nothing, we are so insignificant, and all is just chance. The entire evolution, everything is totally meaningless chance.

And that's an interesting belief, thoughts in your head, and what they fail to realize is that, yes, on a physical level we are very small, but every human represents a spark of the one universal consciousness, without which there wouldn't even be a universe. For even to be a universe there must be a perceiving consciousness. For this room, there wouldn't even be a room if we were not here to perceive it.

What is this table flower? The atoms and molecules floating around vast space. 99.999% empty space, and a few atoms and molecules floating around empty space. It's not a room yet, but then we come, or you come, and suddenly you interpret the atoms and molecules. So it's a creative, the perception of the universe is a creative act, and it's the one consciousness acting through you, and then experiencing itself as a world. Amazing thing.

So you are, as consciousness, you are of infinite importance. You are an expression of the one universal consciousness that underlies the sense-perceived universe. Now, obviously, the mainstream science will still, well, not that they know very much about the mind yet, don't let them tell you that they know a lot about the mind.

We don't know what a thought is. Nobody knows what a thought is. What is the relationship between the material brain?

The big question, what is the relation between the physical brain and consciousness? Mainstream science will tell you, probably, that consciousness, who doesn't even like to use that word, but if it did, it would say, it's a byproduct of brain chemistry, whatever that means. A byproduct of brain chemistry.

I don't know what that means. Or you can go deeper and say, well, it's the atoms and molecules in your brain that make up your brain, and they produce consciousness. That's the belief in mainstream science, with a few exceptions.

Some scientists are beginning to doubt that consciousness is a byproduct of matter. We don't even know what thought is. What is a thought?

Does a thought have material existence? Nobody knows. Does a thought exist as an atom or molecule in the mind?

Nobody knows. I can ask you, do you remember when you were 10 years old, do you remember the living room of the place where you lived, your house or your apartment? Can you mentally go to the living room, when you were 10 years old, and explore the

room in your mind?

And most people can. And I can, although it was a long time ago. I can go there.

Where was that living room, before I suddenly ask the question, did that living room exist in my mind as a collection of certain living room atoms or molecules that were just waiting to be rediscovered? And I'm just, it's just one memory. Where did this living room, where does it, where did it survive all these years in my mind?

And this, I'm just going, this is just one example of millions of memories that you still have. Do they exist, do they have a physical existence somewhere? Or is it something that is, to go far beyond anything physical, is the brain perhaps no more than a transduced receiver of consciousness, like a radio receives, and so the music comes out of the radio, but the radio does not produce the music, and yet the radio is necessary for you to hear the music.

But when you destroy the radio, you haven't destroyed the music, you've just destroyed this particular manifestation of it, in the same way that if a brick falls on my head now, I will stop speaking. And yet the consciousness that produced these words is not really affected by it. Just this brain can no longer work as a receiver of consciousness, and so it stops speaking.

Sometimes one manifests things, but hopefully not in this case. You have to be careful with these things. Talking about manifesting, you become better at manifesting.

That's actually a different story that I don't usually, I don't dwell on it for too much, because the foundation for awakening is more important. But once you are awakening, awakened, awakening, you are connected with an intelligence that is in the unconditioned consciousness, that resides in the stillness, the non-conceptual, pre-conceptual intelligence, and you're connected with that, and that increasingly can create through you. It uses your mind.

It's no longer the ego that says, oh, I need to attain this or that. There's something deeper, and it uses your mind. And you could just, sometimes it's a simple thing like interacting with another human being.

And while you listen and listen to what the other person says, and you look at him or her, you can sense yourself as this stillness, spaciousness, and you're looking at another human being. And the other human being might be saying, okay, so what did you have? You had coffee, and did you have the apple tart?

Yes, okay, that will be. And you look at the other human being for three seconds, and there is a connection, a deeper connection. You can sense the beingness of the other, because you can sense your own beingness.

And so you connect with the other beyond the personality, which may be nice or not nice, or so-so. So you connect with the other at a deeper level. And it might only be a small transaction, just you're paying the bill.

And yet there is a human connection, and that connection is the recognition of the other as essentially the same as you, because you, in essence, are consciousness, and the other, in essence, is consciousness. The ripple is experiencing the other through its realization of being the ocean. So it realizes its connectedness with the other.

And when it does that, then, to use a word that I normally avoid because it's been misused too much, then that really is love. To recognize the essence of another human being is to love the other human being. But you can only love the other human being.

It's not the ego love that says, stay with me. Don't leave me. I want you.

And of course, you know what happens after that. It's a similar story. It goes on.

You love until you hate, and then that's the end. There's the wedding, and there's an interlude, and then the divorce proceedings. And that was the story of the egoic love.

I really can't live without you. Can't live without you is never love. So as Jesus said, of course, you love your neighbor as yourself.

Neighbor means anybody who happens to be there. But there's a slight mistranslation, unfortunately. I know that not because I'm a scholar, but know that through intuition or spiritual discernment, Jesus did not say, you must love your neighbor as yourself, because he would have known that that's not going to work.

And it never worked in the 2000 years for most Christians who tried very hard, and often achieved the opposite. So you cannot tell anybody, you love your neighbor as yourself. You better do that, because otherwise you will be punished.

Of course, it doesn't work. What he said was, find the dimension of spaciousness within you. And when you find this uncluttered space within you, the stillness, the alert stillness, then you will recognize the other as yourself.

And that means you love the other as yourself. That's how it is. So there's not a commandment that says, love the other as yourself would be futile.

First, realize who you are in your essence, and the rest follows. That's obvious. So what we are talking about is awakening out of mind identification with thought.

We transcend thinking. Transcending doesn't mean you now leave it behind, or don't use it. No, transcend means you are no longer trapped in it, that's all.

Now thinking can be used as a wonderful tool. Transcending thinking also does not mean

that you go back to the level of your dog, or even the level of a tree, or a blade of grass, or a rock. Because the rock is really peaceful.

More peaceful than the dog. And the rock is just there. Now we are not going back to the mineral realm, because even in the mineral realm, or the vegetative realm, or the animal realm, they're all beautiful.

And what I'm saying now, there's no evidence for it, I believe, yet in scientific research. Even the rock has an infinitesimal degree of consciousness. It is the consciousness, the first primary manifestation of it as form, as matter.

It's asleep. Almost, well, completely asleep. Consciousness is an ancient saying, I don't know where it comes from, but it might be Sufism.

Consciousness is asleep in the rock. It's dreaming in the plant. It's awakening in the animal.

And I don't remember what the rest is, well, I'll fill it in. It's awakening to itself in the human. So consciousness asleep would be the mineral realm.

Then it begins to dream as the plant realm. Then it begins to awaken as the animal realm. And then it begins potentially, potentially, to awaken to its self-realization in the human realm.

But only humans have to awaken first. And then it goes on from there. And then it's not the end.

It's an inconceivable vastness that is still going to happen. So we are not, when I say to go beyond thinking, does not mean to regress in any way. I call that falling below thinking, which happens every night when you get tired and you're halfway towards sleep.

You're falling below thinking. And you might notice that it's a beautiful moment when you're approaching sleep and you can feel the attraction and sweetness of sleep. And you can feel, ah.

And there's still some consciousness there, but not enough to remember your problems. Not even remember, you don't remember your personal history, because if you did, you wouldn't be very happy. So you're approaching sleep, and there's this moment of delightful sweetness you can feel.

And then, so you're moving, you're falling below thought. In your wakeful life, you are in thought. You're in the grip of thought.

You're possessed by thought. You move only in thought when you're not awakened. And so, because humans perhaps instinctively realize how unhappy they are by being

trapped in thought, many humans seek to get out of thought.

It's not enough when they go to sleep, because it doesn't last very long, the transitional period. So this is where the reason why they love drugs and things, because many drugs temporarily free the human from their tortured mind. So you have a good smoke, and your mind slows down.

It feels so good. Some people do it with drink, too. Have a drink, and you feel a little bit better than you did before the drink.

Have another. Okay, that must mean I feel even better after two drinks. One more, perhaps.

Yes, I won't say no. And without, of course, again, you can't remember your problems. You might not even remember your address.

So you're definitely falling below thought. But for a little while, that feels good. You feel a little bit better.

You might even sing a song. And then finally, you fall off the chair. So you're falling below thought.

Now, it can give the impression that it's liberating, but not for long. And it's not the way to go for humans. We rise above thought, which means, yes, there's no thinking, in the same way that when you drink enough, you can't think anymore.

But there's a huge difference. And the huge difference is, you are alert, present, awake. You are not...

And yet, there's no tension in it. There's just a relaxed alertness. It almost sounds paradoxical.

A relaxed alertness. Not an alertness that is forced. Not an alertness where you have to hold your breath so that you don't think.

Mustn't think. Mustn't think. I've met some people who were Zen practitioners, Westerners, who got somehow...

Yes, they got it, that Zen ultimately is about transcending thinking. But they applied willpower. So they became very full of willpower, Zen monks, and gone, I am enlightened.

I'm not thinking. But then wait for something to happen. And then they blow up.

Because you put a lid on a boiling kettle. So your practice, your main spiritual practice, I would recommend is that you practice, that you invite spaces of not thinking, rising

above thinking, into your daily life. For example, by not always getting your phone out of your pocket when there's a moment of waiting for something.

Just be there. And don't wait. Just be.

Look around. Take in your sense perceptions. And develop the skill, develop the ability of perceiving what's around you through visual perception or auditory perception, maybe some of the others.

Develop the skill, the ability, be alert enough so that you can perceive without the interference of thought, without labeling things, without interpreting, without commenting, just clear perception. So there's the perception, and there's what you're perceiving, and there's the consciousness, the stillness through which the perception happens. One could use an analogy like saying, if you were a painting, what is a strange analogy, but if you were a painting, there's something painted on the, the painting shows a certain something, that's your personality, that's what the painting shows.

But if the painting suddenly became aware that in essence there's a canvas on which these things are being painted, and that canvas is there in the background, and that canvas, in this analogy that I'm using, is the consciousness that you are. And in that consciousness that you are, your life unfolds like a painting, if it, let's say it's a living painting that changes, like a painting on a canvas, and things happen. And yet behind this, there is the perceiving consciousness, the presence, the awareness, and you know that is who you are in your essence.

And then you deal with this other stuff beautifully, it's fine, that's the stuff of your life. And in the stuff of your life, you gain something, and then you lose something. And then you gain something else, and you lose something else.

There's up and down, high and low, good things happen, bad things happen, and yet the mind doesn't actually judge that much anymore. It just accepts what's happening in this moment. It becomes aligned with this moment.

So you become more and more present to this moment, without arguing with what is, being the space for what is. You are not what happens, you are the space for what happens. So you know yourself as that.

Then you're rooted in being, rooted in yourself, rooted in being. So there's the doing, and the being. The doing includes thinking, activity, external activity, and thought activity.

So you do, you participate in life, you think, you do the thinking, without losing yourself in the doing of the thinking. Because you're rooted in being, the being is in the background, and then you can think, without being lost in thought, without being possessed by thought. Because you know yourself to be, in essence, that which is beyond thought, the ocean.

And so the practice then is to invite this thoughtless awareness into your daily life, for example, by looking at things without imposing conceptualization, without labeling it. You can look at a flower, you can look at the sky, even artificial light, anything, even what's here. You can look around the room without interpreting it.

It's beautiful. Now, that's just, before we finish, just one little thing. We are in this room, we are looking, we are aware of the totality of this room, the ceiling, the lights, people, your body on the chair, and you're aware of all that, you can take in the totality of that.

You're also aware that you're breathing, you're aware of all that, and don't need to interpret it, just look, look around. But then be also aware of your own presence. It's not your own, I just call it your own, for a moment.

Be aware of your own presence, the presence that you are. And then there's the sense perception. In the background, there's the presence, and that's a stillness.

So there's a stillness behind your sense perceptions. And you can do the same if you're walking along the beach. You look at, there's the sky, there's the ocean.

And then everything helps you to become still. And when you can do it on the beach, then you go into a little forest or something like that. And once you are more familiar with that state of consciousness, you can go out into the downtown traffic, walk around busy shopping street, and do that's a little bit requires more intense presence to be stay present there.

But it's beautiful. Once you can do that, you can actually enjoy all the manifestations of life around you and can actually enjoy all the dance of life around you, whether it's nature, which is, of course, easier to be in nature and still than it is to be in a city and be still. But ultimately, even in a city, it's more challenging.

But the challenges are good. So don't run away and say, I need to be alone in nature, otherwise I can't do it. Yes, nature is very helpful.

It can put you in touch with that stillness, because nature is still, the trees are still the sky, there are some sounds, but basically there's a vast stillness there. And then you practice in the city, you go into a cafe, and sit there, and there's all bustling or people running around and talking and doing until you practice for 10 minutes instead of looking at your phone, while you're drinking your tea or coffee, or water if you're health conscious. While you sit there, you just be there and watch for 10 minutes, be the presence, then you are like a wonderful thing to be just the awareness in the room, instead of a person, because when you don't remember your personal history and your problems, you're not a person, you're just an awareness.

You're just a presence. So you sit there in that cafe as an aware presence, the person will come back, you haven't lost the person, you're still a person, it'll come back soon

enough after you've finished your coffee. But while you're there, you sit there as be the awareness rather, and then you can shift from time to time, you shift in certain situations, you're more of an awareness than a person.

In other situations, you're still much more of a person than the awareness. And gradually the two come together. And then the awareness shines through the person or the personality.

And the being and the doing merge. And then you don't have to separate them and say, Okay, I can be when I meditate for 20 minutes in the morning, I be and the rest of the day I do what there's a separation, you need to bring them together. So in the doing, you're still conscious of being of presence.

That's the art of life of living. And then everything changes, the world changes. And so thank you, that was the secret of the universe.

[Speaker 2] (57:23 - 57:42)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle essential teachings, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet go to Spotify and follow this podcast. Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle.

Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Awakening Through Illness [3d467ad3-d1f6-4134-9c77-ad8801536d11]

[Speaker 8] (0:00 - 0:35)

Awakening Through Illness. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience filled with either patients or health care professionals about the new consciousness emerging in medicine. Eckhart explains why there's been a lack of compassion, time, and care of patients.

He offers solutions on how doctors can be more fully present with their patients and get to know them on an individual basis. Eckhart also explains how illness can become an awakening, pushing us out of our ego and into a connection with our deeper self.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 1:11)

So just be here in thoughtless awareness, and if thoughts come, just don't follow them. Let them, release them, let them go. If you have a question that you'd like to ask, I believe you come up to the microphone and ask your question.

Hopefully an interesting question. So shall we start?

[Speaker 9] (1:11 - 2:01)

Hello Eckhart. A year ago at this time, it was discovered that I had stage 3 colon cancer, and they discovered that cancer was throughout my body. I went through extreme chemotherapy treatments for over six months, and during that time I became bedridden, and I was in extreme physical pain.

It was the best time of my life spiritually. During that entire time, I was in a spiritual retreat within myself. It was profound.

My question to you is, now that I'm healthy and going back into the busy life that I had before, what advice you would give to me or someone else in how to maintain that beautiful inner spiritual retreat of oneness while entering back into the world?

[Speaker 1] (2:01 - 8:51)

Well, thank you. That is an amazing example of the potential transformational value, awakening value, that a serious illness can have if you allow it to work in that way. It's just amazing.

And in your case, there has been a kind of healing, perhaps, or probably, because of the shift in consciousness and the deepening. And then an illness like that actually, as it forces you into presence, burns up the ego in you, fuel for consciousness. Now you have to be careful, if you do go back into your busy life, don't allow stress to arise, ever.

It is possible to be busy without stress. If you find it's not possible for you, then it's better not to be busy at all. So being busy without stress means just being totally focused on whatever you happen to be doing right now.

Never focused more on the outcome that you want to achieve through whatever activity you're doing right now, than the activity itself. So they can be high energy in the doing. If there's no stress, there's actually a heightened sense of aliveness as you are active.

That heightened sense of aliveness could be called enjoyment of what you're doing. You enjoy not only the outer doing, you enjoy the energy behind the doing. You might have heard the Zen saying, hurry slowly.

So it doesn't necessarily mean that you need to be slow. You can be fast. The slow is the inner state.

The slowness is the stillness and the peace that is still there, even while externally, you may be very active. But as you are not focused on the outcome, you're focused on the doing, you enjoy not only the external activity, but more importantly, you enjoy the energy that is behind it. The energy movement.

And then you can be working very fast or doing whatever you're doing very fast, and yet in a state of enjoyment rather than stress. So extreme vigilance is required so that you don't fall back into any kind of stress, which always means you're not fully in the doing. You're mentally somewhere else.

So it's fine to be active again, but not if you don't enjoy it. So the enjoyment needs to be there, then you are not going to lose the presence that has already burned up a large part of your ego or the entire ego. Ego simply meaning complete identification with form.

What you just told us is a very inspiring example of what is possible, how an illness can be the great awakener. And it helps, of course, if before somebody becomes ill, he or she has already had some contact with spirituality, but it doesn't, even that's not necessary. I have seen people that had not the slightest glimpse of spirituality, and yet at some point in the illness, the awakening happened.

I've also seen people who shortly before their death through illness became utterly and completely present, so that they actually felt joyful. There was no fear anymore. There might have been fear initially, but fear is when you think about what's going to happen to you or the body.

So anything like that, if you allow it to force you almost into utter and complete presence, then what looks as a terrible curse actually is transformed into a blessing. What I said about stress really applies to everybody, but it's more even more important for you. Stress is not a healthy or even sane state to be in.

I know it's hard to live in this civilization without stress, where almost everybody is stressed, and they might think if you're not stressed, there's something wrong with you, or your boss might think if you're not stressed, you're not doing your work. So if you absolutely cannot function without stress, I would suggest to make some changes in your life. But many things can be done without stress.

You can function without stress and function better, but it requires vigilance. Multitasking is a word that's been very much around these days. Now that in itself is stressful, and by the way, multitasking is actually an impossibility, because even when you think you're multitasking, you can still only do one thing at a time, and that's a state of great mental confusion and stress.

When you're doing something, I really should be doing something else, but I also need to be doing this. The Zen master, I've quoted him a few times, when asked to explain the essence of Zen, as you know, Zen masters never explain anything in a complicated way or through mental concepts. What's the essence of Zen?

And he said, doing one thing at a time. That's Zen. And one more thing for the questioner just now, not just talk about your activity for a moment, wherever you are at any time, don't wait for life to have to force you again into presence.

Choose the presence that is already powerfully in you, and continuously invite that intense presence that you had when you were facing almost, one could say, imminent death. That intense presence that arose there, choose it even when you're not being challenged now, so that even when you go from your home to your workplace or drive or go or walk, there's nothing in particular to do or you're waiting, that intense presence can be there now. You don't have to be forced into it any longer.

So that's a wonderful thing. Okay, let's see if there's any other question.

[Speaker 7] (8:51 - 9:48)

Thank you very much, Eckhart. Your teaching allows us actually to go into the darker place of this planet and to help. Yes.

As a trauma surgeon, South Africa, working in Somalia, I encounter and help victims of suicide bombings. Now, when, and you tell us, when we are dealing with pain body, when the pain body is too big, we need to retrieve. How can we, as a collective, deal with such severe pain body?

It's really a collective question, because we face it, September 11, Boko Haram, ISIS, and I know consciousness is actually beyond the duality of good and bad, but as a collective, is there something as enlightened military defense, possibly? Because sometimes we need to stop something.

[Speaker 1] (9:48 - 17:32)

Yes. Well, certainly. Thank you.

Thank you. Certainly, there are extreme manifestations of unconsciousness, and it is sometimes necessary to defend yourself against that in the right way. Defense may be necessary sometimes, if it's done wisely, and if it's not reactive, but a response to the situation.

Wisdom is an absolute requirement for taking right decisions, but unfortunately, wisdom is hard to come by in political circles. It seems that, as people go into politics, they might even have gone in with wisdom, but then it grinds you down, and it seems very hard to stay conscious once you are in the political system. Here and there, there are people who realize the importance of wisdom, so any decision one takes of how to defend oneself, wisdom is required so that whatever you do does not make things worse.

So, yes, in the face of extreme unconsciousness, you may need to defend yourself, certainly. Another more general remark about these events, this is only one example of humans creating something that looks actually quite insane, like the suicide bombing and whatever, looks quite insane, but how is it possible for humans to behave in such a way, and is this not evil? Go back to the Europe in the first part of the 20th century, the whole first part of Europe in the 20th century, the first half of the 20th century, was a nightmare.

What humans did to other humans at that time, First World War, Second World War, just unimaginable horrors, so that at every time period, the human collective, the unconsciousness that is embedded in the collective, will manifest through certain groups of people, and if you close one door, another one opens and manifests over there, in the same way that the need for an enemy that is also there manifests.

The Cold War came to an end and said, oh, how wonderful, there's no enemy anymore, and not many years passed, and quickly another big enemy arose somewhere else, and now we need to fight that one. Now, coming back to the atrocities that are perpetrated in different ways, at different time periods, it's certainly the case that we need to recognize that this is insane, it is a form of collective insanity, psychosis, that is a benign way of looking at it, you could call it evil, but I wouldn't, I would say it's just insanity, because it has no, it seems to have no real purpose, they achieve nothing through that, so it's insanity. Now, if we go then to a higher level, a higher perspective, then you see that the entire consciousness of humanity is involved in an evolutionary process, and that evolutionary process, if you look at humanity with one single whole, the consciousness of humanity as a single thing, being just one aspect of universal consciousness, so this consciousness of humanity, and every human being is part of that one consciousness of humanity, which in itself is part of the universal consciousness, and consciousness, this consciousness of humanity, is involved in an awakening process, and

you might know from your own life, and I know from my life, that the awakening process, for quite a while, involves intense suffering, so humanity as a whole is going through intense suffering, because we are all going through the awakening process, and the intense suffering that the individual goes through, a lot of that is also self-created, it's created by the delusional identity we call the ego, the suffering in my life was self-created, there are other forms of suffering that may have come to you from the outside, but even then, the suffering is the reaction to the external events, and that is the real suffering, and that's always self-created, so both on a personal level, and in a collective level, a large part of human suffering, the larger part, is self-created by humans, they inflict it on other humans, and of course they suffer themselves, eventually also, so these are what is called the birth pangs of the awakening, these are the pains of the arising of consciousness, and if you stay now on the higher perspective, all humans are temporary expressions of the one awakening consciousness, and all humans suffer and inflict suffering, some more than others, but they are all, all humans are really expressions, or life forms, expressions of the one consciousness, the one consciousness is indestructible, the human bodies die, the essence that is in every human continues to evolve, although we need to realize, we need to see that what's happening is insane, because that's part of the awakening, if nobody sees that what we are doing to each other, to ourselves, and to each other, we don't see that it is insane, then we do not awaken through it, but if we recognize the insanity of it, that is already part of the awakening, and then there's a higher level of a higher perspective, where you can see that actually there is an evolutionary process at work here, and it sometimes seems the two levels are contradictory, but they're both true on their own level, so I can make two statements, which are both true, things are terrible down here, and all is well, ultimately, both are true, you can't ignore one, so you have to live with seemingly contradictory truths, the all is well comes through your own realization of encountering that in you, that's not subject to time, the timeless consciousness in you, and from there you can know that ultimately all is well, and then retrospectively, the entire history of mankind, except the awakening, can be seen as a nightmare preceding an awakening. Okay, let's see if there are any more questions. Dr. Nook?

[Speaker 5] (17:32 - 18:26)

Hello, I'm a quantum physicist by education, now I work with blind people, and people are losing their sight, to try to preserve the sight, in doing so, I carry a lot of their pain with me, all the time, and wherever I look, I see your teaching, however, I'm in the investment world, so I'm always faced with a lot of resistance, because it's not conducive to good business, to spend too much time being too soft, and I was wondering if you can comment a little bit on how can I help patients, and also help the people who are in the business side of things? Yes.

[Speaker 1] (18:27 - 18:35)

Thank you. So you work in a hospital or clinic that specializes in helping people with their sight?

[Speaker 5] (18:35 - 18:57)

Actually I'm an inventor, and I take my inventions, we have an investment firm, so we work with people, not only in this country, but other countries, to try and find solutions, to restore sight for people who have completely lost their sight, or preserve whatever sight is left for people.

[Speaker 1] (18:58 - 28:15)

So in addition to treating the eyes, the eyesight of humans, you realize there's more that you are able to do for them, there's an additional dimension there, and there's a little bit of conflict between this, again, we come again to the system that you work in, and what you feel that you need to do to feel fulfilled, and to help others in becoming more conscious, sometimes using their suffering to become more conscious. Yes.

Are you able to still do that within the structure that you work now, or can you change it from within, or do you need to create a new structure? I would not give up, do not compromise on what you feel you are called upon to do with other human beings, so don't compromise and say, okay, I'll just have to drop this and just treat them to like everybody else. But see if you can still function from within the system, and do what you feel you need to do, and if you can't, again, it's a question of doing it in a new way, creating something that makes it possible for you to work on both levels, on the outer level and the inner level with human beings.

And many of you may find, because you represent the arising and the awakening consciousness, many of you will find that the existing structures within which you work are not able to carry the new consciousness anymore. So many of you will find it necessary to step out of, sometimes, as I said, they can, in certain cases, they can be changed from within if there are enough people within who want to change it, but many structures are too rigid for change, so it is up to you to create new structures and come together perhaps with others who are also awakening, so that the new structures will reflect your state of consciousness.

So this is what the world needs, the world cannot continue to function within the old structures that are a product of unenlightened states of consciousness. The economy, the political system, even here in the States, it seems to, compared to some other places, functions quite well, but it's dysfunctional too. All those things, they require new structures to reflect the arising consciousness, so that's your job to create those.

And here we come to that part of manifestation, which the universe also wants. It wants you to manifest, it will use you, it will work through you to manifest new forms, because

the old forms don't work anymore. It's a wonderful thing to do that, and you will see how empowered you suddenly become as you go about creating new forms, how powerful your abilities to manifest will be if they are in alignment with what the universe wants, with what the one consciousness wants.

They are not little egos wanting to create something, you are in alignment with what the universe needs right now, what the awakening consciousness wants. If you then start manifesting from that deeper level within yourself, you'll be amazed how empowered you can be in your own manifestation. It is a new way of creating.

If stress comes in, you're falling back into the old consciousness. This is a joyful way of creating new forms and new structures in this world. The old way, while you're creating, you're stressed and angry and you're fighting others.

Of course, you would encounter obstacles to that which you want to create because the old structures, they will regard you as an enemy in some cases. And that's fine, you have no enemies, let them regard you as an enemy, but you don't attack. Another important thing, you don't attack the old structures and say how dreadfully wrong they are, focus on the new.

So the important thing in the new way of creating external forms, if obstacles arise, then the obstacle can be overcome not by attacking it. Some obstacles are overcome by yielding, but yes, you will encounter obstacles. Then that can only help you with deepening your resolve and deepening your connectedness to the consciousness that wants to create through you.

What I sometimes say, it's not a question of asking yourself, what do I want from life? Or what do I want in life? We're asking, what does life want from me?

Life means consciousness. Consciousness is the essence of all life. What does life want me to do?

And many of you know already, it might not come up very clearly yet, but you have an inkling at least of what it is that life wants you to do. And if you don't have it, then just wait a little, become still. It could take a while.

As a transformation of consciousness and an awakening in you, it will affect others. Even if you never meet them, because underneath the surface of things, all humans are connected. So one human being going through an awakening makes it easier for many others to go through an awakening.

Even if that human being never does anything particularly interesting in his or her outer life, others go through an awakening and they will do significant and interesting and meaningful things in their outer life. But even if you don't, it will affect the totality of human consciousness. You could withdraw to an ashram or live as a hermit, you would

still affect the totality of human consciousness.

And the danger of the active person who acts from this higher level of consciousness is that he or she may become so focused on the doing, beginning to think that the doing is more important than the being behind it, and then loses touch with the being and therefore also gets lost in doing and falls below thinking and gets trapped what he wanted to avoid in the first place, gets back into the same trap of mind. As you know very well, when you want to create something or something wants to be created through you, the important thing is not to believe that you need to attract something into your life. It doesn't manifest from there, it manifests from within, from within out.

So the feeling that it's already a reality in you, Jesus already said that when you pray for something, believe that you already have it. And of course, all many books that you can read on manifestation, the good ones will also tell you that when you want to create something, you need to feel its reality already as here and now. It is already here.

So you need to manifest out of the fullness of the present moment. If you lose touch with the fullness of the present moment, which means being in touch with being, in touch with the essence of who you are, that's where all fullness arises, the fullness of life, as Jesus called it, the emptiness, as the Buddha called it. And if you're in touch with that, you create from there, then the satisfaction is already here.

It's not postponed to some future moment. And that's when you become a powerful creator or the universe creates powerfully through you. So the manifestation is also a joyful thing.

And it could be that something else wants to manifest. You might've had a vision that wasn't quite correct and something even better comes about. That can happen also.

Okay, let's see if there's any more questions left.

[Speaker 3] (28:16 - 28:49)

Hello. Hi. So first I want to say what an honor it is to be here with you and with everyone else.

So I've been reading your work for 10, 15 years, and I'm an ER physician. And trying to imagine a possibility where an emergency room is not a stressful environment is very difficult for me to envision. Yes.

Now, I enjoy what I do. And I see that it's meaningful, you know, and it makes a difference. And I don't know how long I can keep it up.

[Speaker 1] (28:49 - 28:50)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (28:50 - 29:21)

I just don't know how to bring presence. And then you talk about all the... I mean, I try to make a difference for who I'm dealing with.

And there's people that I deal with that are very easy for me to connect with. And then I'm dealing with people with major psychiatric issues, people with major drug issues, people that are seeking something from me that are not there for anything medical. They want a prescription pain medication.

It's a really challenging environment to bring this kind of work to. And I'm interested in what sort of insights you have into that.

[Speaker 1] (29:21 - 29:27)

So how are you managing as far as your state of consciousness is concerned while you do your work?

[Speaker 3] (29:28 - 30:14)

Well, I think I'm unconscious most of the time. I mean... I mean, I have moments, you know, and what I started to see that I could try to do is...

And some of the psychiatrists are saying they have 15 minutes with a patient. I have sometimes two minutes. If I have five minutes, that's a long time in a room.

I mean, I'll have 10, 12 patients at a time. But then I'm immediately in my head. I'm judging them.

I'm evaluating them. I'm thinking, what kind of person are they? Is their pain real?

Is their pain fake? Do I believe what they're saying? Are they just anxious?

So trying to come from that place of stillness, of quiet, of listening from nothing or help.

[Speaker 1] (30:19 - 30:28)

Well, I'd love to try it out, but I can't take your place because I would need years of training before I could fulfill your function.

[Speaker 3] (30:28 - 30:36)

You're welcome to come follow me anytime. That might be interesting.

[Speaker 1] (30:39 - 33:39)

But nevertheless, I know that there are people within those kinds of environments who are so absorbed by what they do, they are totally in their mind and you are relatively

conscious, otherwise you wouldn't be here. Despite that environment, it is possible that you may be more conscious in your environment than you realize. What I would do is be absolutely present.

And you may be doing that already. For example, when you assess or evaluate a person, you ask, is this a fake illness? Is this real pain?

What kind of person is it? What does he need? What does she need?

You may be doing a lot of that already without any words going through your mind. Through looking, you look and you know what the answer is. It seems so far you can function in that environment, but you may not be able to function for many, many years because in that high stress environment like that, nobody should be in there for too long.

So look at yourself and see whether there are areas in your work where you can be more present. But my guess is that you're already more present than you realize. In fact, you're doing a lot of good too within the limitations of the system.

You're doing a lot of good. At the moment, it seems you are actually up to the challenge, but the hours are long and eventually I think you would suffer from stress disorder. No human being, I believe, could function in that for 20 or 30 years without losing presence.

Sustain as much presence as you can. But if you notice a deterioration in your state of consciousness over a period of time, I believe the reading of my books and being in touch with this teaching has probably helped you a lot to sustain presence. Meditation, I think for you particularly, I think would be a very good thing to counteract the work environment.

And perhaps even you have developed more presence because you have to counteract the relatively mad environment of your workplace. So the fact that you are drawn to this and the fact that you have been finding it helpful quite simply means that consciousness is awakening in you despite all that, your work environment. How?

I don't know. It's a miracle. Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (33:40 - 33:59)

I'm a physician also, but my question is related to all the other physicians that I work with who are suffering and I can see it in them. And it's the more that I learn your teachings, the more I see the suffering in them. And I don't know what to do to help them.

[Speaker 1] (34:00 - 34:11)

Have you made any attempt to somehow convey this to your colleagues? Maybe unsuccessful attempts so far?

[Speaker 6] (34:11 - 34:31)

To some degree. Just over the last couple of years, there's been real research showing burnout. And that's a definable thing.

And so we can use the term burnout, which doesn't seem to offend people to talk about it. And then I've introduced some mindfulness strategies because that's another term that doesn't seem to offend people.

[Speaker 1] (34:31 - 39:25)

I was just going to say that mindfulness has become almost acceptable. If you use that word, that might be more acceptable than presence. It's the same thing, of course, but I don't use mindfulness because it implies that your mind is full, but that's okay.

So what about creating a support group for people who work in similar capacities, both people that you know personally and perhaps other people? Because nowadays, the strange thing is, the wonderful thing about the technology that we have nowadays, you can reach so many people through the internet and so on. But you would start on a small scale.

What about a mindfulness group for physicians? You could call it that. You can become the leader of that because...

Okay. Sometimes life asks you to do something. It may ask you to do something before you may think you're ready for it, but life knows better.

And the strange thing is, you as a person would never really feel ready for this because it's hard to do. But if you can become still and get out of the way, because becoming still means getting out of the way, if you can become still, you'll be amazed. And I'm not only talking to you, but many others.

You'll be amazed how empowered suddenly the words that you speak become or the energy that flows through you and how inspired you become and what it might lead to. Because things need to change if the system, not only in medicine, but in many other areas, is ripe for either collapse or complete change. It cannot go on the way it's going because it can only become more disintegrating.

No matter where you look, it's a question of it'll either collapse or change. And if it collapses, that's fine too. Now I'm talking about social systems and so on in general.

Eventually something more conscious will arise or something more conscious may arise and transform the old before it collapses completely. So the ideas will come to you. You can just offer to them, for example, have a meditation, show them what mindfulness is, see if they like it and then go on from there and then transmit it, go on the internet,

contact others, it may suddenly spread.

There are people in mainstream who are doing this. If you can build up a support network of people who can then support others, there are infinite possibilities. But anybody who is here would have to consider themselves as a leader in this because you may not yet be fully present all the time and fully enlightened on a daily basis, but you know much more than most.

I mean, and I don't mean conceptual knowledge. There's a knowing in you of that dimension of consciousness that is still new, still many. And I believe that the world desperately needs you.

And you start in your world. You can reach the most appropriate place for you to reach others is within your sphere of influence and that is your work. So what form that will take, only you can know.

It will be helpful to connect with others, get feedback, talk about it, what can we do? So see yourself as a spearheading this movement of awakening because they need you. So not only your patients need you, your colleagues need you.

And then the work that you do, which is wonderful, will be enhanced immeasurably by bringing a different state of consciousness to it. And once that happens, then the entire system may begin to undergo a change. Change always begins within.

How do you feel about this?

[Speaker 6] (39:30 - 40:00)

I'm a little speechless, but it's a crisis. And I think that it really is a crisis. I know you're speaking not just to me, but to others that are here.

And I think that we need to do this in all aspects of medicine. So if I can help. So thank you for giving me the push.

[Speaker 10] (40:00 - 40:25)

My question concerns the cultivation of virtue. I hear many traditions speak about cultivating loving kindness, cultivating compassion. I heard you say that loving kindness comes naturally out of presence.

So can we cultivate virtues like you practice, you practice and you become it?

[Speaker 1] (40:25 - 43:34)

Thanks. That term tends to be used a lot in Buddhist teachings, the term cultivate, cultivating virtues. So in Buddhism, there's a list of nice things that you...

I only know the essential Buddhism. I can't remember the long lists that you get in Buddhism of virtues and so on. I know the basic thing, which undoubtedly is what the Buddha taught is the origin of suffering and the way beyond suffering.

That's the Buddha. I think all the longer lists were compiled at a later stage by monks who wanted to make things more understandable and accessible to other monks, but they were not fully present when they did these long lists, but that's okay. So ultimately, of course, it is better that somebody should at least attempt to cultivate the various virtues.

So the primary one in Christianity would be, of course, love your neighbor as yourself. That's the primary. And really it all boils down to that.

In Buddhism, metta, loving kindness towards others is important, but ultimately to cultivate this, it's a wonderful intention and it's better than not trying to cultivate it, but ultimately you won't really succeed unless there's a shift in consciousness in you that is primary. There may be many other things that are important, but there's only one thing that is of primary importance and that is to find within you that dimension of consciousness and then live from that dimension of consciousness. And if you live from that dimension of consciousness, then naturally you will love your neighbor as yourself because you recognize your neighbor as essentially one with who you are.

And then you will also love God as yourself because you will then recognize essentially that God is the source of your very being. So all the virtues arise naturally out of that state of connectedness with being, which is presence, love, benevolence, goodwill towards other human beings, which is all aspects of love. And whatever other virtues, really it all comes down to no longer feeling that acute sense of separation between yourself and other human beings and between yourself and the source of who you are, the source of all life, God being the source of all life, the unmanifested source of all life.

When I use the word God, I'm not speaking of an authority figure, a controlling authority figure, but the source of all life. So your question was good. I'm glad you asked it.

[Speaker 4] (43:39 - 43:52)

Thank you for spreading such a positive shining light. My question is a fun kind of question. I was wondering, is it possible to have a conscious conversation?

[Speaker 1] (43:52 - 44:00)

Yes, yes. Have you experimented with that?

[Speaker 4] (44:01 - 44:14)

Yes, I have. I came to the conclusion that maybe two people wouldn't actually be talking

to each other in a conscious conversation. They would be sitting opposite each other in awareness.

[Speaker 1] (44:14 - 46:13)

Oh, well, that's even better. A conscious conversation is basically a conversation where it's between two people. Each person is not identified with their viewpoint, their perspective, their mental position.

They put forward their perspective, their positions, their viewpoints without any sense of self in it because they don't need that because their sense of self is derived from the presence that they can sense throughout the conversation in the background of their being. And then they can play with concepts. They can play with opinions.

They can play with words. They can play with arguments even. My argument is this and then the other person, well, and mine is that.

The famous saying, what is it? We agree to disagree or something like that. That sounds relatively conscious because at least if you're not identified with your positions, then that's fine.

We agree. That's okay. It's interesting.

Self-identification with mental positions is the unconsciousness because then you will be defending your mental positions, but you're really defending your sense of self. And this is why these conversations become easily and very quickly become very unpleasant. They are unconscious.

So in unconscious conversation and with very unconscious people, it can even happen. I mean, you can probably read about it in the papers all the time. They get so defensive and aggressive about their respective mental positions.

They start physically attacking each other. So what is your experience with being engaged in conversation? Do you easily get into that position where you start to defend your sense of self?

[Speaker 4] (46:13 - 46:23)

In my case, I've been experimenting with thoughtless awareness. Yes. And I've been present appreciating and being aware of the essence of the individual in front of me.

[Speaker 1] (46:23 - 46:23)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (46:24 - 46:37)

Listening to their words, but just allowing that presence of acceptance. However, I've struggled with returning a conversation point in that state.

[Speaker 1] (46:37 - 47:16)

Yes, that's right. And that's where the real practice begins. Because if you kind of withdraw from engagement, then it's relatively easy to sustain presence.

But when you begin to actually interact verbally, of course, thoughts become words. Then the real practice begins. And especially if you engage in a conversation with certain things that you feel strongly about.

And ideally, you choose somebody who has the totally opposite viewpoints. Then you can really practice.

[Speaker 4] (47:16 - 47:56)

But it's funny you should mention that because I'm an acupuncturist. Oh, yeah. And the way I operate with energy medicine is in an opposite position to Western medicine in many respects from a thought-based point of view.

And so I'm meeting a lot of individuals who have got a very strong position and I'm trying my best to allow this concept into this new institution. So I should imagine I'll be facing a lot of challenges.

[Speaker 1] (47:57 - 49:35)

Yes, so you can, there's a lot of, you'll be practicing conscious conversation, especially with physicians who say, I don't believe in all that. And I know that's all, it's a lot of rubbish, but you do what you do. But then that could be an interesting conscious conversation, can be challenging.

But the art is to remain present even as you put forward your point of view so that, and this is important, I've said it before, but I say it again, so that you don't identify with whatever thoughts you are expressing. Identify meaning that they constitute your sense of self and that's unconscious. That is self-identification with thinking.

That's the essence of unconsciousness. And so in order to counteract that, because there is an enormous pull when you start arguing with somebody or they argue with you, there needs to be a high degree of alertness in you. And that alertness is presence.

And that alertness needs to be there. And then the words need to come out of that state of alertness. And that gives you your sense of who you are, your sense of self is in the presence.

Then you can play with concepts and words. Then you can put forward your viewpoints.

And even if your viewpoints are being challenged, you will not feel attacked in your sense of self.

That is the essence of conscious conversation. I wish you luck.

[Speaker 4] (49:37 - 49:38)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 2] (49:45 - 51:28)

I'm a physician assistant and I practice in Michigan in the Midwest in an area that's still very conservative. I'm excited to say I'm involved on two wellness committees and I have dreams of bringing mindfulness to not just other providers, but to our patients. In the 12 years that I've been practicing, I've done lots of different things, worked in surgery, critical care, gastroenterology.

And as I've been listening to you, it seems like the imbalance is truly this codependency that is encouraged by modern day healthcare. Not just patients dissociating from their role in wellness, but the pressure of providers to assume that responsibility. And what I heard from you, and please tell me if I'm on the right track, is that as we, whether we're providers or patients, enter into the present moment, we can trust the now.

We can trust our connection to source and what's manifesting in our experience. And as long as we have that connection, that there's no need to fear what is being said, that the proper energy transference will happen, and that time as we know it dissolves. And so we, as persons who feel called to be healers, do the greatest service by teaching through example, by being present, and leading others back to the truth of their wholeness.

[Speaker 1] (51:29 - 51:29)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (51:30 - 51:30)

Right?

[Speaker 1] (51:30 - 51:54)

Thank you. Well, that's all. I think we needed to, everybody needed to listen to you.

There's no answer because there's no question, and the truth, you've been speaking the truth, so it's wonderful. Thank you.

[Speaker 8] (51:59 - 52:19)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle Essential Teachings, the

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Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Awareness Of Our Thoughts Is the Beginning Of Awakening [f5f03808-8d80-4ee1-9ace-ac043b7c42a8]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:57)

Awareness of our thoughts is the beginning of awakening. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with an audience in Adelaide, Australia. He explains that many of us place little value on the current moment because we believe fulfillment can only happen at some point in the distant future.

He says the anticipation of things yet to be is so strong we miss opportunities in the here and now. The thinking mind takes over and muddies the water. Eckhart shares an experience he had at the age of 17 when a friend gave him several spiritual books.

Through study, he learned to shift his thinking from negative to positive and suddenly the well-worn idea that bad things always happen to him evaporated. Eckhart says this breakthrough was a catalyst for greater spiritual development that continued well into his 20s. Eckhart explains awareness of our thoughts is the beginning of awakening.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 37:51)

Wonderful to be back in Australia and of course here for the first time I can sense the energy field in the room that emanates from each one of you and each one of you is present. So the energy field of presence is beautiful. Obviously there could be one or two who are not present but hopefully by the end of the middle of our evening together those who are not present now or don't even know what I'm talking about who only came here because a friend said you must come, you will not only know what I mean when I say presence but actually have a taste of presence rather than a concept of what presence is and if it absolutely doesn't work for you it simply means you're not quite ready yet and that usually means you have to suffer a little bit more until the ego cracks open and presence is able to come through.

So I look forward to a deeply meditative evening and when I say I look forward I'm just remembering a while ago I was emailing somebody, I don't email a lot but I was emailing somebody and said I look forward to meeting you and then I finally met that person who is an aspiring spiritual teacher who is perhaps still some ego and he said I was surprised when you said in your email that you look forward to meeting you, doesn't that mean you're not in the present moment?

Of course we're not denying pleasurable anticipation there's nothing wrong with pleasurable anticipation as long as it doesn't detract from the way in which you experience the present moment but if the present moment is reduced to something of little value in your mind because your anticipation has such gravitational pull that it completely takes you out of the present moment in your mind and you into the future

and you're expecting some kind of fulfillment there then of course if you say I'm looking forward to my vacation there and in the meantime I completely lose awareness of this present moment and my surroundings, it's only just peripheral awareness but not really there so that's a different matter if the anticipation absorbs so much of your attention that you miss this, perhaps we use this as an entry point this meaning here now if you miss this you miss the whole thing because there's never anything but this here and now some people find that if you really grasp that not just intellectually but intellectually you could say yeah of course it's that's all there's always now but if you really sense the importance of that what is of primary importance here now if you disregard that always mentally somewhere else only so yes sufficiently here not to bump into furniture or get run over by a car you still have some just a minimum of awareness in the present moment yes okay but your main occupation is to do with past and future and in the meantime you live here now but you're not really here now because you're looking you're there you don't want to be here I want to be there never want to be here and when you finally arrive there perhaps for a very brief moment it's nice I'm there but then the same mind pattern arises again because there when it becomes here it turns out not to be all that fulfilling and it's there because the next thing comes up it comes there you can never deeply penetrate into the here now you are prevented by deeply ingrained mind patterns from really embracing and penetrating into the present moment with your attention and so millions of humans on the planet live almost exclusively through anticipation and memory the older you get the more you live through memory because you get have more and more past behind you to remember and you can you can sense you have less and less future so the future is shrinking so you don't think when you reach a certain age maybe you don't think that much anymore more you some people still do when I retire then I'll be happy I'm just looking forward to retirement or only another 15 years then I will have and then I can really enjoy myself in 15 years I will start really living my life and then retirement comes and there you sit on a chair what do I do now who am I now without my job title I'm not important anymore weird what do you look for okay now you go into the past think about it there's a lot to think about there's always the mind pattern of this and this is the entry point into what we might call the spiritual dimension of life or the transcendent dimension of life it is the entry point into a certain state of consciousness that is quite different from the habitual prevalent egoic state of consciousness that most humans are still trapped in and the egoic state of consciousness needs past it lives through past and future it doesn't know what to do with the present moment or when it faces the present moment it interprets it according to its conditioning in other words it doesn't see it as it is because it sees it through the veil of its conditioning its judgments that has been inherited judgments over many years so the ego has been conditioned to interpret the world every experience in a certain way so when you are seemingly in the present moment because something is happening that requires your attention there's a person that says something to you it's challenging or situation is challenging and then even then you are not really in the egoic state you're not really present you are reacting according to the conditioning of your mind so in the

past is still interfering even there when you seemingly are facing the present moment it's still facing it through the sometimes very dense veil of the past in you so people carry all that around with them their past which becomes their personality becomes the person that it makes up who you are or who you think you are so you carry the past around with you and many elements go into that make up your personality that consists of the accumulated past in your mental emotional field the accumulation of past experiences in your mental emotional field this accumulation is what you usually identify with as you that's me that's what people refer to when they use everybody's favorite pronoun there are all kinds of pronouns these days but everybody's favorite pronoun is i because they use it all the time i i think i know i i don't like unlike i want i must have i i so what is that i what is it that they refer to each person says i and the i refers to this accumulation of past experiences and past things that you have happened to you things that you have done things that you've experienced acquired and that has left traces in your mind as memories and forms of conditioning so that it becomes the person and that is what humans refer to when they say i now there is a deeper i another i many of you are awakening so you know what i'm talking about there is a deeper i that transcends who or what you are as a person a deeper transcendent identity and my intention is for you to experience if only glimpses or more to verify in your own experience what it is that i'm talking about when i talk about this this deeper i so i have recently started using some new terms that i didn't write in the books because the teaching kind of changes although the essence remains the same but the words sometimes change so we have the you have the surface i which is you as a person or the personality with all its dislikes and likes and its desires and its fears and its reactive patterns and its quirks and idiosyncrasies that's me and that's i call that the the surface i and then there is the potential the possibility of awakening to that deeper dimension of consciousness all ancient spirit traditions ultimately point to that but they use different pointers different words different terms there is the possibility of awakening to that deeper dimension within yourself and i say awakening that's an important term too that's a very ancient term awakening has been used for a long time in many spiritual traditions but it's an important term because it's used as an analogy to the awakening that happens to you every morning when you awaken from sleep and everybody can see what there's a fundamental difference between the sleep state and the dream state while you sleep and the awakening so every morning you awaken out of sleep and you go oh and then you may perhaps you think back a moment you had fragments of a dream are still in your mind and you said oh that was only a dream and so there's a obviously a very fundamental difference in your state of consciousness between being asleep or dreaming and suddenly awake so spiritual traditions use that analogy because everybody is familiar with what awakening is they use it as an analogy to point to another kind of awakening that has certain similarities with the habitual awakening that every human experiences every morning so in that awakening is to awaken out of complete identification with the personality the accumulated mental emotional energy field that you had identified with as me as I so in every human being that possibility of

awakening is there in a one could say in many humans in a latent form it is a potential or you could call it to use another analogy you could call it like a seed that has not sprouted yet there's a reason why Jesus occasionally used the analogy of the seed or the mustard seed and then eventually it becomes a huge tree but the there is a the seed of awakening that in many many most still the majority use is still only a possibility it it has not sprouted yet that's an analogy one could use so what you this the spiritual awakening this is what it is it does not mean that you suddenly adopt certain new spiritual beliefs because the personality may already have an accumulation of spiritual beliefs and for some people their religious beliefs form an important part of their personality that you identify with I am such and such whatever label it is so the spiritual awakening is not to be confused with adopting suddenly or gradually a new belief system let's say you were an atheist and then suddenly somebody talks to you and says God exists you and you must believe and then the next day you say okay I believe now I believe and then perhaps you join a religion I'm just I have great respect for religions but in many cases religions can become incorporated into the egoic structure of the human mind potentially they are also a way of awakening ultimately religions are originally designed to provide humans with a portal through which awakening can happen but in many cases religions have instead of being a portal have become a closed a barrier wall and that happens when religion is no more than ideology a certain set of beliefs that you identify with in your mind and the identification becomes an important part of your ego your egoic sense of self sense of identity so this awakening then is not to be confused with suddenly having some new belief structure because the awakening transcends all conceptual mind activity it is not some new thought that arises although it could later once awakening has happened this new consciousness may flow into your mind and then you may express certain things in words that before you could never have expressed that's true but in itself the awakening is not to be looked for on the level of intellectual understanding or some kind of new belief system or even some people have certain visions which can be beautiful you let's you see an angel suddenly or you see have some kind of spiritual vision some people when they meditate some people have great experiences and good kind of fireworks or something and it's wonderful when it happens and then it happens and then it disappears and then you go oh what was that all about so it was an experience again it's not an experience not a great experience that you have to look for now here we come back to the importance of present moment and so on the looking for yourself as an awakened being to be reached at some point in the future which many spiritual seekers have that image of i want to be an awakened being enlightened whatever you want to call it and so they're looking for that in the same way that a non-spiritual person is looking for the next thing to acquire the next possession the next attainment the next thing that's going to make me feel more fulfilled more complete the next thing that i need to add to my sense of identity because my sense of identity is not satisfying enough i feel there's something big missing in me or in my life and i feel that i haven't arrived yet i don't know where but i haven't arrived yet i'm on my way and many humans have that continuous in the back of their minds or sometimes

in the forefront that continuous sense of something is missing in my life this is a very intrinsic part of the egoic consciousness that sense of there's something missing in my life and so they look for that thing that's missing in all kinds of areas possessions i don't have enough recognition from other people but i don't get enough recognition i i feel i'm nobody or they don't appreciate me or the some kind of attainment or you look for improvement in your body body image that is part of the egoic consciousness of course is identifying with body image that's part of the makeup of the the eye structure you identify with the physical body that's a source of great pride and shame for many humans either one or the other or some halfway in between often this is the most perhaps the most fundamental identification begins with seeing yourself as this body and if the body is better looking than other bodies your ego would love that it's okay i feel superior to all these puny bodies there but if your body is not as good as other bodies then you you have a painful sense of identity as far as your body is concerned it is painful to think of yourself as less than this beautiful look at these beautiful people and look at me in cases like that of course the the egoic mind will very quickly try to repair its injured self-image if somebody shouts insults you shout something at you perhaps in traffic you're driving as somebody did not long ago i was driving and somebody shouted at me and said bad driver that was a relatively harmless insult well it it could have injured me deeply if my identity had been associated with being a good driver but i gave that up long ago but normally if somebody shouts at you you idiot the unconscious egoic reaction the ego any insult will injure the self-image and only that gets injured you don't get injured but you are not even there because you are not awakened yet so what gets injured is the egoic self-image that has a sense of injury and diminishment when you get insulted it feels you feel diminished in their senses so it's painful to the ego to you it's not but you are still asleep i mean you but most humans and so immediately the ego will go into repair activity immediately this is the most fundamental level of ego somebody shouts at you idiot and you have to immediately shout something back that is the way in which you eat the ego repairs its diminished sense of self if if somebody insults you you can shout back with an even greater insult and the ego which is all ultimately fictions in your mind so the ego feels repaired a bit bigger you've shouted something back and then of course it could get amplified because the other's ego now feels diminished and then they shout it back and finally you stop your cars and you get out and you start fighting not uncommon road rage is one of the many ways in which the ego manifests its unconsciousness so the every human carries within this possibility of awakening one could say it's covered up by very dense mental emotional stuff that has accumulated over you can look at it in even in this lifetime a lot has accumulated you can also look for past lifetimes accumulations over past lifetimes these accumulations which we could call karmic if we use eastern terminology everybody of course has this accumulation that makes up the personality everybody has that but the question is are you completely identified with that is that what gives you your sense of self and you have nothing but that surface i the surface i that is the unawakened state and the surface i everybody's surface i of course has a different makeup according to your experiences and past

lifetimes if you want to go there but it's whether or not you believe in past lifetimes is irrelevant for our purposes of awakening so this accumulation is there the question is are you completely identified with it in which case the awakening has not happened yet or are you able to be aware at least occasionally because that would be the beginning of an awakening at least occasionally you're aware of your inner state of consciousness for example you're aware of thoughts in your mind especially with certain repetitive thoughts in your mind and you suddenly realize okay for the past few years i've been continuously thinking that type of thought for example in some people could be i'm not good enough that could obviously would can go back to childhood parents were not encouraging you thought finding on the part of your parents a deeply ingrained sense not of not being good enough and that's that's partly unconscious and partly conscious often you actually you think that in situations and a moment may come when after years of living with that and completely believing in that thought which is what we mean by identifying the thought is imbued with a sense of self that's the egoic state every thought that arises in your mind has a self in it this is a buddhist term the way i talk about is i say you you incarnate into every arising thought you ask the consciousness and that's just spiritually you're asleep you incarnate when you identify with the thought you incarnate into the thought you become it and so i'm not good enough and the day comes when suddenly we don't know why what triggered it but suddenly you're able to stand back and look at the thought as an awareness that this is a thought that has been in my mind for years and this shift of suddenly becoming aware of your own thoughts that is the beginning of an awakening spiritual awakening that is the beginning of this the seed of awakening is beginning to sprout when in other words a new dimension of consciousness is beginning to arise in you at first perhaps only briefly or we don't know in most humans it gets triggered by suffering in one way or another adversity is a great awakener the possibility of awakening grows with your experience adversity that's exactly what the ego does not want obviously the ego wants its comfort zone and the ego might tell you i want to spiritually awaken but what i need is a life where i don't need to worry anymore about relationships and about my finances and my work and my life situation if i could only be somewhere where i'm supportive get good clean wonderful food if perhaps even massages every day if i get all that then i could spiritually awaken i just need this ideal retreat center somewhere it must exist somewhere and then the ego says yeah but you can't afford it don't you know you you you've failed because you're not good enough you can't afford it oh oh my god i can't i can't yes that's when you feel the corresponding emotion that corresponds to that thought and then the emotion creates more thoughts of similar kind for a few more days and finally you can't stand it anymore or you're ready to have to come to a spiritual teacher suddenly point out to the possibility of becoming aware of your thoughts instead of being your thoughts i'm becoming aware of your thoughts instead of being your thoughts and here wow so all these thoughts going through my mind now i'm verbalizing something now that is not verbalized because the awareness is just aware and she suddenly reasons these are small well i had a partial awakening when i was 17 years old and then i went back to

sleep spiritually speaking i had a partial awakening at 17 through a book that somebody left with us a woman was leaving the country and said can i leave these books with you and the books were written by some obscure mystic and i was that was the first time i came into contact with a spiritual book and i read a few a few pages and it said something about your thoughts that's not who you are they the thoughts especially the negative thoughts are they create negative life experience because the external world tends to confirm to you your state of consciousness so in other words if you think that everybody's out to cheat you then you're more likely to meet people who are going to cheat you if you think everybody is dishonest you're more likely to meet dishonest people so he was in that book he was talking about there's a certain correlation obviously between your state of consciousness and the way in which you experience reality there's a correlation but all this was new to me he talked about becoming free of negative thoughts so for the first time i suddenly became aware of my thoughts that i'd had almost since i began to think at age of three or four or five i can't remember there was one persistent thought that i had a lot and i suddenly at the age of 17 i became aware of that well that thought was of course bad things always happened to me i knew it but it's always me always bad things happen to me and they did my childhood was not very happy so bad things did happen a lot i mean some people had worse childhoods and that i know that but it was bad enough so at 17 i suddenly realized wow i've been thinking that thought and it's not a helpful thought and i to some extent i was able to let go of that thought and then there was sufficient shift in consciousness through those writings that my life circumstances one year later changed quite dramatically that one could never have predicted for the better for the first time great things happened to me i changed the negative thoughts into more positive thoughts and then great things it wasn't not a full awakening at all but a partial awakening so to speak and then i i got offered a well-paid job without any qualifications lived in quite a pleasant place moving to a country i wanted to move to it was actually london england i was living in spain at the time when that happened and so that was fine and then i was improved life circumstances and then spiritually speaking i gradually went back to sleep so i had this insight and then a lot of unhappiness came back and i couldn't disidentify from it until several years later but that was the beginning for many humans beginning of awakening is they become aware of their thoughts and that awareness is not a thought awareness is a dimension of consciousness that is beyond thought one could say you could i don't know whatever word you want to use you can say it's behind thought or it's above thought doesn't matter it's it transcends thought and another word for that of course is presence and this awareness is the beginning of liberation it's another spiritual term liberation from yourself liberation from yourself the self that you thought you were which was ultimately a narrative in your mind accompanied by corresponding emotions me and you can see how so many humans are still trapped in that completely in this they carry around this this heaviness of a personality if you know an unawakened human after a little while you can predict exactly how he or she is going to react or what he or she is going to say just you can press any button and it's like a recording that comes out it's

been it yeah it comes out again so the liberation is the incredible thing that is the liberation from yourself this does not mean that you as a person disappear no for a little while you continue in this dimension as a person but you realize that ultimately that is not the essence of who you are at all it is a story it's a character like in a play it's like an actor on stage suddenly awakening while he is uttering his lines that he's uttered every evening in every performance and suddenly he realizes these are just lines i'm uttering because i've learned them it's my script i've learned this this is the script before he was so identified he was the script so this is the beginning of an awakening becoming aware of your thoughts all this mental emotional stuff that it makes up the personality yes it continues to be there but gradually and sometimes suddenly it no longer gives you your sense of identity it's just there as the makeup of your your person so if you are not then the person who or what are you if i am not ultimately that who or what am i well you begin with that thing that enabled you it's not a thing that enabled you to become aware of your thoughts that awareness that is the essence of who or what you are that is that transcends the time created person it's created by an accumulation of time in your mind and traces left i'm oprah

[Speaker 2] (37:51 - 38:10)

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Eckhart Tolle Becoming Aware of the Invisible You [b2ddcf8a-ac0b-4d9e-b923-57d31ce75725]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:56)

Becoming aware of the invisible you. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about our connection to the source of universal consciousness, which he compares to the vastness of the ocean. He says each person with individual awareness is like a small ripple on the surface of the ocean.

However, he believes if we only ever know ourselves as a ripple, then we won't recognize our true depth. Eckhart asks participants to consider who they are beyond the surface, a person with a personality to the fathomless invisible self deep below. He believes all ancient spiritual traditions point toward this journey of transformation.

And he says it's not only a possibility, but is a necessity for human evolution. He says we must ask ourselves, can the ripple realize its true identity as the ocean?

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 29:51)

Let's go to the analogy of the ocean. You have the ocean. On the surface of the ocean, there are waves and ripples.

In this analogy, let's say every little ripple or wave believes itself to be an independent entity disconnected from other ripples. It only knows itself as a ripple, because it doesn't know its own depth. And every wave only knows itself as a wave.

Wave could be perhaps VIPs. If you own a private jet, you're a wave. And if you don't, you're a ripple.

But the wave and the ripple are all short-lived. Their destiny is the same. The body, one day the body is here, you're somebody, the next day you're nobody.

Whether you're a wave or ripple doesn't matter. This ripple, of course, feels uneasy on the surface of the ocean, because its sense of identity is very limited, and it feels sometimes threatened by other ripples, or it wants to use other ripples to associate with in order to become a bigger ripple. And sometimes temporarily that works, but not for very long.

And then you're looking for yourself on the horizontal realm. Where can I be a more complete ripple? Can you help me be a more complete ripple?

Or I need you. If we come together, we can be a big ripple. And it's never, nothing really works.

In one moment, the ripple goes to a talk in the chat, and it hears this weird analogy, and

then says, but who are you beyond the body of you as the person, the invisible you? Can you become aware of the invisible you? First of all, it's the person that consists of thoughts and emotions, but that's already a little bit beyond the surface of the ocean.

You go a little bit into the ocean, and there you exist as a person. And there's all your emotions and your thoughts and your identity as a human. There you are.

You've become aware of that. And that's still very limited. And that is sustained by the incessant thinking machine, the conditioned mind.

It sustains the personal selfhood, self-identity. That's amazing. And so the key is to realizing, go deeper and sense your connectedness with the ocean.

Ocean, in this analogy, means consciousness, universal consciousness that pervades the entire universe, the intelligence that underlies all phenomenal existence, the intelligence behind it all, the organizing principle behind the arising of forms, all forms, a vast intelligence that does not exist as such, but it gives rise to existence. The vast intelligence is, it is being, it is not, it doesn't exist, because everything that exists, exists in this dimension. But beyond this dimension, there is the depth of being, which is vast universal consciousness.

So the ocean is, the analogy of the ocean points to that. And you can sense it, begin to get a glimpse of it. For a moment, the mind subsides.

This is the moment. Now that's, that's enough as a glimpse. Now, okay, what does that mean?

What does that mean? Anything you might, some people might ask. Yes, it does.

What happens when the mind subsides, which means the otherwise incessant stream of automatic, unconscious, compulsive thinking, comes to an end, briefly? What remains of you without the thoughts? And I'm not talking about the cessation of thinking that happens when you go to sleep.

We're not talking about that, because that could happen too. Hopefully not nobody here. The cessation of thinking, as you go into sleep, you become very tired, and you cannot think much anymore.

And there's a moment of transition between the state of wakefulness and the state of sleep, where you are still a little bit conscious. And that is a very sweet, precious moment. You feel the sweetness of sleep pulling you.

And you know you can't resist that. Sleep has come. It forces you to go there, to go beyond yourself.

So you have, even there, you have a moment before, before the sleep of self-

transcendence. You cannot remember your story anymore. There's just a feeling of sweetness.

And it says, come this way. So, wonderful, just the moments before sleep. So, here again, a moment, a brief moment of self-transcendence.

And all self-transcendence consists in the cessation of the otherwise incessant stream of thinking, conceptualization. Well, now, what is it that remains? What is it that remains of you, when you don't remember your story, but you haven't fallen asleep, and you haven't taken any drugs?

Well, I assume not. Or you haven't had a few whiskeys before coming here. Because something like alcohol, which people, millions of people would jump off bridges without their alcohol, they would go totally crazy.

It's a drug. And what does it do? It also offers you a brief moment of self-transcendence.

Not always, but sometimes the possibility is there. And after a few drinks, you feel much better. If you go further, you feel much worse.

Why do you feel much better? Because the mind isn't that active anymore. And some people begin to laugh.

They also do that when they smoke, this thing that they smoke. And suddenly they start laughing. Before they were burdened with their problems, their problematic self.

And what am I going to do with my life? Look at my life, the mess of it. I can't stand it anymore.

And then they go, This is also a brief moment of self-transcendence, but it's taking you towards unconsciousness, similar to sleep. But I can see how some people love it, and might even think they need it, because they get this glimpse of becoming free of the burden of this themselves. Moment of self-transcendence.

But again, what is it that characterizes this moment? And again, if you look deeply, you see that it happens because there's little or no thinking anymore. And yet you are still there.

Now here's an interesting experiment. What is left of you when you're not thinking? You're not thinking about your life, your so-called life, which by the way, you don't have a life, because you are life.

You can't have it. Who is it that has a life? You are the life.

You are the consciousness. What you call my life is a mental construct. It's a concept.

And then when that goes, okay, you don't remember your past. You don't need to right now. That's an experiment.

You don't need to remember where you live or your email address. It's unnecessary. It adds nothing to this moment.

You don't remember anything about yourself. All you're aware of is this moment, and you're aware of sense perceptions, visual, auditory. You're aware of that.

More importantly, you're aware of something you cannot define. You're aware of being. You're aware that you are.

I wouldn't say that you exist, because existence is a form that manifests. It stands. X means out.

X exists to stand out. But beyond that, you're aware that you are the I am. Let's, again, you get a glimpse of that between two thoughts.

One thought comes to an end. The other thought hasn't started up yet. There are sense perceptions in this moment, but there's also an awareness behind the sense perceptions, without which there wouldn't be any sense perceptions.

This awareness has no form. It is pure beingness. And that is what I mean when I say in this analogy, the ripple suddenly becomes aware when it stops, when it stops thinking.

Because in this analogy, the ripple thinks a lot. When it stops thinking, it becomes aware of its own depths. It becomes aware of its own depths.

And its own depths, in the analogy of the ripple, is the vastness of the ocean. And so the ripple becomes aware of the vastness out of which it has come. The vastness that to which it is connected.

And not only connected, the vastness of the ocean that is inseparable from what the ripple is. Because the ripple is a manifestation of the ocean. And a surface manifestation of the ocean.

And suddenly, the ripple realizes its true identity as the ocean. And this is the analogy. And this happens when a little bit of stillness arises.

You get the first glimpse of it. Stillness means cessation of thinking. But no loss of consciousness.

In other words, you rise above thinking. When you go to sleep, in your journey towards sleep, you fall below thinking. Yes, there also you become free of thinking, briefly.

But you're moving towards unconsciousness. The same with drinking alcohol or whatever

drug. Yes, it can free you temporarily from your mind.

But you're falling below thinking. Which is an unproblematic region. Because all of nature exists below thinking.

It's a manifestation of consciousness. But has no, the tree has no concept of who or what it is. The tree has a certain consciousness, yes.

It's a manifestation of the same animating presence that animates all forms in the universe. And the dog is a little bit more in common with the human. It hasn't arrived at the conceptual mind yet.

But it's closer to the human consciousness than the tree. But you might have noticed the dog doesn't have an ego. Well, almost.

Very occasionally, I have observed cats or dogs that have shown the beginnings of an ego. And usually the owner of the dog has a huge ego. And it drops off on the dog or the cat.

But most dogs don't. They don't have a narrative about that they call my life. There's no me.

They exist prior to egoic consciousness. They are free of that. But we, it is not our destiny to go back to the animal, to the tree, to the blade of grass.

Our journey is beyond all ancient spiritual traditions and teachings point to the possibility of realizing the transcendent consciousness, no matter how they talk about it, what they call it. The ancient, the deep teachings all point to this possibility and not only possibility to this need for humans to evolve into that. And that's the need is great.

Especially at this time of a crisis. So a shift in consciousness happens when you become aware, and let's put it like this, when you become aware of awareness. In other words, there is a presence that you can sense when you're not thinking, but you haven't, you're not moving towards sleep.

You're very alert. It can sometimes arise, as I said, when you look at a baby or dog or out in nature, suddenly the wow arises because you're not thinking. And there's a deep response to what you see and perceive.

But also, and more importantly, the realization of that in you, that is the essence of you. And that makes all perception possible. In the ancient Upanishads, the ancient scriptures of India, going back thousands of years, the one of the Upanishads, I don't usually memorize scriptures, so it's an incomplete quote, but it goes something like, not that which the eye sees, but that whereby the eye can see.

Know only that to be Brahman, God. Then it goes on to the other senses. Not that which

the ear hears, but that whereby the ear can hear.

Know that to be Brahman, and not what people hear at all. And it goes to the other senses. So it's not what you see, what you hear, but that which makes all hearing and seeing and thinking possible.

It's not what you think, but that which makes thought possible. Know that to be the transcendent consciousness. And not what people hear at all is always added, which means, do not seek God in the realm of form or existence and say, God is over there or over there.

God is not, can never be an object of consciousness. I'm suddenly talking about God. Usually I avoid it, but it just happened.

I avoid it because there were so many misunderstandings about God. So God cannot be an object of consciousness. This is exactly what Jesus said when he, by the way, when he said, when they asked him, where is the kingdom of heaven?

The kingdom of heaven, by the way, means the transcendent consciousness. In my translation, the kingdom of heaven is the, the kingdom is the realm of heaven is the vast sky, vast spaciousness, the dimension of spaciousness, which is a dimension of consciousness, kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness. Heaven is also used in other spiritual traditions.

The closest you can get to spacious consciousness is the vastness of heaven. The sky, the sky is not an object either. You cannot touch it.

You can never arrive there. It just seems to be there. It's basically, it's, it's just an externalization of space, something that the senses seem to perceive, but has no actual existence.

So Jesus said, when they asked him, when is the kingdom of heaven going to come? He says, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived. You cannot say, look, it's over here or look, it's over there, for truly the kingdom of heaven is within you.

Now, what does that mean? It does not come with signs to be perceived, means it cannot ever be an object of consciousness. This is the misunderstanding of God.

You can speak to God, that's fine, if it gives you comfort, but the essence of who you are is consciousness. And consciousness is an emanation of that one that we could call God, but does not exist in this dimension, is not part of space and time, but the light of it shines into this world and manifests in you as consciousness. This is why Jesus said, you are the light of the world.

This is so clear. What does that mean? It doesn't mean you are, you are better than

others.

It points to the essence of who you are. The light of the world is a consciousness in which the world appears. You are the consciousness that makes this world possible.

You are the light of consciousness. You are the light of the world. And this is not something as an intermediate step.

It's fine to have that belief. And then it's time to go beyond belief, the mere belief, to a realization, an actual realization of the depths within you, the depth within you in which you are connected to that vastness that is consciousness. Now, as you probably know, you go back thousands of years, like ancient Egypt, they regarded the sun as God.

And there are many similarities, one could say, because the sun emanates light continuously, a vast outpouring of energy, which we perceive as light, the life-giving energy of the sun. It emanates continuously, it gives of itself continuously. And I suggest that in the same way, the consciousness that is in all living things, and even in a lower vibrational frequency, in so-called inanimate things, which are not ultimately inanimate, every form that exists is an expression of this one consciousness that emanates, shines into this dimension.

And gradually it brings about an increase in consciousness. So God itself obviously is beyond space and time, there's no development, there cannot be. But the emanation that shines into this dimension and creates this universe, there is an evolutionary process, and gradually more consciousness flows into this universe from that transcendent source of all life.

From that transcendent source of all life, consciousness flows into this universe and it animates, forms, and gradually there is an increase in the light that shines into this universe. There is the universe in the process of becoming more conscious. That's the amazing thing.

The universe is in the process of becoming more conscious. The light of consciousness emanates from the one source. The one source, of course, is beyond time, beyond space and time.

I'm explaining something that one cannot really understand conceptually, but I'm talking about it because I would like to refer to the possibility of realizing this beyond concepts, where you realize this depth that is within you, and then you see that the person that you thought you were is a relatively fleeting phenomenon. In essence, you are consciousness itself, which some in ancient times, some mystics in all traditions, Christian mystics, Sufis in Islam, Zen tradition, Buddhism, and so on, Hinduism very much. A few people in there realized this within themselves, and some kept quiet about it, that was very wise, and others suddenly shouted this was a misinterpretation of their

mind, attempting to understand what had happened to them.

They suddenly shouted, I am God! This was not well received, and many of them got killed. I would advise against it, and it is not the complete truth.

It is, one could say, a partial truth. The same way that a ray of sunlight, you feel it when it comes down, you feel it on your skin. Now the ray of sunlight, obviously, is an emanation of the sun, and is still connected to the sun.

So in one sense, the ray of sunlight could say, I am the sun, but in another sense, the sun is infinitely more vast than just the ray that it emanates, although it's one with it. So I would not say that the ray of sunlight would say, I am the sun, but if the ray of sunlight says, I am an emanation of the sun, and I can sense the essence of the sun as my very being, that is the truth. And that realization comes to you in moments of stillness, and not necessarily when you are being undisturbed by things.

This is not a prerequisite for realizing this inner dimension. The stillness can come in the midst of turmoil too. This stillness, which is a transcendent consciousness, can come when the egoic self loses important things that made up its identity.

So when the egoic self, the mind-made self, loses things that gave it its identity, which could be possessions, sudden loss of possessions, losing relationships, losing somebody close to you through death, losing all your belongings, losing social status, suddenly being nobody in the eyes of the world, whereas before you were somebody in the eyes of the world. Loss of any kind can become an opening because it deprives the ego of its nourishment and sustenance. Without identifying, the ego begins to collapse, it crumbles.

This is why often you hear of people, when they lose all their possessions, they were perhaps important tycoons or business people. There was a story of in the 30s when there was the big economic downturn. Many people in Manhattan, they dumped off the skyscrapers, they couldn't take it anymore because they lost everything.

They were so associated with their egoic self, when this did not have any sustenance anymore, that was the end of the world for them. It was dreadful, and so this can happen, but potentially when you experience great loss, the things that had given the ego its identity are taken away, a crack appears in the egoic shell, and there suddenly what is, what you realize then suddenly is the peace that passes all understanding. You suddenly, when you surrender to this fact that there's loss now, suddenly you feel an inner peace, and you lost everything.

I've had many accounts of people telling me that it happened to them. Many people who've come to me over the years said, if I had not experienced, if I had not lost all my money, or if I had not, in some cases very tragic things, I'd lost my children in an

accident, I was close to death, I was diagnosed with this illness, and I could feel death approaching, everything collapsed inside me. When you feel death approaching, it's hard to sustain an ego, and suddenly they felt deeply at peace, something opened up, and that peace is that deep stillness, and that deep stillness is the, you have transcended all you are as a person, self-transcendence.

[Speaker 2] (29:52 - 30:12)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Beyond The Dream of Thinking [c49efc50-f987-4b58-a3df-fe4068723de9]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:47)

Beyond the Dream of Thinking. In this podcast, Eckhart inspires a crowd in New York City. He talks about the importance of rooting ourselves in the transcendent dimension, especially when we feel overwhelmed by the insanity of the world.

He explains it's easy to believe we are a species who has lost our way. His example is to simply watch the evening news. He says most people's attention is consumed by thinking.

Eckhart believes once we release the mind's constraints, our awareness becomes clear like precious stones, transparent to the light. He says consciousness is what remains when thought comes to an end. He believes it is only by taking our attention deeply into the present that we encounter the transcendent.

The being dimension is who we are beyond the dream of thinking.

[Speaker 1] (0:50 - 50:32)

And now let's go into the really good news, which is, what is this transcendent dimension? Now, as a concept, it's just that, just a concept. But what is the reality of it?

Is it possible to experience, or to know, or perhaps at least to have a glimpse of that transcendent dimension? Not at some point in the future, but here and now, here and now. So what am I talking about?

What is the transcendent dimension? What we need to do now, obviously, is take our attention to the present moment, because that's the only place where you can find the transcendent dimension of consciousness, because it is timeless. There's no past and future to it.

It is only by taking your attention deeply into this moment that you can encounter the transcendent dimension in yourself, and the transcendent dimension in yourself is also who you are beyond the personality, beyond the so-called person. And then you realize that you exist both on the level of humanhood, you are a human, as I call it, you are a human, which is your existence on the level of form, physical form, mental, psychological form of who you are, so that is your temporary existence of a person, and you also exist in the transcendent, and that is the being, human being. Human is who you are on the level of form, body and mental form.

Now, for most people, that's all they ever know about themselves, that they are trapped in that level, and that is what produces human history, what is what produces what you

can watch on TV and the newscasts tonight, politics. That is that dimension of consciousness. Then the being dimension is who you are beyond the stream of thinking on the level of conscious awareness.

Let's stay with just this present moment. If we go deeply into this moment, how do we encounter, how do we go deep enough? What does it even mean to go deep into this moment?

Well, let's see. If we go deeply into this moment, what does it mean to encounter who you truly are? Because that's what the transcendent dimension is.

That's already was the question asked by the ancient Greeks. Know thyself, the dictum that probably was first uttered by Pythagoras, one of the first, or the first Greek philosopher who lived about the time of the Buddha. Know thyself.

Know thyself. That's on the Oracle at Delphi in ancient Greece. It was carved in the stone.

Know thyself. That's the most important dictum in human life. Now, that does not primarily refer to knowing the story of yourself better, but could be interesting, but that's not it.

It knows going beyond the story into a dimension of timelessness in yourself, the dimension of depth. So this moment, what does this moment consist of? This moment consists, first of all, obviously here, your sense perceptions, your sense perceptions, visual and auditory mainly, to some extent, tactile, because you feel that you're sitting on a chair and so on.

So you're taking in the entirety of this room, or there's a man sitting on a chair. You hear the sounds, the sounds of my voice, and they become thoughts in your head. You're kind of following the sounds because then they become thoughts in your head.

So temporarily you are, if you're listening carefully, you're thinking the same thoughts, but you might also get other thoughts in your head that say, oh no, that's not true. So that may also happen. Your entire life consists of sense perceptions, thoughts, and feelings, emotions.

I think that's it. Now with every person, though, they're mixed in a different way because the sense perception that you experienced as a child and experiencing now are different from other people's sense perceptions, but they're sense perceptions. You hear, you feel, you touch, you take in, you experience life, and then you experience life on the level of the mind.

And many people don't actually experience sense perception very strongly anymore because so much of their attention is absorbed by thinking. They're hardly here. Many

people's attention, especially those people who are completely identified with thinking, they're hardly aware of their surroundings because they're continuously absorbed in thought.

It's a noise of thought. And you can see people like that. You can see that their eyes are kind of lifeless.

There's no longer any energy coming through their eyes because everything is being completely gobbled up by, devoured by mind activity and the entire consciousness, their attention is. So they might be looking at you, but they don't really see you. They might see a judgment they have about you, but they don't see you.

And then they're running about the city on the phone. Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions. Okay, that makes those, because your entire past is thought.

It's your entire life consists of sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions that go with the thoughts. And that's it, isn't it? Yeah, okay, hmm.

Sense perception, that's my life. Haven't I forgotten something important? I have a feeling, I have a feeling I forgot something very important.

And that is so easily overlooked. Philosophers over the centuries have discussed the possibility that life is a dream. And you cannot refute the possibility.

There's a possibility you cannot deny that you may be dreaming this whole thing. You're dreaming that you're sitting in a chair, on a chair, and you're listening to a man or sitting on another chair who says that you may be dreaming right now. Okay, you may be dreaming, but even if you're dreaming, there's still something without which you couldn't be dreaming.

There needs to be a consciousness in which the dream appears. Without consciousness, there's no dream. Without the space in this room, there's no room.

You are conscious at this moment. Otherwise, you would not be experiencing this and you would not be able to think anything, see anything, hear anything. All these things require consciousness to appear.

But what is consciousness? Consciousness is what remains when one thought comes to an end and the next thought hasn't started yet. For example, I'm now coming to the end of a sentence right now.

And for just a few seconds, the following sentence will not start. And if you were alert during this gap, I wasn't thinking. And if you were alert during this gap, you were not thinking either.

I'm suggesting to you the possibility of being conscious without thinking. For example,

now. It doesn't have to be long, just a little space.

Just a little space, alert, alert presence. You're still perceiving everything. You're still hearing, but you're not thinking.

Right now, in order to know yourself on that level, you do not need to remember your history. You do not need to remember your problems. You do not need to remember your victories or failures.

You don't need to remember your story, whether right now your story happens to be happy for a while or unhappy, no longer relevant. You don't need to remember your name to know who you are, because what is your name? It's a sound, it's a thought, nothing else.

So let's see if you can keep your internal space free and just be aware of yourself as a spacious presence. It's easier, by the way, if at the same time, you can feel that a certain aliveness pervades your entire body, so that one could almost say that you become present in every cell of the body. There's a simple presence, and while that presence is conscious, but it's not thinking.

If you can realize that this is possible, at first, of course, there seems to be nothing there, really, there's just a kind of blank space. But if you stay with it, if you don't run away from the blank space, because the mind doesn't want you to go there, it says, why are you doing this? Don't you know that you have problems?

Don't you know that you need to think about your problems right now? No, you deal with your problems. When the time comes, you take action and you pick up a phone and you do something.

But in the meantime, you're not going to have your life devoured up by your so-called problems, the beautiful essence of your life, devoured up by your mind, pretending that you need to worry about your problems and you're going to solve them by continuously thinking about your problematic self. You deal with it when the moment comes and there's a possibility of dealing with it, you take action, that's it. But here and now, don't follow the mind when it says, oh, don't go there, I have no time now to be present, I just, I need to get these problems sorted out first.

Now, if you say that, I need to get this sorted out first, and my life is just too complicated to be, I can't be bothered with this right now, I've too much on my plate, as the expression goes, I have too much on my plate. Okay, 10 years pass, are you ready now? No, I still have got a lot on my plate.

20 years pass, oh, I've never had more on my plate than now, don't come to me now. And then you're on your deathbed and still can't stop thinking. The amazing thing is, the next human evolution has not come to an end.

I mean, if human evolution had come to an end, that would be a tragedy. Oh my God, is that the best you can do? That would be a terrible tragedy.

No, it's a work in progress. Gradually, it's very slow, but it's faster now than it has ever been, I know that, because in the past, there's very slow advances and then regressive periods and another slow advance. The human consciousness is evolving, the entire universe is evolving, we are a manifestation of the evolving universe, which is gradually becoming more conscious and more differentiated and producing more conscious life forms.

The development of thinking has been an incredible advance in the evolutionary development of humans, but every advance that has been incredible, wonderful thing also had a downside as it became more and more pronounced, it took over more and more humans. Now, the next step is not to stop thinking altogether, that's absurd, to be able to think fruitfully and to be able to think effectively and to be able to actually use the mind in order to manifest things, to create things, it's a wonderful, wonderful tool, but it's only a wonderful tool if it is a tool, it is not a wonderful thing if you are possessed by your mind, it's not a wonderful thing if you identify with your mind and it gives you a sense of self, then it becomes destructive, it becomes the ego. The next step in the evolution is to be able to relinquish thinking temporarily for periods of time, brief periods, sometimes longer periods, to be able to step into no thought, but not to fall below thinking, sometimes people think I'm talking about regressing to the state of an animal because an animal doesn't think, not conceptually, it doesn't have a self image, but we cannot go back to the pre-thinking stage, many people try that because they are so burdened by their mind that they need to get me out of here, and of course then, that yes, you can take certain substances that will take you below thought, and for a little while, you are relieved, you say, I'm no longer burdened with my unhappy self, I'm, oh, such a relief, it's life, great, give me another drink, oh, God, I can't even remember my problems anymore, or whatever it is you take, no, this is a huge, millions need their drugs, whether it's prescription drugs or other drugs, they need their drugs because they need to escape the torture of their mind, but most of these drugs take you below thought and give you some relief, yes, so one way is to take go below thought, but where we are heading in evolutionary terms is we are rising above thought, we have to rise above thinking, which means it's in a state of relaxed alertness, and right now, if I'm inviting you into that state of relaxed alertness, in which you don't need to remember your name or your past, and you will now, I want you to verify in yourself without remembering your past or your name right now, are you still what you call you, your most essential identity, do you feel that's still there even if you don't remember your past?

Can you sense a presence there that has nothing to do with your history? There is undoubtedly a presence there, and that presence, if you stay with it and allow it to be there and go more deeply into it, you sense it much more strongly, and then it becomes

something almost a very subtle sense of joy in that presence where you are there just as an aware presence. Once you sense that, it's the beginning of the liberation from your mind-made sense of self.

It's the beginning of the liberation from the person, from the personality, which still exists, but exists, but you're no longer in the grip of it. So to access that, that is the who you are in essence, and who you are in essence is no different from who I am in essence, and the other person is in essence. That essence is what we share.

What we don't share is the personality. If we only interact as personalities, every interaction is going to be conflict-ridden and become problematic very quickly. Every relationship is going to become problematic very quickly if you only interact one personality with another, but if you have access to this, I call it sometimes the deep I, I, first person, the pronoun, the deep I as opposed to the I that you use in conventional language when you say I, you normally refer to your personality.

You normally refer to the historical self. That's a normal usage of the word I, but there is in you a deep I that is not conditioned, that needs to be sensed, that needs to be realized to transform your life. You can be rooted in the deep I and yet function actually much better than before, function on the level of the personality or the person and deal with the stuff that you have to deal with and pursue goals, pursue, have aims, be active, but not mistaking any achievement or any activity for who you are, not seeking yourself in things, not trying to improve your sense of identity because you already have a full sense of identity in that presence. And then you are not dependent on the fluctuating externals in your life because every situation that you encounter in your life fluctuates. It's good for a while.

And then the thing that made you happy, suddenly very same thing makes you unhappy or you achieve for a while and then suddenly there's a failure. And that's a narrative in your mind. And that narrative creates so much suffering.

You can't just can't stand the suffering anymore that there is without ever perhaps having listened to any spiritual discourse or read any spiritual book, suddenly there's a disidentification from the narrative because it makes your life so painful that you can't stand it anymore. And you step out of it. And suddenly you're there as just a presence.

And there you sit in your prison cell and what you called your dreadful life has receded into the background. And what's left is you as consciousness. And I've known one or two people who told me that's what happened to them in prison, potentially.

And others have written to me also said, I'm still in prison, but I am free. I've had quite a few communications like that. So that can happen even the most extreme circumstances.

It can happen when the doctor has told you you have a few more weeks, no more. And what does that do? It removes time from you.

It removes future from you. And what does that mean? Remove future means it removes thoughts of future because every thought of future says, oh, I don't have any.

And it's terrible suffering. So this can force you into the present moment that there's suddenly almost a complete dissolving or collapse of the person or the personality, but not in a negative sense. It's a sudden, and what's left is just you as that presence.

And then your life is totally fulfilled. You don't need time anymore, which otherwise you do need because the person always says, oh, I haven't done that yet. I still have a long bucket list.

I'm not ready to go. Look, my bucket list is still 50 things I haven't seen and done. Okay.

So liberation from the personality, but still be able to use it and function as a personality. And then inviting the space of pure awareness into your life in ordinary situations throughout the day, which means little spaces. You get into your car, close the door.

Don't immediately start the engine. Sit there for 30 seconds. Breathing can help too, but don't see it as doing.

You're not doing anything. If you get the idea that you're doing something, you're doing presence, you're doing being, you can't do being. So you can't say, okay, now I'm going to do 30 seconds of presence.

That doesn't work. You have to completely go into the now, into the present moment, so that there's nothing left of you except a sense of presence and the sense perceptions, whatever you're perceiving. Now, there used to be a time before they invented all these devices, these handheld devices, whatever they're called, there used to be a time when sometimes people, where they were sitting and waiting somewhere in a waiting room or waiting at the airport or waiting, going out into nature, there used to be a time when there were no devices to fill up your mind and people could either be completely bored or they could be, oh, look around. So I suggest that great vigilance is required because these devices that everybody uses, they amplify the tendency of the mind to produce clutter continuously. So clutter means useless thoughts.

Many Facebook posts and even many text messages you get may be relatively useless, I think, and they clutter up your mind. They give you the impression that something important is happening. I need to look.

Do you ever see people just sitting somewhere? No. The moment they sit somewhere, they have to look at this or stand somewhere.

Have to engage with this. Be vigilant so that you don't clutter up your mind with unnecessarily engaging in this interaction continuously. It's actually addictive.

It's an addiction. What effect this will have on the development of civilization now that we have the first generation grown up now with these devices, we don't even know. Let's see.

But for you, it's important to be aware that they are addictive because it's the addiction of not being able to stop thinking is now reflected and amplified by this device. I've often said even before, 20 years ago, I already said, probably the greatest addiction, and at that time, they didn't have these devices yet to amplify the addiction, the greatest addiction is the addiction to thinking. And I don't mean fruitful thinking.

I mean thinking like worrying and useless projections and useless interpretations and misinterpretations of other people's intentions and all kinds of useless stuff that continuously is a noise in your head and you can't stop and you don't want to stop because you're in the grip of it. It's the addiction to overthinking. And why is the addiction to thinking?

Because your sense of identity is derived from thinking. If you don't know the deep eye, you need to stop thinking, who am I? And now this tendency, this addiction cannot stop thinking is made even worse by the device.

Now I can't, or not only can I not stop thinking, I can't stop interacting with this thing, which makes me think even more. And there are people who really walk around in a kind of trance. Youngsters, many, it's a terrible thing.

Hardly aware of their surroundings. So this is very important to counteract this tendency in your life so you create spaces in your life of no thought, of pure looking at something. They don't have to be long.

Just the more you practice that, the more it will arise in you. Look at a thing, whether it's a natural thing or a man-made thing, whether it's a table or a flower, natural things are even more helpful. Look at a thing for a few seconds without interpreting it mentally.

Look around this room right now without interpreting what you see, but seeing it. Being aware of what you see, but not naming it in your mind. Is that possible?

Yes. It's actually quite very pleasant. And in that moment when you're perceiving without naming, you are not perceiving things as a person.

You're not a historical person in that moment. In that moment, you are awareness. You are consciousness, timeless consciousness, the consciousness of the universe manifesting in you and as you and perceiving.

And now when you perceive in that way, there is a twofold thing. You're aware of what you're perceiving visually or auditory. Those are the two main organs of perception.

You're aware of what you're perceiving. You're not naming it. You're aware of it.

And when you're aware of it, somehow one could say you're aware that there's more to it than what you thought there was when you just gave it a name. That's why I've quoted it before somewhere in a book or not in a book. Krishnamurti said, when you teach a child the name of a bird, the child will never see that bird again.

Well, what he means, of course, was the moment you replace the pure perception with a mental concept, you have a huge veil between you and it. And immediately you dismiss what you see and you dismiss it by having a label for it. You can't really, you're not really looking and perceiving the bird anymore when you say, oh, that's a such and such.

That's a so-and-so. That's a, oh yeah. And this compulsive naming of everything becomes a huge veil between you and the world around you.

It's a veil of your conditioned mind. And that's an aspect of the egoic mind. And that's a terrible way to live, to continuously have this veil and especially destructive in human relationships.

Because in human relationships, you need to see the other human being. You need to see beyond the surface of the other, but you can't do it. It's immediately you have a label that you attach to that mental label and you call this person something.

I mean, you all know, every, nobody knows what prejudice is. Prejudice is to have a, there's just one aspect of having labels, a label for not being able to see the human being because you have attached a label to the human being. And then you relate to this negative label.

And so, and then your labels for everything, running commentary throughout the day in your mind about situations and people, like somebody is commenting in your head and you believe in everything it says. That's how it is. So to be able to perceive, you see an aliveness or in the presence, even in a table, it's, you acknowledge its being as its presence.

You acknowledge how the light is reflected. It's actually, things come to life when you don't compulsively label things. You begin to live again in a universe that's alive, but there's now, there's an added level now.

It's not only that. It's not only that you perceive things more clearly, more vividly. It's also that in that moment of not naming, you're also aware of the background to your sense perception.

And that background is the space, one could say, in which the sense perception arises, or another word one could use, a canvas. Let's imagine that you are a painting and what you see painted in the painting is your life situation or your life. There's a certain configuration of people and things and things appearing in this painting.

So you become aware of those things. But if this painting became self-aware, this painting would also become aware of the essence, which is the canvas on which it's painted. And if you become aware of the essence that is behind all your perceptions, that's yourself, that's yourself as presence.

So you can look around this room, see everything, and at the same time, not only be aware of what you are seeing, but also be aware, now this sounds a little weird, but also be aware of your own awareness, to sense your own presence. It's not your own, I just call it your own, to sense the presence that you are, without which there would be no perception. So you can sense your presence in the background of your perceptions, which means you're still, your mind is still.

If you haven't read my little book, *Stillness Speaks*, read it. It's good for meditative reading, for taking you into that space of still presence. Still, alert, presence.

And you can sense the presence in the background as if it were the canvas on which your sense perceptions are painted. And that is a wonderful way of being in the world. It changes the interaction with every human being, whether it's a very brief relationship or a close relationship, to perceive the other.

And when you look at another human being, you feel your own presence. And then you can look. Yes, you're aware of the personality of the other person, but you can sense that beyond the personality, there is a presence, there is a beingness.

But you can only sense that because it reflects yours. In fact, it's one with yours. And so to realize the other, in essence, is the same consciousness as you, and it's not your consciousness, and it's not the other person's consciousness.

It's universal consciousness expressing itself as a temporary human being. And then that is the true meaning of loving your, as it goes in the Gospels, love your neighbor as yourself. Your neighbor is the person next to you, as it's in some languages is translated as the one next to you.

Loving your neighbor as yourself, it doesn't mean, as yourself doesn't mean you love this person as much as you love yourself. It means to recognize yourself in the other, and that recognition that in essence, all you share, this consciousness, this is the one consciousness that all humans are temporary expressions of, and other life forms are also temporary expressions of. The one underlying consciousness that uses the brain, science haven't discovered this yet.

There's still a belief in mainstream science that consciousness is a by-product of the brain, of the physical brain, but most scientists don't even talk about consciousness because they don't know what to do with it. So consciousness is, I would say, suggest is a focalization of consciousness, and it receives consciousness and focalizes consciousness in a particular way through human beings that creates a particular world in this dimension, but it receives consciousness in the same way that a radio or a television receives the signals and forms an image. Consciousness then is the essence of all life, and to know yourself as consciousness is also knowing the other as consciousness, and that transforms human relationships.

Then you can still, you acknowledge the personality of the other, but you don't confuse the personality of the other with who they are, and then you can operate still as a personality, but there is a recognition, a silent recognition of the other, and that silent recognition of the other, that's actually the true spiritual, esoteric, true meaning of love, the true meaning of love, or we could say all empathy is there, an outflow of benevolence, an outflow of loving kindness. You may remember the Dalai Lama said, he didn't say, my religion is Buddhism.

He said, my religion is kindness. That's a wonderful statement because there's much more to kindness. It's not a superficial thing.

Kindness is an outflow of benevolence towards other life forms, towards other human beings. It's the ability to have empathy, and that all comes from, does not come from the personality. The personality might say, oh, I'm a good, I'm a good Christian, or I'm a good Buddhist, or I should be, I should be accepting, and I should be loving this person.

It's hard, but I'll try. So that is the, what transforms human relations, and if it transforms a relationship between two human beings, it will also transform relations between groups of humans. You don't need to deny your form identity, whether it's the physical body, whether it's the psychological form of you, or whether it's even a certain group identity.

You can still feel, yes, I belong to this particular group. You don't even have to give up your political persuasion. You don't have to, but you have to be able to look if you belong to one particular party in your mind.

Yes, you can have a position, a mental position. Of course, everybody has. I have certain political opinions.

I'm not going to talk about them, because they're more important things to talk about, but not to be identified with mental positions. Then you can voice your mental position, and this is how I see it, but you don't make the other into your dreadful enemy, because you can see, although the other may have different mental positions, there's still the beingness there, because if you make the other into an enemy, you might actually

create the monster that you see. So the freedom is the freedom from compulsive thinking, the freedom from identifying totally with the thinking mind.

Meditation can be a helpful tool for many people. Meditation is a great thing if you don't regard it as you need to achieve something through the meditation, because then it becomes a doing again. The way why meditation ultimately does not, many people practice it, but they don't really experience a transformation in their normal daily life is that it's a doing.

They're doing a meditation, and they're trying to achieve a particular stage through the meditation, so that's already you're projecting a future self, whereas meditation ultimately is the realization of being. So it cannot be a doing. It's a realization of being.

And meditation can be at any moment when you become alert and you stop naming. In that moment, you have risen above thought. And it's, oh, it's so beautiful to be free of yourself.

And then, of course, you can still operate as a self without completely being trapped in it. You're not trapped in it anymore. There's a space in you, and there's a growing space in you, and there's more space in you.

And then the personality becomes a little bit transparent to the light of consciousness. So even while you are speaking and thinking, your thinking and your speaking is more spacious. There's an awareness that flows into your words, too.

And then the words become different. They're no longer just a repetition of stuff that you accumulated. You can be inspired speaking because the presence begins to use your mind.

And there can be inspired action because the unconditioned presence uses your mind to do things. And that's, it's beautiful. So the key is to embrace that beautiful state of alert attention, which is aware presence as much as possible.

Perform little actions, just being present, not as a means to an end. When you walk in your room from your desk to the door, you take the steps, and you're conscious at every step. Why do you think you need to get to the door?

You'll get there soon enough. In the meantime, this step is more important. Your life isn't going to better when you get to the door.

And this is just one example that you want. There's always, I need to get there. Of course you need to get there, but in the meantime, you're here.

The step you're taking at this moment is the most important step in your life because there is only this moment ever. And if you're completely absorbed by where you need to

get to, all that it means is you're completely absorbed by your thinking mind. You will find that pursuing goals that arise not out of the egoic need to be more of something, to be more superior to somebody, but a true goal, something that brings some change into the world, then you will find your actions and your words become actually empowered.

And your thoughts, you will have creative thoughts, new, fresh thoughts that you didn't have before. And these are very different thoughts from the old repetitive thoughts that go through your head all the time. Oh, so you have an insight.

This is where intuition arises or any truly creative action arises. It comes, you have to go beyond the mind in order so that something that is deeper than the mind can use the mind. But primarily we do it because we become free of, as the Buddha put it, you become free of suffering, the psychological suffering that makes millions of people's lives dreadful.

Psychological suffering, the freedom from suffering is when you know who you are in your essence. Then challenges remain, but they're not transformed into unhappiness because it's the unhappy me that creates suffering. And then every challenge you can actually say, oh, here comes another, okay.

And you see, look at it. And you'll see that every challenge actually then intensifies your presence. Oh, and then even death, approaching death and all approaching death then does, and it'll come to you and to me, to all of us.

It's approaching already. Of course it is. Now, of course, death may come to you suddenly.

So you might not have time, but it may come gradually. And then you go totally, totally present. Totally, just there's no historical person anymore.

It's already dissolved before the body dissolves. The historical person is already burned up in the fire of presence. Death can do that to you, approaching death.

The historical person, the personality, the person, the conditioned person, burned up in the fire of presence. And there you are. Realize the timeless, the timeless being that you are.

And that's a realization. It's not a person realizing that. It's a universe realizing it through you.

So that is the whole purpose of human existence. You're the bringer of consciousness into this world. And that's why you're here.

Whatever you have done or failed to do as the historical person is fairly unimportant as regards the arising of the new consciousness. Whether you have failed in most things or

have succeeded in many things, or it might be a mixed bag, doesn't matter anymore. It has brought you to this point, the point of awakening.

So it all made sense. And therefore, retrospectively, every mistake that you ever made was actually a good thing because it's brought you to this point of the awakening of consciousness. And every suffering that you created for yourself and even for others in your unconsciousness, it's human unconsciousness that creates the suffering.

Every suffering created and yet you create it for yourself. All the mistakes, oh, I made so many mistakes, just one after another. Why did I do that and that?

And then why did I marry that person? I shouldn't have done that. That was a huge mistake, but what can I do now?

Okay, all that evaporates. And suddenly all the mistakes have brought you to here, which means they're not mistakes at all. Thank you for all my mistakes.

Well, I thank the universe for all the mistakes I made and for the suffering. So the suffering, of course, is necessary. This is my paradoxical statement.

The suffering is necessary until you realize that it is unnecessary. Until you realize that it is unnecessary, the suffering's actually a helpful thing because eventually it forces you into awakening. Hopefully in this lifetime, it forces you into awakening.

And therefore the suffering is a twofold thing. It's both a wonderful thing and something that you transcend. And of course that's expressed, and you can understand, you don't need to be a Christian to understand this.

It's expressed in the symbol of the cross because the symbol of the cross, the cross is a torture instrument, obviously, and the cross is a symbol for the divine, twofold. So the cross symbolizes suffering, and the cross symbolizes the end of suffering and the transcendent dimension, which is exactly what the Buddha talked about. Because the Buddha said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering.

So with that, I will leave you.

[Speaker 2] (50:37 - 50:57)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Beyond the Conceptual Self [40ea043c-7ed7-4895-a9a9-785f0e96d24e]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

Beyond the conceptual self. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience about letting go of our false sense of self. He says, when we base our identity on externals, our looks, what we do, where we live, that's the ego.

In that state, we're either inferior or superior, never equal. True relationships become impossible. But when we're grounded in essential being, the need to compare disappears and we discover we are infinitely precious.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 5:35)

An essential part of awakening spiritually is going beyond a conceptualized sense of self and living in a conceptual reality. And of course, all that implies being identified with thinking because concepts are thoughts. So for many people, the question arises, how do I see myself?

And there's a very common problem people have and that's called self-esteem. What value do I have? What value does my life have compared to others?

Some years ago, the Dalai Lama was asked by somebody about self-esteem and he didn't understand the word self-esteem. And the interpreter spent several minutes trying to explain to him the meaning of self-esteem and she just couldn't get it. Now, of course, you might say, well, if I were the Dalai Lama, I wouldn't have a problem with self-esteem either, but that's not it.

Self-esteem and the way in which it's conventionally used is comparative and it's always connected to ego. How do I rate myself relative to others? Either an achievement, worldly achievement, abilities, knowledge, physical appearance, physical strength, good looks, bad looks, fat, thin, and usually it's related to what you have, possessions, what you can do, abilities, what you know, knowledge, and physical appearance.

And that's an interesting thing when you look at your life from that point of view, there's always a sense of unease because there are always others who are better at at least some of these than you are. And then there are others who are worse. For many people, it's a continuous source of unease and even suffering, that feeling that I'm not enough, not as good as, and then there are others who have considered themselves better than others or most.

And underneath, hiding underneath that sense of superiority, there's always the fear of inferiority. And those who are predominantly feel inferior, hiding underneath the feeling of, or the sense of inferiority is the hidden desire to be superior. So when you live in that

egoic state of consciousness, you always compare yourself to others you meet.

And usually you either feel you're superior or inferior. Now, there cannot be a true relationship when you relate to other humans and you either feel superior or inferior to them. Is there such a thing as healthy self-esteem?

Sometimes that expression is used. Or is that kind of self-esteem always unhealthy? I would suggest that the only healthy self-esteem is a self-esteem that is derived from a deeper place than any of those things that usually make up a person's self-esteem.

How you look, what you can do, your knowledge or your abilities, or even weird things like who you know. The strangest things make up a person's self-esteem. And sometimes it's based in some kind of reality, of course.

And in many other cases, it's a total fiction. But the ego needs that. So if you are, let's say, you're not good at anything in particular, there's nothing much that you can do, you're not wealthy, don't have much, don't have a lot of knowledge, haven't read many books, don't look great, and your body is not that great, neither your facial appearance nor your body are that great, what do you do then?

I hope there's nobody in this room who thinks, oh, that's me. Oh, that's me.

[Speaker 3] (5:37 - 5:38)

Oh, that's me.

[Speaker 1] (5:38 - 44:48)

First of all, usually the ego would create a certain narrative to compensate for that feeling of inferiority in an attempt to create some sense, at least in one area of superiority. And one such narrative could be that the world is totally corrupt and I'm not going to take any part in it. Every human is basically evil, implying that I'm the only one who is not.

You could also have an image of yourself as far more spiritual than anybody else because you're free of possessions, your mind is empty because you don't know anything, and you're physically weak because you're spiritually so strong. And then you have a narrative and that gives you some sense of self-esteem. And then you have even more fictitious narratives that are bordering on delusional, which could be, for example, that you are a reincarnation of King Arthur, the Buddha, Elvis Presley.

But no matter what it is, the element of comparison, the comparative element is always there. In that use, in that sense, there's no healthy self-esteem. The only healthy self-esteem is not derived from how you look or how physically strong you are or your abilities in whatever area or your possessions or the knowledge that you have acquired

or any other things, your family background.

In some countries, that's a very important thing. Who is your family? Your grandfather, your great-grandfather.

They have that sense that determines their self-esteem. In the West, especially in the New World, North America, maybe South America too, Central America, that sense of family history is not as strong. But if you go to Europe, there are still quite a few people who have very high self-esteem and it's derived from the existence of their ancestors.

They've never done anything, but their ancestors did. And so that can give you a lovely fiction in your mind. And that fiction gives you your sense of worth, your self-esteem.

And if you have a title, then that's confirmed by everybody else who calls you by that title. You're a lord or lady. Not everybody who has a title actually derives their sense of self-esteem from that.

Some are actually not that concerned about it anymore. I've met some and others very strongly identified with it. So where's the true, really the healthy self-esteem?

Where does that originate? Not from any of these things. You have to go a little deeper into yourself and true self-esteem is not comparative.

It's not, I am better than or less than. Quite simply, that sense of value, of worthiness is derived from that deeper place of quite simply your presence, the presence of you, the presence of consciousness. If you can sense that presence of you, you don't need to compare yourself anymore to anybody else.

You know that that is who you are in your essence and no narrative is required anymore in your mind to justify your existence or to explain who you are in relation to others. And you can then meet, and that's that place of just beingness. And that's infinitely precious.

The presence of you is infinitely precious. Doesn't matter what you have achieved. Doesn't matter whether your life up to this point has been a complete failure or a phenomenal success.

And if you can sense that preciousness, then you can meet big egos in this world and you don't need to compare yourself and you feel absolutely even at one with them. And there's a strength and a power in that presence compared to which any egoic power is like a phantom. You may remember the story I wrote in a New Earth.

It's a Zen story, a true one, that the abbot of a monastery was getting ready to receive the governor of the province in an official visit to the monastery. And when the governor of the province arrived, the abbot greeted him. The visit lasted an hour.

The governor of the province and his retinue went away. And in the evening, the abbot

announced to everybody in the monastery that he was resigning as an abbot. And the reason he gave was just as he was about to meet the governor of the province, he realized that the palms of his hands were moist.

And that was the reason why he resigned. And it wasn't because the temperature was high, because that is a sign of nervousness, wet palms. So he noticed, being very self-observant, he noticed, oh, what does that mean?

That means a lot. That means that I am not deeply enough rooted in my own essence to be able to relate to that person, to relate to his essence. I am mistaking who he is on the level of form for who he is in essence.

And the level of form, he would be superior to me. So he discovered remnants of ego in himself. So he went off, and the story is a few years later, he came back after he had studied with another, or not studied, but lived with another master.

Then he came back and his palms were not sweaty anymore. When your identity, your sense of self is rooted in your presence, in the presence of consciousness, we could call that the egoless state. It's egoless while you are in that connected, state of connectivity.

And that's far more powerful than any ego. I remember the movies about Kung Fu Master. It was many years ago, a series.

And he was always very meek, and he was moving around the United States, visiting places where people are larger than life, like Texas. And so he's meeting all these big egos. Roar, roar, roar, and they think, who is that little guy there?

And in the decisive moments, the Kung Fu Master responds to the situation, and suddenly enormous power goes through him. Roar. And then he's totally still again.

So there's nobody who says, look, see how strong I am, much stronger than you. No, there's nobody who claims anything, and he takes credit. I had an encounter not long after I experienced the awakening.

I was in a waiting room somewhere, and this huge guy came in. Compared to him, I'm just this puny little guy sitting there, and he planted himself in front of me, and obviously enjoying his power. I can't remember what he wanted.

He wanted something. And I could sense that sense of presence intensifying. And I just looked, and he said a few things, and suddenly he became extremely disconcerted because there was no attempt on my part to put up any kind of defense or compete in any way.

And he got deflated like a balloon and didn't know what to say or do anymore. That's an interesting phenomenon. So the important thing for you is in any situation, be in touch

with that inherent power of presence, because ultimately that is the power of now.

Ultimately, the now is the presence, and the presence is you. And ultimately, you are, in its deepest sense, you are the now, because the now is the presence. And this is why I speak of the power of now.

The power of now is also the power of you, and not the personal you, but the you that remains and never was not connected and always is connected and always is an intrinsic part of universal power itself, universal consciousness itself, the one consciousness that underlies all phenomena, the one consciousness of which all phenomena are only a temporary expression. So there's enormous power there. How that manifests in this world is a secondary thing.

Perhaps it only manifests as an emanation that comes through you, or it flows into something that you do or create. And it's a great thing to feel that power, which is not comparative, because you know that everybody else is also a temporary expression of that inherent power, although most people don't know it. It's the famous guy that I spoke of in the perhaps the power of now, the beggar is sitting on his old box for as many years asking for little coins.

And then somebody says, what's inside that box? I've never looked, and it's filled with gold. And I gave that analogy or parable at the beginning of the power of now.

So that is discovering that power in you. And for most people, they're looking for little substitutes to give them a sense of who they are. And of course, this is the reason why it is not unusual for humans to awaken spiritually, to awaken to who they are in their essence, when either one big thing or many things that they have derived their identity from, good looks, physical strength, possessions, abilities to do this or that, recognition, status in society, those things.

And suddenly they lose these things or they lose one big thing that was the main, that gave them their sense of identity, the one main thing that gave them their sense of identity. And that's gone. And that's of course would be, as first is terrible suffering.

And then it can force a human to that deeper place because out here, unless you quickly, the ego might make an attempt to quickly rebuild some mind-made identity by creating another narrative. That's possible too. Not every human who loses, who experiences great loss necessarily goes to that deeper place, but the potential is there.

So it could be a sports person who is great, who is master of some sports, and then he or she has an accident, can never participate in that activity again. And that gave him or her the sense of identity that at first leads to terrible suffering. And then potentially there is a deepening there and the essence, then you are forced into your essence.

There's a medieval image of Fortuna. Fortuna is a goddess of good luck or fortune. It

goes back to Roman times.

That shows the fickleness of things, the transient nature of all the things of this world, which are the things that people identify with and gives them that sense of identity, that's their self-esteem. And it has a Latin inscription on it. It's an image of the goddess and translated from Latin.

It says, this is supposed to be a king speaking or former king, which king stands for any ego. And it says, as these words in Latin, the first word is, I shall reign. The next word says, I reign, to reign a kingdom.

I shall reign. I reign. I have reigned.

I have lost the kingdom. The normal sequence of events. Old age is a great opportunity for that.

Unfortunately missed in many, many cases. Tragically missed. The opportunity as old age comes, approaches, and then you enter old age, proximity of death, loss of physical abilities, of social status, retired.

Who am I when I no longer have that title in my work? All these things are great opportunities for going deeper. And what we are attempting to do now is getting as many books and other material out to old people's homes everywhere, and also hospices and hospitals and so on, because those are great places where spiritual transformation could happen.

So the important thing then is sense your presence, the presence of you, which is not the person, something deeper, that is consciousness, being aware of itself. And then you no longer need a narrative to tell you who you are, free of that conceptual sense of self. And this telling yourself a story in your mind about your life, that also goes out of the window.

My life. This is what it has come to. All those illusions that I had, all those wonderful ideas I had when I was 20.

Now you may well still be at the peak of your success, worldly success, and that's fine. Why not enjoy it? It's not who you are, so you better go into the presence because it doesn't last.

With it also comes a wonderful ability to appreciate other human beings, what they can do, what they know, how they look without feeling diminished by appreciating the external thing connected to another human being. The ego can't do that because if the ego appreciates something, it might pretend because it wants something from you. But if the ego appreciates something, it feels diminished.

If you meet somebody who obviously looks so much better than you, the ego feels diminished by that. So sometimes it tries to say something critical about that person in order to restore the injured sense of self. It's absurd, but that's how it works.

But when you come from presence, you can look at a beautiful form of a human being and appreciate that and feel it's so beautiful. Or the achievements of another human being, to appreciate their achievements. Great, what wonderful things that this person can do.

It's so wonderful. I would never be able to do that. And yet the fact that you would never be able to do that because perhaps you're not strong enough or you're not inclined in that particular direction does not diminish anything of you.

So the appreciation of others then comes in and it's a lovely thing. I even appreciate when I occasionally see people getting into their Ferrari and of course, usually their ego is walking with them because, and so the car, and well, usually it's a red color just to make sure that everybody notices. I love that thing too.

It's a beautiful thing that somebody built. And okay, and this ego is enjoying himself. That's okay.

And you may find that sometimes very creative people, there are some who have no ego about their creations. They do not derive their identity from what they create. Others have fairly big egos.

That happens too. I believe the greatest creators in this world don't have an ego about that. Maybe they have it somewhere else, but not around that.

And that sometimes means that they continue to be creative. So sometimes you see this modesty, which is lack of ego in people who have created something really great, composers, poets, even some scientists like Einstein never developed an ego around what he came up with, the incredible realization about space and time. But he never developed this ego, his idea, I created that.

There was a relatively little conceptual self, just, and he found it absurd that he had become one of the most famous people on the planet even in his lifetime. He just couldn't, it's so weird. And he talked about the gap between what people think of me and who I am is just incredible.

And by the way, that's also the place where you can manifest out of the power of presence. If that presence, if you're linked into that presence, see what the universe wants to, because that presence is the presence of consciousness. It doesn't want to create something through you, perhaps it does.

But in that presence, everything is already present in an undifferentiated state. So

whatever it is that you create externally is like the diluted form of something that in its essence, its concentrated non-form is already there in you. So whatever you can possibly create is already present on some level, on a deeper level.

There have been composers who created the most incredible pieces of music, and many of them said they listened as if it came out of that place of depths already fully created, and they just wrote it down. Okay, let's have this question on the list. Subject, happy thoughts.

A thought comes that can at times trigger negative emotion. I look at it and let it pass. I don't react to it, I stay spacious.

However, when nice thoughts come like life is beautiful, everything is working out perfectly for me, I want to feel them fully, or should I ignore those as well? What do you think? Well, the first thing anybody would probably say, it's more pleasant to have nice thoughts than negative thoughts.

It feels better, certainly. The body likes it more too, because negative thoughts influence the body in some way, obstructing the energy flow. You can test it out for yourself when you feel stressed or got into repetitive negative thoughts, then your body doesn't like it, it reacts.

Even mainstream medicine is discovering there is a link between, well, some still say no, but there is a link between your predominant state of mind or consciousness and the physical functioning. Now, you may also find that negative thoughts proliferate and multiply much more readily than positive thoughts. A negative thought wants to proliferate, and it wants to produce more negative thoughts.

And then you may find a positive thought is quite happy to stand alone. There isn't the pull towards proliferation of more of itself. A positive thought is much less likely to become obsessive, some that you can't get rid of, than a negative thought.

So when you are trapped in the mind, it's very rare, if ever happens, that you are trapped in obsessive good thoughts. You are usually trapped in obsessive negative thoughts, because that is what negative thoughts love to do. They love to take you over.

They want to, for some reason, they're like certain insects that suddenly reproduce and become from one, you get, they give birth to 50, and the 50 give birth to another 50, and suddenly you have millions and billions of them. And, so the difference, a fundamental difference, then, is a negative thought is actually, first of all, makes you feel better. It's easier to experience that which follows the thought, because often after a negative thought, you just experience the reality of what the thought just pointed to.

Life is beautiful, the person here mentions as an example of a positive thought. Life is beautiful. What's wrong with that thought?

Because after that thought, you're actually going to have a certain experience of life being beautiful. So the thought was no more than a pointer, a signpost, and that's perfectly fine. You use thought as a pointer.

It does not absorb all your attention as a thought. It's quite happy to be just a pointer. Life is beautiful, and then perhaps for the next few minutes, you appreciate everything that is around you, and it becomes a true experience.

So as a pointer, it can work beautifully. And the negative one is just one, and after another, after another, it becomes obsessive. But even if you change all your thinking from negative to positive, the most vital thing is to realize that which is beyond all thought.

Positive thought in itself is not yet liberating. It doesn't liberate you. Can be nice, but it doesn't liberate you.

Only to find the place that is beyond all thought liberates you. Now, does that free you from negative thoughts? Yes, after a while.

The negative thoughts need your identification, which means your unconsciousness, in order to proliferate continuously in your life. It's only if you're identified with them, you give them your total attention. In fact, it's not only that.

You become them. They come out of your mouth when you speak. They're in your thoughts.

They take you over. They possess you. You become them.

And that's how they continue to grow and grow and take over your life. And it can happen. Some thoughts or thought patterns have the same function in the human mind, in many cases, as a virus has in the body.

A virus can proliferate and takes over the body. And so there are many mental viruses that people get taken over by and can't get rid of. Sometimes you have that virus your whole lifetime.

Persistent, deep-seated negative thoughts that occupy either your entire mind or a particular section of your mind. And sometimes the virus that can take over collectively, an entire collective entity of human beings, be it a nation or a tribe or a religion or a section within a religion. It can be a political movement that suddenly has all the answers and knows where the enemies are.

It happened when national socialism in Germany was an infection of a collective mental virus. Soviet communism, which started, of course, with good intentions, but of course, had been absolutely no change in consciousness. So good intentions are not enough

unless there's a shift in consciousness.

Good intentions will lead you to more suffering if there's no shift in consciousness. So Soviet communism became an awful thing. And it took over as, again, a collective mental virus.

China under Mao Zedong, a collective mental virus. Millions and millions died in China, in the Soviet Commission, obviously, Nazi Germany. Millions and millions.

Under Mao Zedong, children would denounce their parents. If a child was unhappy with their parents, they would go to somebody at school and say, my parents are saying this and that. The next day, they would be taken away to a labor camp and never be seen again.

Total insanity. Flowers were declared illegal. They had to tear out all the flowers.

Bourgeois infection, we don't want flowers. Just countless things being taken over by an entire nation, being taken over by a mental, obsessed with certain mind forms. And then it passes.

Can last a couple of decades. In Soviet communism, lasted fairly long. National socialism, the 1,000-year Reich, lasted, I don't know, 15 years or something.

So it runs its course. And then, like a virus infection, after a while, the virus disappears and a semblance of sanity returns. Certainly sanity compared to what was there before.

There's still the normal insanity that's part of the normal state of consciousness, but not the extreme unconsciousness that can take over when thought form becomes a virus. And of course, it happens to individuals. They have then, they interpret the world through their mental virus.

You might have certain ideas. If you go on the internet too much, and you might see things that suddenly, the virus infection can happen by looking up certain things on the internet, and you suddenly believe totally in what this, it could be a total fantasy, but it looks so convincing that it becomes a thought form in your mind. And then from there, it grows.

And after that, you only have contact with those people who are also infected by that thought form. And you think that becomes then your reality. That is the case with many conspiracy theories.

Now, I'm not saying that one out of 10, 20, or 50 conspiracy theories may not be correct. It could, it'll be. But many of them are fictitious constructs.

But of course, the world is pretty insane. So it's probably more insane than you realize. And that includes particularly politicians, and political power play, and so on.

So I'm not denying there is no conspiracy. There are quite mad things happening that we don't know about. And yet, I wouldn't go that way.

Even if it's true, don't get drawn into that. Your job is to be present. Your job is to embody a different state of consciousness.

You cannot fight unconsciousness on its own level. You have to rise above unconsciousness. So good thoughts, yes, good thoughts are preferable to bad thoughts, but then go beyond thought also.

Then negative thoughts will lessen in your life, even if you've been around for a long time, as more presence arises. Good thoughts can arise naturally. And a lot of your consciousness is no longer dependent on what thoughts you have.

There's just more presence. And you appreciate life through presence, rather than trying to convince yourself that you should appreciate life. You appreciate life directly.

Gratefulness is another important thing. Gratitude is, of course, wonderful, very transformative. Gratitude implies a deep appreciation of what you are perceiving around you.

Whether or not you have the thought in your mind that accompanies that, that says, thank you, it's secondary. And after a while, you don't need thank you anymore. But when you first practice gratitude, thankful can be helpful.

When you say something beautiful, thank you for things that otherwise you wouldn't even acknowledge. Thank you for how the light reflects off this table. Thank you for this amazing substance that we call water, got these little, tiny bubbles in it.

And here it is. I can look at it, drink it. It's alive.

It's an amazing thing. And you can appreciate it. It's filled with light, life-giving substance.

Why not appreciate it? And whether or not you say thank you, it's up to you. Thank you is not the main thing.

It's the act of giving it attention that, again, is perceiving it through presence. And then everything is something to be valued that's around you. That's wonderful spiritual practice.

And of course, for a while, it's a spiritual practice. Then it becomes second nature. That's how you live.

So there is some association with certain thoughts, yes, expressing gratitude, but it's not the main thing. The thoughts are more like pointers towards that which is beyond

thought. But in many people's lives, the beginning of spiritual practice and realization is that they suddenly realize how much they've been trapped in negative thinking over past years.

And they suddenly wake up to their own thought processes, whereas before they were trapped in their own thought processes. That's the beginning of spiritual awakening. If you realize what kind of thought processes have been predominant in your life over the past few years on every day, through which you interpret other people, the world, yourself, your life, and so on.

And that's an amazing jump because it implies suddenly awareness or presence has emerged and suddenly you become aware of your thinking. That was my first breakthrough, spiritual breakthrough. It was not a real full awakening.

It was a partial awakening that then kind of disappeared again, went underground for another 10 years or more. It happened to me when I was 16 or 17, and my mind was deeply negative in many ways because I'd been unhappy as a child, parents in constant conflict, violent arguments, and even physical violence, and a great sense of insecurity because violence could explode at any moment at home. And we had very little money, so everybody else had more than we did.

They had cars, we didn't have a car. They had a television. We didn't even have a television.

I didn't realize then how lucky I was. And then I went to live with my dad in Spain, and he had moved from Germany to Spain with his savings. And just as I arrived there, he was running out of money.

And we were poor, almost third world, not enough money even to buy a fridge in Spain in the hot weather, but we could afford a block of ice. They would deliver at weekends, so you could order, somebody would come, and there was a huge, we had a fridge, but it didn't have any engine in it, just a cabinet, but you could put a block of ice in there and it would last for a day or two. So once a week, we had enough money to order a block of ice.

So on a Saturday, it would be put in there, and then we could put some food in there. But still, by Sunday lunchtime, it would have gone off in the summer heat. So I was still very negative.

My mind was, bad things always happen to me, was one of the repetitive thoughts. And whenever something bad happens, I'd, of course, bound to happen to me, always does. Nothing good ever happens to me.

And then the first shift came, I was 16 or 17. A lady who was living in Spain, a German lady, had to go back to Germany, and she said, can I leave a few books? I have too

much, can't take all my books back with me.

Can I leave these books with you? She left a few books with us. And of those books, maybe 15 books, eight or nine of those books were written by a spiritual author, relatively unknown at that time and even now.

But I picked up a book, and for the first time, I read that there is a link between what happens in your outer world and your thought processes, and that negative thinking creates further negative experiences, and that you can become free. That was a huge revelation. And my mouth dropped open, and I read more and more.

And then at that time, I had a typewriter. I would even type out, the old-fashioned typewriter, of course. I would type out whole pages of the book and collect them.

And I shifted my thinking from negative to much more positive. And then, only a year later, I was longing to get away from that, from my dad and his second marriage, which wasn't working either. I was longing to get out, and suddenly, everything happened.

I got offered, at that time, was a wonderful job, even though I had no qualifications in London, England. And the most incredible thing, how life shifted, it was through changing my thinking through this author. But then, in England, I was fine for two, three years.

Then the negative thoughts became less and less, and I became unhappy again. So, it kind of disappeared. And then, I had many years of depression and anxiety.

And finally, at 29, something different happened. It wasn't just positive thinking. It was the end of being identified with thinking.

But the first little change happened there. And for many on the spiritual path, that is also the case. And this applies to many people, when they first realize what kind of thoughts they have been thinking or habitually think, and then shift comes.

That's the period when you put little stickers and labels in your place to remind you of positive things, such as, I love myself. Eventually, you transcend loving yourself. But it can be a wonderful intermediate step between transcending yourself and hating yourself.

So, you go from, I hate myself, to I love myself, to I am myself.

[Speaker 2] (44:51 - 45:10)

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Eckhart Tolle Beyond the Surface Layer of Reality [5d4a4b28-db82-49ed-82d4-50aceb822e07]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:50)

Beyond the surface layer of reality. In this episode, Eckhart talks about our true purpose, which he believes is to transcend our surface layer of reality and our superficial sense of self. He says most of us define ourselves as a person with a past, an accumulation of thoughts and emotions built up over a lifetime.

Many identify completely with this limited view, but Eckhart explains we are more than that. He says often a life crisis becomes the catalyst for discovery. We may lose our homes, jobs or someone we love, but Eckhart says loss pushes us toward awakening.

He believes in this process, the ego burns up and the old ways of being give to our essential self.

[Speaker 1] (0:52 - 11:12)

Thank you. Welcome everybody. Here we are in the present moment, not trying to get anywhere, not even doing anything, but becoming aware of being, being aware of being.

Presence is being, becoming self-aware, so to speak. So there's already a contradiction. Becoming implies time, but being is timeless.

Contradiction is always there because in this dimension, time operates. Being is prior to time and space. So one could say that from our point of view here, sometimes I describe it as we're on the surface of being, it's a metaphor.

We exist here on the surface of being. Most people are unaware of what is beyond the surface of their life. The entire life consists of surface, which is past and future and doing.

What's the next thing to do here? And whatever is perceived by the senses, also sensory perception is surface, the surface of reality, you could say. It's not reality, it's the outer layer of reality.

It's a way of looking at it. But who you are is not confined to the outer layer of reality. For many people it is because they don't know anything else.

So they have a very limited sense of self, which in some spiritual traditions is described as illusory, not actually real. Well, it seems very real here on the surface. Our task, our mission, our purpose in life, the human purpose here is to go beyond the surface layer of reality and go beyond who we are on the surface, the person with a little bit of past and a little bit of future.

The person that consists of accumulated thoughts and emotions, complete identification with this. So one could say that on the surface of reality here, consciousness is dreaming that this dream of self is reality. But the purpose of the universe is for this universe, this dimension to awaken to something deeper.

This is one way of putting it. It's very hard to talk about these things. Because the words derived from the surface of so-called reality, every word reflects things on the surface.

So when you point to something that is beyond surface, it becomes difficult using words. Words become very, very limited. But we have to use words.

And so we use words from the surface reality to point to something that's beyond. So the word itself is never it. The word is a slight approximation, one could say.

Sometimes it's almost like a metaphor, a poetic metaphor or whatever. Now, the cleverest way of using words from our dimension is probably the Buddha. And he talked about the essence of all things, described it as traditionally translated Sanskrit term, shunyata, emptiness.

Emptiness is a term from, of course, it describes something, you can have a cup, and there's nothing in it, it's empty. So emptiness seems to be something in this word, so it points to something in this dimension. But it points to something that isn't actually there.

The cup is empty, there's a nothingness in that cup. So to describe the deeper realities, he uses the word emptiness. That's the one word I prefer to say spaciousness, but I would translate it as spaciousness, emptiness.

It's the one word from this dimension that actually isn't something. You can't say, oh, there's the emptiness. That's the one, and so it's clever, very wisely use that word.

Jesus, as you know, used a similar term. He said, it's the kingdom of heaven is like the sky. Kingdom of heaven is the dimension of depth.

And it's the kingdom of the sky, the kingdom of heaven. And again, what is the sky? It doesn't even exist because it's not something, it's spaciousness.

So he uses a term from the sense-perceived world, surface world, that which is the most appropriate term that points to something that doesn't actually exist. Because the sky doesn't exist as such. Space, does space exist?

Not really. It makes all existence possible. But if it exists, then you can say, oh, here it is.

It's not manifested, but it enables everything else to manifest. But it's all very simple, unless you start thinking about it, then it becomes complex. If you start trying to figure it out intellectually, it becomes difficult.

So when I talk about these things, it's better to just listen, let the words sink in, and then possibly something from within responds. And it's a kind of recognition that all says, oh, yeah, I get it. Or maybe just get it a little bit.

Or your mind might say, I don't get it, because you're trying to understand it. You can't understand it as such. You have to give up the need to understand.

There's a lot to understand on this level, the surface level, their understanding as a place. But you can't really understand being or presence. In order to sense this being, you have to give up your desire to understand.

So you surrender, you relinquish the need to understand. And then when you relinquish the need to understand, figure it out, suddenly there is a space, because when you relinquish this need, you relinquish applying thought. And thought obscures being, because thought is also form.

Thought is all part of the, it's not absolutely on the surface, because just underneath the surface of reality, that's where thought exists. It's already invisible, but it's still part of the manifested reality. So relinquishing thought is perhaps the most important thing to learn that.

And I'm not talking about falling below thought and becoming sleepy and unconscious, or kind of drifting, like if you're taking a drug or something like that, because that can do that sometimes too. Then you kind of become a bit floaty and you have a little smoke. And thinking begins to subside and you feel better for a while, free temporarily from yourself to some extent.

Ah, so liberating. And you smoke a bit more. And then maybe you start laughing.

Don't know why you just laugh, because it's all so funny. And you feel a little bit free, can be quite pleasant. But ultimately this is not the direction in which we are going, because that is the direction of falling below thinking.

Yes, it gives you a sense of temporary freedom from yourself, because that's what humans are actually longing for, this burden of self. And this is why this huge attraction to drugs, to free, give you a little bit of freedom from self, but then only temporary. And then you're back and sometimes it's worse than before.

So that's not it. Yes, cessation of thinking, but what remains is absolute alertness. As sometimes Zen masters described it as, they use the word attention.

[Speaker 4] (11:15 - 11:16)

Attention.

[Speaker 1] (11:16 - 19:07)

The essence of Zen, one Zen master, there are not many Zen masters left these days, I don't know if there are any, but there were some great ones. The essence of Zen described by certain Zen masters as attention. There was actually one Zen master lived early 20th century, when asked to explain Zen, he would simply raise his finger, and sometimes he would say nothing, and other times he would just say attention.

Or he would just look at you. So the disciples asked, what is, can you explain Zen? Because we've been trying to get it for years, still can't get it.

We've been in monks in the monasteries, have been in the monastery for 10 years. Please, I need, we need some more explanations, please, we still don't get it. And you just, that is the state, that is attention, that is pure presence, very alert, no thought, just pure awareness.

And this, I don't know if it was the same master or another one, he was asked to, can you write down something, because I'm going away now for a while, just want to remember, can you write, the disciple said to the master, can you write something down for me so that I remember what to meditate on? And the master got a piece of paper or whatever and wrote, and there it is. And the disciple reads, attention.

He says, is that it? Yeah. Well, can you add a little bit more?

Okay, gives it back, writes, gives it back to the disciple, and the disciple reads, attention, attention. Well, I don't understand, please say a little bit more. And the third time, right, three times, attention, attention, attention.

And the disciple says, I don't even know what that means. What is attention? What does it mean?

And the master says, attention means attention. You cannot get there via intellectualization. Relinquishing thought is, if you're able to realize that, then the being is immediately accessible to you.

And for some people, it happens through spiritual teaching. To other people, it happens through a succession of life experiences, many of them challenging. To other people, it happens through experiencing a lot of suffering and loss in life, so that all the things that they had identified with are taken away.

And what remains is after a while, you can't identify with anything anymore, which is when disaster sometimes strikes. And what's left then, when all the things are taken away, what yourself is left, but who or what are you when you can't identify with it anymore because you have lost, let's say, you lost your home, your spouse has gone away or died, lost your job, your security. So this, for people, can be awakening into what is left when all the things that you thought you were are no longer there.

And either you can commit suicide, as often happens, or you awaken, which is a positive suicide. The person dies, so to speak. And what's left is the essence of who you are.

And then the essence is not in thought. Ah, and if anybody then asks you, who are you? You won't be able to give an answer, but you will know.

Not conceptually, there's a deeper knowing, non-conceptual knowing. And once you know yourself non-conceptually, you can look at another human being and know them non-conceptually too. That is true empathy.

That is true love. You don't manufacture concepts in your mind about who or what this other person is. There's an immediate realization of the essence of the other, and the realization that at that deeper level, the other is not other.

You're meeting yourself. That's love. So you always love yourself, not egoically, but it's always the recognition, even nature.

Then you can look at a tree and can sense the, we've been speaking about that quite a few times. You can sense there's more to it than meets the eye, the beingness of it. And you let go of the concept of tree, letting go of concepts, letting go.

You can take them up again when you need them, because sometimes you need them in this dimension, but not be trapped in concepts. So you let go of concepts, and then you're not looking at a tree because you're not thinking when you're looking at a tree. It's just a pure awareness as you set the perception of it and an awareness behind it.

And then you have something else that's called the all related empathy, love, a certain reverence for all life forms, the reverence for nature, which we need to regain. So nature is not just something that we use. So the most vital thing to learn here is developing the abilities to step out of thought.

Doesn't have to be long. For example, just this little bit here, between here and here, no thought, just pure presence. It's not that hard.

Thinking is here and thinking is here, and then there's a space. First it's very little, just a space of three seconds or something. And then thinking is back and gets a bit in a space.

No self, or as in Indian teachings, it is the transcendent self, the Atman. Let's see if there are any questions left. If not, we'll spend the rest of our session in stillness.

[Speaker 2] (19:10 - 20:23)

Namaste, Eckhart. First of all, I wanted to say thank you for taking my question and thank you so much for all your teachings. It's truly a blessing.

Here is my question. My life fluctuates between presence and unconsciousness. When I

practice your teachings, watch your videos, I feel a strong presence and I try to keep that awareness even after the teaching or practice has ended, as you recommend, and that works, but not for very long.

Sometimes it is for days I am into that presence, sometimes it is hours, and sometimes it is immediately I am drawn back into unconsciousness. And as soon as I realize that, I try to bring the presence back and that works too, but again, not for very long. So basically, my question is, is it really essential for us to go through this in circles between presence and unconsciousness, even if I know that it is the presence what I want and not the unconsciousness?

Can you please help?

[Speaker 1] (20:23 - 36:05)

Thank you. Thank you. Probably many people have similar questions.

That is a very common thing to, as you awaken, and as for most people, the awakening is an awakening process, which means there's a continuous going back and forth from being conscious, being present to being identified completely again with thinking or emotions, falling back into reactivity, being determined by external conditions, reactive, completely reactive to external conditions and people. I would recommend to make it a habit in your life to have brief moments of presence in your everyday life. You can associate them with conscious breaths, one or two conscious breaths.

There are two things you can do here. One is to associate being present with certain brief activities that you engage in every day. In everybody's life, there are certain things that they tend to do every day, the brief activities.

A brief activity could be anything from making coffee or tea to putting on your shoes. Don't choose anything that's too long. Let's choose the short thing.

Putting on shoes is fairly short. Taking a shower may be too long because you'll be there for several minutes, so that you can do that later perhaps. Choose short things that you do every day.

It could be if you have a staircase where you live or where you work and you go up and down several times every day. Choose that. Make every step conscious as you go up the staircase.

Let's say it's five steps, and then a conscious step is a step that you give your complete attention to. You're not attempting to arrive at the end. Every step is self-contained.

So every time you go up those steps, that is your presence practice. Again, short, short. And you can vary after having used certain things for a week or two weeks, then choose

some other things that are also short.

What does that mean? That's introducing little tiny spaces into your everyday when otherwise you would be dragged along with one thing after another that you need to deal with. And the sense of inner space or space would be completely lost, and that is being unconscious.

Then you become reactive. Then you get completely absorbed in sometimes worrying or anxiety, whatever it may be. Choose little, very little, short activities.

There are so many things. Let's see, if you have curtains at home, when you wake up, maybe you open the curtains. Choose that you open the curtains consciously and then make it a practice to look out of the window for, what, 15 seconds consciously.

Consciously means let go of thought, just be there as the awareness. Choose those things or make a list. And if you work a lot with a computer, have a plant, maybe a potted plant next to your computer, and make it habit from time to time, give it attention.

Just 20 seconds, whatever, but don't count the seconds, just give it attention completely. Then your day becomes interspersed with little spaces of awareness. That's very helpful.

And, well, another thing you can do is a similar practice. You can vary. Before you do something, you can stop for a moment to be aware.

And again, choose things that you do regularly. Or before a desire arises, for example, a desire to go to the fridge and get a drink. As the desire arises to go to the fridge, stop for a moment and just be present.

Can be present with that desire, but you're there as presence. That's one thing, a desire arising. This is especially good for people who have a problem with addiction, one kind or another, because then an overpowering desire tends to come when you're addicted.

That makes you unconscious. So when, let's say, some people are addicted to food, they're addicted to drink, they're maybe addicted to whatever substance. Of course, obviously, the greatest addiction is thinking.

Everybody's completely addicted to overthinking. Excessive thinking is the greatest addiction. And this is, of course, the very essence of it.

So as a desire comes, just before you give in, give it a little space. And it could be that even after giving it this little space, you may not even have to do it anymore. It could subside in that space, not necessarily, but it could.

But even if it doesn't, it's a wonderful practice. So while you're doing something, short activities, let's say, brushing your teeth is almost, depends for how long you spend

brushing your teeth. It's two minutes, maybe too much for many people.

One minute is still okay. If you can do two minutes, fine. So can you brush your teeth and be completely present instead of thinking about something else?

Another one, again, is just before you do something. So either be present in the doing or give a space before you enter into some activity that is habitual. Getting into the car, if you have a car that you drive every day, you get into your car and you close the door.

And usually the next thing you do is you put on your seat belt. So you close the door. But after you close the door, before you put on the seat belt, give it a space of whatever.

Don't count it, but I'm just saying like 30 seconds. You may be aware of your breathing while you sit there. Now, if it's an emergency, if you're so late or you need to so urgently get somewhere, then you can't even spare 30 seconds.

That's true. But in most cases, 30 seconds won't make much difference to wherever you have to get to. So don't let your mind tell you, no, I don't have time now.

Everybody has time for 30 seconds of presence, unless somebody has been injured and you need to get them to the hospital or whatever. But otherwise, everybody has time for 30 seconds of presence. I remember many, many years ago when I lived in England, they were just introducing the habit of putting on seat belts.

It was a long time ago. See how old I am. At that time, people were not always putting on seat belts and then they began to make it compulsory.

They had an advertising campaign associated with some visuals, but the words that went with it were clunk, click, every trip. Clunk is the door closing. Click is the seat belt going in.

Clunk, click, every trip. So they wanted people to absorb that so that as they associate closing of the door, the next thing is click, every trip. And you see how effective it is.

I still remember it. It was decades ago. And here you can say clunk, stillness, and then click, every trip.

And don't believe your mind when it says, I don't have time now. To have your day interspersed with moments of awareness or presence is very, very effective. It is more effective than to have just one meditation period, although meditation is helpful, to have just one meditation period, like half an hour every day, whatever, or even two meditation periods.

And the rest of the day, you're completely drawn into whatever arises. You're completely drawn in. If you can have both, that's even better.

If you can have a morning meditation and an evening meditation, it's not enough, however. And if you had to choose between meditation period and have your day interspersed with moments of presence, that would be more effective. If you had to choose, I would recommend that rather than the meditation period.

And that just many periods of presence, little throughout the day. So you have to make a list of activities, not too many, just a few that you do repeatedly every day, and be present either while you're doing them or just before you take that action. So you can present either while you're making a cup of tea or just before you make a cup of tea or just before you drink the cup of tea.

That's another one, before eating, before eating something, be present. They had that in, some people still do it, but not that many people to say grace, to say a few things of thankful, being thankful for the food, et cetera, was a habit for many people. Not that many people do it anymore.

But if you can do the silent grace before a meal, that was even more powerful than you're just silent, just silently present before you eat any meal. People don't even have to notice it. Let's say you're sitting around a table with other people.

You don't have to tell them, okay, just be quiet now, I have to be silently present before my meal. You don't have to do that. You just do it for yourself.

Probably people will hardly notice it, or maybe they will, and then you can tell them, just 20 seconds, 30 seconds, no more, just there's the food, and you're looking at the food, and you're present. You're not waiting for this short period to come to an end, that's important. So there's not an attitude, okay, just have to be present before I eat.

You have to hold back, it's not, you have to be more present than that. Now, another way, I can countless things, another practice, of course, present while you eat, to eat consciously. And again, don't do it with a whole meal, that's too long.

Maybe it's half your starter, if you have a salad or something as a starter, just the first half of the salad, maybe you can eat it consciously, which means you pick it up with a fork consciously, and chew consciously. You don't have to slow down that much. It might happen naturally that you slow down a bit, but you don't have to change it in any way, just be present as the witness, and then you chew.

This is quite important, because eating is one of the things that tend to make people quite unconscious. It's an activity that kind of brings you back to your animal ancestors. I've often observed people, when they eat, they go completely unconscious, and then when they finish eating, they kind of wake up again.

So many things, you can be creative, find things for yourself, and vary them, change them every week or every two weeks, so you have different things. So that's that. One

more thing, you can have just little reminders in various places at home or at a place of work, that is a reminder of presence.

And every time you look at it, you take two or three conscious breaths. And you may have to vary them from time to time, because after a while you get used to them, and then they don't work anymore. Reminder can be a little sticker, whatever it may be.

So instead of, some people, of course, use little affirmations, but this is going beyond that. There's nothing wrong with affirmations. Some people put little stickers on their bathroom mirror and said, I love myself.

That's fine, but it's better than hating yourself. So that's a good step. But this sticker actually doesn't say anything, or it might just say presence.

And what does that mean? It means I am myself. When you become aware of being, then you are yourself, then you don't need to love yourself anymore.

Because if you are yourself, there's only one of you left. But if you're still loving yourself, there's two of you, there's I and myself. Of course, it's better to love yourself than to hate yourself.

It's an intermediate for many people, it's an intermediate step from being very negative, changing to positive. And then the next step is, you no longer have a relationship with yourself. You are yourself.

That is to be rooted in being. And that's a liberation from the self. And again, so you can have little reminders to be present and associate that with two or three conscious breaths throughout the day.

Very powerful. And then presence, let's put it like that. Presence power grows in you more as you engage in this practice.

Presence power grows. It seems insignificant at first, these little periods, but there is a cumulative effect. So that is my recommendation.

Please try it out. I believe you find it beneficial. And does it make sense what I said?

[Speaker 2] (36:06 - 36:09)

Yes, it does. Definitely. Thank you so much, Eckhart.

[Speaker 3] (36:10 - 36:10)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (36:11 - 36:11)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (36:12 - 36:32)

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Eckhart Tolle Bringing Consciousness to This World [1d7106d1-60db-4e0b-bf53-adb9016b8c5a]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

Bringing Consciousness to this World. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about his belief that we are meant to bring consciousness to this world. To do that, he says, we must keep the pathways clear.

We rise above thought, not fall below it, which is what happens when we use substances like alcohol, drugs, and thinking. Once we become free of that, Eckhart says, we realize the essence behind the personality, which is pure presence.

[Speaker 1] (0:35 - 1:00:09)

You are connected to the depth of yourself, to a consciousness that arises from a place that is deeper than the human mind, so that the human mind is really only a receiving instrument of a deeper universal consciousness that pervades the entire space around you. So, the I am-ness, realizing that as the presence that is perceiving this room, in this case, here, or wherever you may be. And you develop the ability of refraining, especially when you don't need it, refraining from always interpreting mentally, imposing thought on everything.

That's the essence, for example, of, some of you may be familiar with Zen. That what I'm just describing, both in words and pointing to experientially, that is the essence of Zen. The essence of Zen is quite simply, relinquish thought, but stay awake.

You're not going to sleep. You can relinquish thought, you can get out of the, being trapped in thought, either by going to sleep tonight, there's a short transitional period when you feel really good because you're too tired to think. And this transitional period feels good, but you're moving below thought.

And so you go, ah, it feels, you're approaching sleep, and it's sweet and lovely, and it pulls you, and it says, come here, oh, it feels good. Why does it feel so good? Because you don't remember your problems anymore.

You don't remember yourself anymore. You don't remember the self anymore, but there's a price to pay. You're falling below thought.

And the same price you have to pay when you start drinking, stiff drinks, as they're called, because that can also take you below thought. At first you feel better, ha, ha, ha, no need to think that much anymore because I can't think really anymore, isn't that wonderful? Oh, I love you, I love you, it's beautiful.

Let's sing a song together. Have another one, okay. And again, another way of falling

below thought.

And fine if that's what you choose to do, but it's not the way of spiritual awakening. A good smoke would help too. And of course, it does free you for a while from the burden of your thinking.

And for some people, certain drugs can, people who are so trapped in their minds, so identified with their thinking, it can be helpful for them to once or twice or three times experience, they can be actually be free of that through a drug or something. But ultimately, it's not the way to go. The way to go is to rise above thought, and that is becoming present, developing the ability of refraining from thinking and just being present.

As you are present, you become more intelligent. And this has nothing to do with IQ, or nothing to do with acquired knowledge, you're linking into a deeper source of, the deeper source of all intelligence. That was blocked because of complete, almost complete identification with thinking.

It wasn't totally blocked, because most humans, unless they are virtually on the verge of complete clinical insanity, most humans, even if they don't know it, have limited, very brief access points in their lives to this dimension of consciousness, when thinking subsides, and there's just an aliveness, may only last for three or four seconds spontaneously, it may happen when you look at a beautiful sky. And for a moment, as you look at the sky, the mind is spacious, as spacious as the sky.

And you look at the sky and you go, oh, now, most people don't realize in that moment, when they look at that, they also feel more alive. So they look at the sky and they go, oh, then after maybe three, four, five seconds, the mind starts saying something, either out aloud or in your head, say, oh, what a beautiful sky, or the mind says, if you've visited art galleries, it says, oh, this is a, looks like Turner kind of sky. The 19th century artists are used to paint skies.

So that is again, would be the mind coming in. But in the moment of looking and truly perceiving, there is no thought. There's only presence or awareness in the background of your sense perceptions.

And because in that moment, there's no thought, you feel this is a beautiful moment and you feel more alive and there's a beauty and aliveness to that moment. And you think it's caused by the sky, but it's only indirectly caused by the sky. It's really caused by the cessation of the mind stream in you and the arising of spacious presence for a few seconds.

And then it might happen again, a few hours later, you're walking and the person with a dog on the leash comes and you look at the dog and you look into the eyes of the dog.

And for a moment or three seconds, four seconds, five seconds, you are not thinking. You are actually communicating with a dog in a way that you hadn't perhaps yet been able to do with a human being because you're communicating with a dog beyond mind, beyond thought, because the dog is not imposing thought on you.

The dog is prior to thought. The dog is conscious in its own way, but it has no conceptual thinking. So the dog does not have an opinion about you.

You might have an opinion about the dog, but the dog does not judge you in any way. The dog just looks at you. And this can be a moment for many humans, a brief liberation from the stream of thinking when they look into the eyes of an animal and the animal is not thinking.

And so they look at the eyes of the animal and the animal is more rooted in being than the human, because the human is trapped in their minds. The animal is more rooted in being. And you can look into the eyes of the animal and feel, ah, you don't know what it is.

It feels good. And you think you love looking at this dog or maybe even touching the dog. Oh, and then the words come in.

Oh, what a lovely dog. But before the words came in, there was an experiencing of that that was beyond thought. So an animal can free you or you meet a baby, one year old baby and look into the eyes of the baby.

The baby hasn't learned words yet, but there's a light shining through the eyes and you look into the eyes of the baby. Oh, and in this moment of saying, oh, you're not thinking this. And this might last for a few seconds longer.

And you feel, it feels so good. So what I'm saying is, if you are not totally on the verge of insanity or actual insanity, it means there are moments in your life when these experiences of thoughtless awareness happen spontaneously, but you didn't know that. You always thought it was something else that caused it.

And once you know that, once you know that, you can actually invite it more into your life. And when you consciously know it, they become longer, the periods when you are in spacious presence. And then comes the time when you can actually choose to be in spacious presence.

You don't have to wait for a dog to go past, come past you. You don't have to wait for the, you don't have to wait for the next drink to fall below thought. You don't have to wait to climb.

It can also happen when you're engaged in strenuous physical activity or perhaps dangerous physical activity that stops your mind. And so whether it's motor racing or

mountain climbing, or maybe probably surfing too, you have to be really there. And you can't be thinking about your problems when you're surfing or climbing up a wall of a mountain or racing, because then you're going to fall off.

If you think about your problems while you're on your surfboard, what about my life? So it forces you into the present moment. And so some people say they get addicted to dangerous things like that without realizing why.

They think the euphoric state that they experience, they believe is caused by that activity. It's not entirely true. It is, yes, it is indirectly caused by that activity, but the true cause of that intensified aliveness is the fact that the stream of thinking has subsided for a moment and they have not fallen below thought.

They have risen above thought. Into that state of beautiful presence where they are. No thought, but intense awareness.

And that also, why it feels so alive, it is a liberation from the person. With its personal history, it's a liberation from your personality, with all the conditioning from the past, all your viewpoints and opinions and likes and dislikes and complaints and this and that and regrets and grievances and all the things that make up the person. Suddenly you are liberated from that.

Wow. And you are just consciousness. That's what it is.

Unconditioned, just a conscious presence. You are liberated from yourself for a little while, but that is ultimately spiritual awakening is to consciously go there rather than wait for something to take you there briefly or rather than needing to engage in dangerous activities every weekend. And even then you don't only have it for a few hours while you're engaged in that activity or a few minutes.

And that's fine. It's better than nothing, of course. If you're surfing, go surfing.

It's great. But that's not enough. It can give you a taste.

But the important thing is you can invite that into your daily life. That is the shift in consciousness so that, yes, you are still a person, but you are no longer exclusively a person. There is still a personal self there.

Of course, you remember your history, but something else has emerged so that the person that you are is no longer the source for your sense of identity. You don't have to look to the personal, include your personal history and all the stuff associated and all the conditioning of your mind. You know it's there, but there's something else has arisen which we could call presence or awareness.

And increasingly, you realize that the essence of who you are isn't the person. The

essence of who you are is the underlying consciousness. That's who I am.

And that was the same when we just looked around the room without labeling it mentally, just perceiving it. And at the same time, sensing the perceiving consciousness as yourself. But it has no particular form.

You can't say anything about it. It's just a presence. So to sense yourself as the presence, that frees you from believing that who you essentially are is this little person.

And then you can coexist. There is the person, but there is, more importantly, there is something that shines through the person. The presence, the awareness, the unconditioned conscious, whatever many words can be used, Buddha nature, your Buddha nature emerges.

Or in mystical Christianity, Christ consciousness emerges. It is the unconditioned consciousness that emerges and then shines through the person. So the person is still there.

The conditioning is still there. But you are no longer in the grip of the conditioned person. You are there as an awareness behind it.

And yes, certain things still happen. You may still, as you go through the transitional period, you still find from time to time or regularly find yourself taken over by the person again. And you completely lose presence, especially when you visit your family.

Because people with whom you share a lot of past, they are the most difficult people to stay present with. And even worse, it's your ex-wife or ex-husband that generates a lot of... So the vital thing is realizing that you are actually able to consciously choose many times during the day to be present rather than being a person.

But for example, simply looking around and not labeling mentally what it is you're seeing. Just be there and feel the presence of yourself. I am.

I am. Perhaps the most profound thing in the Old Testament is when God is asked, what's your name? Or who are you?

I don't remember what the question is. But God defines him, her, or itself as I am that I am. Which means I am the underlying I am of the entire universe.

And when you find the I am in yourself, that is the I am of all life. It is not your I am. It is the I am of the universe.

It is the universal consciousness. The one consciousness that you are. So on the one hand, you are a person, which is the ripple on the surface of the ocean.

But you're also the ocean. You're more fundamentally the ocean than the ripple on the

surface of the ocean. Or you might be a wave.

But still you have the same destiny as the ripple. If your private jet is waiting at the airport for you, you're a wave on the surface of the ocean. But that's not going to last that long either.

You still need to find the essence of who you are as the ocean. So who am I then? Who am I?

This is a question that ancient teachers have asked often. Some have said, like Ramana Maharshi, the Indian spiritual teacher who lived in the first half of the 20th century. His highly recommended meditation was to ask yourself, who am I?

Who am I? So you have to sit there and you go, who am I? Now, as long as you ask yourself the question, who am I?

And you go, you're never going to get there because you're obviously looking for some answer, conceptual answer. So you can sit for hours, you can sit for days, you can sit for years. I met people who spent years in Zen monasteries as monks or nuns.

And still didn't get it. Because they tried to work something out mentally. What is Zen?

Who am I? I just can't get it. But of course, the answer is very simple.

And that is, there is no answer, not on a conceptual level. The answer to the question, who am I? Is the stillness that comes after that question.

Oh, oh, I got it now. Do you? And then you might find the mind may still want to come in, even after you get it for a moment.

Yes, but I have another question. I told the story, I believe it's in a new earth about the Zen story about the master, Zen master and the young monk on a pilgrimage out in nature, walking for hours. And then they sit down for a picnic and the young monk asked the master, please, can you, this may be a good opportunity, can you explain again what I really want to get the essence of Zen, but I can't get it.

I need some more explanation. Please help me. And I'll just repeat the story, but it's a different way than when you read it in the book.

Please help me. And the master said, can you hear the sound of that mountain stream in the distance? And the disciple said, no, I can't hear it.

And the master said, listen again, can you hear the sound of that mountain stream? And the disciple said, why are they saying that? I asked the explanation about Zen.

And then he, but then he went, but it was very distant, a very distant sound of water

coming down the mountain. And finally he got it. He, and then he said, yeah, I can hear it now.

And then the master said, that's Zen. You enter Zen from there. Oh, and then after a few seconds, his mind came back in.

So you can see for a moment, the disciple's mind subsided and became present because the sound was so distant. He needed total attention to hear it. And then the disciple said, okay, I have a question now.

What would you have said if I had said, no, I can't hear the mountain stream. And of course the master raised his finger and said, enter Zen from there. So it's, it's so immediate, so direct that the complicating mind cannot possibly understand.

So Zen simply means thoughtless awareness, absolute presence. And that's why there was one Zen teacher who, whenever people asked any explanation about Zen, he became famous as the finger raising teacher. Whenever people asked him about, please explain Zen, he would simply go and look at you and he would go, and some people got it.

Many didn't. That means thoughtless awareness, absolute presence, rising above thought, not falling below thought, above thought. Now that becomes a dimension of consciousness that then becomes active in your daily life.

So you shift from, yes, you, of course you think, and of course you still, as you transitioned from the unawakened, unconscious state, unconscious in the way we use the word here, of course does not mean, it's not the conventional meaning of unconscious, which would be, unconscious means completely identified with your thinking mind, complete identification with thought is unconsciousness, spiritually speaking, and consciousness is to disidentify from thought, and then you can step out of thought when you want to.

That is spiritual awakening. Before consciousness and thought, all your consciousness, it's not your consciousness, but the consciousness that arises in you before you awaken, all that consciousness is trapped in thought. It's trapped.

And that makes up the heaviness of the personality. All your consciousness, all consciousness is trapped and immediately becomes thought. And that is the egoic mind.

It gobbles up all your consciousness, one thought after another. And you can see where people, how lost in thought people are, how uncentered they are, how unpresent they are in many cases, and they're very unhappy. It's a very unhappy state to be lost in thought.

And there's always something problematic in thought because thought is there, it's

designed to solve problems, but the way it's developed is it creates more problems than it solves. So a large part of your so-called problems are mind-created. You may have a few real ones, but even that is still mind-created.

Let's say you've run out of money, you can't pay the rent, and next week you have to move out and you don't know where. That's usually called a problem. It would be a problem, and it is on a conventional level, but it is not in the present moment.

If you're really in this moment, there is no problem. And in this moment, you can take action. If you completely align yourself with this moment, you see the totality of the life situation and the power of this moment, and then you might take some action that solves the problem.

But you don't carry the burden in your mind of a problematic life anymore. This is such an incredible liberation from needing, from being trapped in thinking all the time, to being able to step out of thinking, and then you have conscious. Consciousness then becomes liberated from thought.

And there you have more. And then, of course, thought will want to get it back. It says, oh, come.

And so it pulls it back, and then you're lost in thought. And then, again, separation happens. And then, gradually, you learn to think without completely losing yourself in the thoughts.

So there's always a presence behind the thinking. So you are able to think, but there is an awareness behind the thinking. Meaning, you are no longer completely lost in your thinking.

You're no longer completely identified with your thinking. So the most vital thing as part of your spiritual awakening is stepping out of thought and realizing how vitally important that is. But thought will tell you, no, not now.

Before you step out of thought, you have to think a little bit more. When I've just solved this particular thing, then I can start doing it. But right now, I have too much on my plate.

It's really too much in my head. I can't, I can't, just can't do it now. It's just, it's, it's, I can't deal with that spiritual stuff now.

Just, this is not the time to be spiritual. And, of course, most people believe that if life left them alone for just a while, so that they could really dedicate themselves to their spiritual life, they might get somewhere. All I need is to please leave me alone for half a year.

And, and give me some money so that I can go to the most beautiful place where everything will be, I will be looked after. Don't have to worry about my food, massage every day. And only the purest food will be prepared for me, so I don't have to worry about that.

And the weather will be lovely every day, and so that I can really dedicate myself to my spiritual practice. That should do it. And, of course, that is called, what you really want is to be totally in your comfort zone, believing that that will actually awaken you.

And, of course, if you try it out, it will have the opposite effect. Yes, you may become free of thought, but you will have fallen below thought. Because in the absence of challenges, you very easily fall below thought.

It's the challenges that provide the motivation to rise above thought. But the challenges also can pull you below thought. So you have to look very clearly when you encounter a difficult situation, or a difficult person, which is not difficult to encounter.

Anything problematic that arises, how easy it is for you to become reactive. And let's say you meet a very rude person, doesn't respect you, or just says something disrespectful. And you can feel yourself wanting to, or actually responding, reacting in kind, and say something back.

That's the same kind of thing. The ego does that automatically. When the ego feels diminished, somebody criticizes you, somebody insults you, whatever they do, the ego is the mind made self.

The ego feels diminished even by a simple thing, like another driver shouting something at you. You idiot. And you've, immediately, the ego goes into automatic self-repair mode by shouting something back.

And to the ego that feels something good has happened because I have repaired myself. My diminished sense of self is restored now. And so this is done, can be done in discussions also.

The ego always is looking out for being very much afraid of being diminished in their sense of self. So any criticism, et cetera, is a diminishment. So if somebody said to you, isn't that your ego talking?

Let's say your spouse is saying, you might have an agreement. Please remind me when my ego is coming up strongly, let me know. And so your spouse says, oh, you better watch that.

What you just said seems to me was completely ego. It's coming from ego. You need to be right and you need me to be wrong, obviously.

That's why you said that. And then you will know immediately whether or not what this person, your spouse said was true or not by your reaction. If your reaction is, what?

My ego, you better look at yours. And that means he or she was right. It was your ego.

But if you say, really? Oh, I have to look into that. And then you might say, yeah, I think you're right.

Or you might say, it still doesn't. I don't feel it was ego. There's no reaction, which means there's a presence.

And then it's quite possible that the person was wrong. Perhaps it was their ego being projected onto you. So whenever you go into self-defense mechanism, the kind of thing is ego repair mechanism.

And you can practice with refraining from that. It's quite an interesting practice. It's not uncommon that people, when I drive, well, it does happen from time to time.

I don't know why they shout at me. And usually there's no reaction. I kind of look at them.

And they get, sometimes they shout even louder. I even had one last year. I had the windows closed in my car.

And maybe I did something or not. And he pulled up and his window came down and he shouted something unpleasant. And I just looked around.

And then he shouted, I know you can hear me. But it's interesting when you don't go into ego repair mechanism. At first, the ego would feel diminished at first.

And then you just, you stay with that. And just presence arises. And suddenly you realize there's nothing.

Nothing has been diminished at all. There was just somebody shouting. So you are no longer there as a target at all.

You've kind of disappeared as a target. So observe the reactivity in you, especially when challenges happen in life. There's always, you can go either way.

You can become reactive again, pull it into unconsciousness, or you can rise above and suddenly become more present through the challenge. And what happens as you begin to awaken spiritually, more and more, a challenge makes you more present. And when there's an absence of challenges for a few days, you go back into just ticking over, just normal kind of mind identification.

And then something else happens and goes wrong and go, oh. And then after a while, as

you voluntarily embrace the shift in consciousness, you go there voluntarily by choice. Life does not need to challenge you that much anymore because you're already choosing it for yourself.

Everybody on the planet has a spiritual teacher. Now for 95% of the population, their spiritual teacher is their suffering. And so those are the challenges that become suffering.

And that eventually awakens people. You know it from your own life. I know it from my life.

If I had not gone through intense suffering and being challenged, you're challenged by external circumstances, but more fundamentally, you are challenged by your own mind. Which is the inherited collective mind. That is the greatest challenge.

For a long time, humans don't know that because they don't know that most of their problems arise from the unobserved mind. And so the greatest challenge is, yes, external circumstances, but more fundamentally, the unobserved mind, which creates reactions. And the reactions create further suffering and turmoil for yourself and others.

That's the vicious circle of karma. And karma gets broken when awareness arises. Presence is not part of your karma.

It is the wheel of karma, which is action, reaction, action, reaction, action, reaction, being passed on from generation to generation, from person to person, from parents to children, to their children, to their children. The karma, the unconsciousness, the unconscious reactivity. And when presence arises, something is there that is not part of karma.

You don't need fantastic karma to awaken spiritually. Karma meaning the things that you come into this world with. Some people, of course, have more pleasant life circumstances.

They are born into relatively pleasant environment and so on. And others are born into a very difficult environment. So it is the people who are born into a very pleasant environment are not necessarily, and probably not at all at an advantage as far as spiritual awakening is concerned.

It's the suffering that awakens you. And then you jump out of the wheel of karma. You're no longer reactive.

You can respond to situations, but you don't react anymore. You can take action, but the action arises out of the sense of presence rather than the accumulated conditioning of your mind. The action arises when the response comes out of being, you look at every situation that arises and you're present and you face it and you look at it and you accept

it the way it is.

And then greater intelligence operates in you and spontaneously you do the right thing. Spontaneously you say the right thing or spontaneously you refrain from doing anything because you realize or you recognize that at that moment there's nothing to do. And you're at peace.

You're aligned with the isness of this moment. It's a wonderful, amazing time to live. You are going through a transition from one state of consciousness to another.

It's an evolution, almost a different species emerging that is no longer governed by ego. Ego meaning identification with the mind, identification with every thought. And something new is arriving, what Jesus called the kingdom of heaven, meaning kingdom dimension, heaven, sky, spaciousness, the dimension of spaciousness.

And then they asked him, where is it? It's within you. Oh, that's what he was talking about.

He was talking about the dimension of spacious awareness in you. But to explain it to people, he pointed at the sky, which was the closest thing he could find as an analogy to explain that he was actually talking about an inner realization. So he was looking around and spontaneously he pointed at the sky because the sky is the closest in the sense perceived reality that you could use as an analogy for the inner spaciousness because the sky is not an object.

Everything else that you see around you is an object. It's a material object, everything else. But the sky actually doesn't really exist.

It's just spaciousness, but you can never touch it. You can never get there because when you go up in a rocket, there's never a moment when you say, I'm now in the sky. It's not, you can be in a cloud, but you can't be in the sky because the sky doesn't really exist as an object.

So he very cleverly, deeply inspired, used that from the sense perceived world to point to an inner reality because also the consciousness that you are, that formless spacious consciousness that you are, can never be an object of everything else is an object that arises in your consciousness. But you can never say, ah, this is my consciousness. There it is.

I have it. No, it's like if you were shining a light, let's say you're shining a spotlight and you're looking, let's say you're looking for yourself or you're looking for God, same thing. So you're shining the spotlight of consciousness.

Where am I? Where am I? And it's just what I thought all kinds of objects.

It illuminates all these objects. No, I'm not that, not that. And finally, okay, I give up.

And maybe at that moment, when you say I gave up, you're no longer looking out there and you become aware of the light that you use to look for yourself. And suddenly you realize that's what I was looking for. I am what I was looking for.

I am the light with which I was looking for myself. Consciousness. So it's, you cannot become an object to yourself.

That's why Jesus used that expression, the dimension of space, kingdom of heaven, dimension of spaciousness. And then when they asked him, he said, when they asked, where is it going to come? When is it going to come?

The kingdom of heaven, because they obviously didn't understand what he was saying, but they wrote it all down. A few things survived, but most, a lot of it didn't go very well, but a few jewels survived. So it's worth, it's precious for those jewels.

So when they asked him, he said, well, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be observed. That's a literal translation. The kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be observed.

You cannot say, oh, it's over here, or, oh, it's over there. Because I tell you, it is within you. Other translations say in the midst of you.

It doesn't matter. The kingdom of heaven is within you. It's never there.

It's never there. It's not an object that can arise in consciousness. God is not an object that can arise in consciousness.

Oh, there's God. I met God there. Interesting question.

I don't use that term too often because it can be very misleading and has been misused for a long, long time by people who had no idea what they were talking about, but they're using God continuously, talking about God, God, God. What do you mean? Unless you have realized who you are beyond the person, you have not the slightest idea of what God is.

It's a mental concept. That's all. It's a mental idol when you use it without knowing yourself.

But when you know who you are beyond the person, and it's not a conceptual knowing, it's sensing the light of consciousness that you are, that spacious, one could say spacious, luminous, it's an analogy, spacious, luminous, the consciousness that manifests through you that becomes thought, but is not thought, is prior to thought, the unconditioned consciousness, which scientists tell you is produced by the physical brain, but they will realize at some point that consciousness is not produced by the physical

brain, although there's a relationship between the physical brain and consciousness, in the same way that there's a relationship between the radio and what it transmits or a television set and what it transmits. Of course, there is a relationship between them, but mainstream science still believes that there's nothing but matter.

Mainstream science, except for a few very advanced scientists, and most of them are either retired or close to retirement, and then they have the courage to speak out and say things that otherwise, but they would lose tenure if they said things like consciousness is not produced by the brain. Only scientists who no longer were near retirement are able to make these statements because otherwise you get condemned like you got condemned in medieval times when you said something that the church didn't approve of. It is the most obvious thing is that you are essentially invisible.

Every one of you, I mean, what you see of another person or what you see of yourself when you look in the mirror is a very, the tiniest surface phenomenon. What matters most about you, your thoughts and your emotions and all the things that make up who you are. Go to a surgeon, could open up your brain, your head and examine your brain under a microscope and the most powerful microscope, he would not find a single thought.

He couldn't find a single emotion. How many thoughts are there in your head? The memories that you have, you have millions of memories in your head.

I sometimes suggest to people, think at this moment, the teacher you had when you were eight years old, your favorite teacher, suddenly he or she appears. The house where you lived when you were 10 years old, can you hear them? You open the door, you walk in, there's the living room, there was your room.

Now that I ask you, you can go there mentally. So in some way, that memory was dormant in you until I said this, how did that survive in you? Was that, were there certain atoms or molecules that was your living room?

Are there memory molecules and there is, some are reserved for this, some are reserved for that. So you wouldn't find any of that if you look to the brain with the most powerful instruments. Science doesn't even know what a thought is.

No idea what a thought is. And it's of course, it's invisible. It's obviously, you are not essentially a material being.

So, because if you examine the matter of you, the physical you, they would never find you there. They cannot find you there. You're not there.

So the consciousness that you are, and that is the most essential thing when you can sense yourself as consciousness. Now, what I'm saying now is a little weird. Can you become conscious right now that you are conscious?

Can you know that you are conscious? Can you sense yourself as consciousness? It's so easy really.

Sounds a little weird, but it's easy. Can you sense yourself as consciousness? A conscious presence.

It's a similar thing that we did before is let go of personal history, just presence. Consciousness. And this consciousness perceives.

Without it, there would be no perception. It makes all perception possible. This consciousness makes all thinking possible.

That consciousness makes all emotion possible without what it wouldn't be. That is the consciousness that you are. Now, where does that come from?

And now I will suggest to you the relationship between your consciousness and God is similar to the relationship between the sunshine and the sun. The ray of the sun, the sunshine, which comes from the sun. It's emanating some, the sun in the physical universe emanates continuously light.

God, now we can use the sun as an analogy for God in the sense-perceived universe. God, of course, you cannot talk about. God is the source of all being and all life beyond anything that you could possibly comprehend or talk about.

God does not live in this dimension in space or time. God is in the transcendent, but all life emanates from the one source of all life. That is similar to the sun.

And what it emanates into this dimension is consciousness. That is the light of God. So you are a ray of that central source.

It appears briefly and temporarily as a person, but of course it's not a person. But it's, that is, each one of you is an emanation of the one. And each life form is an emanation of the one.

Your essential identity is not, you're not an autonomous being, not a separate being. You are the one experiencing itself as the many. And at the ultimate realization is the realization of the underlying oneness of all life.

The underlying oneness of all life. And that is realized when thinking ceases and that beautiful stillness, alert stillness in you, that is light of consciousness itself. That is primordial intelligence emanating from the source of all life.

And so when you know yourself as that, then the way in which you experience life in this dimension changes. You are free of fear, for example, because you know the indestructibility of life, the life that you are. And you also know that the belief that you have a life that one day you're going to lose is not actually true.

Because obviously, when I say, I have a life, or when I say, he lost his life, she lost her life. How is that possible? How can I lose my life?

Because that would mean there's a duality there. Here's me and there's the life. And then I lose it.

But then what am I if I'm not life? How can I lose myself? He lost his life.

How can he? He is life. How can I lose my life?

I am an expression of the one life. There isn't me and life. I don't have a life.

And you don't. You just think you do. I don't have a life.

I am life. And you, of course, you have a life on the level of the person for a little while, and then that dissolves. But what remains is the ray of consciousness that emanates from the central sun, which is God.

And that is your essential identity. And that is on a journey in this dimension. Gradually, the transcendent source, the emanation from the transcendent source, gradually brings about a universe that evolves in this dimension.

So in this dimension, one could almost say God evolves and becomes more conscious of itself or himself in this dimension. So you could say, and this is an ancient, that God or consciousness, which is a light of God, is present in all things, but in different vibrational frequencies. So God or consciousness is asleep in the mineral, in the stone, in the rock.

God, this is an ancient saying, God is dreaming in the plant or plant life, like one consciousness is dreaming in the plant life, in the trees and the flowers and the plants. And God is awake in the animal and in the human. And then in those humans who are awakening, God awakens to him, her, itself in the awakened human.

But they're all expressions of one consciousness at different frequencies, but ultimately all one. And that is such a beautiful thing, that realization of the oneness of life. That's also where the love, true love, loving kindness, a goodwill towards all humans is part, emanates from you when you realize your central oneness with every other human.

So you look at a human being and you know there's a person there, but only on the surface. And then you look again and you listen and you can sense that they are consciousness, essentially, an expression of the one, as are you. But if you don't know yourself as consciousness, then you cannot recognize the other as consciousness.

And the other is always completely other. And that's the egoic state. The egoic state is surrounded by others.

And the stronger your ego is, the more you attempt to emphasize the otherness of

others. In other words, you love your enemies and you want to have more enemies because the fictitious ego identity gets stronger in its encapsulated sense of self, the more enemies it has around. That's not what I believe.

That's not what we believe. We believe this and we are the only ones who are right. All this ego stuff, we know all that.

It's all delusion. And that's the opposite of recognizing the oneness. And then the sense of otherness disappears.

And that's a beautiful thing when you no longer have this strong sense of otherness, both for individual people, but also groups of people. So this is where we are moving. This is where you are moving.

A new way of being in the world that arises from the awakened state of consciousness. And it's such a wonderful adventure to be part of this right now. So whatever your life is on a personal level is secondary.

The important thing is, are you bringing consciousness into this world? It doesn't matter what you do or how you do it. Are you here as a conscious being?

Are you emanating consciousness even in any simple, just even when meeting another human being, is there another dimension there? Not just the personal. And then many of you will also be teaching either formally or informally because there's a longing for humans, many humans, still a minority, but they're growing.

There's a longing to awaken to who they truly are. And if they don't know who they truly are, then they are unhappy. And that's why millions survive on pills and antidepressants, tranquilizers.

Even children these days are given tranquilizers and antidepressants. It's terrible. Why?

Because there's spiritual ignorance. So that is where the awakening is vital. And now we're moving probably towards difficult times in the collective.

And that's how it's meant to be because that can only accelerate the awakening or that looks negative on the surface, but it will accelerate the awakening. Critical times and awakening often go together. So I'm very optimistic about the future of humanity long-term, short-term is a different matter, but consciousness cannot be.

The universe wants to, is meant to become more conscious and you are an expression of that. Consciousness, you are an expression of that universe that is evolving in consciousness. So you're not a person, at least not for that long.

So accept who you are on the personal level. The person becomes less dysfunctional as consciousness comes in. It still has its limitations.

The person has its imperfections and limitations. You can live with that. You're not going to be perfect as a person.

What you gain here, you lose there. That's how it is. But you become compassionate with yourself.

You become more compassionate with the limitations of others because you realize who you are beyond that limited personal sense of self. And then you cannot not teach others. Everybody you come into contact with somehow is affected by your consciousness.

And even people you're not in physical contact with are affected because we're all connected at a deeper level. So enjoy the journey. Your life is a great success because you are awakening.

So that means you're fulfilling the purpose of human existence. So whatever the world tells you, whether you're important or not, or whether your personal history is a great, wonderful tale or a sorry story, no longer matters. It has brought you to the point of awakening.

So it all worked. Your life was a total success. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:19 - 1:00:33)

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Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Bringing Consciousness to the Grief Process [caadcd2d-1694-48aa-bad8-72f811c9019d]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:35)

Bringing consciousness to the grief process. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions about dealing with grief consciously. He explains what the grief process looks like for an awakened person.

Eckhart believes even if we're in touch with the transcendent dimension, we will still experience grief. He says when we are awakened, grief doesn't disappear completely. However, the intensity will be less.

Eckhart also explains that facing death or the possibility of death is vital because it is the catalyst for the evolution of our consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 21:06)

Hello, everybody. Wonderful to be with you. Thank you for being so present that even to say that you were patient is no longer correct.

Because patience is a kind of intermediate stage. It's kind of trying to be really patient. I'm so patient.

You haven't yet fully arrived in the now, but you're patient. It's better than not being patient and restless and so on. And as you become present, even the concept of patience disappears.

Every concept, in fact, disappears. There are many ways in which one could encapsulate the essence of all spirituality, whatever you want to call it. Even there, we come to a word already.

It's a choice of words. There are many ways you could encapsulate the essence. A very simple one, for example, would be to say the spiritual awakening and the spiritual arising of the transcendent dimension, which is what it is, comes through the letting go of concepts.

A little threatening, perhaps, for many people who are so identified with mental concepts that they derive the entire sense of self from them. So if you derive your identity, your sense of who you are, your sense of I, if you derive that from mental concepts, then letting go of concepts is something threatening to be feared. That even includes spiritual concepts.

Now, concept is another word for thought. In the English language, there's a word that usually has negative connotations, and that is the word thoughtless. In the normal

usage, to be thoughtless is not a good thing.

And it implies that the next thing that you do is going to have very bad consequences when you act from a state of thoughtlessness. But there's another way. There's a deeper meaning behind thoughtless, and that's not common usage.

Therefore, I would not use the term thoughtless to talk about it. But I would say free of thought. Thoughtless probably would imply that you are below thought.

You act out of some impulse. Then comes thought. Then comes the possibility, the realization that there is a dimension of consciousness that is above thought.

And that's easily realized when you become aware of an inner space of just awareness itself, space of no thought, freedom from thought. But your sense of beingness, however, is still there, but it can no longer be defined through concepts. It's just pure beingness, which cannot be doubted.

The one thing you cannot doubt is that you are. Everything else that you perceive and think about may well be the matrix, whatever it is. It may be a projection.

It may be a dreamlike state. All kinds of things are possible. But the one thing that cannot be doubted is the presence of consciousness.

I am. And that realization is you arrive at, as you arise above thought, a clear space of awareness. And that awareness is a deep sense of you haven't lost yourself.

I wrote this little book a long time ago, Stillness Speaks. I think the first sentence goes something like, you are never more truly yourself than when you are still. And to be still, of course, is to be free of concepts, free of thoughts, but awake, aware.

That's the transcendent dimension that opens up. You transcend concepts, which transcend doesn't mean you completely eliminate concepts. They are still able to operate, but no longer form the basis, foundation, for your sense of identity, that spiritual realization, spiritual awakening.

Now to the self that's derived from concepts, that is a kind of death. So it's quite possible for a spiritual seeker to arrive at this threshold. You've learned a lot about liberation, awakening, spirituality.

And then at some point, after reading 200 books about it, and going to workshops and lectures, at some point, you reach that point where it's time to let go, even of what you think you know about spirituality. Or if you've been reading about scriptures, some people, God is an important thing for many people. But of course, God also, until there comes a deeper realization, God is a concept.

And at some point, yes, you spend years reading whatever it is, religious texts, whatever

tradition. And at some point, you've reached this threshold where you have to let go of your concept of God also. In order to find the reality that is behind that word God, you have to let go of the concept, the word God.

The Buddha must have realized that because he never used the word God. And as you realize this, something emerges that I call the deep eye. And the surface eye recedes quite a bit.

It doesn't disappear completely while you're still here in a physical form, with a memory, and so on. The surface eye, the antipersonality, the surface eye is there, but it becomes less important. And all the things associated with the surface eye, the personality, the person, many of these things still operate.

The surface eye has certain imperfections, inadequacies, undoubtedly. They won't go away. The insanity that's sometimes associated with the surface eye does tend to go away, or does go away.

There are many other inadequacies and imperfections and limitations of the surface eye that may remain. But you have transcended them, transcended. It means you haven't eliminated, you have gone beyond.

They're still there, but they no longer give you your sense of self. They're no longer the center of your life. The self becomes a little less important, and then even less important.

And then you become comfortable with a personality, because it becomes a vehicle for the deep eye to manifest itself into this dimension. Don't underestimate the power of nature to help you free yourself from concepts and from yourself. In other words, nature can be a very helpful thing to free you from yourself, to bring you to a perhaps temporary self-transcendence as you go into nature, whatever nature may be, a forest, the ocean shore, the desert, the forest, the desert, the garden, or even just the sky, the tree, the weather.

I love weather, different kinds of weather, always good. But you have to, it's not enough to just go out into nature. You have to really be there with your senses fully.

And if you're there fully with your senses, then you're not imposing concepts on nature. You're able to see and hear and feel directly without any mental labels. And it's very subtle.

It's no longer just the magnificent things that, like a magnificent sunset, although they're wonderful. It's not just the spectacular things in nature, which sometimes are there, but ordinary things that normally humans would overlook. Because humans are always looking for the spectacular or the big thing that stands out, not only in nature, in their own lives too.

They could completely ignore the so-called ordinary, which is 99% of your life is the ordinary things of daily existence. But they're looking for the spectacular, the one thing, the big thing. And sometimes it comes and then it goes, and then you're back to the ordinary.

Or sometimes it comes and it stays, the big thing. But if it stays, it's no longer a big thing. It becomes ordinary too.

So you go into nature and perceive with this alertness. And you realize you can know nature, not through concepts, but directly through awareness instead of through conceptualization. And these are the two modalities of knowing, conceptual knowing, which we need.

Yes, there's a place for it, but it becomes destructive if we become consumed by conceptual knowing and don't know anything else except concepts. Then it becomes a terrible, terrible prison. And so that means you have not transcended concepts.

You are imprisoned by concepts. Then you discover there is another way of knowing, not to replace concepts, but an additional dimension, a dimension of depth that wasn't there before. You didn't know it was there, but you had no idea it was there, so it wasn't there for you.

You can have a hundred million dollars in the bank, but if you don't know it, you're poor. You have no idea that you have it. Of course, what we're talking about is infinitely vaster than a hundred million dollars.

So to know something is always a choice. What's the best how to approach anything that comes into your life? So judging through concepts, judgment and concepts go together.

And then there's a deeper knowing that comes from the deep eye. It doesn't consist of judgments, and yet you know that there's a knowing. And you can test it with things like you can just look at something, even an object.

Nature is even better. You can look at something without any words in your mind, and you know what it is. Look at a tree, any tree.

Look at a tree. You know what it is. Well, yes and no.

It's hard to say whether there's a deep recognition of this thing that we call tree when we use concepts. And yet there's also something deeper that goes deeper than sense perceptions and certainly deeper than any concept. And when you're still for just a moment and observe something visually or through auditory perception, whatever it may be, the song of a bird or the sound of rain or whatever it may be, or the sky, and you see it and there's a deep knowing, unitive, I sometimes call it unitive knowing.

You and it merge. There's no longer a sense of me and it, the separation. You and it, this unitive knowing.

And that's a deeply peaceful and deeply satisfying and wonderful, this unitive knowing. The sense of separation falls away. That inevitably comes when you only relate through concepts.

Because every concept is a limited form. It is this, but not this. And so if you define your identity only through concepts, then your sense of identity needs the other that is not like you in order to survive.

That's very interesting. Let's say you're part of a, let's say it's a religious church and the members of this church believe that only we are in possession of the truth. All the others are not only wrong, they're actually evil.

Everybody who is not part of us is evil. Every member of the church defines his or her identity through the other. If suddenly the entire planet were exactly the same beliefs, it couldn't before your identity anymore.

You would lose your sense of identity without the other. I sometimes give the example of racial identity too. Well, it's fine to raise this part of your form identity, physical form.

In this case, form identity is also psychological form, of course. So if form identity is to be acknowledged, it's there, it's fine. Recognized, accepted, it's fine.

But to what extent does it give you your sense of who you are? If your racial identity is the most important part of your sense of who you are, then I suggest you imagine a scenario where you are taken by a spaceship suddenly comes and takes you to a planet where everybody is exactly the same race as you. Everybody, exactly the same, which means your entire sense of identity that was built on race will collapse because the other is gone.

Where am I without the other? So with concepts, you need the other. And if you're very strongly embedded and interacted by concepts, you need to emphasize how different the other is from you.

And that strengthens your sense of self. It's called ego, personal ego, collective ego. It doesn't matter.

They're all forms of ego. So in the egoic sense of identity, you desperately need the other. And that is the absence of love.

You can't afford yourself really to love. You can't love the other. You need to say the other is not.

You're superior, obviously, to the other. So love, true love can only arise in the unitive

knowing, not knowing through concepts. Then you can sense something in the so-called other that is not other at all, that is one with who you are, the essence of who you are.

And you look at a human being, a so-called other human being, and you recognize something, but you can't say what exactly that is. But you recognize their beingness, their essence, their breath beyond the veil of the personality, which of course is there. And it could be that sometimes the veil of the personality is so dense that it's very hard to recognize the essence of that human that can happen.

It's somewhere. And so you need to pierce through the density of the personality, heavy karma, whatever term you want to use, in the other. And then it's there, or sometimes you can't sense it at all because it's so dense.

And then something may happen. And suddenly there's a crack in it. And then there's a moment where the recognition beyond the person, beyond the personality.

This is also vital that everything else in your life recedes into relative insignificance, considering how important this is, this realization. It's not just a temporary realization. It's the transition to this state of consciousness where the deep eye and the surface eye live together.

Let's see if there are any questions.

[Speaker 2] (21:09 - 22:23)

Hi. Thank you. Thank you, Eckhart, for your teachings and for taking my question.

So I'm just going to read it. So in the last few years, I've lost several key relationships to death, drug addiction, mental health illness, and other reasons. And so I've been in a continuous state of grieving, and it's been really draining.

And so I do finally feel myself approaching acceptance or some sense of peace. But I wonder if I could have managed the process better or made progress more quickly. And so my questions are, you know, what does the process of grieving look like for an awakened person?

Does one experience those classic stages of like denial and anger and bargaining and depression? Or is there more like an immediate, like acceptance or transcendence? And also, can you please provide guidance on how to bring awareness and consciousness to the grief process?

[Speaker 1] (22:24 - 39:14)

Thank you. Thank you. It helps, of course, to have had some realization of what we've been calling the deep eye when you are faced with death around people that happens to people around you.

If you've had some awareness, or you have some awareness of the transcendent dimension, does not mean that grieving will disappear. Grieving will be there. The other things you mentioned will probably not be there so much.

But if they are, like denial and anger and so on, if they are there, you will recognize them. There will be an awareness that recognizes that this is happening to you. That's very different from it happening to you without awareness.

And if it's happening to you, while you're aware that this is happening, they are short-lived, anger, denial, anger, and so on, whatever they are. And what remains then is the grieving or the sadness that comes. Grieving becomes mourning, sadness that comes with it.

That remains for a while, but you are not consumed by it. There is a sadness, and there is also that sadness is not incompatible with a deep sense of peace. In fact, they kind of go together.

One of my favorite things, especially when I go to Europe, like England, English villages, countryside, each village has an old church. And then there's an old churchyard with gravestones, sometimes two, three, 400 years old. And often the name is already half eroded or eroded.

Sometimes it's still legible. And what I sent there is a sadness at the impermanence of the human condition, but also a very deep sense of peace. And the grieving process, therefore, is something that still operates because that's to do with, yes, it is very sad to lose this being that you knew the form of this being, the physical body and the personality, and that suddenly is no longer there.

That leaves a very painful gap hole, a hole in the, I sometimes call it a hole in the tapestry of your life, the tapestry of your life where everything looks all nicely arranged. And then suddenly something is torn out of it. It's painful.

And it's particularly painful if all you know, you don't know what's behind the tapestry. You'd only know the surface of it. Then it's particularly painful.

And of course, when this hole is torn into the tapestry, torn out of it, a piece is torn out, that is also an opportunity, even if you have never realized the deeper dimension before, if you're able to accept this hole, the disappearance, the sudden disappearance of this person, it's something very strange, very strange. If you're able to accept it, then this becomes an opening into the transcendent dimension. This is why some people, when they are confronted with death, or even they become aware of the existence of death, some people don't even believe that they are going to die.

Conceptually on the surface, they say, yes, of course, I'm going to die one day. But they don't, it's not, they don't know, really know that. Then somebody close to them suddenly

dies.

And for some people that for the first time, they become aware of the reality of death. And that can be a terrible shock. It can be extremely painful.

But it can also bring about a sudden deepening. If you're able to accept this, this is harder in our contemporary culture, Western culture. Of course, a lot of the world has become westernized by now.

But Western culture traditionally denies death, not hasn't always been like that. But contemporary Western culture is so focused on externals, so focused on things and getting things, doing things, all the world of form, and it's kind of lost awareness of the inner dimension. And it has a symptom of this is the denial of death.

It's a little less so right now, but it has been a taboo for a long, long time to talk about it. It's regarded as something that should not be happening, something the most terrible, terrible thing. So grieving is something that will still happen.

But you're not consumed by it anymore, as you become accepting of the fleetingness of the human form. It no longer consumes you. Grieving also has a natural lifespan.

That's fine. But when you are consumed by grieving, then it can happen that you for a year or two or three continue to grieve, even about one person's death, and you can continue to be consumed by grief, and it destroys your life. You're not helping anybody.

The person who is no longer here in the physical form, if he or she observes you, would be very sad if you were still grieving after two or three years. And why are you still grieving? Because you are continuously reviving in your mind.

You have memories attached with your life with that person, and the memories continuously revive the emotion. You relive this again and again and again. And there's a lack of awareness there where you can bring your attention away from compulsive thinking and bring your attention into the reality and the aliveness of the present moment.

So death is a vital part of spiritual realization, is to investigate and to face death. It's all around us continuously, but you don't see dead bodies usually. So then you have the illusion that death is an anomaly.

It's an anomaly because you never see any dead bodies until somebody so close to you dies, and you don't see any dead bodies because it's regarded as something wrong with seeing a dead body. It's a taboo. Unless you're a very close relative, you cannot see a dead body.

It hasn't always been like that. There was a time when we were more familiar with death

and therefore also less fearful. Fear, to a very large extent, is ultimately the fear of death.

And if we are able to investigate death, then an opportunity opens up for going deeper. Death, when you face it, either your own, the possibility of your own death, or somebody close to you approaching death or having just died, is an enormous opportunity for deepening. And by deepening, I mean you become aware of that which transcends the personality, because that dies.

The person dies, the physical form dies. The essence of that being is beyond death. But you have to find that which is beyond death within yourself.

Then you're free of the fear of death. And that's a wonderful liberation. In, I don't know if you know, in many, many traditional cultures, very ancient cultures, all parts of the world, for people who were reaching adulthood, adolescents who were reaching adulthood, they had initiations.

They had to face a very difficult situation that was part of their life was structured that way. When you reached a certain age, you had to, you were confronted with a difficult situation that in some cases even led to death. So it was, you were, you encountered the possibility of death.

Sometimes you might have been sent out into the jungle and survived there alone for two or three days. I'm not saying we should go back to that. I'm just explaining that's how it is.

But there's a very deep wisdom embedded in that. And these people who did that, they wouldn't have been able to explain what they did. It was an expression of an innate wisdom.

And what was the purpose of that? The purpose of that was is to bring an end to childhood by forcing this adolescent to face the possibility of death, bring about a deepening in who they are. And when they emerge out of that ordeal, they are transformed to some extent.

They are a deeper human being and they have reached adulthood. They do not carry childhood into their 20s and 30s as is often the case in Western culture. It's everywhere.

There's lots of adult children around in Western culture. So just look on the internet. So the deep wisdom in this, we can't go back to that right now.

This is not the situation people would say we cannot return to initiation rituals where adolescents are facing death. Our culture does not allow for that and that's fine. But to understand that there was a very deep wisdom in that.

So something is lost that we have lost this unfortunately. So we have to find it in another way. And this is of course why we are here and facing death or the possibility of death is the most vital thing that's inseparable from the evolution of your consciousness.

It's absolutely vital. So death is a wonderful thing without which there would be no evolution. In the Western world, if you look at paintings, old paintings done in medieval times and so on, you can often see when it's the rooms, there was a room where a man or woman sitting in a room and there's a desk.

On the desk or somewhere else on the shelf or the windowsill, there's a human skull. That was quite normal for people to have a human skull somewhere in the room on their desk or somewhere. Why?

Because, well, they even had a name for it. I think it was called memento mori, which means the remembrance of death. So you would become, you would be continuously aware of mortality.

Now, is that a bad thing? Not necessarily, because if you're continuously aware of mortality, it gives you a right perspective on the relative importance of the things that are happening in your life. And when you are aware of mortality, all the things that you thought were so incredibly important and all-consuming, suddenly you see it's even from a deeper perspective.

And the deeper perspective is in a few years, you will be gone. And with you, all your problems will be gone. So that's very helpful.

There is a transcendent dimension. The essence of who you are does not die because it's not even visible. It's not part of this world.

That which inhabits the body, the human form, the mind, which gives rise to the mind, that is what Buddhists call the deathless. Jesus said eternal life. Find eternal life.

Very inspiring. Buddha said the deathless. Of course, they are both true, different approaches.

One states what it is, one states what it isn't. And if you state what it is, there is the danger that you could mistake the concept for it. The kingdom of heaven, eternal life.

Okay, where is it? It's going to come. So you're mistaking the concept for it.

But the concept was very inspiring. You felt good about it. Yes.

And for some people, it might have worked. They might have realized what Jesus talks about when he says eternal life, which means timeless, by the way. Eternal doesn't mean it goes on and on.

It means timeless. The timeless life that you are doesn't go on and on. The eternal life, the deathless realm is the Buddhist term, the deathless realm.

Well, much harder to make that into a concept that you can believe in. And that's a good thing. Because that forces you to realize the reality behind the words instead of making the words into an idol.

Of course, over the centuries, Buddhists have also managed to transform many Buddhist terms into idols that they did manage to just maybe took a little bit longer than with Christianity. Of course, not ever. There are still people alive who realize the essence of Buddhism, obviously.

There are still people alive who realize the essence of Christianity. Of course, they are one. So eternal life, the deathless realm, these are pointers.

One is a negative pointer. One is a positive pointer. Becoming aware of the impermanence of all forms, when you don't reject it, but accept it fully, fully accept the impermanence of all forms, then that takes you deeper.

As long as you reject it, you say, oh, no, that's terrible. Look, all these people are dead now. I don't want to see them.

That doesn't take you anywhere. You're more trapped in ego. But if you accept, it takes you deeper into the deathless, timeless dimension within yourself.

So the grieving process has a lifespan, and then it subsides. And even while you're grieving, through acceptance, you can be aware of a deep inner peace behind the grieving. They can go together.

[Speaker 2] (39:16 - 39:18)

Thank you. That's so helpful. Thank you, Eckhart.

[Speaker 3] (39:20 - 39:40)

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Eckhart Tolle Challenges Push Us Into Presence [0bcf10a3-d865-49d2-82e0-1927be6061e6]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:34)

Challenges push us into presence. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions on how to deal with death for ourselves and those we love. He says it's critical that we break the taboo so we can overcome our fear.

Eckhart proposes that when we are faced with the possibility of a very limited future, the ultimate question is not whether or not we will survive, but instead allow the push us towards higher consciousness. He says it's possible to transcend our fear to reach a state of deeper presence.

[Speaker 2] (0:36 - 3:17)

Hello, thank you for taking my question. I am an oncology nurse. I've also just recently had two friends diagnosed with cancer and this week I had a friend who passed away from ALS that she lived with for 14 years.

I deal a lot with disease and end of life, but I've never understood people who use their faith. They feel that in order to be cured, they must have a strong faith and if their disease isn't cured or they die, it's because they did not believe strong enough. I was always puzzled by that attitude because I felt like if you have a strong faith in God, why are you so afraid to go and meet him?

Even as a young child, I never liked the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. It just always puzzled me. I remember you saying that one time, Eckhart, when you were talking about spiritual healing, eventually everybody's going to die.

It just bothered me why Jesus didn't let Lazarus die. I just find that sometimes people are so afraid of dying that they cannot enjoy living. On the other hand, I'm not suggesting that we all forego any kind of treatments and run off and commit suicide, but just how do we balance how much treatment we should go with and to decide if we're presented with a situation, how do we decide should I go for treatment, try treatment?

How far do you go? You try a certain treatment if it stops working. I'm often stuck on how to talk with people.

I'm pretty good about talking people about end of life and options, but if someone is presented with a choice, I don't always know how to present it. If my thoughts would be to go with end of life hospice care and it's not something that they wish, I don't want to sound callous, but I also want to be supportive of them. It's a term I hate.

It's a fight with cancer or a fight against whatever disease they have, but how much fight

are we supposed to give to stay in this world?

[Speaker 1] (3:19 - 18:18)

Yes, thank you. Good question. Yes, it's interesting what you said about Lazarus.

He was raised from the dead and a few years later he died, undoubtedly. Unless, of course, the entire story is symbolic of something else, which, of course, that's another matter, but again, the most important thing for our civilization, perhaps, or one of the most important things is to become more familiar with death because death is such a taboo still in our society, mostly. It's rarely talked about.

Nobody can recommend, of course, you mentioned somebody falling ill and there are various things you mentioned. One is to have faith that you will be cured. Sometimes it works.

Some people do become cured of cancer. They cure themselves through faith or whatever it is, presence. In other cases, they don't.

I would say that when you are faced with a potentially fatal illness, when you know that there is a condition in your body that might kill you, ultimately, because everybody has a condition in their body that will kill you, it's called time, so that's a virus that nobody escapes on the physical level. So, if you become aware of mortality, that can be a dreadful thing, impending mortality or the possibility of mortality approaching before you're really old, that can be very frightening for many people. And if you have your religious beliefs, then you might think, if I have enough faith or I pray enough, I will get cured.

And sometimes you may get cured and at other times you will not. So, my advice, if for anybody, and perhaps you can pass it on in some way, when coming into contact with people who are in that situation, when you are faced with the possibility of imminent death or death or a very limited future, if the doctor tells you you only have one year or maybe two, that initially can be a dreadful thing. But within the context of this teaching, which is any true spiritual teaching, the ultimate thing is not whether or not you survive and you die a few years later, rather than in a year's time.

The ultimate thing is that you use that situation or that condition to force you into a, one could say, higher state of consciousness or deeper state of consciousness. When you have little or no future, you think, I may not have any more future or very little. That at first is a dreadful thing because the usual egoic entity looks to the future for fulfillment.

The first worst thing we can do to a human being is to remove future. And so, if there's very little future or there's a possibility that there may not be a lot of future, then at first it will bring out a lot of fear, of course, and despair. But if you have already become familiar with the practice of presence, the practice of awareness, then it may become

easier and you can allow the situation, the expression I use is, to force you into intense presence so that you don't look to the future anymore.

And you don't look to the past anymore because you know the moment you look to the future, you begin to suffer and you begin to have fear. So, if you allow the situation to push you into intense present moment awareness, and I've known several people who were able to do that, and I'm sure there are many others who I don't know who are also able to do that, allow the situation to force you into intense presence. And sometimes that can happen, usually it happens after you suffer for a period of time, and then you just can't stand the suffering anymore.

And then you become intensely present, and that's the end of the suffering. But that presence can also be very healing. In some cases, intense presence, which pervades the entire body, intense presence pervades every cell of the body, is extremely healing.

In that state of presence, you're not fighting an illness. That's very important. Many people have the need to fight this illness.

I don't believe that is the most effective way of dealing with an illness, to have the inner attitude that you're fighting an enemy. I'm going to kill you, they say to that thing that wants to kill them. So, instead of fighting an illness, first step would be acceptance of the present moment, this is what is, and then an intensification of the presence in the present moment.

I have had some accounts of healings that have happened to people who were suffering from potentially fatal illnesses. In many cases, healing happened not because they were fighting an illness, but because they surrendered not to the idea of illness, but to whatever they are experiencing at this present moment. So, when I talk about surrender, which means acceptance, you don't accept, oh, I have to accept that I'm going to die in a year.

No, that's not real acceptance. Or I have to accept that I'm a cancer sufferer. That's not acceptance, that's a narrative in your mind.

Acceptance is always refers to this moment, what are you experiencing at this moment? Maybe you're not experiencing anything in particular, you just accept, or they experience some disability, or you experience some dysfunction, or even pain, acceptance of this moment, and then intensification of presence. In some cases, healing happens.

But whether or not healing happens is a secondary matter. If you use the illness to force you into intense presence, then you can, you die before you die in a good sense. And there's a flowering of consciousness that takes place through you, that would not have happened without the illness.

I've personally known several people who have experienced that. And some died a year later, six months later, it no longer mattered because there was an intensification of consciousness. And there was already a light shining through them.

The personality or the ego dissolved completely in that intense presence. In some cases, it can even happen. I remember reading an account a few years ago.

In England, there was a famous musician, I don't remember the name. And he had this account, it was published in the Times in London, I think. He was diagnosed with potentially fatal cancer.

He went to the doctor and the doctor said, well, you don't have that much longer, it's already spread throughout the body. And then he was interviewed. And then he said, he walked out of the doctor's office.

And he had had no spiritual, any kind of spiritual preparation before. And this is very rare. He walked out of the office.

And he suddenly became intensely conscious of, intensely aware of everything. He was looking at the sky, he was looking at the trees, and everything was amazing in its intensity of aliveness. And he said, why didn't I live like that before?

What is this? This is very rare for most people, suffering comes first and then they surrender. But with this person, there was an immediate shift into intense presence.

And he had never been present before. And he said, how wonderful this life is every moment, every second. And there's not even a need to cling to anything, not even need, how much longer am I going to experience this?

Even those questions disappeared. So, there's a great opportunity when something like that happens, for an intensification and acceleration, one could almost say of spiritual awakening. So, if that happens to you, or anybody I'm talking to, or anybody you know, potentially, it can be an intensification and acceleration of awakening, if you use it in that way.

How to advise somebody who's never had any contact with any kind of spiritual teaching before is difficult. And you cannot advise somebody whether or not to go on with treatment or not, because you cannot take that responsibility for them. If they are very afraid of death, then whatever their decision is, will probably be, I will suffer even for another six months of life, I'd rather suffer than to die six months earlier.

Because they are so afraid of death, they have not gone beyond identification with the body, with the psychological entity, the me. So, anybody who is here with us, of course, is much better prepared to deal with a situation like that, if it arises. At some point, of course, death will come to everybody.

We don't know when it will come, but at some point, death will no longer be tomorrow, it will be today. And therefore, it's so important to die to the surface, I call it the surface self, the egoic self, it's based on the past, the personality, and find, and we come back here to the vertical dimension of presence, find that before death comes, then you are prepared for death. And not only are you prepared for death, if you see it approaching, your presence will only intensify.

And that is how anything that's normally regarded as negative, any kind of disaster, it doesn't have to be an illness, can also have that function. Let's say you lose everything, you lose your marriage, you lose your job, you lose your home, all at once, it does happen to people. And again, when disaster strikes, there's always another side to it, there's potentially, there's an opening into the transcendent dimension, and a deepening can happen.

And it happens, most likely, when you're experiencing some kind of challenge, whatever form, loss, death, big upheavals, then that drives the evolution of consciousness. The suffering that's created by that leads to the transcendence, potentially to the transcendence of suffering. And that drives the evolution of consciousness.

All the challenges of life, and they are manifold, all the challenges of life that every human experiences, inevitably, they are the driving force behind the evolution of consciousness, and that includes death. So all this is a, what we are engaged in here is to do with finding death before death finds us, and then realize that there is no death, and it's no longer just a belief. There's nothing wrong with the belief.

But quite often, the belief is not quite enough. It doesn't free you from the deep fear of death, in many cases. There's actually a realization of the deep I that is beyond the physical you, and beyond the psychological you.

And that's, in fact, to bring it to the more simple terms, when you stop thinking for a moment, and awareness remains, I mentioned it before in our session at the beginning, there's a cessation of thinking, which means the entire personality subsides, the person. Because when you're not thinking about yourself or anything, you're not the person. Thinking subsides, there's a moment of spacious awareness.

And again, as I said before, that's a little death. Then thinking resumes. And I call that you reincarnate into the entity again.

And then you step out of thinking, and there's pure awareness. You die again. And the more you die in that way, the more deeply you realize that death is not something that needs to be feared.

So die daily. That's, I don't know who's, there was one saint, I think, who said that. Die daily, die as much as you can, by inviting the cessation of the otherwise incessant

stream of thinking.

And there's a spacious awareness, you're dead. When you are dead, there's something that's left that's intensely alive. So I hope that makes sense.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (18:20 - 18:39)

Eckhart, our next question is a written question. If, quote, consciousness is gradually arising, unquote, that implies time. So how can there be no need for time to awaken?

[Speaker 1] (18:40 - 27:20)

Right. It sounds like a paradox. And it is.

So how do we explain that? Well, let's find an analogy. Let's say there's a, you have a lamp, a lamp, a table lamp with a lampshade.

So there's a light bulb, and there's a lampshade. And the lampshade, let's say the lampshade is very dense, so it lets through very little light from the source of light. But gradually, for various reasons, the shade, the light shade, loses some of its density, and more light begins to shine through gradually.

So the light represents the, the light is timeless. But as the, this is, we're talking about the light of consciousness here in this analogy, the light is, comes from, the light of consciousness emanates from a transcendent dimension. The consciousness does not have a location in space or time.

And so there's an emanation of consciousness in the same way that it emanates from a lamp or the sun. And the light that emanates, the consciousness that emanates into this dimension, what we call the universe, not just this planet, the entire universe and all galaxies, there's a gradual intensification of the light that reaches this dimension. The light itself is timeless.

So consciousness doesn't grow as such. It's only in this dimension, it can manifest more fully and measure that through the temporal time here. On this planet, the planet most likely started with just mineral, there was nothing.

And then at some point, there was the first plant life. And then gradually, other life forms came over millions and millions of years, with many setbacks, many setbacks, not a continuous progression. And after each setback, there was, again, an intensification, a renewal of life.

So gradually, there's more consciousness, the life forms become more complex here on this planet, and therefore everywhere else. And you can, in humans too, humans evolve

gradually with many setbacks. Yes, often regressive periods happen, not only to an individual, but also the collective of humanity can experience regression in this.

It's not a continuous ascent to higher consciousness, but there is a movement, an evolutionary movement here. And that takes time. So it takes time for this dimension that is timeless to manifest itself in this world.

And so I sometimes on a personal level, on a human level, I sometimes say, you need time before you fully realize that you don't need time to be yourself. Sometimes it requires time, you need, in other words, you practice meditation, you have spiritual practices, every meditation kind of takes time. You say, okay, I'm going to meditate for 15 minutes now, or half an hour.

And you might even sometimes open your eyes and see how much longer do I have to meditate now. Any practice takes time, any spiritual practice takes time, inevitably. And that is the greatest obstacle also.

If you do practice meditation, meditation can be quite helpful. But if you want to achieve something through your meditation, become a better meditator, or you want to achieve some kind of state, hoping to achieve a state of enlightenment through meditation, you're already creating time. And that becomes the greatest obstacle.

Because you're still moving in the realm of becoming, instead of being. For most people who do a spiritual practice, they are on the level of becoming, I want to reach this level. There's a future they want to reach.

And paradoxically, that prevents them from finding the vertical dimension, the being dimension. If through your meditation, you want to become an enlightened human, then that idea that you want to become an enlightened human is the greatest obstacle to the realization of who you are as an enlightened being. Enlightened means to know who you are on the deepest level.

Now, the Buddha, as a good example, the Buddha's life, he practiced the most arduous and austere spiritual practices for many years when the Buddha was a young man, because he wanted to become enlightened. And it didn't work, he almost starved himself to death as part of his spiritual practice. That's the story goes.

And I believe it's true that it was transmitted from just 2,500 years ago. And at some point, the Buddha says, I've had enough. I'm not, this is my paraphrase.

I've had enough, he said, I'm done with becoming. I'm done with this. And he sat under a tree.

And he already had disciples at that point. And the disciples left him, they said, he's lost it. He's no longer practicing.

So all his disciples went away, and then he was left alone under a tree. He was no longer trying to get anywhere. And he sat under the tree, and he sat under a tree.

And that's where his realization happened. He had left the realm of becoming. And he found the dimension of being.

And now the question is, one could ask, as sometimes people have asked, would he have found this being dimension if he had not gone through the attempt at becoming for such a long time? Would he still, nobody can answer that question. Perhaps yes, perhaps no.

Was it necessary for him to do all these practices to come to the point of realization that spiritual awakening is not something that can be found in time in the future? We don't know. Some people might say, well, why didn't he start with that and sat under, just instead of going through all this, why doesn't he just sit under a tree?

Well, this is not how it happened. Perhaps he needed to go through this. Perhaps he needed time in order to realize that he did not need time.

And that is a paradox. You can't remove the fact that there is a paradox here, because we are operating on the level of becoming, and language itself is becoming on that level of time. But we are pointing to something that's beyond that.

And therefore, paradox arises. So that really is the, you cannot remove the paradox, but perhaps the story may help you that you may need time, a bit more time before you realize that you don't need it. And perhaps the time has come now.

You realize that you cannot awaken in the future. You can only awaken by going deeply into the present. This is really what is meant by that.

Perhaps one more question.

[Speaker 3] (27:22 - 29:22)

Hi, Kurt, I'm so grateful for the opportunity to talk to you today. I just want to say that your teaching found me at an important time in my life. And I'm so grateful for everything you did and for everything you're doing right now.

So my question is today, and it's interesting with everything you said, because I'm from a place of achieving a lot, and something happened to me, and I realized that it's not that important for me to achieve big thing in my life, instead of just being present to realize what I want to do with my life, with my time, with my husband and with my kids and everything. So I feel that all the foundation of what I did before just doesn't matter anymore. But my family and my colleagues and everybody tried to achieve so many things in their lives and in their work.

So my question is, I suffered from depression and burnout, and I feel that everybody

around me are in that kind of state and a lot of anxiety. And so I'm wondering, right now, are we cluttering too much of our mind with so many information to become something that, I don't want to say that doesn't really matter, but how can someone arrive at something in their life that they want to do without cluttering their mind with so many stuff that you become burned out and depressed and anxiety are always in your day?

[Speaker 1] (29:22 - 42:07)

Right. Thank you. Thank you.

Yeah. So the most important thing is to be as much as possible rooted in the vertical dimension of life so that you're as present as possible. And sometimes as people realize, beginning to realize this dimension, sometimes they lose interest completely in achieving things in the outer world.

Some of this may be happening to you also, and that is almost a natural thing that happens to many people. Some people temporarily even lose the ability to do things because they become so so deeply immersed in being that they can't be bothered with achieving or becoming. I had a little bit, or not a little bit, quite a bit of that when I first went through a shift in consciousness.

For quite some time, I lost interest in future, my so-called future. In fact, I never really regained that much interest in my future, but I lost interest in planning and doing for a while. For many people, after a while, they realize that they still live in this dimension and to lead a balanced life, it is best not to completely ignore the demands perhaps that this dimension places upon you, the dimension of becoming and doing, the doing dimension.

You can regain your ability to do, but in a different way from before. Because before, when you do things without having this deep connectedness with being, then doing is all there is to your life, and you seek some kind of fulfillment through the doing. You're always like the famous thing, the carrot, the dangling a carrot in front of the donkey.

The donkey is running towards the carrot, but he doesn't know that he can never reach the carrot. So humans are sometimes obsessively consumed by doing, wanting to achieve some kind of success, which ultimately never satisfies for very long, and then the next thing comes. So there's a seriousness behind the way in which people are engaged in doing when this happens, they're very serious about it.

And stress, a lot of stress arises, which is bad for you, it's bad for the body, it's bad for your consciousness. Stress means you want to be there, but you are here. Basically, so the gap between there and here or now and then creates stress.

For example, you may be, you're in this particular location, maybe you're sitting in your car or whatever, but you need to be some other location, and you would rather be there,

but you can't get there quite yet. So this mentally you create stress, there's a pull between here and there. I am here, but I want to be there.

It works on the dimension of time, this is now, but I want to be there then when I finish this, I need to finish this task, because I want to get to the end of this thing that I'm doing now, in order to arrive at the end of this doing. And you're projecting yourself mentally, you're more there than here, you're not completely present in what you do, because you want it to be over with, I want to, because there's the next thing to do after that, and the next thing after that, you never arrive really, because when you achieve this, there's the next thing that you're striving towards. This is not a healthy or constructive way of doing, and you're creating a lot of unhappiness for yourself and even others around you.

So people who live in that way, millions of people do, they make themselves unhappy, and they make others unhappy, whoever is around them. Some people are bosses of big companies, and everybody is under continuous stress, they're all ultimately, one could almost say insane, and miraculously the company still survives, but everyone is unhappy. And so when you're not motivated by this, how does the doing arise when you are rooted in being?

First of all, what you do might change, you may see that the things that you've been doing before are not really something that you truly enjoy, you might find something else that you enjoy. The level of enjoyment comes into the doing, the needing the outcome, lessons diminish, to need a particular outcome to your doing becomes secondary. Yes, I want to achieve this or get there, but you have the ability to actually be completely present in what you do, which means you even enjoy what you do in the moment.

The doing of the moment becomes more important than the place that you want to get to in the future. That is a sign that you become more conscious in your doing. And then it also does not mean that there cannot be intense energy to what you do, because you might have some wonderful project that you want to create, achieve, and there's this great enjoyment in the doing.

And you have to be very careful that the old egoic way of doing could reassert itself. And you can detect it, for example, when an obstacle comes in, because whenever you want to do something, you're likely to encounter occasionally obstacles to where you want to get to in the form of other humans or in the form of situations that you encounter, you get as a delay or people don't do what they're supposed to do, or you fail at something, an obstacle arises, and how you respond to an obstacle can give you good feedback of whether there's still egoic mindset behind the doing an obstacle, when an obstacle arises, when you're present is immediately accepted. Oh, and so you look at the obstacle, and then instead of focusing on what's wrong, or complaining about this, this

human being, or instead of that, you immediately focus on the net, what's possible now.

So can I walk around this obstacle? Or can I transform it into something good? There's never a complaining, there's never, there's not a resistance, there's an immediately alignment with the present moment.

So you're not stressed when an obstacle appears, you don't get negative. When an obstacle you immediately you look at it, oh, and you know the obstacles are bound to appear in whatever work you do, you will encounter challenges and obstacles, and they're no longer something negative, that means you're present in what you do. So you're, the obstacle is transformed often into something helpful.

But it is suddenly it's no longer an obstacle. The most important thing then is what you want to achieve. Yes, you know what you want to achieve.

But it's secondary, because there's enjoyment in the doing. And if you achieve it, you're, it's fine, you're great, achieved it, it doesn't produce an unrealistic high in you. Wow, I have achieved it.

Because a few days later, you may experience a corresponding low. Because it hasn't satisfied you for long enough, whatever it may be. Another thing that is, there's a playfulness that comes a little bit of a playful attitude when you're engaged in doing.

The seriousness goes out of it. When you're present with what you do. And that's very important, because the, when you look at the world, people that kind of deadly serious in wherever you look, whether it's in business or commerce or politics, or wherever you, you look, they say, and that goes out, there is a certain detachment.

Because you don't need the externals to function a particular way for to make you happy. You don't need the outcome to make you happy. You don't need to have no challenges in order to be happy.

That's so a playfulness. This is the world of, you play in the world of form. Yes, there can be an intensity of doing, but not that's not the seriousness.

And then if somebody comes, you immediately will be get angry with them. This is so, so important. This is so important.

And you realize, nothing is that important. There are many things that are, they might be relatively important, but not absolutely important. So less attachment or no attachment to outcome, the result of the action, enjoyment of what you're doing.

When obstacles arise, there's no negativity that they produce, the obstacle is immediately accepted. And then enjoyment in the doing, and a playfulness, a playfulness, lack of dead seriousness, that changes. So you may find that you're able to

do things, but the entire energy behind your doing has shifted.

So life is much more enjoyable. And there may be a period when you do very little, you just be, or you do just routine things, because there may be periods when you don't need to achieve anything. And there are some humans who, I call them frequency holders, humans who have no particular big project goal that they want to achieve.

They're happy with the little things in the present. And that's fine too, if they can sustain presence. For example, let's say you're a gardener, and you can sustain presence without losing presence.

And if you have routine activities, if you're not challenged, and you have routine activities, the danger is that you lose presence. Because when life goes too smoothly, let's say you're a gardener, you just want a peaceful life as a gardener, it's fine. Let's say you have 10 years of no challenges, you're just, you have a regular small, but regular income and a very peaceful life as a gardener, it might work for you.

There's a danger though, without any challenge, that gradually your degree of presence would diminish, because we need the challenges. Challenges come in two kinds. Challenges that you create for yourself, they're good too.

If you have a project, let's say you want to write a book or a song or whatever, that's a challenge you create for yourself, and that's good. Then there are challenges that you haven't created that come seemingly from the outside, and suddenly something appears, represents a big challenge in your life. So there's a self-created challenges, and they're good.

And there are challenges from outside. Both of them are very helpful.

[Speaker 3] (42:08 - 42:11)

Yeah, great. Thank you so much.

[Speaker 1] (42:11 - 42:36)

Thank you. All right. Well, we have come to the end of our session, and let's just enter a moment of just stillness or beingness, just aware.

[Speaker 4] (42:40 - 43:02)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle. Essential teachings, the podcast.

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Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Challenging Times Can Awaken Us [4cd9e15f-1ccc-45a5-b553-ad2d013841a8]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:16)

Hello, podcast listeners, I am truly delighted to bring you this weekly series from someone I believe is one of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle. These essential teachings by Eckhart will help you learn how to quiet your mind and understand the difference between your ego and your true self. If you're interested in living a fully present life, Eckhart's essential teachings can put you on a path to discover an enlightened state of consciousness.

I know this one thing for sure, Eckhart Tolle and his teachings have certainly enhanced and transformed my life. I hope listening to Eckhart as a podcast will create a riveting, instructive, and spiritual experience for you, all at the touch of your fingertips. In this podcast, Eckhart explains how challenging times have the potential to awaken us, whether it's political upheaval, the pandemic, or a personal crisis.

We all know it's pretty rare for people to evolve when life is going well. Eckhart says that it's actually adversity, not comfort, that pushes us to grow spiritually and awaken to the deeper dimension of who we really are.

[Speaker 1] (1:19 - 36:52)

Welcome. So, we're here to address the topic of living in challenging times, how to deal with sometimes extreme challenges, how to stay conscious when challenges arise. It is, of course, true to say that most of the time, life is experienced for most people as challenging, although there are sometimes interludes when everything seems to be going very well, according to plan, good things happen, you can relax, be happy, perhaps you've fallen in love, or you're just getting married, or you got a promotion, you're doing well professionally, a child is born, happy moments, happy interludes. It's wonderful when things are going well in one's life, but the strange thing is, there's always something that comes in sooner or later that seems to want to sabotage the things that are going well in your life. Some people take it even personally, and they think there's perhaps a God who has something against them, or they say, life in general is treating me unfairly, why do these things always happen to me?

Everybody else seems to be fine. Of course, that's a misperception. They may look fine if you look at their Instagram posts, and what they post on Facebook, but of course, as you may know, that's a facade, it's an artificially, mentally constructed image that people project into the world in order to get recognition, in order to get as many likes as possible, and then they feel strengthened and experience an enhanced sense of identity, and they may not realize that they are living ultimately a lie, that they are continuously projecting and living through a false, fictitious sense of self. Now, to some extent, that

was already the case even before people invented social media and all those things, but this has now become amplified, the tendency to have a mental image of who you are, and to experience life and other people and events through this mental image of who you are.

It's a role that you've been conditioned to play, the roles vary from person to person, but almost everybody, unless they begin to awaken, become aware, awaken spiritually, almost everybody then plays without knowing it, so you become this entity. And ultimately, when you are unconscious, which means you are completely identified with this role, you are acting out a script, and if somebody lives with you, then they know that after a while they realize their behavior is quite predictable, and what you say tends to be always the same, it's a script that you mistake for who you actually are, the conditioning of your mind. And so, this entity, this mind-made sense of self that we could call the ego, is never happy for very long, and it tends to very much resent it when things go wrong in your life, in other words, when challenges appear, something that does not fit into the narrative of me, and so it is very common for people to complain a lot about their life, either mentally or out loud, when things happen, little things that seem to sabotage, even the smallest things, you miss the bus, you're stuck in the traffic, the ego is not happy most of the time with where it is and what it's doing, and so the challenges that arise in people's lives, now let's for a moment use another word. When things happen, it's usually something that feels more like what one could call adversity that happens in your life, something that's wrong. So this adversity is related to adversary, and so it's almost as if you were facing an enemy in the form of a situation, or an unpleasant person, or an event that either is not happening but should be happening, or is happening but should not be happening, so you experience adversity on a small scale, and from time to time on a large scale, large scale adversity and small scale adversity leads to suffering. The ego experiences it as unhappiness, and the adversity, the different forms of adversity that arise, they're basically, one could say, three types of adversity, one is adversity that arises in your personal life, in your immediate environment, to do with the people you know, the people you work with, at home, at work, wherever it may be, or some kind of illness that arises, or financial problems, relationship problems, and so on.

So adversity arises in your personal life. Then there's another type of adversity, and this is something that we want to focus on here in the next few sessions particularly, is adversity that arises on a larger scale in the collective of which you are a part. That is adversity that does not just affect you, but adversity that affects large numbers of people in your city, in your country, or even in the entire world.

So that could be, whatever it may be, it could be an earthquake, it could be a hurricane, it could be financial collapse, it could be a pandemic, a very relevant topic at the moment. So suddenly, you, not only you, but millions of others are faced with the same kind of adversity, and those things tend to be bigger things that arise that seem to

sabotage, the little things that seem to sabotage your life on a daily basis. So you're sometimes faced with huge forms of adversity.

So we have those personal and collective. Sometimes the collective adversities that arise is so huge that you forget about your personal problems. Let's say there's a war somewhere that comes into your country, there's civil unrest, civil war, or your country gets invaded, or pandemic, complete financial collapse, and so on.

And suddenly, you may find that things that you've been worrying about recede into relative insignificance. And now there's a third type, but the third type is an element of all the others. The third type of adversity that is extremely common is adversity, suffering, you could say, that arises in your mind as a result of certain types of dysfunctional mind activity or thinking.

And that is very important to recognize in yourself and to ask yourself in any situation when you're experiencing adversity, suffering, unhappiness, is there actually something here that is causing me to be unhappy, or is my mind creating the unhappiness that I'm experiencing at this moment? And very often the unhappiness that my mind, if it is your mind, is creating at this moment is some type of fear. It's a very common form of suffering that people experience, fear.

So if you become more conscious of that so you can separate what it is that your mind is doing from what it is that's actually an immediate problem in your life, you can free yourself from a significant amount of unhappiness by recognizing that a huge percentage of the unhappiness in your life does not arise from situations that you find yourself in. Or that seems to be the case, but when you look more closely, you realize that actually the narrative that's arising in my mind right now is creating this emotion of unhappiness in me. A typical case is, of course, you wake up in the middle of the night and you begin to worry.

Why, or what's going to happen? It doesn't have to be the middle of the night, it could be anywhere during the day too. You suddenly feel worry.

What is worry? Worry is a certain type of mind activity and usually it means you're projecting yourself into some future moment that is critical. Worry does not concern the present moment.

When you have a problem or a challenge that arises in the present moment, you're not worrying about it, you're looking at it, and you may be required to take action, or you may look at the problem that arises in this moment and there's nothing you can do. And then, well, there it is. Worry usually implies future, projection into the future, which you cannot control.

There's nothing you can do about something that you imagine happening in the future,

and that makes it even more frustrating. If it were happening in the present moment, you could take action, or you could say, well, I'll just have to accept the way it is right now, that's how it is. But if it's something that your mind has created, there's nothing you can do about it.

And so the mind projects itself and creates scenarios in which you find yourself, or people close to you find themselves, maybe your children, you imagine something happening to them, something happening to you, some kind of great loss that will diminish who you are, that will make your life unbearable. And it could be a big event, there's a problem of pandemic, what's going to happen to me, to my family, is it going to affect me, am I going to get ill, am I going to not be able to work anymore, am I going to die, and then you imagine yourself these things happening to you, and then you experience fear. So it's important to realize that the fear is not created by the situation, if you look at it really closely, the fear is created by the mind activity, by unconscious mind activity - when I say unconscious mind activity, by that I mean you're completely identified with the conditioned mind and what the mind does, you're in the grip of certain types of thinking.

And this type of thinking, and if it's worry, it creates an emotion that you experience in the body, this emotion is anxiety, fear. You can feel it in your stomach often, you can feel a contraction in your energy field, you might even feel that the palms of your hand become moist, it's a sign of extreme nervousness or anxiety, all kinds of things, that kind of emotion is actually very harmful to the body. Even mainstream medicine now recognizes that people who frequently experience the emotion of fear, anxiety, stress, have a greatly reduced immune system, it affects the entire functioning of your body, it interferes with the otherwise harmonious functioning of your body.

And the paradox is, the irony is, the sad irony is, very often that which you fear continuously, you tend to attract. So in the case of illness, one can see it more clearly, if you continuously worry about illness and you see yourself falling prey to some virus, and continuously we have this mental image, first of all the emotion that goes with it weakens your immune system. And also there's something else, the mental image of yourself as suffering from an illness tends to create, the mind is a very powerful creative instrument.

So the mind is capable of creating something that it projects into the world on a regular basis. You're more likely, not only because your immune system has been weakened, but also because you're projecting yourself as a person suffering from an illness, you're more likely to experience it in reality. So it's actually quite dangerous.

I'm not saying that will necessarily happen, but it is more likely to happen. And I'm also not saying that when you don't have this mental image of yourself being ill that you cannot fall ill at all, there are many other factors involved, but this is one important

factor. Fear.

So you experience fear. And that's a very unpleasant emotion. The fear is, as I said, experienced in the body.

And the reason why the body is experiencing this emotion is that the body, which has its own intelligence, is pervaded with intelligence that coordinates the countless functions that every organ, every cell, cooperates with the totality of the body. And there's a vast intelligence that underlies the functioning of the body. This intelligence, although it cannot tell the difference between something that's happening actually in reality and something that's happening only in your mind.

And that's the reason why you experience fear. The body believes that when you worry, which means you're experiencing critical situations in your mind, you find yourself in this narrative, the body cannot tell the difference between the reality or just the mental creation. So the body reacts as if what you're imagining were reality, so it experiences fear.

If challenging situations were happening to you at this moment, the body would also experience perhaps this energy field that we call fear, but there would be a purpose to it. You would need this heightened energy in order to take action, so it wouldn't be trapped. Or it is possible that fear can paralyze you.

But potentially, when you're faced with a situation, then you need an influx of surplus energy and then fear has a place. It's not psychological fear. It is something that enables you to do something, to remove yourself or to fight.

Fight or flight is the word. But when you're worrying, then that is not the case, there's nothing you can do. So fear is extremely unpleasant and millions of people, majority of people still experience it.

And when things go wrong, adversity arises on a larger scale, either in your personal life or in the collective, then you experience even more fear than you would normally experience. So the first thing is to see whether it is possible to reduce, if not eliminate, the fear that you experience. Because then that would, a huge burden would be lifted off your shoulders if you were able to experience life with no fear whatsoever or at least with a diminished amount of fear.

So that is something very important that you can work on. When you experience fear, become aware of your mind activity, what is your thinking. And you will usually find there's a mental projection into a future moment that's very bad.

It could be for yourself, you might have a fear for other people, bad things happening to them. And the first step in becoming free of unnecessary suffering is to become aware of your mind, of your own mind. And then you will find that a huge chunk of suffering is

produced by your mind rather than by the situation.

And now, the first thing is to recognize that that's a fact. Now this does not perhaps immediately free you because the mind has a certain momentum. But you begin to awaken when you recognize that actually right now, here and now, in this moment in which I find myself, there's actually nothing to fear.

And the weird thing is, that applies to almost every moment in your life. When I say every moment, what I really mean is, it applies to the present moment. And what is the present moment?

The present moment is the space in which your life unfolds, cannot unfold anywhere else. Everything unfolds in the present moment, there is never anything other than the present moment. Your life, what you call your life, is inseparable from the present moment.

The present moment is the space for your life. It is the space. Even when you remember the past and even when you're thinking about the future, you're doing it now.

And so, in the present moment, usually, there's nothing to fear. Yes, there can be something that's going wrong in the present moment, a situation that is challenging and you need to do something about it. And you do something about it.

If a wild animal came into this room, suddenly the door opens and a bear comes in, it's possible that we would experience, and I would experience, a moment of fear. You go, ahh. And after that, enormous energy is released, perhaps, in order for action to happen.

We can't predict what action that might be if a bear comes in. Maybe the best action would be to be totally still, or you remove yourself very quickly, who knows. Or make yourself as big as possible so that the bear gets afraid.

That's what they recommend when you go for walks in the forest here in British Columbia. If you find a brown bear, it might help to make yourself look bigger than you actually are. And you go, ahh.

So you're taking right action. It might work or it might not. Maybe the bear will not be fooled by it.

Maybe the bear will attack you. Maybe the bear will kill you. But this is a rare moment in which you're being challenged.

Most of the time, these things do not happen. Almost always, when you look at the present moment, which the only thing there ever is, in this moment, there is nothing to fear. Let's look at the virus, the pandemic.

We know that it's affecting many, many people. But in this moment here, is there

something to fear right here and now? I'm breathing.

I'm looking around. I'm alive. I can feel the energy.

If you find yourself with symptoms arising that could mean that the virus has entered your body, or whatever it may be, headache, sore throat, then you say, well, it may be the virus or it may not be the virus. Then of course, again, the mind may come in and say, oh, am I going to die? So even when you experience the symptoms, if you could be focused on the present moment, then you just experience these symptoms.

And in addition to experiencing the symptoms, you can still experience the inner energy field of the body, because not every part of the body is feeling the symptoms. So you can feel the energy in your legs or your arms or your hand. And this is what it is.

And you come into a place of acceptance. This is what I experience now. It's a continuous returning your attention to the present moment, always.

And in the present moment, most of the time, you find that suffering or unhappiness or fear cannot survive in the present moment. And that's a very interesting realization. They cannot survive in the present moment.

And so the practice is for you, when you experience fear, become alert, become aware, and ask yourself, what's my mind doing? What are the stories that my mind is creating right now? Or has been creating for the past hour, the past two hours, the past two days?

And then you find, oh, it had created scenarios, critical scenarios, that are not happening but could happen. And so then, yes, there is a momentum behind that. There's a momentum behind those types of thought.

In other words, that type of thinking wants to continue in you because it is an energy field and it's part of the egoic consciousness, the ego consciousness. This energy field lives in you. It does not want to go away.

It wants actually to grow. It's possible for people to become completely absorbed in certain types of thinking. They obsessively think about certain things that are experienced as very problematic or awful and they cannot let go on almost every moment of their daily lives.

These are the more extreme cases, but it's not uncommon. Obsessive thinking. In other words, something has taken possession of your mind.

It's an energy field. It wants to grow. It's like a mental virus, not a physical virus.

Many people experience mental virus without knowing it, which means one thought grows, replicates, one could say, leads to other related thoughts. This bundle of thoughts

has taken possession and almost anything that you think of is then colored by this bundle of obsessive thought that lives in you. But you're so identified with it that you don't even know that.

That is your reality and that's an awful way to live, not uncommon at all. In a minor form, everybody who does not have even a minimum of awareness of their mind, who is completely identified with their mind, experiences that to some degree, some people to a much greater degree than others, to be possessed by certain types of thought in your mind and you call it I. You're so identified with the thoughts that you call them me.

You are this bundle of thoughts. Who is speaking? When you speak, this bundle of thoughts uses your voice.

You are not even there. You are asleep, spiritually speaking. You are completely unconscious.

You are possessed by certain types of thinking which become part of your ego, your egoic consciousness. And then life becomes pretty unpleasant because in most cases, in virtually all cases, these types of thinking are not happy thoughts. The obsessive thoughts are unhappy thoughts.

I haven't yet met anybody who has obsessive thoughts like, isn't life wonderful? Life is so good. No, that's not an obsessive thought.

But life is dreadful. Look what they've done to me. Look at those awful people, whoever they are, whatever the nature of that thought is.

It has taken possession of you. And then now we need to look at something else. These are not ultimately your thoughts.

These thoughts you have absorbed, these thoughts from the collective. The hive mind is the collective mind. And this collective mind finds expression, yes, nowadays you can see it more clearly than you could before.

The collective mind already existed before we invented social media and the internet and so on. But now you can actually see the collective mind externalized in the internet and social media and you can also see the collective mind externalized in mainstream media. And so when you watch these things, wherever you do it, on your computer, on your television, on your phone, you watch these things and then you absorb certain thoughts from the collective hive mind.

They then cling to you and they become part of the thoughts that live in you. And you don't know that this has nothing to do with you. You have linked into the collective hive mind and then you express your opinions, but it's not your opinions, it's just certain thoughts that live in you.

So awareness is missing. That which frees you from this terrible fate of being at the mercy of the conditioning of your mind that creates so much unhappiness, awareness is the key that frees you from that. And awareness is the awakening of consciousness.

It begins with a simple realization that all the thoughts that go through your mind are not who you are. How do you know that? Because there is the ability in you to become aware of the thoughts that are happening to you because that's what it is, they are happening to you.

And then you no longer completely believe in the thoughts. You just see their thoughts. And then you can see very often, for example, as far as the hive mind is concerned, the craziness of many things that people say and speak about.

You can suddenly see, oh, a lot of what I see in the mainstream media, there's a lot there that's actually pretty crazy. The mainstream media then, and other forms of media too, and the internet and so on, are an externalization of the human mind. And they can also strengthen the fear that you would normally feel even without those things if you interact too frequently with those forms of the externalized collective mind.

If you watch too much television, if you watch too much social media, if you interact too much with it, then a lot of the things that are a cause of unhappiness in your mind are then amplified by what is absorbed from the collective mind. So you become even more fearful than you would be without all the social media and the mainstream media. You become even more fearful because they amplify what's already in you.

So it's extremely important, especially at these times, when you interact with the media, you become conscious of how unconscious most of these people are. You can watch the news, but more objectively, you can be there as an aware presence, and then you see how much fear-mongering there is. And they are not doing it on purpose, they can't help it, that's their job, they have to do it.

They are creating suffering, but they don't even know it. So first of all, you need to reduce the amount of time that you spend linking into the externalized collective mind, and social media, and mainstream media, and internet. And when you do interact, be very conscious of the fact that this is an expression, ultimately, most of what you see and read is an expression of human unconsciousness, of the ego, the personal and the collective ego.

So that you don't get hypnotized by, because it is a form of hypnosis almost, you get hypnotized by this type of technology and what is conveyed through it. Another interesting factor is when the hype that you experience, the fear that comes, the end of the world, there's a certain ambivalence in many people about the end of the world. On the one hand, they fear it, or some huge catastrophe, as you see in many movies, and these movies have been around for years, and many of them are very successful, movies

that show huge catastrophes, collective catastrophes happening to humanity.

And so there's countless movies that have been made of that, and people love watching these movies, something draws them to the huge catastrophe. Yes, when it happens in reality, of course, there is an enormous amount of fear also, but there's an ambivalence, there's also an unconscious desire in many human beings for what we could call the collapse of the human-made world, because most humans experience the world as a burden, they have to live in this world, but the world is problematic, the world has a heaviness to it. You have your job, you have the taxes, you have money, and the world is complex and heavy, and there's an unconscious longing for people in what we might bluntly call the end of the world.

But ultimately, what they are longing for is, yes, it is a kind of liberation, but the ultimate liberation that they are really longing for is the liberation from themselves, the liberation from what they experience as their problematic, heavy sense of self that's inseparable from the so-called outer world. And so there's a longing in every human for that. But that's not going to happen yet.

[Speaker 2] (36:53 - 37:13)

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Eckhart Tolle Confronting The Challenges of Our Present Time [f70ef6b8-d9fd-4b24-867f-fc7f67431fc6]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:55)

Confronting the challenges of our present time. In this episode, Eckhart encourages us to rise up to meet the challenges of the present time. He says the turmoil that exists here and around the globe is an opportunity to grow spiritually.

He explains most people do not awaken when they're in their comfort zone and it usually takes a push in the form of a crisis. He says if we're not challenged then the motivation to change is not there. He goes on to say that our external circumstances do not have to determine our fate.

He cautions against victim consciousness, which is what happens when we let the world or other people define our being. He says the most primordial fact is not what happens around us. It's to maintain our state of awareness.

Eckhart explains the only thing that can save the world is a shift in consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:57 - 29:39)

Particularly helpful, I would say, at this present time as we are finding ourselves in a time of global disruption, many global challenges arising and likely, it's likely that the challenges will remain with us and new challenges will come as we are moving into a period of global turbulence. And that's fine. It's a unique opportunity for spiritual awakening, a unique opportunity for disidentifying from the egoic mind and finding the transcendent dimension to who you are.

The motivation for awakening, for going deeper grows for human beings as the challenges grow. And this is a reason why this is potentially an auspicious time. When humans are not being challenged then the motivation to evolve is not there.

It's lacking because you're relatively comfortable in your little comfort zone. But when you're taken out of your comfort zone, when things get disrupted, a huge amount of uncertainty comes into your life. Loss comes into your life or the possibility of loss.

And that's often the same thing for people because the possibility of loss is a projected future. And you suffer just as much as if you were already in that situation, which may never happen. But all these things potentially become the motivating force for deep, profound inner change, for a shift in consciousness, for a step forward in the evolution of your consciousness, which is the consciousness of humanity.

So we need to rise up to the challenge of our present time because if we don't, or if you don't, then it will affect you in a very unpleasant way. You suffer more and more as

already millions of people are experiencing suffering. For example, an enormous amount of fear in the collective energy field.

And so there's a disruption that occurs on the outside and there's also a disruption that occurs in human consciousness. The most important realization is to become aware of the fact that the most primordial thing in your life, ultimately the one thing that determines how you experience your life or your reality, determines how you respond or react to events and situations and circumstances. The most primordial fact is not what happens around you.

The most important factor is your state of consciousness, the state of consciousness with which you meet the circumstances of your life, the situation of your life. And so if people live unconsciously, they're not aware of this, it's very easy to become a victim of your circumstances. And many, many humans are victim of their circumstances.

What does that mean? Their inner state of consciousness is completely determined by the external world, by other people, by what happens on the outside, both their personal situation and the collective situation in the world. So they're at the mercy of circumstances.

Even on the smallest level, at the mercy of another human being, you meet another human being who is angry. If you are not sufficiently present, this human being who is angry will trigger the same emotion in you. And so you are at the mercy of somebody else's state.

It's just a small example and it happens all the time. And then you have the, whatever you absorb through the media these days, the mainstream media, social media. Mainstream media, for example, generates an enormous amount of emotion.

It's there because emotion sells. It sells people tune in. It has an almost addictive quality to it.

And so without knowing it, I don't believe the people who run the media, the mainstream media are probably not aware of what they're doing, but they themselves are in the grip of this collective energy field underneath the surface of things. And there's a huge amount of collective fear running through. And if you are not sufficiently present, then you have no immunity to what goes on around you.

And you are susceptible to catching, so to speak. I'm not talking of a virus because there's another kind of immunity that is of a different kind that is within your consciousness. You are then at the mercy of whatever mental virus is floating around in the collective energy field.

And without knowing it, it infects you. So you absorb by watching an excessive amount of news, television or whatever device you use, you absorb all that collective energy field

that you can't see it. It's underneath the surface of things.

And you're then taken over by a mental emotional energy field. Without knowing it, you think that's you. You're identified with this collective energy field.

You've been taken over by what could be described as a virus, a mental virus, a mental emotional virus. And you find yourself in a state of either fear or a state of anger or anxiety. And so, when you identify with that state of anger or anxiety or fear, you become it, so to speak, or it becomes you.

It becomes part of your identity. And spiritually speaking, we call that unconscious living. To be unconscious is to completely identify with a mental emotional energy field.

Identify means you seek yourself in it. It takes you over. You don't know yourself except through that.

Your consciousness is completely identified with that energy. And that's a terrible state to be in. Now, a state of quite normal.

It's very important then when this becomes more and more unpleasant, fear grows, anger grows, then it's easier for humans to suddenly become aware of what's happening to them. And that is the motivating force that helps people to step out of the identification with the collective streams of emotional mental streams. That's the most vital thing.

You need vigilance so that you are not drawn into these unconscious collective energy fields, which are really very much like a mental virus collective. So there's an equivalent on a mental level to what we have on the physical level. On the physical level we have the virus that we all know about all over the world.

And the equivalent of that on the mental level is a virus of destructive negative thought forms and emotions that people get taken over by. And that makes life very unpleasant. It can also lead to an intensification of external problems.

When more and more people are being taken over by negative energy fields without knowing it, then they create in the external, they create whatever corresponds to their inner state of consciousness. So this is a time, a very critical time, but the most critical element of it as I see it, is not in the external. Yes, there are external problems, but more fundamentally it is a problem of human consciousness.

And it can only be tackled there. It's not possible to take wise action and make wise decisions out of a state of fear. Also many people want, they have good intentions.

They want to create a better world and that is wonderful. But if you neglect the causal realm which is your consciousness, then whatever you do on the outer, you might be

very angry and out of your anger you want to create a better world. That's dangerous.

It's understandable, but it's dangerous because any action you take is contaminated by the energy field of anger and creates in Eastern terms would say creates more karma, more suffering. So the important thing for us is not to be taken over by the collective virus that's floating around and that's everywhere in the media and so on. So be very vigilant.

Vigilance is required. It's ultimately, and this is what meditation is all about and this is what healing is all about. Healing in a wider sense normally healing refers to physical healing, which is wonderful too, but the deeper healing is a healing of your consciousness, the healing of the fragmented consciousness, the healing of the suffering that arises when you completely identify with mental emotional streams that come to you.

They take you over. So then you identify with all your mental positions. You have political views, mental positions, and you derive your sense of self from your position and the other becomes the enemy.

It does not mean as you awaken out of that, it does not mean that you no longer have any mental positions. You continue to have certain views, for example with regards to the political situation or the social situation. You have certain views and that's fine.

It would be virtually impossible to say I'm now giving up all my viewpoints completely. I'm no longer having any viewpoint. You can't do that, but you can recognize a mental position as a mental position without deriving your sense of self from it.

Then when you become involved in a discussion with someone who holds for example in the United States at the present time, there's a huge division. It's almost like two gradually two universes are developing. They're separate.

There's a fragmentation and if you're unconscious which means you're identified with your mental positions then when anybody questions your mental position with an opposite mental position the person becomes your enemy. If millions of people live in that unconscious way civil disorder even civil war is not impossible. That means millions of people are so identified with their positions that they're completely unaware that they are being taken over by an energy field.

The answer is to become aware of the positions that your mind is taking and saying this is my position. You can then have a discussion with someone without making the other into an enemy without attacking the other either emotionally, mentally or even physically in the case of very unconscious people. You can have a discussion and perhaps you can arrive at some kind of you can meet at some point in the middle if you're conscious.

If you're unconscious which means completely identified with your mental position there's no meeting anymore. You cannot meet the other because the other is the enemy. The primordial problem and this is where the healing also comes in healing is really to be restored to wholeness not to be fragmented and lose yourself in the fragmentation of your mind.

So how does this happen? How can I have a mental position for example? Even I have certain positions obviously every human has with regards to politics.

I don't talk about them because who cares what my mental position is that's not important. I'm here to guide humans to a higher or deeper dimension where they are no longer completely identified with and absorbed by their mental positions their minds, their thoughts. Then you can have the thoughts but you have the thoughts exist within a greater wholeness which we could call the awareness and your identity lies in the awareness the presence, the consciousness not in the position of the mind then you can still have your position but you're no longer threatened in your sense of identity if somebody questions your position or contradicts and that's the essence of meditation also the essence of meditation is to find that to discover that transcendent dimension to who you are the being of yourself and you discover it as I speak there's an opportunity for you to realize this within yourself as I speak here and now this transcendent dimension to who you are the unconditioned being is something that you do not need to bring about through arduous discipline and you cannot generate it by being a good person it comes before all that it's already here at that level you are already complete perfect or to use this word whole whole you are already whole on the level of being you are already whole now that's an interesting word W H O L E whole on the personal level the conditioned mental emotional entity you are not whole there's a lot still that you could do and many things you cannot do you can improve your life on the level of the person of course it's a good thing to improve your life on that level but if you miss the fundamental dimension of the transcendent which is the spiritual dimension then nothing on the level of your personal self will ever ultimately satisfy you no matter what you achieve on that level it doesn't mean that you should not strive to achieve things it's a good thing to try and achieve things as a human being to learn new things, experience new things, to grow this is part of why you are here but it's not enough and in fact it's frustrating ultimately and not satisfying if you miss the more fundamental human task which is to awaken to the deeper dimension of who you are beyond the conditioned person and that's the healing that's the wholeness you realize on that level you are already whole healing and whole go back to the same root if you go back the etymology in English healing and whole go back to the same root which lies in Old English, Old High German and Norse which is Scandinavian language healing and whole go back to the same root sometimes wisdom is embodied sometimes in language if you follow it to its root so healing and whole have the same root and then there's another word that's part of that that comes out of the same root and that's the word holy so the word healing

whole and holy have the same etymologically have the same root so you discover a dimension that has always been there is not subject to time discover a dimension within yourself that is also the realm of the holy and you cannot define that, holy points to the fact that you are intrinsically connected to the source of all life which traditionally is called God the holy points to that, holy is not a word that you will hear very frequently in our present civilization it's unlikely that the word holy has ever been used in the past few years on CNN MSNBC or Fox News very unlikely and the New York Times also haven't seen the word holy I've been looking for it a long time no, it's not there because humans no longer know even know what that means you can only get a glimpse of what that means within yourself beyond conceptualization when you go out into nature and you're in a state of pure awareness and you look at the totality of nature that surrounds you, no matter where you are trees or there's a landscape or there's the ocean or there's a mountain or just a field or even just a park or even just one tree you give it your complete attention then without labeling it, without analyzing it without calling it anything you give it your complete attention then you can sense that beyond that which you see in nature with your senses or what you can hear, see, hear take in with your senses there is an essence in nature there is a presence in nature that can only be described as holy and you're in a state of awe I like that word awe when you're in nature and you go and of course at that moment your mind stops, you're just conscious, you're not labeling what you perceive every sense perception is a surface reality but beyond the surface reality there's a deeper reality and you can sense this deeper reality which ultimately what is that?

it's the universal consciousness that manifests itself through countless millions of life forms but underneath it there is the one, ultimately the one consciousness, the one being and you can sense that when your mind is still you can sense that in nature and then you can sense that there's not a separation anymore between you and nature the same consciousness but different frequency, yes, is alive in you as you as the consciousness that manifests as a plant, a tree a flower and so you sense that that is the awakening that's the restoration of wholeness the wholeness of life when the fragmented entity, the ego subsides and you become restored to the wholeness of who you are this is what is needed for sanity to come back into human interactions the only thing that can save the world is this shift in consciousness this realization, it begins with you and it begins here and now and how does it begin here and now?

it begins, and I'm inviting you now perhaps it's already happening in you but you're not quite aware of it it begins with a moment of no thought but just pure presence of beingness like now that's meditation meditation is thinking subsides awareness remains and when thinking subsides the entire self what we could call the self the egoic self the person the personality also subsides because it's created by the movement of thought so when thinking subsides even for a moment in that moment the conditioned entity the personality also subsides and something else arises and there are many names that we

could use to describe that something else that arises that is much deeper much more fundamental than the person many words have been used over centuries and millennia to describe this the most neutral term you could use is the being of you or the beingness of you it could also be called the Atman the innermost the divinity within this is from Indian spirituality the Atman now Jesus had certain words for it he called it sometimes he called it the kingdom of heaven which is a dimension of consciousness it's not something you can see it's here or it's there he clearly said you can never say it's here or it's there because it's inseparable from who you are so the kingdom of heaven is another term you can use to describe that dimension the entire teaching of Jesus was about finding that dimension within sometimes he called it other things he also called it eternal life and he said I want you to have eternal life my teaching is this, eternal life what does that mean? it doesn't mean that the person goes on and on eternal means timeless the timeless dimension of who you are and then the Buddha came and the Buddha refused all positive terminology like kingdom of heaven or the Atman or eternal life because he knew that humans would fall into the trap of transforming any positive statement into a mental idol so he refused to make any positive statements he used only negative statements he denies everything that is ultimately not it so Buddha described it as the no self this is the no self and that's the ultimate teaching of the Buddha to discover within yourself the ultimate unreality of the person the personal sense of the egoic sense of self which also Jesus said when he made the important statement deny thyself that wasn't the Buddha Jesus said it deny thyself deny yourself meaning deny is a strange word here it doesn't mean that you say I don't exist that's not it deny means as he uses it recognize the unreality of the self that you thought you were that is the denial of self deny thyself recognize that ultimately that is not really who you are this is just a surface phenomenon you find that it also has its place you have to live with it for a while but the deeper dimension is that that is not who you are

[Speaker 2] (29:40 - 30:00)

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Eckhart Tolle Conscious Creativity [ff3a9733-4bc2-4c1b-8e3d-0505e0dd32ac]

[Speaker 3] (0:01 - 0:41)

Conscious creativity. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about overcoming obstacles to conscious creativity. He explains, we may have a vision of what we'd like to create, but when we try to express ourselves, the ego kicks up resistance.

Eckhart says, we feel attacked by inner voices, such as, who do you think you are? You're not ready for this. And then we self-sabotage.

He explains how we doubt our talent and give in to our fears. Eckhart says, when this happens, we must recognize it as the voice of the ego. And in those moments, we should practice presence.

He shares, we need to release our negative thinking, allowing the creative process to flow through.

[Speaker 2] (0:44 - 1:49)

Hi, Eckhart and everybody here. Such a wonderful thing to be here with all of you and be here with you, Eckhart. I'm so grateful.

My question is this, it says, I have long since had a clear vision of what it is I'd like to create in this world, and this vision, it lives inside of me, and it continually brings me such exquisite delight beyond description. It is as if it already is, very much to me. That said, when I begin taking the necessary steps to begin bringing it into creation, into manifestation, I oftentimes, I experience gripping egoic contractions, some resistance in me, panic and self-sabotage come into play.

And at times, it can feel as if there's a war going on inside of me. How can I best offer myself to the situation at hand?

[Speaker 1] (1:51 - 2:12)

Thank you. Thank you for your question. Would you describe that as fear?

Those are fearful states? That's basically what you're describing, that which is sabotaging you and creates certain thoughts. Would you describe the underlying emotion as fear?

[Speaker 2] (2:14 - 2:52)

I guess so. It's as if these very kind of reactive things come up in me with such tremendous force that kind of seem to pull me back down into that. Yeah, I guess it is

fear, because it's into that safe sense of the familiar.

But what's familiar isn't, is suffering. Suffering is familiar. So these things, they keep me just kind of held down a little bit, and I wanna give myself fully to it.

[Speaker 1] (2:56 - 3:10)

Are you referring to something external that you have a vision of that you want to create, or do you want to share with us what it is, or would you rather keep it private?

[Speaker 2] (3:11 - 5:03)

No, I'm happy to share. So I had these tremendous awakening experiences when I was around 17. I've always loved music.

I play music. But I want to connect with as many people as possible on as deep a level as possible. So basically to share that deepest nameless truth through music primarily.

There's also been, I've also been leading meditation groups for years now, and I also see part of the vision as being a speaker. And then also in the last couple of years, there has been a woman has come into the picture who has a child, and I would like so much to be able to fulfill that role of being a provider and a family man. I have never needed much.

I've always had plenty just for myself, but I've been a caregiver all my life. I've never really pursued money, career plan in that way. I've just cared for people, and that's been a good part of my spiritual practice.

And so now it feels as though I'm embarking on this new chapter and want to share through music and speaking. But I grew up around a lot of drugs and poverty, and difficult things like that. And so, pretty extreme dysfunction in family.

And so it's been a lot of pretty unhealthy behavior patterns and mental patterns ingrained in me pretty deeply from early on. So I've spent a lifetime kind of unpacking and I'm- Yes. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (5:03 - 11:00)

Yes. So there's one good say, there's two of you there. One is the conditioned entity with its very limited patterns, mind patterns and reactive patterns.

So they're all part of the ego. As long as you're completely identified with them, they are part of the ego. When you're no longer completely identified with them, they are just remaining patterns.

You're on your way to freedom when you're no longer completely identified with the patterns. In other words, they don't take you over completely. You're able to observe

them.

So to continue to realize that there's two of you, there's the unconditioned, aware, conscious being, the self that is emerging, but the old conditioned patterns don't want it to emerge because they realize, well, it's also, I'm saying they, but ultimately, yes, there are many patterns, but together they form the ego. So the ego, as you know, is afraid of disappearing. It wants like everything in existence wants to remain in existence.

Everything that is every life form wants to remain as this form, but it cannot remain as this form. So the question is, and it's not a battle. So the awareness is not something that would need to fight the ego.

You cannot fight the unconscious patterns in your mental, emotional field. You can only be aware of them and not be taken over by them. It begins with when a thought comes into your head that is a thought of fear or doubt or questioning yourself, whatever it may be, not to believe in every thought that arises.

You don't have to believe. It's just, it's a thought that arises. It may be a complete lie.

In many cases, thoughts are complete misinterpretations of events, other people, yourself. Many people live with a self image that is just a completely erroneous narrative, but they believe in it. They are it.

So there's the arising awareness and on top of it, there's the conditioned entity that feels threatened. And so it's important for you to realize that who you essentially are, and that is the aware presence. And when obstacles arise in the form of thoughts or reactions, to be able to be aware of them and realize you don't need to act on them.

You need to just observe them and realize what they are. So to recognize what they are, it's a conditioned thought. And some conditioned thoughts have been there for a long time, for decades.

Sometimes the same kind of thought comes up again and again. And when it arises, do you lose awareness? Does the thought, the conditioned thought obliterate your awareness temporarily?

Perhaps it sometimes does, but vigilance is very important. Vigilance is part of being aware. To be vigilant is to be acutely aware, to be acutely present.

So when you are, let's say you want to give a... You mentioned music and perhaps helping others by speaking. Let's say you want to have a speaking event.

So you, and you put something online to say that I'm going to speak, please join me. But, and then while you're typing into this, you're in doubt suddenly, am I ready for this? Can I do it?

And then you have this, I'm just imagining, because I know the human mind. It doubts you, it says, no, you can't, you shouldn't. Who do you think you are?

You're not ready for this, you have to wait. And a good thing to know is when you, when these thoughts come is to realize they're egoic thoughts and say, thank you for coming up and realize that you'll never be ready for a spiritual teaching. You will never be ready to be a spiritual teacher, but you have to get out of the way so that the teaching flows through you, but you cannot do it.

So if you think you can do it, then you're right, you can't. For the teaching to happen, you need to step out of the way. You need to, and you do that by cessation from thinking.

There's a state of clear, spacious presence. And then you become comfortable with not knowing what to say. And so you are not doing it.

It happens, the universe speaks through you. It happens through you. And with music, I don't know what form that takes for you, but there may be opportunities that you have not taken advantage of and so on because of fear.

And again, it's the deep enjoyment is very important part of that. When you, I assume that you experienced that, when you, what music do you play?

[Speaker 2] (11:01 - 11:27)

I play acoustic guitar and sing and write songs, but I also have taken on producing stuff at home and doing stuff that's a little bit more beat oriented as well. So it's mostly taken format that I think the focal point of it is the kind of presence through singing. And so it shines through my voice the most.

[Speaker 1] (11:28 - 42:19)

Yes, very good. Thank you. Yeah.

Well, whether or not you even need to manifest to have a vision of where you want to go with your music, in some cases, people do practice that. They have a vision of where they want to go and others simply deep enjoyment of what they're doing. And they continue to do what they're doing.

And then at some point it grows and grows and grows. You reach suddenly a point where you're riding this wave and it suddenly grows. And I haven't had any visualization or anything that I want to achieve for many, many, many years.

So I'm simply happy with how things are unfolding. And I'm happy with the present moment. I have no vision of where I want to go with the teaching in the next few years.

I may not even be around, who knows. So I'm quite happy with things unfolding. And that is also a way of manifesting.

Manifesting doesn't always mean that you have a clear vision of what it is that you want to achieve. Sometimes that is fine and works. But to be in a state of appreciation of life, in deep alignment with the present moment, so that you're not in an antagonistic relationship with the present moment anymore.

You're just deeply aligned with the flow of life in the now and you appreciate everything that is and the things you do. The things you do, you do them fully. You give your fullest attention to what you do.

That's another obstacle of many people. They somehow are not able to give themselves fully. They're not, there's something holding back.

There's something that's holding them back. You can sometimes see it with people who are on stage or sometimes singers or musicians. You can sometimes see they're not the full, there's not the full energy is not there for some reason.

Perhaps they're afraid for some reason of, they may be afraid of giving themselves fully. So to be fully in what you're doing, to give your fullest attention to what you're doing in the present moment is a very powerful way of manifesting. But whether or not you have a vision that you project and you feel it's already happening, the vision can only work if you continue giving your fullest attention to the present moment and to enjoy the energy of what it is that you are producing in the present moment that empowers the vision.

The vision is always, the point of power is always in the present moment. A great obstacle for achieving a vision or any success is to be, and this almost sounds paradoxical at first until you begin to understand it, is to have an excessive attachment to the outcome. That's a huge hindrance.

Now you might think, well, if I have a vision of what it is I want to achieve, would it not be natural for me to be attached to the outcome that I want to get there? I want to reach millions of people with my music and I want millions of people to feel better by listening to my music, perhaps to get a glimpse of presence by listening to my music. That's a great vision, but the mastery of this lies in not attaching yourself to the vision so that you lose consciousness in what you are doing and it gets dissipated into the vision which ultimately is a mental thing.

The point of power is always in the present moment. Excessive attachment to the outcome, one could almost say any real attachment to the outcome weakens your ability to manifest. I give the example of a pilgrimage.

Let's say you're on a pilgrimage. Life could be regarded as a pilgrimage or journey. And

you know where you're going.

You want to go to whatever it is. You pilgrimage to a holy site. In medieval times there were pilgrimages to Rome and other sacred places.

Now, the very purpose of pilgrimage is to bring about a transformation of who you are, transformation of consciousness. The arriving is relatively unimportant. Arriving at your destination is just a short moment and there you are.

But the journey is how conscious are you of the step you're taking at this moment. If you're excessively attached to the outcome, which in this case would be your destination, then you're mentally, you already want to be there. That takes away from the quality of your step at this moment.

Now the step stands, it's an analogy for whatever it is you're doing at this moment. And quality means how much consciousness flows into what you're doing in this moment. So if you are dissipating it and you lose yourself in an outcome that you need, you're expecting ultimate fulfillment through the outcome.

That is a hindrance and a delusion. And many people who have achieved so-called great things in the eyes of the world, things that are called great in the eyes of the world, a lot of the time are not great at all. A lot of things, they have achieved it and then it became after initial elation, I made it.

After an initial elation, they experienced a very deep disillusionment, a very deep disillusionment with fame, with wealth. And many of them became more unhappy than they had ever been before. Because there was an excessive attachment to outcome as some future point will provide me with the fullest version of myself.

It doesn't happen. So you make it. And so there are many people who make it in the eyes of the world.

And this is the very thing that makes them extremely unhappy and they can't even take refuge anymore and say, oh, okay, it's going to get better in the future. They have arrived already, where do you go if you have all the things that people believe are signs of the ultimate success in this world? And now you have your private jet waiting for you.

You have your big houses in various places. You can do anything, go anywhere, have any sensory experience, feel important because people admire you. So you see yourself in magazines and so on.

And you're not, you're unhappy because you never learned to go into the vertical dimension of life and realize that fulfillment cannot be found in, this is the manifestation can only be successful if you do not expect to find yourself in whatever you want to manifest. You need to treat it as a play. Leela is a word used in Indian philosophy,

spiritual philosophy, the divine play.

It's a, you play with form. There's not, whether or not it happens is a secondary and relatively unimportant thing when you're already deeply rooted in the aliveness of the present moment. That's where it comes from.

And then you give your fullest attention to the step you're taking at this moment instead of continuously losing yourself in your destination. And if, because if you're losing, if you're mentally lost in your destination, the quality of the step you're taking at this moment decreases. If the quality is something that is hard to, you may not know what I mean when I say quality.

It means how much consciousness is in it. There can be quality in the slightest thing you do because it means, are you doing it simply as a means to an end or are you giving your fullest attention to what you're doing? So many people are held back because they have excessive attachment to outcome.

For example, that's one of the main teachings of the Indian Bhagavad Gita, the wonderful, one of the great books of Hinduism. If you haven't read it, you should, Bhagavad Gita. And it talks about the importance of not looking to the fruit of your action.

So be completely present in the action, but renounce the fruit of the action. So that is a secret of successful manifestation. You know, and again, coming back to my analogy of pilgrimage, yes, there's a certain importance in your destination, but it's not the ultimate.

The destination, it's a good thing to have a destination. You know where you want to go. You know the direction in which you want to go.

So you're conscious of that, but your fullest attention is in the present moment. This is a reversal of normal living. In normal living, your awareness of the present moment is peripheral and because you are so much more concerned with where you want to get to or your past or the future, and you're hardly aware of the present moment.

It's just peripheral. That gets reversed. Your awareness of where you want to get to continues to be there in the periphery of your attention, like a person on a pilgrimage.

You know where you're going. Let's say you're in Spain, northern Spain, going towards Santiago de Compostela, and it's fine, you want to arrive there, but this step you're taking right now, this is what the ultimate, that's the whole journey consists of one step at one time. The entire life journey consists of the step you're taking at this moment.

And what is the quality of the step you're taking at this moment? What is the attention that you give it? Give it your fullest attention.

Then that is the transformation of happens through the journey of you become more and more present. And then finally you arrive. Oh, fine.

And where do you go from there? Well, you're not going to be there for that long. Then you have to go somewhere else.

If that was the ultimate, it's you're going to be very disappointed by the things that you achieve. Oh, is that it? And I've been looking forward to this for years.

Is this really it? And of course it's not it. It's the present moment is it.

That also means if for some reason you should not arrive at your destination, maybe you die before you can get there or something else happens, who knows? Maybe something else prevents you. Suddenly there's a pandemic that suddenly stops you in your tracks.

So you don't make it. It's almost irrelevant whether or not you arrive at the destination. Because the important thing was the journey, the step at this moment that brings about the deepening into the vertical dimension, whether you arrive or not, who cares?

Well, it's a nice when you arrive, it's fine. But that is not that which liberates you, that frees you, that gives you ultimate satisfaction. It cannot.

And so you become liberated from needing to arrive somewhere. Then you regard it as something that you, in this world, you play with form. It's a play of form.

And yes, the universe may want to create something through you and maybe it will. And when it is, it's lovely, it's beautiful, but it's the act of creation, not the final product. Because the final product of any creation is already the beginning of dissolution and the level of form.

Let's say you write a great bestseller. Okay, and where do you go now? Okay, you have to write another one.

Okay, and then is it going to be as good as the first one? Probably not, or maybe it is. There are many people in this world who feel they haven't arrived.

That's a common disease, it's a misconception. They feel this sense of lack. There's also a syndrome that's called, somebody told me a while ago, it's called the fear of missing out.

The fear of missing their field, that's something, my life has failed. The terrible fear, or I haven't made it. I haven't achieved my goal.

And maybe it's too late. The mind says too late to achieve it. Or you have all kinds of narratives that are created on the basis of that misperception.

So the important thing is ultimately what you achieve in this world is secondary. Your greatest achievement is to be conscious now. Is to realize this vertical dimension of being, to become aware of being.

That is the awakening. That is your greatest achievement. Then the universe wants to awaken.

Otherwise you couldn't awaken. The universe was creating millions of life forms, manifesting continuously, increasingly complex life forms on this planet, many other planets, millions, billions of planets, and billions of life forms even on this planet. It creates life forms, gradually manifests more consciousness.

That's one, the universe wants that. The universe also wants to, one could call it the dream of creation, the dream of form. The consciousness loses itself in the forms.

It loves to experience that. And the universe gradually grows and becomes more conscious. And at some point, this expansion into multiplicity and complexity, increasing complexity, this expansion of the world of form, this is the outward journey.

At some point, that reaches a point where suddenly the universe begins to awaken out of the dream of form. It had lost itself in every form. Every form experienced itself as autonomous in the human form too.

You were lost until you began to awaken. You were lost in the dream of your life. And that was, you derived your sense identity from that.

The return movement, as I call it, is the awakening of the universe where it becomes aware of itself. The one consciousness becomes aware of itself. And that's, we have it, we're at this point now where the outburst of the universe is approaching the end.

I'm talking mystical terms. Don't be too concerned about it. Science cannot verify this.

The outburst of the universe has come to an end and the universe is beginning to breathe in again where the multiplicity of things returns to oneness, complete oneness. Now, in our terms, that would happen in several billion years from now where the big bang was the expansion and then there's a contraction in physical terms. Physical term is only the surface of things.

It's like the beating heart too, the way your heart beats, it goes. The in-breath and the out-breath. These are the two movements and you find these in yourself too.

There's a tendency in you, you want to do things and create things, but you also want to be. And it's more fun, the being is becoming more important for you now. And we're at the point where you can bring the two together.

I wrote about that a little bit in the New Earth. You can bring the two together, the

awakening consciousness, that you become aware of yourself as the underlying being. And from there, you can cooperate with the universe, co-create and create whatever it is that you want to create in this.

Ultimately, it's not you because you as a separate entity do not exist. It's you as an expression of the one, then the one expresses itself and creates through you. But if that sounds too complicated, it's the important thing is to realize, coming back to practical things, to be very careful of not attaching yourself to some outcome and to very careful not to fall into the delusion that your sense of self-worth, for example, let's put it like that, depends on achieving a particular outcome in the world of form.

Now, that's a big one. So that your sense of self-worth does not depend on what you know, what you can do, what you have achieved, how you look, what you possess. All these things are usually used by people to determine their sense of self-worth, what you own and what's mine, the ability, I can do this, but other people can't do this, my body, how my body looks better than others for some people for a while until it doesn't, what you know to be identified with some kinds of knowledge and opinions.

So you derive your sense of self-worth from one or several of these achievements, what have I achieved? And you look back, and that's a delusion because you cannot find your ultimate sense of self, which is self-worth and self is the same thing. In any of these things, they are nice when they happen to be appreciated.

Oh, that's nice. It's very nice. It's not the ultimate thing, and it probably won't last.

It'll either leave you or you will leave it, or it no longer functions as something that gives you satisfaction. It could suddenly turn into its opposite, something that makes you unhappy. So your sense of self or self-worth is derived from a more immediate place.

And that is what I sometimes call, as you know, the vertical dimension where you become aware of yourself as the aware presence. You are say something in you that's far deeper than the person. That is the ultimate source of satisfaction in life.

What is that then? It's to know yourself as consciousness. Consciousness becoming aware of itself is the ultimate source of satisfaction in life.

Oh, you're free of the person. It's still there, but you don't look for yourself in it anymore. The ultimate source of satisfaction is found in the present moment.

And that is the secret. And that the Indians knew that, the Indian teachers, and they described that realization, which is an awakening relation, by using the three words, stringing them together. There is one word, they have come from Sanskrit, Sat, Chit, Ananda.

Three words strung together as one word. Sat, Chit, Ananda. Sat, Chit, Ananda.

Sat means being. Chit means consciousness. Ananda means joy or bliss.

Sometimes it's right, it's bliss. I call it joy. Now these three are three facets of the same thing or no thing.

Being, Sat, Chit, consciousness. Sat and Chit together. Being and consciousness means the awareness of being conscious.

Being is Sat. Being, consciousness, joy. They're one thing.

It is the joy of knowing, of being conscious of your being. It's all one thing or no thing. It's not a thing.

Sat, Chit, Ananda is the realization, being consciousness bliss, to be aware of yourself as the conscious being. That is a joy. That's the liberation from the person.

And then you can play around with the person. It's fine. And that's where your sense of self-worth arises because it's not the self in the conventional terms.

It's the consciousness, what the Buddha called spaciousness or emptiness, spaciousness. And the Buddha also called it the non-self. But that is what we are talking about.

It's the ultimate realization. So I'm mentioning that because it's very important because otherwise, even if you master to some extent, the art of manifestation, if you don't know the underlying truth, even that will make you unhappy, ultimately. Even if you achieve what you set out to achieve, it's not going to fulfill you for very long.

There's a saying, I don't know who said it, who first said it. There's two ways of being unhappy. One is not getting what you want and the other is getting what you want.

Now, getting what you want makes you happy for a little while until it doesn't. But if you were not attached to the outcome, not to the, as the Bhagavad Gita says, not attached to the fruit of the action, then whatever the fruit of the action is can be enjoyed for what it is. Oh, nice, very nice.

Knowing that it's not going to last, nothing lasts, and you might not even be that interested anymore after a while. But while it's there, it's very nice, enjoy it. So I need to mention that because sometimes when you read about manifestation, there are books, there are good books about how to manifest.

Some of them omit the most important part, and which is what we've just been talking about. And that's the very foundation for your life. And by omitting the most important part, people who achieve these things are not made happy by the achievement.

In some cases, as I said, they're even more unhappy than before because after that, what else can they look forward to? In the eyes of the world, once you have your private

jet and your many houses and your yacht and your whatever it is that people think to determine success, adoration of others, look, everybody loves me. Then that's a trap.

That's not it. So the self-esteem, I'd told the story a few years ago, I read it a long time ago. The Dalai Lama was answering questions and somebody asked him a question about self-worth or self-esteem.

He said, many people have a problem with self-worth or self-esteem. Can you please comment on that? And then, of course, he said, what is self-worth?

And then he asked his interpreter to explain, what is self-esteem or self-worth? And the interpreter was talking to him for several minutes and he still didn't get it. Talking, trying to explain, he just couldn't get what self-worth or self-esteem was.

Because he doesn't, he does not derive his sense of self from his position. You can see it when you listen to him that he's not attached at all. He does not derive his sense of importance from his...

One would think if you're the Dalai Lama, you must feel really important. You have achieved a great thing. Well, he hadn't even achieved it.

From birth, he was already, well, soon after he was born, he was already chosen. But no, he didn't have, and it was almost impossible for him to understand that people have a problem with self-esteem because his sense of worth, it does not derive from externals, from position, in no conceptual sense of self, but a deeper sense of self, not a conceptual sense of self. It's all connected.

Not to be lost in a conceptual sense of self that's associated with things that you achieve. And then the things that you achieve improve temporarily your conceptual sense of self. And then you derive your identity for a little while, an enhanced sense of identity from your conceptual sense of self because you add your so-called achievements to who you think you are.

And again, it doesn't last. So the basis for all is, again, it's all very simple. The step you're taking at this moment, give it your fullest attention.

The present moment is no longer relegated to the periphery of your consciousness. It becomes a focal point of your consciousness. What is relegated to the periphery of your consciousness is your destination, but you still have one.

It's good to know where you're going. To some extent, you have some kind of direction in life. You have a goal.

It's not bad to have a goal in life. That's the place on pilgrimage. You want to arrive at that site of where you, the holy site or whatever it is.

You have that goal and that's fine. But in the meantime, the journey, the step you're taking, what is the quality of the step you're taking at this moment? That's the ultimate.

And if that is of high quality, then you can be assured, even if you do not practice any specific manifestation techniques, even if you do not practice them, you can be fairly assured that the so-called future will look after itself in a harmonious way. If you give your fullest attention to this moment, and because this moment is very deep, this moment is inseparable from who you are in the essence of your being, because ultimately what we call this moment is the consciousness of this moment, the consciousness that underlies everything. I needed to say this because we do not want you to become a master at manifestation and still be unhappy when you manifest what you wanted to manifest.

So we are silent for a moment, realizing our essential being as the one consciousness. You are that. I am that.

Oh, so liberating to know that. Thank you. Thank you to all of you.

[Speaker 3] (42:20 - 42:42)

Thank you so much. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle Conscious Relationships [3aecbd28-fffd-4303-9193-ad81016a6bb6]

[Speaker 6] (0:00 - 0:20)

Conscious relationships. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to an international audience in Greece. He brings his renowned wisdom to everyday concerns, like how to quiet an overactive mind, what is the best way to set boundaries with friends and family, and how we can use the practice of presence to create conscious relationships.

[Speaker 1] (0:23 - 0:31)

Let's have the first question. Somebody has been chosen. Take your time.

One step at a time. There you are. Hi, Eckhart.

[Speaker 5] (0:32 - 1:05)

Eckhart, you said very frequently to observe the mind and to detach from the mind and let it go. But sometimes, you know, personally I observe the mind and I see sometimes how it drains my own energy. It's like the mind has its own intelligence, and it knows my weakness, and sometimes it becomes so aggressive, so demanding.

So I would appreciate it if you tell us how to deal with this kind of situations.

[Speaker 1] (1:05 - 1:42)

So the mind has a momentum of its own, but seems to be the case that you are aware of that. So this is already a gain in consciousness, because you are aware of what your mind is doing. The question is, are you usually aware after a very noisy mind movement?

Are you aware in the moment of it happening? Or do you become aware after a certain mind movement has exhausted itself? Are you aware while it happens?

[Speaker 5] (1:42 - 1:42)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:43 - 1:44)

While it happens.

[Speaker 5] (1:44 - 1:46)

I'm aware that this is not me.

[Speaker 1] (1:46 - 1:47)

Right.

[Speaker 5] (1:47 - 1:51)

But it's so demanding. Yes. Sometimes I cannot control it.

[Speaker 1] (1:51 - 12:54)

Right. And does that become sometimes speech when you're communicating, and it goes, it uses your voice, and then you speak to people, to your mind, then makes you say, speaks through you, right? Yes.

And I know it's not me. Right. When it happens.

Right. Okay. Well, that's already a big step forward, because if you were completely identified with your mind, you wouldn't even know it, you'd be totally it.

It is not possible by willpower to stop your mind. It can only be done by heightening your power, your witnessing power, so that the mind loses some of its momentum. It might take time.

And I would recommend that you start with little things when it's a relatively small event, where your mind is speaking through you. It may also happen that there's nobody around you, but you are speaking, the mind is speaking to itself. You also experience that.

Yes. And that can be also quite a very extremely dramatic things happen in people's minds, without anything dramatic happening externally. But you know that this is happening.

Ask yourself if you have a choice. Do I have a choice? And let's find out if I have a choice.

Ask yourself, am I able to take attention away from the mind? Because the mind is, as you know, is very cunning. It's tricky.

It will come up with all kinds of reasons why it is not a good idea to step out of the mind now. You really need to think about this. This is a real problem.

Although it's four o'clock in the morning, you need to think about a bit more about this. It is vitally important. You're in the grip.

But if you have some awareness there, then you can see whatever reason the mind gives you is just a way to stay in control. And then you say, okay, let me try if I can just, I see it is futile from the level of awareness, you can see it's futile. Am I able to take one conscious breath right now when this happens?

First, you have to see the futility of it. It's that it ultimately serves no purpose except to

strengthen the egoic self. Am I able to take one conscious breath in between all this mind activity?

Find out. And I believe you can. One conscious breath means you breathe in.

And while you breathe in, you observe the inflow of air into the body. Then there's a stop. Then you observe the outflow of air out of the body.

And then there's a stop. That is a huge success. You were able to take in the midst of all this mind stream, you were able to take one conscious breath.

That's a big win. And if you were able to take one conscious breath, which by the way, to connect with what I've been talking about just now, immediately, one conscious breath brings about a small gap in the mind stream and brings about a deepening. You go, the breath gives you access to this inner space.

So you go down into and then you come out again. And then the mind may immediately start up again, or you may find that if I can take one conscious breath, perhaps I can take another one. You have to experiment, regard yourself, your psychological experiment, regard yourself as you're conducting psychological experiments with yourself.

So after the one conscious breath, perhaps I can take one more. Yes, then you might feel at the back of your mind, a certain push, a force, the mind wants to come back in by push. You keep it out by a high degree of alertness, so that I had to use the analogy, perhaps in the power of now or somewhere, a cat watching a mouse hole.

If you've ever watched a cat watching a mouse hole, that gives you a good illustration of what an alert state of consciousness is. A cat watching a mouse hole looks like for a long time. Now, I gave the example in the book somewhere.

This is not to be done when you're immersed in very violent mind stream, but at normal times, you can try this, you can try it now, this little experiment that goes like this. I wrote about it. I wonder what my next thought is going to be.

I wonder what the next thought is going to be. And then you're very alert, watching for the next thought. And if you're really alert, really alert, like the cat, you're really alert, the next thought does not come, because the alertness keeps it at bay.

And that's when you find this power in you, this power of alertness, which is an actual power, it's the power of consciousness itself, then you have something that is far more powerful than the mind. But they are not ultimately in opposition. The mind is a bit like, a turbulence on the surface of the water.

And the depths of who you are is the depths of the ocean or the lake. And where in the

depths it's still, the turbulence is only on the surface. So they're not separate.

Your mind is not separate from consciousness. Your mind is a manifestation of consciousness, but a surface manifestation of consciousness. And so, when you have access to this power that I just illustrated, and you find in your own experience, a little experiment, what's my next thought going to be?

I wonder, let's wait for it. Hasn't arrived yet. Still no thought.

There's not just an absence while you're not thinking, it's not just an absence, there is a powerful presence there. And that is the light of consciousness. And only the light of consciousness is more powerful than the surface turbulence of your mind.

So, find in yourself, develop this, the inner muscle, so to speak, of presence, of alert presence. Do it when your mind is relatively calm, and find the presence by doing what's my next thought going to be, do some conscious breathing, feel the inner aliveness in the body, or just be, just be still. When you, when that, that's a huge discovery and a huge advance, if you can just be still by wanting to be still, and you just say, okay, I'll be still now.

This is kind of a graduate work, PhD in stillness, where you can simply step into alert stillness, because that's what you want. You want alert stillness and you go into, then you have really graduated and you, you're close to being a master. The only difference being a master and you, spiritual master and you, is that the master is able to step out of the stream of mind and be the presence.

That's all. There are many spiritual teachers, and there have been many spiritual teachers who were not particularly educated, and especially teachers who lived in the distant past, Jesus or the Buddha, almost certainly had less knowledge than any one of you, because there wasn't as much knowledge around, but it didn't matter because it's not, it's not to do with knowledge, to do with the power of presence of consciousness. So when you get a, an actual sense of what that this power is, then it can be there, even at times when the mind becomes turbulent, but you have to not be hypnotized or seduced by something that the mind is telling you and giving you some reason why this is not the time to do it. This is not the time to be present.

I need to think, I need to think, I need to think. My life is going to fall apart if I don't think, or it has some, there may be emotion behind it. Emotional thinking has an enormous power behind it.

It might be emotions connected with certain other human beings. And so you have, you get not only thinking, you get thinking that is being amplified by a huge burst of emotion, emotional thinking, and emotional thinking can be extremely unconscious. When emotion rises up into your mind and affects your thinking, also your ability to think

rationality decreases enormously, and you can think all kinds of very dysfunctional thoughts based on certain emotions.

So it's a, it's a wonderful, the purpose of the rest of your life is this. Whatever else you do is secondary, whether you're doing your business or whatever you do, or whether you make a lot of money or not, it's all secondary. The purpose of the rest of your life is this, what I've just described.

[Speaker 5] (12:54 - 12:55)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (13:03 - 13:07)

Take your time. We're not in a hurry. One step at a time.

[Speaker 3] (13:08 - 13:56)

Thank you Akart, for your power of now. It has played a vital role in my life and it has taught me to hurry slowly. All right.

All right. I just want your suggestion regarding how you would handle if a close member of the family, you don't see eye to eye. For example, you want to get to the airport together.

You would like to start early, drive slowly and arrive safely. Whereas your partner, laid back, always late, rushes and then drives fast, not sure when reach. How do you manage?

[Speaker 1] (14:02 - 14:24)

I think quite a few people have a similar problem. That's it. Yes, it is a dilemma.

Have you had a conversation, not while this is happening, but at another time, have you had a conversation with your partner about this?

[Speaker 3] (14:25 - 14:39)

Not really. I mean, in the sense that there is a conflict between, you know, you're trying to become more aware, more cool. The other person is not really at that level as you are.

Yes. How do you manage?

[Speaker 1] (14:40 - 14:40)

Not easy.

[Speaker 3] (14:43 - 14:44)

That's why I ask this question.

[Speaker 1] (14:44 - 14:50)

Let's not fool ourselves. No, your partner is not here, right?

[Speaker 3] (14:50 - 14:51)

I'm not talking about my partner.

[Speaker 1] (14:52 - 19:40)

I said a person close in my circle. Okay, good. So let's assume you live with somebody.

To generalize that a little bit more, there are certain ways in which this person does things that seem to be the opposite of how you do things. And then you become anxious and frustrated with that person. And let's also assume that this person is not conscious enough so that you can have a conversation with this person about changing his or her behavior.

So then you need to look at the totality of your relationship. And the totality of your relationship, which let's assume it's a loving relationship, where there is a lot of perhaps feeling of love still there. And let's assume I'm not going to want to ask you too many detailed questions.

So you have to see this, these various incidents that repeat themselves within the context of the totality of the relationship. Assuming that the totality relationship is still a relatively desirable one, then it is up to you to accept this person as he or she is so that you can find inner peace in the midst of all this. So that this person does not become a source of continuous or repeated frustration for you, because that would cause you to become unconscious again and again.

So you realize that what really matters at any given moment, or rather in the present moment, it's not so much whatever is going on in the situation around you that is always secondary. It's easy to forget that. Whatever is happening externally in your life is always secondary.

Most people forget that what is primary is your state of consciousness with which you meet what is happening around you. That is primary. What's happening is secondary.

Also, when you realize that that is primary, then your state of consciousness will become, to a large degree or completely, independent of external conditions. It will no longer be at the mercy of external conditions, at the mercy of what somebody is doing or not doing. And that's an enormous amount of freedom you can experience when you feel the power in you of dwelling in that state of consciousness that is no longer determined, controlled by somebody else's behavior in a reactive way.

Therefore, whatever happens externally, you mentioned going to the airport and so on, missing the plane would be a price worth paying for being totally dependent on somebody else's behavior. A very small price to pay. And you may find that until now, your inner resistance that was there perhaps came out through some things you said, but also in your energy field, actually contributed to perpetuating this person's behavior in some strange, unconscious way.

That person motivated by certain unconscious forces was actually strengthened in their unconsciousness by your reactivity. And it's often that you find when you accept, when you come to a complete acceptance, not only do you become free internally of external conditions, miraculously, you may also find that suddenly or gradually the other person's behavior changes. And that's almost like a little miracle, but it is not uncommon.

Many people have reported that when they start practicing. So that's your work, very different from what it was before when you asked the question, you see now what you have to do. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (19:47 - 20:26)

Hello. I think my question will be interesting for most of the people who are here. And it's very simple, though.

We have all our family members and friends, people who we care about, and just random people as well. And sometimes observing them, you can see they suffer a lot because of total impresence. If they were more conscious, they might be happier.

So the question is, shall we give them an idea or just watch them? How to check when they're ready to change?

[Speaker 1] (20:26 - 20:33)

Yes. So the question is, do you mean, do you talk to them and try to explain something?

[Speaker 4] (20:33 - 20:38)

The question is, shall we start or just watch till they ask for help?

[Speaker 1] (20:38 - 35:18)

Right, right. Okay. Yes, I think it's a very helpful question that many people will have a similar situation.

If you talk to somebody before they have reached a point of readiness, what you say will not be received. Jesus had a somewhat, if he said it, you never know, but it's in the gospel, a somewhat brutal way of putting it, casting clouds. If he said it, we can't be sure.

Your presence there could have some effect. But it may not be immediately observable. If there's one person who is present, it can, if there is, if there's a latent readiness in anyone in this, in your environment, then your presence could act as an awakener.

It is possible that, and this is, I speak from my own experience, it's possible that in an, in an ordinary conversation that you have with someone, somebody says something or ask you something, and your answer has a little bit element of something spiritual or consciousness in it. And then that person will suddenly go, oh, but the most important thing is, first of all, the power comes with acceptance. The foundation is you accept these people as they are, although it would be nice if they didn't produce their self-made suffering.

Of course, you know, that would be very nice, but that's not happening at the moment. So at the moment you practice acceptance, you accept them for who they are, and you accept that they act according to their level of consciousness. Nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness.

So to expect somebody to act beyond their level of consciousness is futile. At some point, I realized that with reference to my parents, when I went through a shift in consciousness, I realized that I, towards my father, although there was love, I also had resentment towards my father. And the resentment was partly to do with the fact that he left us, my mother and me, when I was about 11 or so.

He just went off to another country with another woman. And my mother was virtually destitute. She was a traditional, at the time, traditional housewife, not trained for any kind of job.

And we had no idea where money would come from for food or anything. Even the social services at the time were not fully developed. They're not like now.

So there was enormous crisis. And he just, he left. And there was some resentment.

I didn't hate him for it as a child. I still loved him. But when I later thought about it, there was resentment.

And so whenever I saw him, I could feel resentment. And my mother, she was also, there was love also. But on top of that, it was, she was very irritating.

So I was almost continuously irritated by her whenever I was. And when I went through this shift in consciousness, things changed when I was 29. Of course, I was no longer, had left home long ago.

I left home when I was 18. And it was one of the happiest moments of my life. I remember it forever.

But then I suddenly realized after the shift in consciousness, and also there was this continuous, while my parents were still together, there were continuous conflicts, dreadful, like living in some kind of madhouse. But I realized suddenly they had no choice. There was not enough consciousness in them to act differently.

Their state of consciousness manifested externally in their behavior. My father could not stop his anger that he would always burst into. Of course, my mother irritated him even more than she irritated me.

And so his anger was like bombs exploding in the house. Every other day, they would go to read huge outburst of shouting and banging tables. Oh, this is, I learned a lot about the ego and without knowing that it was the ego, but he could not help it.

So he had didn't, there wasn't enough consciousness to have a choice. Because to have a choice, you need some certain amount of consciousness. And this was quite normal, especially at that time.

I don't know anybody who at that time who had conscious parents. They were all unconscious. There might have been some, but I didn't meet them.

And then at 29, what is in conventional terms, they would call forgiveness, but it wasn't forgiveness because I suddenly realized there was absolutely nothing to forgive. And of course, that's true forgiveness. True forgiveness is the realization that there's nothing to forgive, because you realize they act according to their level of consciousness.

And then suddenly there was no more resentment with my father. And whenever I saw him, either I visited him or he came to visit me occasionally, it was fine. He still had a huge ego.

That was okay. I accepted that that's how it is. But little changes happened in him when I was able to completely accept him.

Certain areas emerged in his life where he behaved very consciously, almost like a spiritual master. And then other areas remained where he was still totally ego-dominated. Consciously, for example, when he had to wait for something, he says, I can wait for hours.

I don't mind. I'll just sit here and I'll wait. So that was amazing.

And then he had occasionally some statements came out of him that seemed, oh, there's a consciousness emerging. He had various ailments, like most elderly people have, including myself, things in the body that don't go as they should, but he would never see a doctor. I have inherited that, by the way.

And he would always say, I live in peaceful coexistence with my illnesses. That was quite

a profound statement. But in other areas, he was still totally unconscious.

But I accepted him totally for the way he was. I believe that my acceptance had something to do with his partial awakening. And my mother, she didn't irritate me anymore.

I only saw her, of course, when I visited her or she came to visit me once a year. She didn't irritate me anymore. However, I did reduce the amount of time that I would, the number of days that I would spend with her, because her mind was so active, she would speak continuously, talk and talk and talk and talk and talk and talk and talk.

A wonderful acceptance practice. That's how she is. And occasionally, she had some very occasionally breakthroughs into brief realizations.

And that was wonderful, wonderful to see. So acceptance is vital. There may be a time rather than giving some abstract explanation, that you don't have to live in this way.

You don't have to, you can live more consciously, all this probably doesn't work. But some very simple things may work if the moment is right. And only you can tell whether the moment is right.

Even a simple thing like, can you feel the energy in your right hand? Do you want to try a game? Can you feel the energy in your right hand and say, what do you mean right hand?

Yeah. If you close your eyes, hold your hand like this. And is there any way you can know if your hand is still there, even without looking at it or even touching anything?

This is a little game that will direct attention into the hand. And without them knowing it, what they have done is they have taken attention away from thinking and put it in here. Then can you feel your left hand?

How does it feel? Then you can say, I do that every night and it feels so good. Maybe you could want to do it too, you might like it.

And then you can even go from there, but can you feel your feet or even if you just stay with your hand? This is one way of taking attention away from incessant thinking and bring a little bit of presence. Breathing, do something with breath.

Perhaps you can have a little, if the moment is right, but if not, your acceptance is vital. Accept each human as they are. It is not uncommon for humans to change when they are accepted fully.

When one person accepts them fully, very often change happens and you no longer expect it because if you expect change, there's not complete acceptance. Complete acceptance. So you observe how they create their own suffering and you just see it and

you don't, wow, you become the witnessing presence.

The witnessing presence that has not yet arisen in them. But if it's there in their immediate environment, that can be almost a substitute for their witnessing presence that arises within them. And that's the power that emanates from a human being who is present.

A certain power emanates from you. So don't underestimate the power of acceptance. And then it may happen that at some point in some conversation, it may just arise that you say something that they are ready to listen to in that moment.

I've had quite a few people telling me that they found the power of now on new earth and they said, oh, it changed my life. I must give that to my uncle, my brother, my whoever it is. And they bought a copy and said for Christmas or birthday, this book changed my life.

You must read it. It'll change yours too. And so they got the book and then the next day or next week, did you, have you looked at that?

Have you started reading that book that's going to change your life? And he said, I read one page. I couldn't get beyond it.

It doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever. Why do you give me books like that? And it has also happened is more than one person that told me that they were given this book and this is, this was their reaction.

And the book was put on a shelf and several years passed. And in the interval of these years, these people who had received the book, but didn't understand a word, went through further life experiences involving, I suspect, further suffering. So they went through more suffering and then they had reached a point where the suffering had made them ready to hear the message.

And then they tell me, several people have told me, I had your book on my shelf for years. I could, at first it made no sense at all. And then I picked it up again and suddenly it made complete sense and it changed my life.

So there needs to be the readiness. If you give them one of these books for Christmas, this may happen, but hopefully they won't throw it away. Hopefully they'll put it on a shelf somewhere and one day they may be ready for it.

What does not work is wanting to change people. Even if your intentions are good, often it has the opposite effect. As you know, the famous proverb, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

So that's your practice. We'll see how it goes. But remember, acceptance comes first.

Everything else arises out of that. But if you want to have this little trick about feeling the hand or something to do with breathing, that might work for some people without any other explanation. You don't have to say, if you feel your hand, this will take attention away from your thinking mind and it will gradually free you of your ego.

Don't go there.

[Speaker 4] (35:21 - 35:22)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (35:22 - 35:32)

Thank you. Let's have one more and then we'll have a little meditation.

[Speaker 2] (35:33 - 35:33)

Hello.

[Speaker 1] (35:33 - 35:34)

Hello.

[Speaker 2] (35:35 - 35:41)

First, I just want to thank you for the contribution that you've made to my life, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (35:41 - 35:41)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (35:41 - 36:20)

And I know to many lives. And I love the subject that we're on, relationships. I really feel that that's where there's a lot of healing opportunities like you have spoken about.

And the one piece I need help with along those lines is setting healthy boundaries in relationships and staying in a state of consciousness. When somebody is projecting their pain onto me, I have been able to do this is in my biological family.

[Speaker 1] (36:21 - 36:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (36:21 - 36:44)

And I'd like to hear you share about that, because the boundary that I've set has been very strong in so many words, that type of treatment towards me is not acceptable. And

I don't want to have contact if you're going to continue to treat me that way.

[Speaker 1] (36:45 - 36:45)

Right.

[Speaker 2] (36:45 - 36:47)

So I'd love to hear you share.

[Speaker 1] (36:47 - 37:07)

Right. So the behavior of those people, it was not just mostly talking to you about their drama or unhappiness or suffering. It was actually aggressively directed towards you.

[Speaker 7] (37:07 - 37:07)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (37:08 - 37:12)

Right. And more than one person.

[Speaker 2] (37:12 - 37:24)

Yes. And I hold it as a healing opportunity, you know, so that that's the piece to give you more.

[Speaker 1] (37:24 - 37:25)

Yes, of course.

[Speaker 2] (37:27 - 37:30)

This may help many people in this room.

[Speaker 1] (37:32 - 37:32)

Yes.

[Speaker 7] (37:34 - 37:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (37:34 - 37:37)

At the moment, it's kind of focuses on that.

[Speaker 7] (37:38 - 37:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (37:38 - 37:52)

Yeah. Well, one, of course, is in some cases, when you when you say boundaries, do you mean that you refuse to have contact with these people anymore? Do you reduce the amount of contact you have?

[Speaker 2] (37:52 - 38:27)

Well, I had been reducing the contact. It just kind of was organic. And then what happened was there was a conversation on the phone and there was, oh, you think you're so much better than everybody else, hang up on you.

And then the next week, oh, I have a favor, you know, and it was it just had me feeling like, well, this doesn't feel good anymore. And this has been a pattern in my family. So I think I just got to the place where I was like, I don't want this anymore.

[Speaker 1] (38:28 - 38:28)

Right.

[Speaker 2] (38:28 - 38:30)

And right.

[Speaker 1] (38:30 - 42:48)

Well, with certain types of aggression, then to place boundaries and reduce the amount of time you spend with these people or no longer engage in extreme cases that might be extreme, that may be necessary. But another thing to try out and consider is the way in which you converse with these people. If you are able to perhaps avoid certain subjects or don't contradict them, let them say what they want to say without stating your mental position, which is your viewpoint, your perspective, how you see things.

I call that mental positions. A mental position is a thought form that you identify with. The moment you identify with a thought form, which becomes your opinion, which, or which if many people regard their opinion as the absolute truth, and anybody who argues with that opinion is not truthful, doesn't know the truth, they confuse opinion with objective truth.

If you are able to become aware of your own mental positions and realize that a mental position that you identify with is a substitute for a true and deeper sense of self. And when the mental position is attacked by somebody, when this happens, and it has become a substitute for a deeper sense of self, then you feel it, you are being attacked. And they are basically attacking you by attacking your mental position, you feel you are

being attacked, and they will also confuse your mental position with who you are.

And so you become their enemy, because they are deeply identified with their mental position. It's possible, on the one hand, to have a conversation with somebody and put forward your viewpoints without identifying with your mental positions, in which case you simply state, this is how I see it. Then the other person will say, oh, they see it, they might be attacking your position, but if you have not identified with it, there's nobody there that they can attack.

It's also possible to avoid certain subjects, because it makes no difference whether or not you state your viewpoint in that situation, it does not make a difference to the world, it does not make a difference to the political situation, whether or not you state your point of view in that situation. If you have been called to testify in front of Congress or something, then perhaps you would have to state your point of view, but you are at a family barbecue or whatever, and what your point of view is, is ultimately irrelevant. If you uphold your point of view, it only serves to uphold your sense of your separate self, your egoic self, as opposed to, it strengthens the other person's ego, and it strengthens yours.

So one way is to simply not talk about certain things and allow people to say whatever they want to say, nothing is going to change by the, whatever they say will make no difference to anybody. It's sometimes hard to remember that. They can say anything, what difference does it make?

It goes up into the air and then it dissipates. And so you don't need to oppose it, and you don't need to assert your existence by opposing it, because you're already fully yourself without needing to state your mental positions. They are not who you are.

[Speaker 2] (42:48 - 43:02)

Yes, the mistake I made was when she asked me my opinion, and maybe I should have known, you know, because I know how emotional they get about that subject.

[Speaker 1] (43:02 - 43:02)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (43:02 - 43:14)

So when they asked my opinion, I did not probably stay in my awareness enough to know, oh, do not answer that question.

[Speaker 1] (43:14 - 43:22)

Yes, that's probably a correct interpretation of that event. Yes. Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (43:28 - 43:48)

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Eckhart Tolle Continuous Doing Leads to Forgetfulness of Being [17014055-1bdd-40e4-b637-528fdd4d5ed8]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:56)

Continuous doing leads to forgetfulness of being. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the fact that many people live in a continuous state of waiting for the next thing that will magically transform their lives. A relationship, a job, a house, or more money.

He says we're misguided when we believe something outside ourselves will provide lasting fulfillment. This mindset is considered normal, but Eckhart says normal won't free us from our inner turmoil. He says even during the best of times, we feel something important is missing from our lives.

Eckhart explains when we're continuously doing, waiting for the next thing, we become forgetful of being, and this leads to suffering. Eckhart says the being dimension is fundamental to living a fulfilled whole life. He says awareness of our inner states is the first step in getting there.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 30:33)

Welcome, glad you could make it. I assume nobody's in a hurry to get anywhere, and I also assume nobody is waiting for anything to happen, and here we have already arrived at a shift in consciousness, because most people, without knowing it unconsciously, habitually, are always waiting for the next thing to happen. It's so deeply ingrained and habitual, they don't even realize it.

It's absolutely normal, but normal isn't good enough anymore. Normal doesn't free you from suffering and unhappiness. One could go so far as to say normal is suffering, unhappiness, dissatisfaction, sense of deep sense of lack, of non-fulfillment, of frustration, and a lot of that has to do with the inability to be present.

So, this continuous sense of not having arrived yet, except for brief moments when certain desires have been fulfilled, a good meal, some other physical short-lived satisfaction, and then the normal state returns. It is always, at the best of times, an underlying sense of something missing, not being fully yourself, neediness, and whereas it's true to say that on the horizontal level of life, there are always things that you can do, some things you have to do, there are things to be achieved, to be experienced, and all those things happen in time, they unfold in time, which implies something in the future, you're going towards it.

So, that's one aspect of life, is the horizontal aspect that unfolds in time, where you're looking towards the next thing, doing, and to be completely absorbed in the doing dimension, which is a necessary part of life, of course, but to be completely absorbed in

the continuous doing dimension, I call it sometimes the horizontal dimension of life, leads to a very serious condition, more serious than any other condition that you might contract, or illness, or virus, it leads to forgetfulness of being, and then the life is experienced as eternally unfulfilling, ultimately, any condition that you arrive at for a little while seems to be fine, and then very quickly, it's unfulfilling again, relationships, achievements, nothing wrong with these things, nothing wrong with obviously having a relationship, achieving things, wonderful, but if there's forgetfulness of being, then nothing satisfies for very long, and this is why I say, you are a human being, human being, the human is the person, the conditioned entity, including the physical body, the psychological entity, the personality, conditioned by the past, all things that happen in your mind and in your emotional field, they're all part of you as the human, the person, and of course, it's all conditioned by the past, but you're not just a human, you're a human being, and the being dimension is the one that is fundamental to a fulfilled life, but it's the one that is habitually overlooked, and remains unrealized, and all the spiritual teachings point to it, they use different pointers, different words, but they all point to this one thing, Jesus says somewhere, only one thing is needed fundamentally, deeply, on the surface, other things are needed, in the depths of who you are, only the realization of who you are, beyond the conditioning, the conditioned entity, the person, that is vital, and that begins with a simple thing, to become aware that you're always waiting for the next thing, the next thing is a thought, there's no next thing other than a thought, in other words, the future can only be experienced as a thought, isn't that an incredible thing, the future, because if it were something other, if it could be experienced other than as a thought, some intrepid explorer would have arrived there one day, and said, I have found the future, where, it's here, now, in other words, it's not the future, oh, the future is necessary on the horizontal dimension of life, we need it, we needed the future to come together here, to make a plan, schedule, what time is it, okay, that is, that's fine, but you cannot experience the future, you cannot arrive there, the so-called future can only manifest as the present moment, so it's fine to make plans for the future, to have goals, but not to give that which is to be achieved, the goals, not to attribute to these goals an importance that the goals ultimately don't have, not to expect these goals to lead to ultimate fulfillment, a fuller sense of who you are, because you won't really enjoy the fruit of your labors, if habitually you cannot be present in the moment, no matter what you achieve, the enjoyment will be short-lived because of the habitual pattern of dissatisfaction, in the background, it's always there, some obscure sense of lack, and often it comes into the foreground as real unhappiness, frustration, and then if you realize that there's always this waiting for the next thing, which is thought, when you're waiting for the next thing, you're trapped in thought, because that's where the future happens, the realization that this is happening to you is very important, the first step is the beginning of something else arising, and in all of you that has already arisen, although occasionally it still gets obscured, perhaps, probably, I assume, something else has arisen that's not thought, that is beyond thought, the ability to recognize thought, the ability to recognize certain patterns that habitually arise in your mind, your mental

emotional field, the ability to witness that which arises in your mental emotional field, that's an enormous leap in consciousness, another dimension, one could say, has arisen, we could call it presence, we could call it awareness, it's not thought, but it's intelligence, so intelligence is not confined to thought, there is a dimension in you that is far greater, far more intelligent than any intelligent thought, it's the place from where all intelligence arises, a place of where all creativity arises, so there's the ability to suddenly be aware of your inner states, to be aware of what your mind is saying, the narrative, the habitual narrative, that you're telling yourself, you're having a monologue, or many people have a dialogue with themselves, where they split themselves in two, and then this one argues with the other, why aren't you good enough, why did you do this, why do you never get anything right, you shouldn't have, he shouldn't have said that, yes, but on the other, so you can have a dialogue in your narrative, or you can have a monologue, says I am such a miserable creature, because a lot of the time, the narratives, the unconscious thought processes, tend to be more negative than positive for many, many people, so to be aware that this is happening, that's an enormous gain in consciousness, it's the beginning of awakening, spiritually speaking, something arises that is not part of the conditioned mind patterns, so there's the ability to observe your inner states, and that's a wonderful little pointer, to ask yourself frequently, what's my inner state at this moment, and then look at it, direct your attention to it, the narratives, what have I been telling myself, and the emotion that accompanies the narrative, what am I feeling, what's the emotion, so in addition to being a story in your head, and an emotion, there's a knowing behind it, there's a space behind it, sometimes I call it inner space, there's an inner space, from where you can be aware of what's happening on the level of the person, the personality, because that inner space, the awareness, is not part of the personality, it's part, it's the being, the knowing that is inherent in the being, and so when you become aware of dysfunctional patterns, dysfunctional meaning, narratives that cause unhappiness, for example, what your mind is telling you something, and what your mind is saying about you, about where you are, about other people, whatever it may be doing, you become aware of it, and then you realize the emotion you feel very often is a reflection of the self-talk, this emotion reflects the self-talk, if the self-talk is about the bad things that could happen to me tomorrow, or next month, or next year, or the bad things that probably will happen to me, unless I get really bored now and start thinking very hard, otherwise those bad things are certainly going to happen to me, and then the body doesn't know, it believes that's already happening, so you have the emotion arises, as if the scenario that your mind creates at three o'clock in the morning when you're in bed, awake, the scenario that the mind creates, the emotion that you feel is no different from the emotion that you would feel if that were actually happening, you were in that state of absolute danger, it's called anxiety, it's a very common state, very common, and people don't know it, how do I get out of it, so you first, you investigate by being aware of what happens, this inner process, oh, this is what I'm doing to myself, because in this moment, there is nothing to fear, so when anxiety arises, it's something that a narrative that the mind creates, if there is an emergency situation, that's a

different matter, when a true emergency arises, then you need to deal with it, and you do it now, but that's not anxiety, an emergency situation may bring up fear response, perhaps, and that adrenaline arises, arises up in your body, and then action is needed to deal with it, that's a different matter, but anxiety is to do with mental creations, and very often, certain external situations cause you to react in certain ways mentally, to interpret the situation as bad, and then you feel the corresponding emotion, so I often recommend, when you're in an actual situation, let's not talk about being in bed at 3 in the morning, that's another way, it's totally, completely a mental creation, let's say you're in a situation that's not going the way you want it to go, people don't do what they're expected to do, they don't arrive on time, things get cancelled, things go wrong, things break down, it happens quite a lot, things breaking down, going wrong, this is not supposed to happen, why is this happening? But of course, this happens all the time in life, it's part of life, is that things don't go the way you expect them to go, no matter how much positive thinking you practice, which is a good thing, nevertheless, you will experience, quite often, things don't go according to the way the mind says they should be going, why did they cancel my flight, I've been waiting for three hours and now it's cancelled again, this is awful, this is dreadful, dreadful, so there's a narrative, there's not really anything you can do right now, you can see that if you imply your intelligence, you say, no matter how much you complain that this flight has been cancelled, it's cancelled, just one example, there are bigger things than cancelled flights, but the mechanism behind it is the same, the flight is cancelled, and then the narrative is very dreadful, these people are so inefficient, and then if awareness arises, you suddenly realise there's a narrative in my mind, and then the mind says, yeah, of course, there's a narrative, because this is awful, which again is part of the narrative, and then awareness comes in again and says, how would I experience this situation or this moment, it's always this moment, how would I experience this present moment, without the addition of a narrative, okay, you have plenty of time, because your flight got cancelled, so you might as well experiment, how would I experience this without the addition of a narrative, a mental narrative, okay, now to find the answer to that, you have to drop the narrative, because otherwise you won't know how you experience this situation, you drop the narrative and there you stand there, or you sit or stand, whatever it is, and you look around, people, room full of people perhaps, and you're breathing, and there are lights, artificial lights probably, but noises around you, noise, lights, people, life unfolding in the present moment, and you're breathing and looking, perhaps you can even feel your body, the inside of your body, because it's alive, perhaps you become aware that the body is alive, if you're not distracted by a narrative, you might become aware that your body is alive, so now you have the answer to how would I experience this situation if I didn't add a narrative to it, and the answer is, peace, it would be quite peaceful, because suddenly you're no longer reactive to the externals, the conditioned reaction to the externals has dropped away, and you have discovered a kind of, well, what's the word, autonomy, independence of external conditions as far as your inner state is concerned by dropping the narrative, this is what is, maybe your mind is still saying occasional

things, but it's not reacting, just saying, well, this is what is, and here you are, or here I am, breathing, feeling the aliveness in my inner body, looking around, other life forms surrounding me, technology here and there, that's what is, and you're standing or sitting somewhere, and it's actually not that bad at all, in fact, you feel some inner peace despite the external condition, not as caused by the external condition, if you feel happiness or inner peace that's caused by an external condition, that's always short-lived, because every external condition is short-lived, or the external condition loses its ability to make you happy after a short while, a relationship, for example, this person is making me happy, okay, just wait, then this relationship in the form of this person loses its ability to make you happy, or the external condition quickly disappears, whatever that may be, as the Buddha said, it's impermanent, everything is impermanent, so to attach yourself to an impermanent condition for your inner state of satisfaction, inner peace, fulfillment, happiness, whatever you call it, is erroneous and leads to suffering, as the Buddha said, dukkha, suffering. Anicca is the term in the scriptures that the Buddha said is, that means impermanence, so attaching yourself to impermanence is suffering, but the attachment is a mental thing, so how would I experience this without the addition, the baggage of unnecessary thought, ah, and then you arrive in the present moment, without the barrier or the veil of unnecessary thought, and you have the bareness and aliveness of the present moment, because every moment is alive, it's a manifestation in the external realm, the physical realm of life, every human, even technology, they're all manifestations of life, and that's what is, now it doesn't mean you become incapable of taking action, in fact you're more likely to take intelligent action if you access the deeper intelligence that arises in that space of awareness, so if there's something you can do, you're going to do it, and it won't be a reactive, it will be a true response, real intelligence operating through you, perhaps using your mind, but you're connected, but to be connected to that, you need to come to an alignment with the present moment, without the alignment with the is-ness of now, you are disconnected from the deeper intelligence that potentially is there, actually is there, but unrecognized within you, for the power to operate through you, power that transcends who you are as a person, you have to come to an inner alignment with the is-ness of the present moment, and no matter what form it takes, sometimes it's relatively okay, sometimes things go wrong, sometimes it's quite nice, but they're all is-ness, is-ness of this moment, and when you become aligned with the is-ness of this moment, without demanding that it should be different, you discover that there's an alive peace that you sense within you, first you don't, may not sense it very clearly, but there's an inner peace suddenly, that inner peace is also power, I call it the power of now, there it is, it's independent of external, it is not caused by external conditions, and one characteristic of this is, if you look very closely, you discover when you come aligned with the present moment, there is less unnecessary thinking happening, thinking slows down, but you don't go to sleep, thinking slows down, even you get spaces in between thoughts arise, where the thought is replaced by awareness, just giving attention to something, instead of calling it something, you just give it attention, there's a difference between looking at a tree and

calling it something, giving it a name, nothing wrong with it, but there's more to life than that, there's a difference between saying something about the tree, either you know its name, or you say, oh that looks like a tree that my grandmother had in her garden, or you say, oh I would like to have that tree in my garden, or where did you get that, that if it's a pot, this is a potted tree, where did you get that tree, that looks like a tree that so-and-so painter painted, a 19th century impressionist, he painted something, didn't he, yes, yes, that's all true and fine, but you're still looking at the tree through the veil of thought, and there's a place for that too, but more importantly, it is possible to look at this tree without imposing any thought in it, instead of looking at it through the veil of concepts, you look at the tree through awareness, and then you see it, but you don't call it, you don't compare it to anything, you don't judge it in any way, it just is, how long will you look at it like that, I don't know, maybe a few seconds, or half a minute, or a minute, but it's a different way of relating to the tree than relating to the tree through the veil of concepts, there's a place for that, you need to be familiar with these two modes of knowing, knowing through concepts, but more importantly, knowing without concepts, awareness through awareness, through awareness you know everything at a deeper level, even the tree, you realize there's more to the tree than the word tree, there's more to the tree than what your senses tell you about the tree, the senses only give you a fraction of what's there, there's a mystery embedded in this tree that you cannot analyze and conceptualize, but you can sense the presence of the tree as you can sense your own presence, that's a new way of relating to nature, that humans have lost, that's why humans have become so destructive with nature, they have lost the ability to sense the presence that is inherent in everything that is natural, what in ancient times would have been called sacred presence of everything, so that's an amazing shift to be able to relate, become aware that there are the two, you have to dance between the two modes of being in your life, the two modes of interacting, of relating, of perceiving, one is through concepts, it is fine, knowledge, concepts, comparing, analyzing, sometimes you have to do these things, but not being taken over by concepts, not losing the ability to step out of conceptualization into awareness, because that frees you, conceptualization is all the conditioning, it's part of the conditioning of your mind, the culture that conditions your mind, etc., your upbringing, even the language that you grew up with is already a form of conditioning, everything, so you have the two, the two modes, know when the conceptualization is necessary, then you can use it, but you're no longer used by it, and most importantly, because if you don't know the being dimension, you're trapped in conceptualization that also applies to your sense of identity, your sense of identity or your sense of self, your sense of who you are, is then derived from concepts, if you have no awareness of the being dimension, your sense of who you are is a conceptual sense of self, it's a kind of narrative again, the me, me and my life, it's called, me and my life, ah, and there's a heaviness to it, and it's very problematic, all these things that happened in the past, oh god, and what's going to happen in the future, oh, I don't know, and then you oscillate between future is so important because I'm not fully myself yet, I'm a conceptual entity, I'm a narrative, of course I'm not myself, and then

you look to the future, which doesn't exist except as a thought, so it's a place you never arrive at, so you look to the future for your real self, when I'm enlightened, that's the spiritual person, well, the conceptual spiritual person, or when I get this or that, or obtain this or that, or become free of this or that, so you look to the future for what the future cannot give you, because it's only a thought, so your sense of self is a conceptual one, it's called the ego, by the way.

[Speaker 2] (30:33 - 30:53)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Creative Solutions Come From Stillness [a4e92607-16f6-45ba-b9fe-e9768b719463]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:54)

Creative solutions come from stillness. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from participants. A woman is reluctant to experience another life on earth.

She asks, do we actually choose to reincarnate? Eckhart says if we're compulsively reincarnating with every thought and emotion that occurs, then we probably will continue the same dysfunctional pattern, not only in the next moment, but in the next life. Another woman asks about how to be a conscious parent.

Her teenage daughter feels unmotivated. And wants to find a purpose. She's been partying with her friends and feels aimless.

Eckhart says most of us make many mistakes in our lives, and that is how we evolve. Lastly, a man who is a technologist and creates virtual worlds says there's a lot of suffering on these platforms. He asks Eckhart about designing social media in conscious ways.

Eckhart reminds him that creative solutions come from stillness.

[Speaker 1] (0:55 - 5:22)

It's my birthday today. Lindsay from Australia. Happy birthday.

And I am not sure I would choose to come to earth again. I'm sure not having a body would be more fun or peaceful. My question is, do we choose to be incarnated?

Can you talk about this? If you incarnate, which means to take on form, incarnate, well carnate comes from carna, flesh, they become chili con carne, it's the same word. That's the same, the same origin of incarnate, flesh.

But the question is, do you incarnate here in this lifetime, here and now, do you as consciousness incarnate into every thought that arises in your mind, which here means do you identify completely with every thought in your mind? So the thought absorbs your consciousness completely, so you reincarnate every moment into the unconscious mind. You identify with it, that is reincarnation.

And the emotions that go with it take you over completely. There's no awareness left. There's complete identification with the pain body, complete identification with thoughts.

So if you are completely identified with the pain body, you incarnate into the pain body. And so from there you can, if you incarnate in this lifetime every moment compulsively because you are not conscious enough, then it is more than likely that you have no

choice about your next reincarnation, because the same compulsion, the same unconsciousness that draws you into every thought and every emotion here and now, is the same thing that will draw you into some other form in order to experience the same dysfunction and dysfunctional drama and the same unconscious person again living out its unconsciousness. If you cannot experience the end of this compulsive reincarnation into every thought in this lifetime, then my prediction would be that you will be forced to reincarnate again. You have no choice in the matter.

Just as you seem to have no choice in this lifetime. So the solution then to the problem of reincarnation is not sometimes if you go to a Buddhist temple they might tell you maybe in 20 lifetimes you might be able to come to the end of this compulsion to reincarnate. You become free of the cycle.

Well, the question is here and now. Are you free of it here and now? And the possibility is there here and now.

Instead of looking to time to become free of the compulsion to reincarnate, the possibility is there here and now. So that's the important question and catch yourself when you reincarnate into a thought and into the pain body and into an emotion. You become it.

You can see how it takes you over a reaction, a thought. You're not even there. You're completely asleep and at night you wake up in a horrible state.

But of course you're all beyond that already. I'm just acting out. Perhaps there are some questions here.

If anybody has a question, please ask. Somebody will choose some omnipotent person. One or two are here.

They will choose the questioners. I can't do it from here because nobody would know who I'm pointing to.

[Speaker 2] (5:24 - 7:35)

So I've been following the teachings for about 16 years and a question has finally arisen. I remember you saying a number of years ago, and probably many times since then, our practice as parents is to just be present with our children. That's our spiritual practice, our whole spiritual practice.

So I've done a lot of that since my children were born, just being with them, not telling, not doing, and now that my children are older, they're teenagers, this has become an even more important practice. And they have some background. We used to listen to your audio books to calm them down at night, and that's been incredibly helpful.

I think it's a real foundation for them. So when they ask me questions, like my 16-year-old said a couple weeks ago, she said, Mom, I'm really feeling unmotivated. I have no intrinsic motivation.

I really want to know what my purpose is and what I'm meant to do here, what my impact is. And I say, for once, there's a doing when something comes out of me versus the being. And I say, well, your purpose, your inner purpose is to be.

And she laughs and says, did the tree tell you that, Mom? So my question is, is there a doing that needs to come from the being of them at this age? Because at this age, it feels like the stakes are higher.

It feels like she's a teenager. She's going out and doing all the things that teenagers do. Many of us have also done.

So the question is, as I refrain from labeling what she's doing, and I just be with her, is there anything else?

[Speaker 1] (7:37 - 9:08)

Thank you. Thank you. I believe you are providing good guidance, and the trees have provided good guidance for you.

And now, increasingly, the child who is no longer a child gradually has to face the challenges of life, various ways in which life can go wrong. It's always good for a child to explore. It would be too much to expect at this age to find what their life purpose is.

They were very rare. I didn't know my life purpose until I was, I don't know, early 30s. Many people have to make many mistakes and go through various kinds of suffering, sometimes as a result of those mistakes.

And hopefully, you can help her so that she does not make mistakes that can never be rectified, or very difficult to rectify, like getting into a drug addiction, or what seems to happen a lot to teenagers these days. Just that is not the case, I believe, with your daughter. So there is no answer at this point of what the life purpose is.

Perhaps by asking questions, what would you like to do first instead of, is she still at school, right?

[Speaker 2] (9:09 - 9:19)

She is in school. She was traveling, schooling abroad, and she's come home now. It's very different after you've been a global student.

[Speaker 1] (9:19 - 9:30)

Yes, yes. And of course, for all, it's important. I don't know how much time she spends on her devices when the youngster spent many hours on.

[Speaker 2] (9:30 - 9:38)

Many hours on the devices, and school supports that, and the partying. And there's a big focus on that at this age.

[Speaker 1] (9:38 - 15:01)

Yes. Life, as you experience it, can be divided into this past, there's the present moment, there's the future, and for most people, traditionally, past and future have been the focal points for their life, especially future. Now we have to add a fourth one for modern, especially young humans, which is the digital, the virtual world.

So they not only don't live in past and future, in addition, they live in the virtual reality, which for many youngsters becomes their primary reality. That is the strange thing. For many young people, the virtual world is their primary reality.

And we cannot predict what consequences this will have in the long term, because this is the first generation growing up now for whom the virtual world is, for many of them, their primary reality. And that, I believe, can lead to very dysfunctional inner states. It's very hard, although at this point it may be impossible for you to ask her not to indulge in excessive participation in that dimension.

But it's funny that she mentioned three when you said being, because something that can provide some kind of counterbalance to the virtual world, which is an abstract world, where there's no true human interaction, it's all abstractions. As a counterbalance to that, as much as possible, I would encourage my child or help my child to continue to have contact with nature as much as possible, so that they, in whatever way you do that, I don't know, activities in nature, going on hikes or camping, stay in touch with nature. That's also, many people feel depressed.

Youngsters feel depressed these days. Again, loss of touch with the natural environment, for many of them, can be the cause of depression. And I would recommend nature to anybody, even adults, to keep you sane, to escape the insanity of this human-made world, go into nature, spend as much time as possible in nature or perhaps also interact with nature, doing something in nature, make a fire or collect some berries or whatever it may be, be in nature, interact with it, give it attention.

And so, she's 16. I don't know if, at this point, she has her own mind already and she may not want to go into nature, I don't know. But you could make it as attractive as possible for her.

That is a vital thing to counterbalance the harmful effect and it applies to millions of

youngsters these days. I do not know where humanity is going with that. I do not know, I don't feel terribly confident that this is having a good effect on the collective human consciousness.

It could lead even to a breakdown of entire civilization within two generations. It is possible. The inability to focus on anything for very long, attention deficit disorder, it's called, and this is one of the effects of the virtual world where everything is short attention spans.

And in order to be creative in this world, in order to create something new, you have to give it attention. With a short attention span, you cannot create anything significant in this world. You have to give something attention so that creativity can happen.

If you lose the ability to give attention to something, then creativity would be lost. And if creativity is lost in humanity, then humanity will be overwhelmed by self-created problems without finding any solution whatsoever, any creative solution. But all these are larger issues.

My recommendation is to encourage your daughter, maybe together, spend as much time in nature as possible. That would be helpful. And then you have to allow her also to find her own path.

You can give some guidance. And you have to allow her, she will make mistakes. If she doesn't make mistakes, she's not going to evolve.

And in order to find something that she really wants to do, her life purpose for many humans, they have to go make many mistakes before they finally find something worth the experience of flow. And you have to allow her to make mistakes. As long as they become, hopefully, not too destructive.

You have done your best, as far as I can tell. She is aware, although she said jokingly about the trees. She has some awareness of the being dimension, I believe.

[Speaker 2] (15:02 - 15:08)

She said, most kids my age don't even know what a life purpose is. They don't know how to define the word impact.

[Speaker 1] (15:09 - 15:27)

Right. Yes, that's right. Yes.

So that's all I can say at the moment. But you have provided a good foundation for her life, which hopefully will counteract the harmful effects of the virtual world that she's engaged in, like all of them are.

[Speaker 3] (15:37 - 17:41)

Hi, my name is Baba. And I started listening to you a year ago during the pandemic. Thanks a lot to my partner who introduced me to you.

I have a three dimensional question for you, sir. As a technologist, I come from this experience of creating virtual worlds. And I would say there's some good news.

The good news there, both as a producer and a consumer, is there's a lot of suffering there. And as we always say, suffering is the foundation to consciousness. So hopefully we'll find a solution there.

On a serious note, the three dimensional question I have for you is, in regards to language, how has your understanding of multiple languages enabled you to get access to wisdom in the conscious dimension and communicate that in accessible ways? So that's the first one. Then the second one is, talk about how you would design social media in conscious ways.

What would you recommend there? Because I usually quit my job to explore some of these ideas. Because yeah, I think, as the pandemic showed me, it's important we solve this problem.

Then the final one is the power of now. I come from a different community whereby thoughts like yours was inaccessible to me. And I feel like it was a language barrier.

And I would like to work with you and your team to help make the power of now accessible in major African languages. Because I... So please, languages, digital media, and the power of now.

[Speaker 1] (17:48 - 18:03)

Thank you. Wonderful proposal. And that will help perhaps millions of people.

However, I must confess that I have forgotten your first question.

[Speaker 3] (18:07 - 18:21)

Your understanding of several languages, does that help in accessing wisdom from the conscious dimension? And does that help in communicating that in accessible ways?

[Speaker 1] (18:22 - 24:45)

Right. Well, we had a retreat in Mexico. And for the first time ever, I wanted to challenge myself and decided to do the entire retreat in Spanish.

And... I learned Spanish a long time ago, over half a century ago. And I haven't used it very much since.

Reading, occasionally reading a book. And at first, it was very hard for my mind to find the words There's an intuition that comes. Before you speak, it's very hard to describe.

Before language happens, you already know what wants to be said at a non-verbal level. And then this knowing what wants to be said, which is a non-conceptual knowing, then it gets translated into concepts and words. And in English, they say your language is rusty when you haven't used the language for a long time.

You say it's rusty. And that's how I experienced it. The impulse came to say something.

And sometimes the flow was there. It was fine. Then you can't find the right word.

Immediately, the mind has to work overtime to find an equivalent or similar word. And it slows you down a bit. But that was fine.

And after a couple of days, the flow came back and it went much more easily. Quite enjoyable, reaching people in their own language. That makes a difference, if you can reach people in their own language rather than have it translated into their language.

This is why I wanted to do it. And people were grateful that I made this effort. Normally, I'm not into efforting at all.

But I made an effort to speak Spanish and it worked. And that was good. A similar thing in Germany, years ago, I saw out of touch with the German language that I spoke as a child.

And I said, I cannot possibly, that was 20 years ago, I said, I cannot possibly give a talk in German. It's just the words are not there. And at the first event, I had a translator.

I spoke English and the translator translated into German. Didn't feel quite right. And a few times, I knew the translator wasn't correct, but I couldn't say anything.

And at the second talk, the organizer said, why don't you just say a few words in German and explain to them why you are not going to speak German? And that's a good idea. So I started and I talked.

The reason why I'm not going to speak in German, I said in German. The reason why I cannot speak in German because I haven't used the language in 60 years or whatever. And then I talked and talked and talked.

And 15 minutes later, I said, oh, I'm still speaking German. And then they continued. Translation was unnecessary.

The flow was there. It was a miracle. And so after that, I've always, whenever I go Germany, Switzerland, I speak in German now.

That's good. But the language is a strange thing. It's an abstraction language.

I use language to teach. And the words that one uses in spiritual discourse, the words have a different function from the function that words have in ordinary discourse. In spiritual discourse, the words are not the thing.

They only point to the thing. All the words point us to something that is beyond words. So I'm using words in order to point something that is beyond the words.

Even when I say stillness, the word stillness isn't stillness. So it's a pointer. When I say the awakening, spiritual awakening, presence, whatever it may be, they're all just pointers.

They are not something to be believed in. It's not, you cannot learn the terminology of spirituality and then believing because you have mastered the words that are used in a spiritual teaching. Then you have mastered the spiritual teaching.

In ordinary subjects, this is how it works. You learn the words and in exams, you regurgitate what you have learned. You write it all down and you pass your exam.

And so to learn the words is you become proficient. In spiritual discourse, if you learn the words, you might become proficient in spiritual discourse, but it hasn't done anything to your state of consciousness. There are actually people around these days who give talks, spiritual talks.

I've seen a few on YouTube who have mastered the spiritual discourse, especially in the area of what in India is called Advaita, Advaita Vedanta. People who have mastered the terminology of Advaita and they can beautifully explain it. Whatever you say to them, it's all delusion, of course.

It's all totally delusion. Everything is denied. It's very easy to make sense apparently, but it doesn't make sense at all.

And you can see it hasn't done anything to their state of consciousness, but they have mastered the terminology. So language has a different function in spiritual discourse.

[Speaker 3] (24:46 - 25:00)

Do you have thoughts on how social media, digital media can result in more consciousness? I think this is going to help technologies like me design things for the next generation.

[Speaker 1] (25:01 - 31:41)

Well, I am not an expert. I'm not only not an expert, I am computer, almost computer illiterate, but I'm observing things. I know how these things function, how they work.

I don't have a creative solution as such. I do know that a few things that appear in the virtual world are actually helpful. There are apps that can teach you to meditate or to breathe consciously, to bring you back into the present moment.

Also, there are talks by Eckhart on YouTube. I was, not long ago, I was going for a walk and you know that people have different conceptual identities. One of my conceptual identities is I'm a writer.

When people ask me, I usually say I'm a writer. Or if I don't want any further questions from them, I will say I'm retired. Which is not a lie because I've been retired for many decades in a deeper sense.

So I'd rarely say I'm a spiritual teacher because I'm not a spiritual teacher, except in the moment when spiritual teaching happens. I don't carry around with me a conceptual identity in my head. I am a spiritual teacher.

Anyway, I was walking. A young man was coming with his partner opposite direction and the man stopped and he looked at me and said, I know you from somewhere. What's your name?

Said Eckhart. Oh, so you. I watched you.

I read you on YouTube all the time. And then he said to his girlfriend, look, this guy is a famous YouTuber. And then I realized I have a new identity now.

So sometimes the virtual world is used for good purposes. This is not the only example, of course. But there is an inherent danger in the medium itself.

That's the hard to describe. Even a simple thing when I occasionally read. I love books, the physical presence of books.

But sometimes when I travel, I have things on my iPad or virtual books because books are heavy otherwise. It is not quite the same to have the experience of reading on a screen. I find it hard to describe what the difference is.

It's almost as if I was leaking energy when I'm engaging with a screen. I have sometimes the feeling there's an energy leakage. That energy pours out.

It's kind of the screen sucks it out. And perhaps to some extent this happens to everybody because the energy is directed onto that screen and attention is energy. So there's an outflow of attention onto there.

And so I don't know what the screen does with it. Here we have a nice idea from a science fiction movie that the screens are sucking up human energy. It's the Matrix.

Nobody can control what people put out there. There's nothing you can do about that. If

people are very unconscious, what they communicate will reflect their state of unconsciousness.

So there is not much you can do. To censor people becomes problematic, although obviously there are already laws against threats of physical violence or slander and things like that. In an ideal world, one would say, oh, let's only allow polite and nice messages to come through.

Anything other we need to censor, that would not be the right way to go. But I have no solution except to encourage you to apply your presence that is already there so that you have creative insights into what is possible. Use the presence instead of looking to me for an answer because it appears that I don't have one.

Instead of looking to me for an answer, go into that stillness, that presence, and see what arises because creative solutions, creative answers come from there. So trust yourself, not the personal superficial self, but trust in the depth of your being where intuition resides, the source of all creativity. Become present, become still, direct your attention, have a question.

What do you want? A creative answer to allow the virtual world to become a helpful tool in the development of human consciousness or whatever your purpose is to direct it. And then you become still.

You ask the question, let go of the question. It drops into the stillness. This applies to any creative solution that you may need.

You ask a question and then you become still. And perhaps not immediately, perhaps after several days, weeks, or months, an answer arises. And repeat that process several times.

Ask a question so you focus. And then be happy with not finding, not having an answer. Allow the answer to come up.

So what you're asking, the question you're asking me is what you should be asking yourself. You will find a creative solution to that. I can sense that that will happen.

And reaching people in their own African language is a wonderful idea. So please connect with us so we can pursue that.

[Speaker 4] (31:52 - 32:11)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these Essential Teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

Join us next week for more Enlightened Teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for

listening.

Eckhart Tolle Daily Life As Spiritual Practice [1cf2a65b-4c68-4f8f-a317-c676e9dc554a]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

Daily life as spiritual practice. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience about the importance of using our daily lives as spiritual practice. Throughout the day, when we're not challenged by difficult people or circumstances, we invite presence into our lives, like a muscle that gets stronger with use.

It becomes part of our daily routine. Then, when challenges do arise, we don't fall into unconsciousness. We draw on our reserves.

Eckhart calls it presence power.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 57:09)

More and more, your spiritual practice is everyday life, rather than a separate time. And you can have that too. It can be very helpful.

But the most important thing is use daily life. If you want to divide daily life into those times when things are running okay, you're not being particularly challenged by difficult people or situations. And then there are times when you are being challenged by difficult situations.

They may not be difficult, but you may think they are difficult, or you react as if they were difficult, and then you make them difficult. And the same with people. There are people, they may not be conscious.

Your reaction to those people changes the way in which you experience, and changes that person's behavior too, unless they are immune, and they're so present that they can no longer be influenced by your state of consciousness. But when you relate to someone, one state of consciousness meets another. To some extent, they link up, and then you get pulled down into their state.

Your reaction pulls the other person even further, and you're both going down. Use those times when you're not being challenged to invite presence into your life. Then you grow, so to speak, in presence power.

If there's not enough presence power, then every time you get challenged, you lose it. You lose yourself. You become completely unconscious.

And you may know in your personal life, there may be certain situations that always create upset, anger, any kind of overwhelming reaction. Perhaps you already know what those are. There may be certain people who do that to you.

It could be your parents when you visit them. It could be other relatives, or it could be when your ex-husband or wife, when you bump into them, or whatever it is. It could be even remembering something from the past.

It could be having to deal with money. And every time anybody mentions money, you go completely unconscious. Whatever it may be, if you don't invite presence into your life when you're not being challenged, there may not and probably will not be enough presence power so that you can transcend the old reactive patterns in you and stay present when the old challenges come that usually pull you into unconsciousness.

So it's vital not to just, when things are going okay, it's a routine kind of day, and you're drifting or doing the usual things. No, there it's essential to choose whenever an opportunity arises. It arises continuously for choosing to be present rather than be involved in judging and thinking.

So choose presence when you walk from the building to your car. Watch your surroundings without labeling anything. Just be the presence through which the perception happens.

Every time you do that, presence power grows in you. Then the next thing you get into your car, you shut the door. Why not stay for whatever, 30 seconds?

Not automatically go into the next thing you do. No, consciously bring space into your life, which is primarily inner space. So you sit for half a minute before you start the engine and you look around and you feel the energy in your inner body and you perceive.

There's a presence that arises. And many occasions, whether it's at home, performing routine actions, or just going from here to there, or just sitting. So presence does not mean that you always have to become still and stationary.

You don't get necessarily frozen. Like there are some, I don't know if they still have flash mobs. Flash, when they can only do that through, people have phones these days, so they can ring hundreds of people at the same time and say, we meet in that particular place.

And when their phone rings, you all go, whatever position you are in, they can do it in a supermarket or some public place. And suddenly everybody goes, it's quite nice because it breaks the routine of everyday life. So it's almost like a performance art performed by hundreds of people sometimes, but you don't need that for presence.

It can help. There was even a spiritual teacher called Gurdjieff in the early 20th century who had the stop practice. So when the students were talking amongst themselves, he would sometimes come into the room and suddenly shout, stop.

And everybody has to freeze, whatever they were doing, any posture. And he did that in order to make people aware of how automatic their usual life is. They run on automatic, the next thing, and then that's the next thing.

And then there's always, there's never really this, there's always the next thing you have to do and the next thing, totally automatic. I think he called it mechanical, like some kind of big machine. So he goes, stop.

And then I think they would have to wait until he released them and then they could carry on. But it's a desperate measure to bring some presence into people who are otherwise completely absorbed in their mind. Another thing he did, which I would not recommend, but he was a very eccentric teacher.

He would sometimes have drinking sessions with his students and he would challenge him to stay conscious even under the influence of alcohol. Now, I usually recommend as presence arises in you not to indulge too much in alcohol. A glass of wine is fine, but if after one glass, you no longer realize that two or three glasses would be too much, then one glass is too much too.

But as presence arises, it can pull you down every time you get drunk. You go, it's like you go up the escalator and then you get drunk and it pulls you down and you stop walking up. I would recommend not indulging in alcohol.

Once a certain degree of presence is there, it would be a pity if just a glass of wine could take you out, then it's not the real thing. I love a glass of wine with dinner, sometimes two, but almost never more than two. One is the usual and that's fine.

Now, he tried to bring people to that awareness through very unconventional methods. Another thing he had is dance, some kind of movement or dance. At that time, he thought these people were so unconscious, they needed desperate measures were called for, but you don't need to freeze.

You don't need to say, okay, I need to be still somewhere and sit, I need to get present. No, bring presence into, it can be on the one hand, it can be contemplative. When you are present, you're not doing anything in particular, but just perceiving.

You're sitting in the car at the traffic lights. Why not use that precious moment rather than mentally create upset because you're not somewhere else? Isn't that absurd?

You're creating upset in your mind because you're here, but not somewhere else. And it's not just the traffic lights. Many people live a large part of their life like that.

They are upset or dissatisfied with where they are, what they are doing and who they are with. And this is the origin of the famous bumper sticker, I'd rather be whatever, not here and not now. It's very normal, but unconscious, dysfunctional.

Life becomes a frustrating experience. So use all those opportunities, whether it's contemplative, like you're sitting in the car, waiting at the lights, why not be the presence? It's a precious moment.

The only one there ever is. It manifests as this moment. There's the lights and here's the body sitting in the car, but it's always the present moment and it's precious.

It's precious because there is nothing else. Only the mind tells you there's something else. The mind tells you there's something more valuable than this moment.

It's called some future point where I want to get there. Once I'm there, things will be better, but you're never there because every here becomes a there in the mind that you'd rather be. Then everyday life, invite presence in ordinary situations that are not particularly challenging.

For some people, even a red light, a traffic light is challenging. Having to wait in line somewhere is challenging. Why not use this precious moment and become alert?

Feel the energy field in the inner body and just be there as an observing presence. Then you have the two dimensions. You have sense perceptions, hearing, and you have the formless presence.

So you have this light and that which appears in the light. It's always the same, the light of consciousness. So then you grow in presence power as you use all those situations that before were never good enough.

You're always on your way somewhere better. Use those situations to bring presence in, and then that power grows in you. It's only then if that power grows in you, presence power, that you can deal with the heavy, let's call it, use an Eastern term, the karmic stuff.

Those accumulations in you that are old patterns, some of which originating in your present lifetime, in childhood, but in many cases, patterns that go back a long way in time. Your ancestors acting out patterns that your ancestors acted out 500 years ago, 1,000 years ago, 2,000 years ago. It's still the same conditioning.

Or you can look at it in terms of whether you look at it in terms of genetics, that you think that come or in terms of past lifetimes, whatever approach you want to use is fine. The fact is there are accumulations in you. There are patterns of unconsciousness that have been there a long time.

We could call them karmic. Karmic meaning unconscious patterns that you usually identify with as yourself that take you over completely. And the real karma is not the external events in your life.

The external events in your life really trigger the karma that you carry inside and they become your reactions. And your reactions determine how you experience your life. So in a way, you could have the same thing happening to one person creating a certain response and the same event happening to another person creating a totally different response.

For example, when I had just written my first book, the publisher said, why don't you sign some books for some famous people? They might give you an endorsement. So I did and they were sent out and almost nobody replied.

And I didn't realize at the time that those famous people, how many books and manuscripts they get sent every week and every month. Now I'm getting them. And now I'm the one who doesn't reply because you just can't.

It's impossible to read it all even dipping in. They pile up. There's a backlog.

I have now already several months of backlog to get through. So it's very hard, if not impossible. But I didn't know that.

But fortunately, I didn't take it personally without having read the four agreements. I already knew this is not a personal thing. So it was not problematic.

But I've had some instances where people have sent me books and they got extremely upset because they didn't get a reply. And they get more and more upset. And the letters became more and more angry.

And then I became the worst dreadful person in the world. And those are old karmic patterns that people carry. The external event triggers the pattern.

For some people, what becomes a huge drama for one person is an insignificant event for another. So how you experience your life is not really so much to do with what happens to you, but it's how you react. Because every reaction determines the next thing that happens.

So something goes wrong, you make drama out of it. And that creates more stuff. And this is how more karma gets created.

How you react to a person determines how that person reacts to you. And so it's a reflection, in other words, create to a large extent, your life, not to a large extent, completely, your life experience unconsciously. And so to break the old patterns that create so much suffering, unnecessary baggage, I sometimes call it, that you carry around with you, that you, so you meet it, you interpret situations and people through the unnecessary baggage in your mind.

For that to be transcended or dissolved, that requires presence power. The presence

needs to be there when the old patterns arise in your life. And that is there so you don't wait for the challenge when hoping that you can stay present because you won't.

Use it when you're not being challenged and invite presence into your life. All those moments that are really precious. And that generates more than you, it's like a, almost like the equivalent on the physical level would be working out.

You get stronger, so to speak. And so it's sometimes, it's only a disaster that makes a person conscious. It has a potential of making a person conscious.

It doesn't always, the potential is not always fulfilled. Often a disaster can make you even more unconscious and more unhappy, but potentially any disaster, any great loss in your life can be the awakener, the awakener. And then you see, for example, many people, when they fall seriously ill, they realize all the things that we're worried about and upset about are quite insignificant.

And suddenly they realize, what was all that about? All that drama that I had to pass 10, 15, 20 years in my life. Nothing.

It was just generated out of nothingness. What is a Shakespearean, a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing. That is what many people's lives unfortunately boils down to.

Full of sound and fury. And then they die. It was so important, it mattered so much.

And then there's the gravestone. And it's almost a relief that they died because all this stuff finally comes to an end. But does it?

Maybe they continue in another dimension, more drama in the astral realm. So that is the, as I sometimes call it, the sword of presence needs to be there. And you practice in ordinary situations.

And it's wonderful because already there, the benefit is, it's not a preparation for when things, when you're getting challenged. Yes, that also, but the benefit is already there in the moment because the way in which you experience even the ordinary moments, which before I'm so boring and routine and not another, I have to go shopping again and my laundry, do that again and again. Even that is actually quite, when you really bring presence to it, every movement is actually, has a certain quality to it.

You pick something up, put it in the washing machine and suddenly no thinking, just a presence. And you listen to the noise, whatever noises are associated with that particular movement. And it's a pleasant experience.

You could call it a meditation. And then you might lose yourself in the mind and then you come back. So the alertness is there more and more.

And that means the person subsides, the presence arises. So it's like the person is the seed that begins to dissolve slowly. It's still there as long as you have a body, you're still a person, but it becomes transparent.

So the seed, if you want to continue with that analogy, something comes through where the person was, something shines through the person. And that means your identity, and this is a wonderful thing, your sense of who you are is not derived from that particular person that you are in space and time. Your personal history is not, no longer gives you your sense of who you are.

But your sense of who you are is the presence that you sense right now, that you are right now. That is who you are. Yes, you still have your personal history.

It's fine. Don't forget it. You remember exactly what happened.

But you don't go there unnecessarily, trying in your past and continuously revisit, especially the unpleasant things or even the pleasant. Try to revisit this pleasant time five years ago. That was so nice.

And then you miss this moment. Or you revisit painful things in the past. And you derive your sense, your identity from something that happened, you did in the past, something happened to you, you achieved something.

10 years ago, I achieved something. Who cares? Or that was the big failure.

I failed. I failed at my marriage. I failed at my job.

I didn't get, I didn't, I failed at my university. I failed at everything. I failed.

Okay. Now what about this moment? Are you, how can you fail at this moment?

You can only fail at this moment by not being present to this moment. That's the real failure. No other failure.

And then suddenly your sense of identity shifts from this construct in the head that you call me and my past to the alive presence. Even the me and my past construct in your head could not exist without the consciousness that gave it form. So you go deeper and realize this is who I am.

And it's not a conceptual sense of self anymore because everything else is conceptual. Every story you tell yourself in your head is conceptual. Ideas about who I am.

Concepts, in other words, thoughts. So deriving your sense of self from that is very limiting. Somebody asked the question here, the meditation is, who am I?

Somebody asks, who am I? This contemplation message seems to be goal oriented and

very appealing, but the spiritual consensus seems to be that enlightenment cannot be made into a goal. I can't tell if these meditations will do what is promised.

Please comment. This person thinks that when I say, who am I, the meditation becomes a goal. No, it's not because you're not asking who am I going to be.

When I'm enlightened, that would be a goal. But you're asking who am I is not a goal. It takes you more deeply into the present.

It takes you into the present. It eliminates past and future. Who am I?

Don't answer the question. That's the essential thing. Any answer to who am I?

You failed. You failed miserably. No, not miserably.

It just means you didn't get it. That's okay. Who am I?

Those words are the pointers. What comes after the pointers is an alert presence in which you do not know who you are, because there's no longer any concepts. And you can't really say, you know, at least not conceptually, you don't know.

You have to have the courage to not know. Not only the courage to not know who you are, also the courage not to interpret other people or situations. You don't need to formulate immediately judgments and concepts about everything around you.

Let it be. Because the moment you start formulating, the clash begins between reality and your mind. Because the concepts say this shouldn't be how it is.

And so this person, they should, the word should comes very often. When you operate through concepts, you can see how frequently the word should comes in. I should have.

I should, he should, he shouldn't have. I should not have. So this is a continuous conflict between the mental expectations and reality.

So this is when you happen to live through concepts. So that goes away and you have the courage to not know who you are. Who am I?

Well, even saying, I don't know, you've gone too far already. Because even that's not totally true. It is true that you do not know conceptually who you are by being able to give some kinds of conceptual answer.

But the miracle is, there is another way of knowing, another dimension in humans that is non-conceptual. And that arises when you're no longer totally trapped in concepts, mental concepts. It's only from the point of view of mental concepts that it appears that you have become completely ignorant when you not judge anymore compulsively.

But there is a deeper knowing that cannot be put into words. It is direct knowing. There

are analogies.

There's traditional analogy from the East, the difference between talking about honey and tasting honey. You know that you can know the honey by writing a PhD about honey without ever having tasted it. And you can know everything about honey, but have never tasted it.

And then you can taste the honey without knowing anything conceptually about it. This is an analogy. It's not quite the same.

So there's a direct knowing, and there's a knowing about. Now all conceptual knowledge is knowing about. It's not knowing.

So most people's sense of self or identity is they know things about themselves. And the things they know about themselves is what they have been told by others. That's how it starts.

What your parents tell you about you, what your surroundings tell you about you, what your culture tells you about you, where you fit in in your particular culture, what the world tells you who you are, and you take it on board. And then it becomes what you tell yourself about who you are. And it's always knowing about, but not knowing.

Not the true knowing. That's where the ancient word gnosis comes from. G-N-O-S-I-S.

And this is dreadfully neglected in our ignorant civilization. The deeper level of knowing, they don't even know it exists. And this is why they cannot experience anything deeply.

You can go into the forest or anywhere in nature. Of course, you can walk in the forest and talk about the stock market with your friend. And occasionally you glimpse at the trees.

Oh, that's a nice tree. Now what about those shares? Oh, that's a nice flower.

He tells me I should sell apple shares. So yeah, there you're not there at all. Or you can go through a forest knowing a lot about the forest, which is fine.

You can say, oh, that's such and such a bird. That's such and such a tree. And that's how it grows.

And that's that. Isn't that lovely? I wonder if I can find this kind of fern that I've been...

Oh yes, there it is. And you can know a lot and you can label what you see. Names for trees and birds and animals and plants and flowers.

And miss the knowing. You know a lot about the forest, but do you know the forest? Now to know the forest, your mind has to become still.

And you have to be the presence that experiences everything in the forest. And you become the presence from the point of view of conception knowledge. You don't know anything suddenly anymore.

You're just taking it all in. And what you take in brings a much, there's a deeper dimension suddenly that you were not aware of at all when all you knew was knowing about the forest. And suddenly you experience a depth that is in the forest and in you.

Simultaneous, they go together. A depth opens up and you can sense that the forest is an alive energy field. The forest itself is a presence.

And you can sense the inherent aliveness that pervades the entire forest. And then you go, wow. And you go very alert and you look and listen.

Every sound, every little thing, even a little leaf quivering, the slight breeze and everything is... And what then arises in traditional spiritual terminology is called sacredness. Then you go, wow.

And you walk more carefully. And that is inaccessible to you if all you have is conceptual knowledge about the forest. You have to go into the deeper knowing.

The same applies to knowing another human being. Again, you can know a lot about another person, perhaps because you know their personal history, perhaps you've known them for a long time, or perhaps you know so much about psychology that when you look at a person or the way they behave or move or speak, you can already interpret and know a lot about them. He's such and such a kind of person or that you can apply your knowledge.

Yes. But again, we are missing something very vital. If you only know the person through mental concepts, you're missing the most vital part or dimension of that human being, because then all you know is the limited, all you know is who that person is within the limitations of their conditioning, their form, their physical form and their psychological form.

And emotional, mental form. That's all you, that's knowing about. But to really to go deeper and beyond that in the other person and relate to this human being on a deeper level, you need to let go if only for a moment of the conceptual knowledge and just look and listen.

If they're talking, look, listen. There's an outflow of attention towards the other. And there's a true meeting.

And suddenly you can sense in the same way that you can sense the forest, all you knew was things about the forest. You can now sense an inherent aliveness in the other that has nothing to do with their history. You transcend the karmic limitations in the other,

because you have transcended the karmic limitations in yourself by becoming present.

Otherwise, it's just two karmic formations meeting and having a difficult time, for a little while a good time, and then it gets hard. Always does. So that is all part of bringing presence into everyday life.

It is another dimension of consciousness. The most vital thing in your lifetime here is that. It's very much secondary in what situation of your so-called personal life, in what situation that happens to arise.

Whether your life situation is very limited right now, or whether relatively okay, or whether your experience, everybody experiencing is that, I don't think there's anybody who has no problems. Life is problematic. It is.

That's how it is. It's meant to be. Otherwise it wouldn't be.

Life is challenging. It's never not challenging. Unless you go completely unconscious and drifting off to sleep, but then you'll have nightmares.

So regardless of what your particular situation is, whether you are doing a job that could be considered not important, or whether you're doing a job that in the eyes of the world is considered important, is secondary. Whether you are serving coffee at Starbucks, or whether you are the CEO of Starbucks, it doesn't matter. Who cares?

What matters is your state of consciousness. And it is quite possible that the person serving coffee at Starbucks is much more present. I don't know who the CEO of Starbucks is, but it is possible that that person is much more present than the CEO.

Of course it is. And so ultimately what you do is secondary. The important thing is what is the state of consciousness through which you do things.

So this is really to do with inner purpose and outer purpose. As I wrote about in a book, the inner purpose is the awakening. The outer purpose is what you do externally.

And what you do is secondary. As more presence arises in you, it is possible that your outer purpose changes before it suddenly, you get taken away. And suddenly you're not serving coffee at Starbucks anymore.

Suddenly you're taken somewhere totally different and perhaps performing some totally different function. It is important to honor the present moment, which means to be present with what you're doing, no matter what you're doing, so that the mind doesn't tell you that you'd rather be doing something else. Now, if absolutely you cannot surrender to whatever you're doing at any given moment, or let's say it's your work, your job, I would suggest you try first to see if you can give it honor what you are doing, even if your mind tells you it's not important enough and you are really doing something that's

beneath you, but you happen to be doing it right now.

So if you can really fully give it your fullest attention, it means presence flows into it. Everything changes. If absolutely you cannot, if your surroundings are so dreadful that every time you're there, you go, ah, then please leave.

Don't do that to yourself. But in many situations, presence can be brought in. And then you can still be, yes, I don't want to be doing this for the rest of my life.

Of course not. But at this moment, you're doing it. And why not honor it so that a quality flows into what you do.

And then much more likely things are going to change than for somebody who is internally at war with what is, who is internally arguing with the present moment and doesn't want to be there. That is really means to be stuck as shown in the movie Groundhog Day. It's a monumental thing because as presence arises and we invited in into everyday life, and then we can apply it when the old patterns come up, the pain body comes up, the strong reactive patterns in certain situations.

This is a huge shift in consciousness as karma dissolves and something else takes its place. You think it's a personal thing. It goes far beyond that.

It's a shift in the collective consciousness. It's an adventure. It's wonderful.

So use what you have, use whatever situation you're in right now. Sometimes the mind says, I don't know what I should be doing in life. I need to figure out what I'm meant to do, what I should be doing, because the mind says, I know I shouldn't be doing this.

And I need to figure out where I'm meant to be, because I know I'm not meant to be here. I should figure out who I'm meant to be, because I know I'm not meant to be this person here. That's not quite somewhat dysfunctional thinking.

The first realization is, if you're here, you might as well accept and admit that this moment is as it is, and I'm where I am. Wherever you go, there you are. It's not only the title of a book, but also a fact.

Wherever you go, there you are. And wherever you are, it's here. And no matter what time you can even think of in your life or some future moment, it's going to be here, now, always.

To cooperate with life, to align yourself with life first, you accept that you should be where you happen to be. That's where you should be, otherwise you wouldn't be there. Oh, that means I can't complain anymore.

Okay, that's true, you can't complain anymore. It does not mean that you cannot see, okay, this is fine, here I am. You can still know where you want to go, but not out of

unhappiness or negativity, but you see clearly there are other possibilities.

But you're not denying the present moment, and you're not resisting the present moment, because if you're internally resist the present moment, the intelligence of life cannot fully express itself through you, because it needs for you to be open in the present moment to flow through you. Life wants to move through you and flow through you, but humans are closed. That's already been expressed in the Bible that God wants, if you want to use theistic language, God wants to support you, but you're closed.

So that the power can move through you, you have to be open to the present moment, which means not denying where you are right now and even what you're doing right now. And if absolutely every fiber of your being says no to where you are, let's say you work in a slaughterhouse, but you have to make money to keep your family alive, but every fiber of your being says no, then you need to walk out. Those are extreme situations, but if you cannot walk out, if it's a prison, then you need to go surrender there to the present moment, and you have to go very deeply there, and people have done it and are doing it, and they can no longer argue with the isness of this moment.

So if every fiber of your being says no, if you can, you need to remove yourself, but make sure it's not a pattern that is really in you rather than the external situation, because then you can do something else, and again, that it may well be external. But there are places where you would rather not be, or if you're involved in total insanity, a war situation, everybody's going totally insane, they're killing each other. If you can, of course, rather than saying, I need to stay here because I need to surrender to the present moment, no, if you can, walk away, remove yourself.

If absolutely you cannot, then even there, it can be done, but you have to go very deep. These are some philosophers, existentialist philosophers called that limit situations. If you find yourself in a limit situation with dreadful things going on around you, and you cannot remove yourself, then you have to go very deep into surrender to the present moment, and then sometimes there, even there, miracles happen, even on the outer level, but the miracle then always happens on the inner level, because you become internally free of the situation, and even in hell, if you went deep enough, you could be at peace, and even in heaven, if you're not ready for it, you will think it's hell, because you carry the hell inside your mind, and when you get to heaven, you'll start complaining.

I'd rather be somewhere exciting. So that's our, that's your life purpose, is this presence practice, and then the rest unfolds, the outer purpose, either what you're doing now deepens, and you do it more effectively, and love and joy flows into what you do, and affects other people around you, or you are so present that it becomes incompatible with where you are, and life takes you and says, no, you're not meant to be here, and puts you somewhere else, either because they, you get fired, because you're too present.

Some companies don't want to have presence, so you get fired, and that'll be great, or you walk out one day, you look around, we were meant to be asking questions, but the present moment always determines what happens. There may still be time for a few questions.

Time is now, now, now, now. It's half past now. The strange thing, dividing the day into segments, and, and then there's the week, and there's the months, and then there's the years.

It seems so real, but of course, it's a mental thing, those are as unreal as the equator. We were a few years ago in Ecuador, the country, which is Spanish for equator, because it's situated on the equator, and they have a place where tourists go, and there's a line, and says, this is the equator, and people take photos. There's nothing there, it's just a line.

And in the same way, it's not really 4.30, it's just, it's a mental construct, so that, yes, it's helpful, so that we can meet, rather than saying, one day we are going to meet. But it's not, it's not the year 2013, that's what we say it is. It's a concept, no more.

It's not Monday, it's not whatever it is. These are just, we just, it's not no, the absolute reality is just, it's always just this moment. There was a time when humans had not invented these concepts, and all they ever had was the present moment.

What time? What do you mean, time? What day is it today?

Huh? What year is it? Year?

It's now. Here's a question about observing your thoughts. When observing my thoughts, I notice the observation is made after the thought has passed.

Is the concept of observing one's thoughts supposed to occur simultaneously? For example, a thought arises, and so does the being observing the thought? I hope this makes sense.

Thanks for everything. That's a good question. One talks often about observing one's thoughts.

Can you observe a thought while it arises, or does the observation come in afterwards? As presence arises, there is presence in the background, and thoughts arise in the foreground of your being. So the thoughts arise.

This is very hard to describe, but I'm sure many of you know it because you have experienced it. There is a knowing that these thoughts are arising. There is not a total identification with the arising thoughts.

They arise. They may be quite powerful, but if presence remains, there is a remnant of

awareness in the background. You're not totally drawn into the thoughts that arise, which could be opinions, which could be likes and dislikes, which could be all kinds of things.

You're not totally identified with the thoughts anymore. The background is there, the background of awareness. That really is the balance that needs to be there in your life between the background, which is presence, and the foreground where things happen.

It's another way of putting it. In the foreground, you're thinking, but while you think, in the background, you still sense a certain presence, a certain field of awareness. And as you listen now, for example, and as I speak now, you're taking in what you're hearing, and external noises, police car going past right now, just to give us an example, at the right moment.

You hear those things that are happening, and in the background, there is an awareness that this is happening. So there's a sense perception. Now you hear my words.

You take them in. They become thoughts in your head. That's the only way you can access them.

Auditory perception goes into your ears. Signals are transmitted to your brain. The brain reassembles the signals, and then they become thoughts again.

But you're also aware of your own presence in the background. I'm aware of the presence out of which the words come. So you're no longer totally trapped in the stream of thought as those people in whom the presence or awareness has not been awakened yet.

They are totally at the mercy of every thought that arises, and then they get continuously dragged along by this stream of incessant compulsive thinking, accompanied by certain emotions that reflect the kinds of thoughts they think, and that's their life. Every waking moment, with a few brief intervals of relief when they go, ah, that's beautiful, or they pet a dog, ah, for a moment the mind stops, and then it comes back. Or you have a child, a baby, you look into the baby's eyes, and for a moment there's a space that opens up.

It's whenever you feel really good, and there's a goodness that you feel, a joy comes in for a moment. There's a space of no thought, just aware presence, and that's where it comes through. And then the clouds come back again, and they become strongest when there's a reaction towards something, against something.

The awareness is in the background, and the thoughts are happening, so you're not totally identified anymore with it. That's really how it is. A wonderful thing that happens, as I sometimes put it, thinking old patterns may still arise, old thoughts may still arise.

You don't completely believe in them anymore, not completely, in other words, they lose their power to make you unhappy. Judgments may still be there, but they are recognized as judgments. So you're not totally in the grip anymore of thoughts, and then thought is no longer problematic.

It actually can be a useful tool for creating certain things. Thought is helpful. You can write a book.

You need thought to write a book. You need thought for many things, and for many other things, you don't need thought. To be a good dancer, you don't need much thought.

You need to be able to step out of thought while you dance, or even a painter, a great painter wouldn't say, no, I wonder what color is going in that corner there. That's not how creation works. You look, and you're present, and something comes through you, and that's the state of creation.

You go into the state of creation. For certain creative things, the presence may have to use your mind. It flows into your mind, and then you speak from presence.

Maybe you become a public speaker, and to be a powerful public speaker, you need to be able to speak from presence, and people listen. When you read your script, they are half away. They are only half listening, or they drift off because the power isn't there.

You read, ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to be here tonight to address you, blah, blah, blah, blah, but if you lose your script, you go, words, I don't know what to say right now, and everybody listens. You say, I don't know what to say, but they can feel the words are genuine and come out of this moment. I feel so nervous as I sit here facing, I don't, I'm just saying.

I feel so nervous as I sit here facing all of you, then people begin to wake up and listen, because the words come out of that moment, out of presence, and they are genuine, and then maybe you forget all the things that you meant to say, and it doesn't matter anymore, but you connect, and not only when you talk to an audience, when you talk to an individual person, too. You can be boring, just repeat all this stuff that you've repeated already many times, all the predictable reactions, or you can be alert, present, spacious, listening. Some of the best interviewers can do that.

When they interview a person, they are spontaneous. They may have some questions prepared, but most of the interview then develops spontaneously, and they are the few that are, they always say the right thing at the right moment, and there's a true meeting, but you have to be thoughtless in that moment, thoughtless awareness, and when thought happens, it's in the background. When no thought happens, what before was the background becomes the foreground, like now.

I've been speaking, and as I've been speaking, in the background was the awareness.

Now that I stop speaking for a moment, the awareness that was in the background comes into the foreground, and when words happen, it recedes again a little bit, and the words appear in the space of awareness, and then the words stop, and it comes into the foreground, or you could be interested in certain things that you're looking at or listening to, and still feel your essential beingness there, listening, and then you could close your eyes, and all you sense is the presence, and you open your eyes, and there's sense perception again. Another analogy you could use is the awareness is a canvas, and your life is painted on the canvas, and it changes all the time, although some fixtures, some things seem pretty permanent, so it's a complex canvas.

There's a complex picture, and colors appear, and figures appear, meaning things happen, thoughts, emotions, events, but they all appear on this canvas, and sometimes, if you awaken spiritually, little spaces appear on the canvas, and it's just white. Nothing appears there. There's stillness, little moments of stillness here and there, then covered up again, and then as awareness emerges as a more permanent state or realization, the canvas shines through the colors that appear on it, and the figures, and the pictures that appear on it, and so there's an awareness of the canvas, and at the same time, life happens.

It's an analogy, no more, and then the canvas actually has a more ethereal quality to it, because it's not just the stuff on it. It's that which enables the stuff that's on it to be shines through, and that's a wonderful shift in your life, because before that happens, all you have is the stuff of your life. You don't know anything other than the stuff that makes up your life, which by stuff, I use that generic term.

Stuff means external stuff and inner stuff. External stuff is all the things that go on in your life. It includes all the possessions of the stuff that's in your house or your apartment that you may be looking for more stuff to put in there, and then there's the stuff of your relationships, and your finances, and the stuff of all, and then the inner stuff of all your thoughts that go one thought after another, more stuff, so most people's lives are just filled with stuff.

Stuff is my life. I'm using that generic term to include almost everything, but they're not aware of that which is beyond stuff, but enables all the stuff to be. The canvas, which of course is the space, the consciousness, so they're not aware.

As that awareness comes into your life, the canvas shines through the stuff, and the stuff is no longer opaque. It does not have that density anymore. It still happens, and that is liberation from just stuff.

That is the transcendent dimension that then shines into your life. That is the true meaning of spiritual. Spiritual is not a thought.

It's not even a feeling, and it's not a belief, and talking about God 12 hours a day doesn't

make you spiritual either, and so when that shines through in your life, you can give a sigh of relief. Oh, then it does get easier.

[Speaker 2] (57:10 - 57:30)

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Eckhart Tolle Dealing With Expectations [57c9f66f-d30f-46c1-8330-ad5100041a01]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:21)

Dealing with expectations. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience about issues many people can relate to, like what to do when you start to compare yourself to others, how to turn family arguments into opportunities for conscious relationships, and surprisingly, how anger can be used as a tool for spiritual growth.

[Speaker 6] (0:24 - 0:41)

Hi, Eckhart. I often find myself comparing myself to other people, my physical appearance compared to other women, and it gets very tiresome, as you can imagine. And I was wondering if you had any practical advice for helping dissolve this.

[Speaker 1] (0:42 - 0:53)

Okay, thanks. And I assume sometimes you come out as better than and at other times as not as good as, is that right?

[Speaker 6] (0:53 - 0:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (0:54 - 0:58)

And better than feels good and not as good as doesn't.

[Speaker 6] (0:59 - 1:01)

It all feels tiresome, to be honest.

[Speaker 1] (1:01 - 14:10)

That's a good point to reach. To get tired of an old pattern like that, then you're ready to let go. As the Course in Miracles puts it, comparison is one of the favorite ego devices to keep the ego going, or it keeps itself going, especially by comparing, whether the comparing is to do with external appearance, or comparing other things, evaluating others in comparison to how in your own mind you evaluate yourself.

It could be to do with knowledge, education, class, social class, strength, physical strength, how many possessions he's worth, such and such amount of dollars, and I'm worth so much more than he or so much less than he, all kinds of things. Implied in that is a sense of desire on the part of the ego to enhance its sense of worthiness. And if

anybody has less than you, or appears less than you, or can do less than you, in some nonsensical way, it seems to add something to your sense of self.

Of course, it doesn't make sense. It's a little bit absurd, but that's how the ego functions. And in reverse, it feels to the ego as if somebody has just achieved something, or that you haven't achieved.

It feels to the ego as if something of its sense of self had been taken away. So it gets deflated and is not happy. If you're really trapped in ego, you're not happy when something good happens to somebody close to you.

Because it feels to the ego as if it had become diminished because somebody else has enhanced their identity in the eyes of the ego. You can see when you explain it in this way so that you can actually see how it operates, then you realize that it is absurd to feel you have become less because somebody else has received more of something, or can do something that you can't do. And so you can see how unreal that sense of identity is.

You feel diminished because something good has happened to somebody close to you. And in some cases, if the ego is very strong in you without any trace of awareness, you cannot even admit to yourself that you feel bad when something good has happened to somebody close to you. It's there as an unreal, an unwitnessed emotion, and then it might come out when you speak to that person with a desire to diminish what they now have that you don't have.

And it's totally unconscious. With you, you are not totally unconscious. There's already an awareness in you that is aware of that pattern.

If there were no awareness in you, you wouldn't be asking that question. You wouldn't be sitting here. You would be acting out that pattern.

And next time somebody in your vicinity has just bought a new dress that looks absolutely stunning, you would look at it, if you were totally trapped in ego, you would look at it, and something inside you would contract. But you wouldn't know that because there wouldn't be enough awareness for that. But that contraction as an energy field would then flow into your mind.

And then words would come out of your mouth, again unconscious, to diminish the worthiness of that dress. And you might say, oh, that dress, that would look good on your sister. And the other person, who perhaps is also identified completely with their appearance, suddenly feels hurt deeply.

And in both cases, the famous saying applies, they know not what they do, which of course points to complete lack of awareness. So in that sense, people hurt each other and try to take away in order to feel. And the moment the ego said that would look good on somebody else, it feels a little bit better already because you've taken away a bit

from the value, the perceived value of that thing.

It's a delusional system. But many people are still totally trapped in that. Not with you, of course, it's not the case with you.

You're not totally trapped. It still operates in you to some extent, but not totally trapped. So there's some connection with value, your own sense of worth or worthiness, which is connected to your external appearance.

It could be connected to other things. It may also be connected to other things. So there's an image in you of who you are.

It's a surface image of the surface appearance, your body. And the solution, of course, is very simple. It's to take your attention beyond the surface, where it usually is, the surface of your body, the surface of that which is on top of your body, the clothes.

Take your attention deeper to the inherent energy field or aliveness or conscious presence that pervades who you are, the entire being, nothing to do with the external, nothing to do with the shape of the body or what's on top of the body. And if you begin to go there, into that dimension, take your attention into that dimension where you are not the external form, but you sense the very essence of who you are, you sense the life that you are beyond the form, then you no longer need to identify with form. You're no longer then threatened when somebody else's form is seemingly better than yours.

It no longer does anything to your sense of identity or your sense of worthiness. And then you're free. And you're free to admire somebody else's good looks.

And you're free to be happy with the way you look for the time being until years pass. And then perhaps the body doesn't look that great anymore. After a few more decades, you have a few decades to go.

But they pass fairly quickly, too. And the further you go, the more quickly they seem to pass. That's strange.

And so the time comes when you notice a deterioration in the appearance, and then you begin to notice that most women around you actually look better than you for the simple fact that they're younger. And you can appreciate the way they look because they are a manifestation of life without feeling threatened in any way in your own sense of self because the life of which those lovely women around you are manifestations, you can sense that very life in its essence in you. So you can acknowledge all the beauty that is in others, even though in the external form of you, that beauty may no longer be manifested as such.

And that's wonderful freedom to appreciate the beauty that you see around you, even if your own body is no longer part of that. Because there is a beauty in you that has

nothing to do with form. And one could call that the essence of all beauty.

That's the very essence of life itself. So when you have the essence, you appreciate the external manifestation of it in its so-called, one could say, diluted form in the flower. Now, most egos are not threatened by flowers.

But in another human being, you can appreciate the beauty in another human being. And the comparison, the compulsive need to compare disappears. There isn't, oh, what about me?

That thought pattern dissolved long ago. By the time you reach the point where most women will externally look better than you, then it's disappearing already. So you don't need to wait a few more decades to get there.

Or the ego can say, okay, I have another 30 years I can identify with my good looks. So the answer, of course, is then find the essence of who you are, which is what all this teaching is always about. Find the essence of who you are so that you get in touch with the inherent sense of beingness or aliveness or presence within you, which pervades the entire so-called physical body, but is not the physical body.

And as I speak about it now, you should be able to feel that within you, the fact that there is an aliveness that pervades your entire being. Can you feel that? That is more essentially who you are than the external appearance of who you are.

And that is going to be exactly the same in 30 years time as it is now. Then you become free of form, you're essentially the consciousness behind it all. So know yourself as that life or consciousness, there's the same no thing, know yourself as that and you're free of the ego.

The ego is there as a substitute. It's to seek yourself in some form. That's the delusion.

And it creates an unhappy life. So it's a wonderful thing. It's also liberating to see the absurdity of the ego.

Once you see how the patterns that I just described just now, you can see how mad it is to feel diminished when something good happens to somebody else, to feel enhanced when something bad happens to somebody else, and not even know it. So let's see what happens next time. And the same thing happens with a beautiful object, whether it's a natural object or something that is a man-made object, you can appreciate the beauty of whatever form again here without the ego need of owning it.

I'd love to have that and keep it and make it mine. You may see in some shop windows, you see actually beautiful human-made things. And you can appreciate the beauty for 30 seconds or one minute without feeling necessarily the need to go into the shop and say, how much is that?

I want to have it because I will feel enhanced in my sense of self or aliveness if I have that object and add it to my life. Which doesn't mean that you never buy anything and you might find yourself going into it and buying a lovely object but not out of the need to have it, just simply appreciating its beauty. I wouldn't mind having that around for a while in my place and appreciating the beauty, so you can, but many times you will find it's enough to look and feel the recognition of beauty and you walk on.

Now this may not be good for the economy, but that can't be helped. There will have to be changes in the economic structure of the world that we have created. That's inevitable.

So we are not here to feed the old patterns, neither inner nor outer.

[Speaker 6] (14:10 - 14:11)

Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (14:11 - 14:26)

Hi. I have met people in my life that have an awareness and an intuition that can only come with presence. That's very attractive and it invites trust.

So my question is, can presence be used to manipulate or use others?

[Speaker 1] (14:27 - 14:32)

Without going into detail, would you say that you have experienced something like that?

[Speaker 7] (14:33 - 14:33)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (14:33 - 24:48)

Now presence cannot be used, but presence can arise and then be covered up again and then the ego returns and claims something. It claims ownership of presence. That's one thing that can happen.

It claims the ownership of the power that is in presence. That's the downfall frequently of spiritual teachers. Who have periods of egolessness and the ego has become dormant or stepped aside and presence arises, but the ego is still lurking in the background and then it reasserts itself.

And then you know it when the spiritual teacher claims some sort of specialness for him or herself when he says, I'm the most advanced human that ever lived and ever will live on the planet. Then you know that probably the ego has crept back in, even though that teacher might have uttered beautiful words only a few weeks ago, inspired words. So

that can happen and has happened.

There are certain abilities that some people have, that's now the second part of the answer. There are certain abilities that some people have that sometimes look as if they were things that only an awakened human being, an ability that only an awakened human being would have. It sometimes appears like that.

For example, what in India they call siddhis, which are psychic powers, people who are able to have sometimes clairvoyance or can tell you what the name of your grandmother was and at what age your grandmother died. They can perhaps influence others, infuse their own will into others and make people do certain things that otherwise they would not do. They can have a hypnotic effect on others.

Sometimes it looks to an outside observer as if you were looking at a highly evolved being, an enlightened being, but that is not necessarily the case because there are many humans who have psychic powers which do not necessarily go together with spiritual realization. But if you don't know that, you can easily be led to believe that these things can only come out of spiritual realization. If I levitated here and now and somebody films it, then suddenly large numbers of people all over the world would believe that I am the most highly evolved human being on the planet.

But it could be that I simply have certain psychic powers, like an athlete on the physical realm has developed enormous physical abilities that other humans don't have because he or she has trained certain muscles and limbs to move in certain ways. So he has things that are almost superhuman. In the same way, there are some humans who have psychic abilities.

They're like athletes in the psychic realm and doesn't necessarily go together with absence of ego. In fact, it's quite dangerous if there's a big ego that is hidden. Egos are also good at concealing themselves.

So the ego is hidden and this person is able to bend spoons or to manifest things out of nothing. Well, it seems out of nothing, but maybe the sleeve is not nothing. It manifests somewhere.

I haven't practiced enough. I can't do it. So those things are often, of course, often used, not necessarily often used in the service of the ego, but presence itself cannot be used by the ego.

Ego can only come in once presence has been covered up, receded into the background, and then the ego claims something, perhaps because there was inspiration there. And then with some spiritual teachers, you can see the difference once the presence has been covered up. Also, the quality of what they say is diminished.

It no longer has the inspirational power that it had before. There's also a difference

between charisma and presence that is sometimes confused by people. There are certain humans, some are spiritual teachers, other humans that perhaps have certain powers or positions of power, who seem to emanate a very powerful energy field.

And that is also, in those of you who don't know the difference, can also be confused with spiritual attainment or enlightenment or awakening. Some spiritual teachers have both presence and charisma. Some have only presence.

Presence is more fine, an energy field of a higher vibrational frequency than charisma. Charisma is a very, very powerful, it's basically, it's chi or shakti that emanates from them. And I have described chi or shakti, whatever you want to call it, as the bridge between the manifested physical world and the unmanifested formlessness.

In between, as form is born out of formlessness, it becomes energy. It's the first manifestation is energy. You can't see it with your senses.

And that energy is chi. And then that energy flows into creating form. So it's a bridge between form and some humans are in touch with that level.

And those humans have charisma. Sometimes spiritual teachers have, as I just said, have both presence and occasionally charisma, or psychic powers can often come with charisma also. And then you have people who are in powerful positions in the world.

And because of the energy that flows through them and the attention they're given by other humans, they develop the charisma, they are in touch with that energy source of chi. For example, obviously, some of these are not necessarily great, good people, because that energy can be used for egoic purposes. And in the past, kings often had that.

In medieval times, many kings were reputed to have the ability to heal. And so they called it the royal touch, and often sick people were brought into the presence of the king, and he would place his hand on them, and many of them were healed. And through perhaps the power of the energy added to that, of course, is also their belief that in the presence of the king you are healed.

So it was their own power, of course, very often that healed them. It's sometimes hard to tell the difference, unless you're already firmly established in presence yourself, between charisma and presence. And some spiritual teachers, I don't know whether you had contact with what you just mentioned, whether that was a spiritual teacher that you had contact with and you witnessed what you just described.

Some spiritual teachers, I'm not mentioning any names, of course, whether they're alive or dead, I'm not mentioning any names, but there are some who very clearly had enormous energy outflow, and people would get virtually addicted to their energy field. Whenever they came into the presence of the teacher, they could feel, ah. And with

presence, a little bit like that happens also, because presence in one human being awakens your own presence.

But the teacher needs to point out that what you're experiencing is yourself. It's not the energy of the teacher. The energy of the teacher awakens your presence.

But there's a misperception when humans are addicted to an external figure, to the energy that comes from that figure, they are dependent on him or her for their energy intake. But a very clear sign that they're not being enlightened is when they go back into ordinary life, they're just as unconscious as everybody else. So there's no real change.

There's only an energy absorption, which really, the energy, you should find your own source from within rather than depend on an external source. So presence cannot be used. Two things can happen.

Either it's not presence, it's she in the service of the ego, or it was presence, but it became covered up, ego reasserted itself, and then made claims and tried to manipulate people for its own purposes. Now which one it is in your case, I don't know, but perhaps you can, you will be able to see for yourself. The main thing is a person in presence, presence and ego cannot coexist at the same time.

So the ego can be in the background, but it cannot use, ego cannot use presence when presence is present.

[Speaker 7] (24:49 - 24:50)

I understand.

[Speaker 1] (24:50 - 24:51)

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (24:52 - 25:01)

My question is, should we seek professional help to recover missing or lost childhood memories?

[Speaker 1] (25:02 - 25:07)

Professional help? You feel inclined to seek professional help yourself?

[Speaker 5] (25:08 - 25:18)

No, not really. I guess a part of me is concerned that, because I cannot remember, that possibly I have a negative energy that I've got stored.

[Speaker 1] (25:18 - 28:13)

Yes. I would not categorically say don't, because usually the focal point of this teaching is, of course, the present moment, and to address whatever is arising in the present moment. And often what is arising in the present moment is something from the past, a past pattern, a past emotion, a past feeling.

At some point it arises in the now, and it's there that you bring your awareness to it. And by bringing your awareness to it as it arises in the now, something happens, certain transmutation happens to that. The past gets burned up in the presence, in the presence of presence, the past gets burned up as it arises.

And when that happens, you may suddenly remember where that emotion that is now seen in the light of presence, where that emotion originated. So the memory can come spontaneously and suddenly when the light of presence shines on an old pattern that is arising in the present moment. And then suddenly you can sometimes see, oh, that's where it came from, that's where it started.

In other cases, you may never know where it started, but it's enough for it to come into the light of presence and being transmuted through the light of presence. But however, this is generally, I believe, true. Nevertheless, I would not categorically say to everybody not to seek something that happened once.

There may be certain cases where it is advisable to look at the past, I would say exceptional cases, and only the person who is guiding you, who hopefully is quite present, could judge that, where it may occasionally be advisable to see if you can retrieve a memory. So my first choice is always, and my first recommendation is always, look at what arises in the present moment. And as you are present, the past, in some form, will come into the light of presence.

An event happens, it triggers something old, and there you have it. Where it originally came from is secondary. If the memory is there, fine, it suddenly arises.

If you never know where it originally came from, it doesn't matter, it's now in the light of presence. You may have to go back generations, where the same dysfunction was inflicted from parents to their children, to their children, to their children, to their children.

[Speaker 5] (28:13 - 28:14)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (28:17 - 28:52)

Hello. I've got two questions. The first one is, how do I stay present with my family members when we're all together?

And this comes up at dinner time. I can be present with myself, and present with one family member, but when there's three of them together, or two of them together, my presence goes out the window, and I get caught up in the drama of what's going on. My second question is from my husband, who's not here tonight, and he was recently diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

And his question to you is, how can he heal this?

[Speaker 1] (28:53 - 32:27)

Well, let's start with the second one. There's something more important. Whether or not it can be healed, I don't know.

There is something more important than the healing of that physical condition, or any physical condition. And that which is more important than the healing, which I'm going to just briefly talk about now, is also that which in some cases brings about the healing. But that's not the main thing.

That which is more important than the healing is to use the condition, in this case it's a deterioration of the physical form, which comes slowly over years, as far as I understand, to use that to push you into intense presence practice. That's all you can do. So allow it to push you into that which changes the entire vibrational frequency of the physical body.

When you truly live in presence, which affects every cell of the body, the entire frequency of the physical form changes. If you do intense body awareness, you can feel that for yourself. It's an enormously enlivening energy field.

That practice also burns up the ego. So the opportunity there is you have an enormous motivation to embrace the state of consciousness that we call presence. That's the most vital thing.

And that may bring about healing, or if it does not bring about healing, it may delay considerably the onset or the process of deterioration that comes with that disease. So the predictions that the doctors make are not necessarily correct, especially if surrender happens. So surrender, it's not uncommon for the state of surrender to give you much more to slow down the progress of the disease.

It sometimes also happens that through surrender, which brings about presence, that healing happens. But healing is a beautiful byproduct of the arising of presence, which sometimes occurs, but don't expect it necessarily to occur. Considering to the importance of the arising of presence, the healing of the physical body is a secondary matter, because the arising of presence is so much more vitally important because it is part of the entire evolutionary impulse of the universe, compared to which whether this body gets healed or not, and by getting healed lives a few more years, a little bit longer

than it would otherwise live, is not that important. As you have both embarked already on the awakening process, you can also help him. It's wonderful if the two of you are practicing presence.

He would quickly become more advanced than you because his motivation is so much stronger through the physical condition. So it's a beautiful opportunity. Don't believe in all the predictions.

Welcome healing if it happens, but don't believe that healing is the that which matters most here. Whether he becomes healed or not, I don't know what age he is now. What age is he now?

[Speaker 2] (32:27 - 32:28)

He's 59.

[Speaker 1] (32:28 - 32:53)

59. So in the meantime, what really matters is whether the flowering of consciousness happened through that particular form, and whether he has 40 years to live or 10 years to live is less important, as far as the flowering of consciousness is what matters. And now your relatives?

[Speaker 2] (32:54 - 32:56)

My children and my husband.

[Speaker 1] (32:57 - 32:59)

When they come together?

[Speaker 2] (32:59 - 33:03)

At the dinner table, and there's dramas going on.

[Speaker 1] (33:03 - 33:06)

How do you lose presence? You get drawn into...

[Speaker 2] (33:06 - 33:36)

I get drawn into it. I also have a special needs daughter, the younger one, and she wants my attention. My husband wants my attention, and I have a teenage daughter who usually doesn't want my attention at all.

Yeah, but it's a dynamic there, and then my husband and my teenage daughter going at it, and me wanting to protect her and then take care of the younger one's needs. I

basically just want to run away, not come back home. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (33:36 - 39:07)

Well, that's also very good practice. Just be aware of, if you're able to not lose yourself, when you give attention, as you must give attention, of course, it's wonderful to give attention to your child or to another human being, but not to lose yourself in the giving of attention so that you are connected with the source of attention, which is within you, without losing this connectedness with the source, then your attention can flow and you can say something to your child, say something to the other, without losing yourself in that movement. And again, inner body awareness can be the anchor for staying present. So as you sit at the table, you have to feel yourself, feel your inner being, and then you're rooted in being, and then you can give attention, and you can feel the connectedness with being.

You're not lost then in the mental realm. They may be, but something, if there's only one person who stays connected, it usually affects the entire energy field in the room, in the same way that a deeply unconscious person also affects the entire energy field in the room, and if there is a deeply unconscious person there, for example, a deeply negative person, that may not be the case in your family, then your presence would have to be quite intense to counteract that.

It doesn't fight it, you don't fight the darkness, just the light needs to be stronger, you turn up the dimmer switch. But you have to turn it up anyway, to some extent, as you sit with people at home. There's also the additional factor that people with whom you share a lot of past, it's sometimes more difficult to stay present with them than people with whom you don't share so much past people, acquaintances, friends, but family members that goes back often a very long time, but it's a lovely challenge too.

So practice when you're just with one or two people there, and then there's enough presence power in you, so that you can sustain presence even when there are more. What is required here is vigilance of your own energy, your own consciousness. Without the vigilance, you could call it attention too, as one Zen master explains that the essence of Zen is just this, the raised finger.

That was his explanation for Zen, that's all that's needed, attention. That means alert presence, vigilance. So it needs to be particularly strong when you're in the presence of a number of people who are mind dominated, as most humans still are, it needs to be particularly strong when you're with somebody who is mentally disturbed, intense vigilance, intense presence required.

It needs to be particularly strong when you have a physical condition and a serious so-called illness, then that can be the motivating force for intense presence or vigilance. You can see how much more helpful the raised finger is than conceptual explanations.

You cannot conceptually explain what presence is or what vigilance is to the mind, because it immediately takes you beyond the mind.

And sometimes people ask, I had somebody after a week-long retreat some years ago who asked, can you just explain again the concept of presence? I just want to hear again what it really actually is. I didn't quite get it.

The entire week was the practice of presence, but his mind said, I didn't quite get it. Of course it didn't get it, because he was expecting to understand conceptually, and he thought, if I just explain a little bit more, then he'll really become present. No, I've already said too much.

Presence is just attention. Attention is non-conceptual intelligence. It's the spacious awareness.

This attention basically means there's little or no thought. There's just consciousness, just the light. So you shine the light on people, and then you can speak, and the light is still there, and you speak.

The presence is there. In other words, as I'm speaking to you now, the presence is there, but the words are also there. They come out of the presence.

And if there's a child here that says, Daddy, Daddy, he just took away my toy. Tell him not to do that. You can look at him in that lovely presence in which there's also compassion and benevolence.

It's all part of that. And you look at the child and say, OK, well, just don't talk now. Say whatever comes to you without losing yourself in the drama, the daily drama, the drama of daily existence, the nervousness of that.

So that's your job. OK.

[Speaker 2] (39:08 - 39:09)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 3] (39:10 - 39:54)

Hi. I often feel overwhelmed by anger. And that anger makes me throw my spiritual practice really out of the window.

It's like a big impotence that I feel, and pessimism. So it's not going to work anyway. So just hell with it.

That's one thing. And the other thing is, I also feel very often that something is wrong. So I need to take some action to correct something that probably is just imaginary.

So it's unreal. So there is no action needed, most probably, but I have to do something about it.

[Speaker 8] (39:54 - 39:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (39:55 - 39:57)

So and I get carried away by that.

[Speaker 8] (39:58 - 39:58)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (39:58 - 40:05)

Yeah. For example, right now, I feel my heartbeat very strongly. Yes.

And I guess there's no reason for that.

[Speaker 1] (40:05 - 41:06)

But well, you're doing public speaking right now. So maybe that's why. Yeah.

And that's fine. You just you acknowledge that the heart is beating and you let that be. And the feeling that something is wrong, that's not a personal problem of yours.

It's a universal human condition that to carry that feeling inside that something is wrong. And then the mind looks for what can I do about this? Or where is it?

Where is the thing that's wrong? And then it misinterprets situations. So anger, when anger comes, of course, the energy field of it immediately flows into your mind.

And the thoughts that you then think are reflections of the anger. The anger makes you think certain thoughts. And as you put it, it says all that spiritual stuff obviously doesn't work.

These are thoughts that come out of the anger, the energy field.

[Speaker 3] (41:06 - 41:17)

Yes, or whatever I do, it's gonna be always the same. And, you know, no point of it, because it's not going to work. So that's the kind of thoughts that it generates.

[Speaker 1] (41:17 - 45:12)

Yes. But next time it happens, see if you are able to, in addition to thinking those

thoughts. Well, at the same time, you can be aware that these are thoughts that have arisen out of the energy field of anger.

In other words, see if you can have an awareness. It's not easy with anger, because it comes so suddenly. Whether you can have an awareness, not only that there's the energy of anger flowing through you, but also perhaps that the energy of anger, which may be old anger that has lived in you for a long time, pain body, I call it, which can easily then rise into your mind and control your thoughts.

Are you able to stay aware while it happens and recognize anger as an expression of the pain body? And if you are thinking angry thoughts, to realize that these are the thoughts of anger. Anger is thinking these thoughts.

They are not true. So they are simply thoughts that reflect the energy field of anger. So the experiment then is whether you can stay aware as the observer or the witness of those thoughts and of the energy field of anger.

You may not. I'm just suggesting it as an experiment. Whether or not you're able to stay present depends on how much presence there is already in you, how much presence power there is already in you.

Perhaps after having spent some time here with us, there may be more presence power in you because this energy field is helpful for drawing that out of you. Once you are there as the witness, then changes begin to happen. You don't even have to do anything.

You know what I mean by witness. It's simply to witness, to be aware of the energy so that you don't become completely identified with it. So the witnessing consciousness is in the same way that you now witness perhaps a certain nervousness.

Your heart is beating. There may be a certain nervousness as you stand there. You witness there's the nervousness and there's the heart beating and the witness allows everything to be as it is but there's a deeper dimension in you from where you can say my heart is beating.

I feel nervous energy inside me. These are still verbalizations but beyond the verbalization there's the ability to simply see it so to speak and that will change all the old patterns. The more awareness comes in, the more the old patterns will change.

So you don't have to change yourself because that's complicated. Many people try to do that. I have to change myself.

The most powerful, the real change comes with becoming aware of whatever is happening inside you so that the anger is no longer you. The anger is anger and you are the awareness. You know it.

You see it. You feel it. There it is and that's the decisive shift from being the anger to having the anger in your energy field and observing it.

That's a wonderful shift. So use anger as your spiritual practice. If you fail of course anger will immediately say you see you failed again.

You can't do it. That's the anger speaking.

[Speaker 3] (45:12 - 45:13)

There is something wrong with you.

[Speaker 1] (45:13 - 47:39)

Yes particularly that there's something wrong with me. Now I don't know if you may be surprised to know that there are millions, billions of people on the planet who have that same thought pattern. There's something wrong with me.

It's part of the human ego. So you bring in the awareness and that will change everything. That's the only true key.

If you fail next time the anger arises what happens you will become aware immediately after the anger has subsided. And then oh there it was and I wasn't present. And then the moment will come when you are there in the first, if you can catch the anger the first moment it comes or if you might even see that it could be the result of a thought that creates the anger and if you can be there in the first moment before it becomes the fully blown anger then you can stay there and it might not even become fully blown anger if you catch it the first moment.

You can feel the first stirrings of anger. You may only have three seconds. It may come very quickly.

Anger is like an explosive energy. You may only have two, three, four, five seconds to stay there with your awareness and feel it. Oh it's coming.

There it is. That's the pain body, the angry pain body coming. And if you catch it in the early stage don't suppress it.

By catch it I mean feel it. Be there as the witness. Then you can stay even as it grows.

The witness grows with it. It may not even grow. We'll have to see whether it still grows into full blown anger or not.

That doesn't matter. And so be thankful for your anger because the anger can become a very important spiritual practice for you because through it awareness can grow. So sometimes strange for people to see you can be thankful for things that you think are

the most difficult obstacles in your life but they can become your greatest opportunity for spiritual awakening.

Use it as part of your practice.

[Speaker 3] (47:41 - 47:46)

I think the most difficult thing to deal with is impotence. When you feel it's not going to work.

[Speaker 1] (47:47 - 47:47)

Powerlessness.

[Speaker 3] (47:48 - 47:53)

Yes. Deep pessimism. It's not going to work.

You're about to fail.

[Speaker 1] (47:53 - 48:59)

Yes. And you have to recognize that these are thought forms. They are thoughts that arise in your mind.

And when you're aware you don't need to believe in every thought that arises. And that's an enormous freedom. You recognize it as a thought that comes from anger.

Not the truth. It's a thought. A thought form that comes from anger.

The pain body. If a thought comes from anger it's not the truth. It's a distortion.

Recognize it and you say oh there's another thought form that says something negative that there's nothing you can do. You might as well give up. Whatever thoughts come.

Recognize that it's a thought form. Do you see how important that is? And it's always interesting to see how things have evolved as you practice now.

As you bring awareness into the anger see what happens to it a year later.

[Speaker 3] (49:01 - 49:02)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (49:03 - 49:33)

We need to finish now. Thank you. Wonderful.

It's just wonderful to see consciousness evolving, awakening in different ways and that

we can be thankful for everything, especially the difficult parts of our life. Because without that there would be no awakening. The challenges create the necessary energy for the flowering of consciousness.

[Speaker 4] (49:34 - 49:53)

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Eckhart Tolle Deepening Presence [8e15c6e9-5381-4ac5-b4bc-80648af9896d]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:31)

Deepening Presence. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience on a wide range of topics like what's the function of the ego? How does it feel to be enlightened?

And what's the best remedy for loneliness and the pain body? Eckhart responds with his renowned wisdom. He says the best motivation for liberation is the desire to stop suffering.

All of life's events can lead to that.

[Speaker 5] (0:37 - 0:52)

My question is around the ego. And is there any, we all have one. And that's I have to believe that the world comes from perfection.

And so is there a positive role? Because we do a lot of talking about making it go away?

[Speaker 1] (0:52 - 16:28)

Yes, thank you. Good question. The ego is has been absolutely a necessary part of the evolution of human consciousness.

Also, we need to be aware before I talk more about that, when we talk of ego, not to confuse ego with what I call form identity. Everybody has a form identity, which means you have a physical form, and you have a psychological form, the person, the makeup of that person on the level of the mind and the emotions. And the psychological form of you and the physical form of you have their place and must not be confused with ego.

So to look after the form of you and to acknowledge and honor it and even improve it is a good thing. You can improve your physical form by exercise and right nutrition. You can improve your psychological form by acquiring new experiences, more knowledge, learning new things.

That's all part of your form identity. As form identity also, you are not complete yet. As form identity, there are many possibilities.

There are many things you can still do unless you are 100 years old, in which case, well, you're returning. You no longer need to do much. As the older you get, the more you go into the being.

But in the meantime, some form is still there. As you get very old, the form begins to

fade and then more and more essence, you're more and more just essence. So to acknowledge your own form, and that remains, it does not mean when the ego subsides.

Oh, sorry. What is the difference between your form identity and the ego? Very simple.

Ego means complete identification with your form identity. So that means you only know yourself as the physical vehicle, which may be good looking, not good looking, fat, too thin, too fat, whatever. Great, just right, better than anybody else's or whatever, or getting old.

I don't want to look in the mirror anymore. Whatever. That's the physical form.

There is the mental and emotional form of you. Complete identification with your form identity means ego. So it's important when one speaks of ego to define what one means by ego.

And sometimes people have discussions about ego. One person means something else by that word, and the other person means something very different. So it's very important for us to know how, in what sense we use the word ego.

Now, when I say complete identification with form identity, what does identification mean? Identification means you derive your sense of self from exclusively from the form of you, exclusively from body appearance and abilities and so on, and mind and emotion, knowledge, achievements, ability to do, all the things we've been talking about, form identity. And that is something that was unavoidable, as unavoidable as the human consciousness has been growing for thousands of years, the ability to think grew more and more.

And that's an incredible thing. It was an incredible evolutionary development, the ability to create a consciousness, to create thought. What then happened was that humans who, before the arising of thought, humans lived in a state of connectedness with being, the oneness.

And then very, very gradually, they began to think very gradually. And even when they began to think, that wasn't a problem yet. That was a wondrous thing.

There are some anthropologists, and I believe they are correct, who say that when humans first began to think, which is of course linked with the arising of language, a lot of thinking is words in your mind, the arising of language came, and then as language formed more and more, the ability to think grew more and more. And some anthropologists say, and I believe they are correct, the first humans in those times when the thinking arose, they believed that gods were talking to them because they heard these voices in their head. So they interpreted their thought processes as messages from God, or one God, one of many gods.

So they might say, now go there and kill those people in that village, maybe. But perhaps they were not yet, they had not yet arrived at that state where they felt the need to kill people in the neighboring village, which arose later when they began to identify more and more with the thinking structures in their mind, and a collective ego developed before a personal ego developed. A personal ego is a later stage of development.

So the ability to think arose, and gradually it grew more and more, and their consciousness got drawn more and more into mind, into thought. They lost that sense of rootedness in being gradually, and that was the beginning stages of the ego forming. And this is the reason I would say is why in many civilizations and ancient cultures, there is an ancient myth in many parts of the world called by different names, and that ancient myth is called the Golden Age.

And that tells the story there was once, a long time ago in the distant past, there was a time when humans were happy, when things were well, life was easy. And then for thousands of years, people have been telling that story of these ancient times. And those were the times, the pre-egoic stage of human consciousness, when there was that connectedness.

And that's where animals still live too, in that rootedness in being, before any self-image arose created by thought. But we had to go through that, it is in order to reach another level of consciousness, another evolutionary level, in order to go deeper often you have to lose something that you originally or seemingly lose something you originally had. And when you regain it, and that is the connectedness with being, when you regain it after losing it, you have it at a much deeper level.

So the Golden Age that actually, I believe that myth has a reality to it. There was such a thing a long time ago, that in ancient myth is called the Golden Age, that can and is destined to return, but not in the same way that it was then. The return of the Golden Age means conscious realization of being.

And then that is when, as the ego then dissolves, it was a necessary part of that development of human consciousness. Ego dissolving does not mean that you no longer have a form identity or do not honor your form identity. It simply means that you derive your sense of who you are no longer from anything that constitutes your form.

And so the egoic stage that we have arrived at now is an end stage. And that means as the ego approaches the transition and begins to dissolve, not form identity, that's fine, that's there, but ego as identification with form begins to, is destined to dissolve. It has been an evolutionary stage, an evolutionary development in consciousness, but in the same way that the caterpillar, just before it metamorphoses into a butterfly, experiences life becoming more and more difficult as a caterpillar.

And something seems to be going very wrong for the life of the caterpillar before the butterfly comes out. Oh, if the caterpillar could speak, it would say, I can't stand this anymore. Life is so hard.

Why is it so hard? Because you are supposed to give birth to something totally different, which is you also, but in a totally different manifestation. And so at some point, the caterpillar dissolves or changes into, whoa, what an incredible metamorphosis, the most miraculous thing.

And so the human ego is at a stage now where it becomes more and more dysfunctional. And this started quite a while ago. It becomes more and more dysfunctional in a dangerous way, because of the advances that the mind has progressed more and more, the ability of analytical thinking, science came in.

Science is the applied use of mind, grown and grown and grown. There hasn't yet, we are lagging behind in the growth of consciousness. It has to catch up with the incredible advances in technology and science, the growth of consciousness lagging behind.

And if the egoic state continues for much longer, it creates more and more havoc on the planet because a dysfunctional ego without technology can create a certain amount of havoc, but not that much with a sword or throwing stones. But the more technology develops, the more dangerously dysfunctional the ego becomes in its attempt to have enemies, to fight its enemies, it needs its enemies, always can't do without that, both on a personal level and on a collective level, creating enormous amount of unnecessary conflict, if you really look into it, unnecessary. So we need and we continue to have a form identity.

Yes. The only thing that changes is we don't derive our identity from it anymore. And so the way in which we as a form identity operate in this world becomes very different from the way in which somebody operates who identifies with their form identity.

So that is the transition. There are also, there are ancient stories about this need to lose something in order to regain it at a deeper level, including in the gospels, there's the narrative, it's called the prodigal son. The prodigal son has everything.

He's the son of a wealthy father. This is a parable. He is the son of a wealthy father.

He has everything. And then he says to father, give me my inheritance. I'm going to go away and experience life in a different way.

I want to be independent. I don't want to be part of this. I want my own life.

And the father says, yes, the son goes off into foreign countries and gradually, by the way, there are other versions of it. It's an ancient story, but gradually he squanders his wealth. And not only that, he doesn't even remember who he is anymore.

And at some point, the father sends messengers and the messengers finally find him. And they tell him, don't you know who you are? Oh, not really.

I can't remember. And he's become poor by then. And then they remind him who he is.

And then there's a return journey. He goes back to his father's home. And when he returns home, his father loves him more deeply.

That little thing in the parable points to the fact that when you return and regain what is lost, paradise lost, paradise regained. When you regain what you have lost, there is a greater, deeper consciousness to it. It's a totally different dimension of the same thing.

So that's a wonderful realization. So as this is the path of humanity, we had to go through the ego stage because that's how the ability to think was inseparable from that. And it became so powerful, the ability to think, that it absorbed all our consciousness.

And the power to think will remain, but we will not be dominated by thought. We will not be trapped in thought. In fact, what thought can do once it's no longer egoic is wonderful.

It can create and manifest incredible things. So the answer to your question is, the ego has been a necessary development in the evolution of consciousness. It's coming to its final stage now, but it's not to be confused with who we are on the level of form.

[Speaker 4] (16:34 - 16:36)

To be enlightened, how does it feel like?

[Speaker 1] (16:43 - 16:44)

Feels good.

[Speaker 4] (16:44 - 17:01)

I mean, I need to know what I'm doing. I think I have to go through the mental process of understanding this. What will I get out of this?

[Speaker 1] (17:03 - 23:51)

The motivation to seek enlightenment can be of various kinds. Some work better than others. There's a danger that the search for enlightenment is ego-motivated, that can easily happen.

The ego feels a sense, which is quite normal, of lack or dissatisfaction with the things, either the things it has or the things it has already achieved and didn't fulfill it. And then it went on to something else. And that wasn't quite that fulfilling either.

And then it reads or hears something about the possibility of achieving a state of enlightenment. Well, that sounds much better than all the things I've been looking for so far, because those things haven't satisfied me. So I'm going to go for that.

And then the ego creates, of course, a goal. I want to reach that goal in the same way that before it created other goals that it either reached or did not reach. Either way, it wasn't satisfying.

You might have heard the saying, there are two ways of being unhappy. One is not getting what you want. The other is getting what you want.

That's when the ego operates, that's the case. So either it achieved already what it wanted, and it didn't satisfy it, or it couldn't achieve it, and now it's looking for something else that maybe it could achieve. And enlightenment seems a good option because the Ferrari, that didn't satisfy me.

And then I tried the Lamborghini, and that didn't satisfy me. And then I tried whatever else didn't satisfy me. But enlightenment, that's it.

I want to go for that. And then of course, it wants to know, okay, but what exactly does that mean? I want to know what I'm striving towards, because it might be the wrong thing.

Maybe when I achieve it, I won't be there anymore. Or maybe the only way to achieve it is for me to dissolve. I don't know if I want it anymore.

I think I'm going to ask Eckhart that question. What I can tell you, in addition to what I've already said, is enlightenment will not satisfy your ego. Sorry about that.

Ego needs to be recognized as an illusion, an ultimate fiction in your mind for something else to emerge. And in that sense, one can say, nobody actually becomes enlightened. You don't become enlightened.

But when you get out of the way, there it is. So enlightenment is not something you can actually achieve. And I have no feeling that I achieved anything or that I am enlightened.

I said it feels good because just the present moment feels good. That's all I know. So just even to make that claim, I am enlightened, is ultimately cannot be correct.

Because who is saying that? Who is making that claim? So in ultimate terms, you cannot be enlightened.

But if you, the person, recognize its ephemeral nature, and you no longer see your sense of self there, then something else is suddenly there that has always been there, but you just didn't know it. It was obscured. It was continuously overlooked.

The presence of consciousness was continuously overlooked in every experience. You could have been conscious of it at any moment, but it was overlooked because the hypnotic nature of the sensory world, and especially of the mind, was so overpowering that you overlooked something more essential in you that has always been there, is always there, will always be there. And therefore, if the motivation to seek so-called enlightenment comes from that place of seeking some permanent fulfillment, then it's not going to work.

And there are spiritual practitioners, without knowing it, they spend years and years looking for that thing, and they're mentally projected into this place called future, which, by the way, only exists as a thought, but has no reality as such. There is no future, except as a thought in your head. Nobody has seen future, touched it, been there.

You can't. It's not there. Life is now, always.

There is no future. So if you seek a future state, it's misleading. And if you seek enlightenment in the future, that very search is the obstacle.

So there can be another motivation for seeking enlightenment, but then I would suggest a different word for it, and not enlightenment, but liberation. And that motivation can be not to find some greater fulfillment, but that motivation can be to become free of suffering. So there can be another motivation for seeking enlightenment, but although I would prefer the term liberation here, or in Christian terminology, a related word that's used in Christian terminology is salvation.

So if the suffering in your life gets too much, and then realizing that there is a way beyond suffering and wanting to know more about that, that is a better motivation for finding liberation than seeing what can I get out of it when I finally get enlightened. And of course, the answer is the one that's asking that question won't be even there to experience it.

[Speaker 2] (23:58 - 24:10)

I want to speak about loneliness and pain body, because since two years I'm traveling alone, trying to do like you, like doing nothing.

[Speaker 1] (24:17 - 24:18)

That's a good try, yeah.

[Speaker 2] (24:22 - 24:43)

And then I have difficulty to accept this nothingness, so then I spend time on devices, on Facebook, and then the pain body arrives, and then sometimes I see the world like it doesn't exist, and that other people are like robots, so it's a lot of suffering. I don't know

how to overcome this kind of feeling.

[Speaker 1] (24:44 - 24:47)

So you've been traveling for a couple of years?

[Speaker 2] (24:47 - 24:54)

Yeah, like one year and a half. I start with India, and then now I'm following you because I went to Norway, New York, Costa Rica.

[Speaker 1] (24:55 - 24:58)

Okay, and you're not running out of money yet?

[Speaker 2] (24:58 - 25:02)

The universe gives me what I need.

[Speaker 1] (25:03 - 25:05)

Okay, that's good. That's a good sign.

[Speaker 2] (25:05 - 25:12)

But it's about like the disconnection with the world when I am alone and with devices.

[Speaker 1] (25:12 - 34:48)

Yes, you're not in a relationship at present, and you haven't been for the past two years, and the relationship has not arisen, or do you on purpose avoid entering a relationship? Okay, well, whatever it is, learning to be with yourself, at ease with yourself. Loneliness can be a great thing when it comes transformed through acceptance into solitude.

Solitude only arises when you accept your aloneness, become completely present, and suddenly you sense your own presence, which does not need anything, is already complete. Which is not to say that on the level of your form, there may not be a need for some company, whether it's physical or emotional or mental or altogether. On the level of form, you will continue to experience certain pulls and certain needs.

On the level of form, if you have no relationship, you may feel that sense of needing something to complete you on the level of form to some extent. That's not a problem if you are rooted in your essence. You can be aware that on the level of form, there are still, there are certain needs, and these needs may be met at some point, or right now, they may not be met, and that no longer matters that much.

It is only of relative importance whether you have a relationship or you don't have a

relationship. On the deepest level, you don't need it. On a slightly up, on a form level, you're not complete.

There's masculine, there's the polarities of yin and yang, not necessarily always related to the biological masculine feminine, but you are either, if you are yin, you need some yang. If you are more yang, you need some yin. And that operates on the level of opposites and of form.

It may be advisable for you to engage in some kind of activity so that you can not only practice presence by doing nothing, because it was never my decision when it happened to me. It was not my decision to do nothing for a couple of years or so. By the way, I'm still good at doing nothing, but it wasn't my decision to do nothing in order to achieve some state.

The doing nothing arose because already I was so deeply immersed in presence that I had lost the balance as a human being. I had lost the balance between human and being. I love that word human being.

The English language doesn't have a word for man and woman, like German has Mensch, which is the word for human being. But in English, you have to use two words. But there's the human part of you, that's the form.

There's the being of you, that's the essence. Ultimately, everybody needs to be in some kind of balance between those two. I was immersed in being so deeply that I lost the balance.

I wasn't unhappy about that at all, but I lost the balance between the human. The human became so unimportant to me that I didn't do anything to even, I knew what am I supposed to do with my life, even that didn't arise, that thought. It was so delicious, delightful to be immersed in being.

And that's how this period of complete, not complete, there was some activity because I had to occasionally get little jobs to survive. And occasionally people gave me money, but I did have temporary jobs to survive, so that I was forced occasionally to come out a little bit out of the being. But I didn't last in any job for very long.

The moment I had enough money, I would stop again. So I got temporary jobs at various places. For two weeks, I worked at the kennel club in London, filling out forms of puppies that had just been born of different dogs.

Fortunately, they had no computers at that time yet, because that would have been beyond me. So there was just the bliss of being was so all-consuming that the balance between the human and the being was lost. And then it only began to re-establish itself when people started coming to me and asking me questions.

And the question pulled me out of the being because an answer was required, but the answer came from the being. So when I started answering questions, suddenly there was a flow. And the answering of questions became my doing.

So that's how the balance got re-established slowly. I would not necessarily seek inactivity as a way of achieving a kind of presence. It is sometimes easier to engage in some activity and even engage in relationships and see if you can stay present there.

But it all comes back to really the present moment, whatever it is, wherever you are, wherever you are. Is there enough intensity in you not to be drawn into mind for long periods of time? Is there enough intensity in you to stay present in that state of aloneness so that you can be the consciousness rather than the person?

You are the consciousness. And it could be a great opportunity that you're able to do that, to just travel and explore. But you already went to India.

You did not find what you were seeking, perhaps. And then you came to Eckhart. And there you did not find what you were seeking, perhaps.

And the only place where you can find what you're seeking is within you in the present moment. Doesn't matter where you are. So intensity of presence is important to cut through mind.

Are you motivated enough to have that intensity of presence? And it could well be that there's not enough suffering in your life to provide the motivation. So that is a possibility, but that's not a problem because it'll come.

My sense is that right now is just too easy for you. It's too easy. So the suffering is, I mentioned before, the best motivation for liberation is the desire to escape from suffering or realizing the possibility that is possible to be free of suffering.

And that's why the Buddha chose that term to describe his teaching, which is very wise. What's my teaching about? The Buddha said, I'll tell you what it is about.

It's not about enlightenment. It's not about achieving God realization. It's not about that.

The end of suffering. So it seems that he attracted mostly people who were at that stage where that meant something to them. I don't know if you are at that stage where the end of suffering means enough to you to provide the intensity for awakening.

I was suffering. That was the motivation. I didn't even have a name for awakening.

The wonderful news though is, life always gives you what you need. And it could well be that if you continue your life in this way, the way in which you live will create more and more suffering. Perhaps the loneliness will become unbearable.

And so then the suffering of the loneliness might drive you into a relationship. And then something may go wrong in the relationship. Then the relationship will become unbearable.

And then you will seek out another situation and something will go wrong there. And then that will become unbearable. And then suddenly you will want to be free of suffering.

And there you have the motivation. So whether you carry on the way you are now, fine. Life will give you what you need.

Or if you think, okay, I'll try a relationship. Great too. You will find the necessary suffering to get you there.

[Speaker 3] (34:51 - 35:10)

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Eckhart Tolle Discovering Our Deeper Essence [b6283770-f7c4-40fc-8f78-0f7783bb8d4e]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

Discovering our deeper essence. In this episode, Eckhart reveals why becoming aware of the present moment is synonymous with connecting to the deeper dimension of who we are. He explains how we go beyond the personality to reach our transcendent self.

Eckhart describes how we're not just human doings, we are human beings. He says our primary mission is to integrate the two. He believes this is the most important discovery we can make in our lifetime.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 22:15)

Welcome, everybody. Before we get to the questions, let's just becoming aware of the present moment. No need to call it a meditation, just more simple than that.

Just becoming aware of the present moment. Not only becoming aware of the content of the present moment, what I call the content of the present moment is whatever appears in your awareness. You may have perhaps certain emotions or feelings right now, it's possible, perhaps something that's lingering, something that happened earlier today or who knows, or something that might happen and this has a little bit of residue or whatever it may be, whatever emotion, anxiety or sadness.

But again, if you sense anything like that, that's fine too, that's also what appears. Or any thoughts that come in, also they appear in your awareness, of course. So the present moment is what appears to your sense perception and your inner perception of thoughts and feelings.

But that's not all. Well, that's already a good step in the right direction to become aware of whatever appears in this moment, become more aware of your sense perceptions and become aware of your thoughts or fully feeling or physical feeling in the body, that's good. But becoming aware of the present moment is deeper than that.

You're not only aware of what appears in your field or space of awareness, this is more subtle now, you can also become aware of that space of awareness itself, that is the awareness that makes everything else possible, that's much more subtle. To become aware of that, there needs to be at least a moment of stillness, stillness is inseparable from that stillness, not necessarily outer stillness. Inner stillness means a cessation of the stream of thinking, just a little gap.

What remains at first seems like nothing or nothing much or nothing, certainly nothing interesting. Thoughts are interesting, or it can be very boring too, but even boring thoughts pretend to be interesting. But that space of stillness is not interesting,

obviously.

So it's something that's overlooked completely for most people. They're looking for the next thing to arise, the next whatever it is, something that's hoped for, something that's feared, whatever it may be. But if you go more deeply into the present moment, you become aware of the essence of the present moment, which is inseparable from the essence of who or what you are beyond the person, the transcendent dimension.

It's very simple, just a brief moment of stillness, but not a tired kind of stillness, an alert stillness. So the real meaning of becoming aware of the present moment really is synonymous with becoming aware of yourself beyond the conditioned entity that is called the person, the deeper dimension to who you are. I would say that that is the most important discovery that you can make in your entire life.

That is what some spiritual traditions call liberation. Liberation from what? Liberation from the conditioned person, the entity, the limited conditioned entity.

Other traditions call it awakening or salvation. So to be able to enter the present moment is something that's a skill, one could almost say, that grows in you, and it becomes easier and easier to step out of the conditioned entity, it doesn't matter for how long, in everyday life, and sense the underlying presence, awareness, whatever you want to call it. But the thing is, that is not an object that you are aware of, although when we use language, it sounds as if it were something that you become aware of, but the real you becoming aware of applies to everything else, because everything else is an object that arises in your field or space of consciousness, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, they're all objects, they come and go, but the awareness itself is not an object that you are aware of because you are it. So it becomes aware of itself, you become aware of yourself, and it's only object-subject relationship when you speak about it, but when you actually realize it, it's not a subject-object because it's the arising of self-awareness.

Now, this little talk here, the most important part of it is what I'm not saying, which is the gaps between the words. If you pay attention to the gaps between the words, you have to become aware and still. If you are not still or present, you cannot be aware of the gaps between the words.

You would immediately fill the gaps between the words with your thoughts, thoughts that, for example, are trying to figure out what the speaker has just said, or that takes you somewhere completely different to tomorrow morning or tonight or yesterday or 10 years ago, or the gaps between words become an uncomfortable place, and there's a feeling of frustration, and why is he speaking so slowly? What's he really saying? I don't get it.

I'm trying to get it, but I don't get it. Of course, you don't get it because you can't get it

by thinking about it. Now, this is helpful, this little talk.

The purpose of it is to become aware of that which is beyond language and beyond thought, and again, the moment you talk about it becomes falsified to some extent because I've already just said you become aware of it, not really. It's the arising of awareness as yourself, and there you are now a complete human being, and before you were just a human unaware of being. I believe this Chinese sage Confucius said somewhere that humans are not fully human yet.

We are on the way towards becoming fully human, and so one could say, yes, this is what it is because you're not fully human until you are aware that you're a human being, not just human. It's not enough to be human. It's horrible to be just a human.

It's suffering, frustration, fear, regrets, and continuously stuff happening that make your life difficult as a human. There's no end to it. It's not a personal problem or challenge, then it's a collective problem or challenge, and then personal and collective come together.

There's no end to it until you become aware of the transcendent dimension. The mind stops for a moment, and you become aware of the space of awareness, and the tendency is for this to easily, very easily become obscured again when you engage in everyday life, so your mission here is to integrate the dimension of being with your everyday life as a person, a human. No matter what you are engaged in in your personal life, whatever it is, no matter how old you are or what your station is in society, that is your task, is this integration of the transcendent dimension and the conditioned dimension here.

There are other words you could use. You could say integrate doing and being. The person is the doer, and even if you sit still and are not active outwardly, you're still continuously thinking as a person, so you're still doing the thinking.

Well, you're not really doing the thinking, the thinking happens to you, but it's a kind of... Most people don't think they are the victim of their thoughts, but don't even know it. When that level is completely missing the transcendent dimension, you are at the mercy of whatever thoughts arise in your mind, and you confuse those thoughts with who you are.

It's called normal, and you absorb thoughts from the collective mind, facilitated these days by our technology, and then certain thoughts become more predominant than others, they take over your mind, it can happen very easily, and then you derive your sense of identity from a bundle of conditioned thoughts that drown out all other thoughts, or most other thoughts. Some people have obsessive ideas about the world or about themselves, about other people, they're totally in the grip. These are more extreme manifestations of the same dysfunction that is in everybody who has not begun

to awaken.

So, in the more extreme manifestation, which are not all that rare either, you are in the grip of very dysfunctional thoughts that act like a virus in your mind, mental virus, affects all other thinking, all other thoughts, and then you look at reality through the veil of that, and you can't even see what's there anymore, because you could look at something that's, it's white, but your thoughts say it's black, and you can't even see that it's white, or the other way around.

Thoughts can be so, become so heavy that they make it impossible for you to actually become aware of reality out there, it can, it's then denied. This can also happen collectively, collective mind viruses, and there are periods of time in human history when certain areas on the planet get taken over by a virus infection, not the virus that we're talking about now, but a mental virus, not the physical virus, taken over by a mental virus, and then an entire collective being taken over by a mental virus. It's sometimes in small areas on the planet for a certain period of time, it's like a disease, and then it subsides, and then you just have the normal identification with thought again, which is dysfunctional enough, but not quite as extreme as those periods when there is a viral infection of sometimes millions of people, for example, I mean, everybody's familiar with witch burnings in the Middle Ages, so it's when a totally unbelievably insane, say, how is it possible that everybody, almost everybody got infected by this?

Then we have certain other, sometimes it could be a religious virus, in religious terms, it could be a political virus, we've had some big ones, they last a few years usually, the infection, National Socialism, the Communism, and we're familiar with that, smaller areas of the planet, Cambodia, for example, under the regime of the Khmer Rouge Pol Pot, not that many people perhaps are aware of that anymore, not that long ago, the country killed one third of its own population, totally insane, taken over by a political virus, so-called political, that said that we need to kill all those who are the oppressors, which means everybody who can read and write, for example, they are obviously the oppressors of the peasants, and let's kill them, and their children, of course, so we get very extreme forms periodically, but they all go back to the normal dysfunction, so sometimes the normal dysfunction, which identification with thought, can become extreme, the only immunity you have against this virus, there is no vaccine, by the way, for the mental virus, you can't inject yourself with something, that doesn't work, the only immunity is awareness, the only immunity is presence, so that when thoughts happen to you, there's the ability to be aware of the thoughts that happen to you, instead of being totally in the grip of the thoughts that happen to you, that's immunity from mental viruses, and I'm glad you're all here, because you have voluntarily come here for the spiritual vaccine against the mental virus, no anti-vaxxers here, and that is the, before we go on to the questions, just a little bit more, it's particularly when a person is confronted with unusual difficulties, problems, adversity, challenges, then it can happen more easily, that this person's level of consciousness decreases, you become more

unconscious in the face of extreme challenges, so often extreme challenges make you more unconscious, and then that is when the mental virus can much more easily arise, because there's not enough consciousness left, so when, in other words, when life gets difficult, whether it's on a personal level or on a collective level, when life is always difficult, but when it gets particularly difficult in heart, that is, at those times, whether it's in your personal life, things get difficult, when you lose your job, you lose your livelihood, your career, breakdown of marriage, the relationship, death of a loved one, loss of possessions, loss of status in society, whatever it may be, some collapse in your personal life, something more extreme than the usual difficulties of life, those are times when it's very easy to become reactive and lose consciousness, and then you are much more prone to be taken over by a mental virus, and that can also happen collectively, when the society is faced with extreme challenges, it is much more likely that a collective mental virus may arise, one example from politics in Germany in the 30s, there was a breakdown, a total economic breakdown, everybody lost all their money, inflation was rampant, to buy a loaf of bread you needed a pile of money, just to get a million marks to buy a loaf of bread, everybody lost all their savings, everything, unemployment, complete collapse on many levels, and of course, fear arose, enormous fear in people, and then the moment the fear gets intensified, then you are really susceptible to that virus, and then very quickly, a collective viral infection, mental virus infection happened, and the virus infection, the mental virus, it lowers consciousness, it makes you, to put it bluntly, and in very simple terms, it also makes you more, obviously makes you more stupid, so your level of intelligence goes down too, because you really have to be stupid to do things that, to do those things that you do when you're infected, your ability to think rationally diminishes, so without going into it, I can see some of it happening now, because collectively, we are faced with the challenge of the physical virus, and there's a lot of fear arising, and the fear lowers your consciousness, and then you are really, can very easily become infected by a collective mental virus, which means you can no longer think rationally about these things, and then whatever you do is wrong, and makes things worse, so it's terribly important what we've been talking about, is the becoming aware of the transcendent dimension within yourself, and become liberated from the person, the person continues to operate in this world until the person dies, but the person that continues to operate in this world is no longer as dysfunctional as a normal person, it still has its quirks, and it has its idiosyncrasies, it still has perhaps certain likes and dislikes, and maybe a few weird things are still around, but it's no longer the person is no longer really an agent of suffering, does not cause suffering to others, and does not make itself suffer anymore, so to some extent, the transcendent dimension begins to shine through the person, and that's how it's like the lamp and the lampshade, the person is a lampshade, and the awareness is the light, the lamp, and the lampshade gradually becomes more and more transparent to the light, it still has its shape and form, but it becomes more transparent to the light, and that is your destiny, that's why you're here, and let's look at some questions, if any are left.

[Speaker 3] (22:17 - 22:52)

My question is like, it's easier for me to stay present when I'm alone with like conscious people like all of you, but it's really hard for me to stay present when I'm with like my friends, like they're always on their phones or check social media, stuff like that, makes me really hard for me to be present with them, and I know that I cannot change them or just tell them don't look at your phone, so yeah, I'm just wondering, do you have any suggestions for that?

[Speaker 1] (22:53 - 35:32)

Right, right, yes, it's something that gradually you learn to bring that awareness into interactions with other people in groups, it's initially perhaps very difficult when there's a group of people coming together, and you're swept along with the mind movement within the group, conversations, discussions, and so on, with a single person, while you're interacting with a single person might be easier at first, and I suggest that you give attention to the person, and that's an interesting thing, let's say the person is telling you a story, what happened yesterday, let me tell you what happened yesterday, I saw this guy, and then he said, and then whatever the story is, and you're listening, giving your fullest attention to a person, both let's say on the visual level, you're looking at the person in the auditory, you're listening to what the person has to say, and you have this open attention, this is a, could call it a spiritual practice, if you give full attention to a person, yes, not the words that this person is saying, you're aware of what the person is saying, but there's more to attention than that, it's not just attention to the words, it's more than that, or it's deeper than that, you give attention, you look and you listen, and you are present, while you look and listen, while you are not saying anything, you just look and listen, and then you become aware, while you're looking and listening, you become aware of that attention itself in yourself, that which is presence, so while you're looking and listening, you're aware of yourself as the attention, and people love that, they like to be looked at and listened to, they like to be given attention, children particularly, it's very important to give children attention, to, it requires an alertness, and there's an openness to it, you're not preparing them, the next thing you are going to say, you're a space, very good communicators do that intuitively, although they may, in other areas of their life, they may be completely non-present, but there are certain people, extremely good communicators, and they have, without knowing it, the ability to listen, to give attention, and when, then you connect with a person at a deeper level, that's beyond the words, because what I call attention here, is really presence, and when you give attention, you can even do it, start with simple things, like meeting a person in the elevator, and perhaps you're saying, some people are comfortable with silence, so they might say something, they say, I think it's going to rain today, or hasn't the weather been awful, or whatever it may be, or you're a brief interaction in the street with someone, somebody asks you a question, asking for directions, you go to a store to buy something, even during those brief interactions, give attention to that person, might only

be for a few seconds while the interaction is happening, you look and you listen, and there's no, the mind is clear, in other words, there's a still presence, so as much as you can, be the still presence, when you're with another person, it doesn't mean that you're unable to speak anymore, because when the moment comes, you will say something, words come, then you participate, perhaps in a somewhat different way, not quite in the same way, if what the other person is saying is very dysfunctional, you would not participate in the dysfunctional discourse, whatever the person is saying, the other person is complaining about how awful some other people are, and what they, and you know what he did then, and then I said, and then he said, and then and so on, all the stories that people have, instead of being getting totally drawn into that, if it's dysfunctional kind of narratives, be there as a space, there was a early 20th century spiritual teacher, and he would sometimes, when his disciples were in a room talking to each other, or having some kind of gathering together, they were standing around talking, discussion, he would sometimes burst into a room and shout, stop, and everybody stopped, no matter whatever posture they were at, they were at a glass in their hands, or they had to completely become motionless while he was saying that, the purpose behind it is what he called self-remembering, what he wanted people to become aware of themselves in that moment, but not of the person, but of the underlying consciousness, self-remembering is stop, because before he said that stop, everybody was identified with the mindstream, completely identified to it, it's like a raiding river, it drags you along, especially if you're in a group setting, and everybody's talking, and you're saying what you think, and the other person saying what they think, you're like a raiding river, and you're being dragged along, stop, awareness, he would even sometimes encourage people to drink alcohol, I don't recommend it, he would encourage people to drink, become drunk, and then he would say, see how unconscious you are, to make people aware, of course, when you drink, you can very quickly, unless you're firmly established in presence, when you drink, you very quickly lose your ordinary level of relative consciousness, not that conscious, ordinary consciousness, not that conscious either, but you fall from ordinary consciousness to lower consciousness when you drink alcohol or certain other substances, and so people then lose the little awareness that they had, when they drink, they lose that completely, and then something else takes over, so he used that sometimes as a test, he would give drinks to see who of his disciples could actually stay present, even while the alcohol was infecting their minds, could they still be present, this is why it's not recommended for people on these awakening paths, it is not recommended that they indulge in excessive drinking, for example, a glass of wine may be fine, but some people, after one glass of wine, they already lose sufficient consciousness to remember that 10 minutes before they said, I'm just going to have one glass, and so it leads to more and more, so you have to be careful with that, when you're firmly established in, honestly, it doesn't matter anymore, but obviously, you wouldn't want to drink a lot, because your normal state of consciousness is so much more pleasant than whatever you could achieve through any kind of drug, so coming back to your question, giving attention, giving attention, and become aware of

the field of attention that you're giving, and then you can practice, even in a group sometimes, you may be able to practice while others are talking, you suddenly become aware of yourself as the awareness that's taking it all in, make it into a spiritual practice, that an interaction with a friend or friends, make it into a spiritual practice, you don't have to tell them that, because they think you're weird, if you tell them that, so, and don't neglect little things, very brief interactions with people, they're also quite important, and sometimes easier that way to practice that, it's wonderful when you can just look at a person, and for a moment, while that person is saying something, you are not saying anything inside you, there's only still alert presence, that also you begin to sense, I'm reluctant to use a word that just came to mind, but I'll use it anyway, you begin to sense some degree of love towards that person, when you look in that way, maybe a better term is loving kindness, that's a Buddhist term, loving kindness, you can sense that, and so people become much more pleasant to interact with, and to meet, because when you are present, you can sense the presence in the other, even if they are not present, you can sense that which is beyond the person or the personality, you can almost, one could say, you can pierce through the veil of the person or personality, and then you connect at a deeper level, and this connection at a deeper level is love, which as I, love I say is the recognition of oneness, that's what love is, the recognition of oneness, so ultimately you always love, you love the other as yourself, that's the real meaning, because you recognize ultimately the other is yourself, because the oneness, you are both manifestations of the one consciousness, the light is the same, the lampshades differ, there are many, many lampshades, but it's always the same light, so instead of reacting to the lampshade, you kind of look beyond the lampshade, you are aware of the lampshade, yes, but you look beyond it, and you are actually more aware of the light that shines through than the lampshade, you are aware of both, but you are more aware of the light, and that's a wonderful thing that changes your interactions with humans, because until that happens, really humans are just so difficult, they're just so troublemakers, and sometimes you think they're great, and then the next day they disappoint you, and they let you down, and then they make your life difficult, so it's very important, this is a human interaction as spiritual practice, that is really extremely important, human interaction as spiritual practice, yeah, I wish you well in your spiritual practice with humans, so you bring the being into the human level, thank you.

[Speaker 2] (35:33 - 35:53)

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Eckhart Tolle Discovering Our True Identity [8ae14e22-b0e7-4f38-9d0e-d2e82f8ce1f8]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:32)

Discovering our true identity. In this podcast, Eckhart discusses how we define our personal identity. He says it usually begins with the physical body, then possessions and achievements.

He says we may have a long list of accomplishments, even personal wealth, but we're not satisfied. We're still not good enough. Eckhart explains defining ourselves in these superficial terms is a trap and just another form of ego.

Our true identity is beyond that.

[Speaker 1] (0:34 - 15:05)

Wonderful to see you. There'll be many people from all over the planet joining us. We are not in a hurry to get anywhere.

We are happy with being here in this moment. But before we hear the questions and maybe the answers, if they come, I'd like to have a little experiment or experimental, brief meditation, so to speak, to do with identity. Identity is very important for people, to have an identity.

And many people are continuously in search of a better or more complete sense of identity, sense of self, sense of who you are. And for many people, or most, unless they awaken spiritually, there always remains a significant area within their sense of identity of dissatisfaction, incompleteness, the sense of something lacking, the sense that I haven't completely arrived yet, wherever that may be, the sense that I am not completely myself yet. That's why people are so afraid to die, because if you have no more time to become who you could be, that's terrible to the sense of identity that is the ego.

So identity begins with your body, the physical body, that's me, me and my body. Then whatever else you incorporate into your sense of self, it becomes imbued with a sense of self, possessions, achievements, sufferings, memories that are imbued with a sense of self that create eventually a sense of my life, me and my life. You have personal identity that you identify with things that you own, or things that you suffer that were done to you.

Then you have identities always connected with a thought, even a possession, it's an external thing, or an achievement. Ultimately, it's all experienced as a thought in your mind. Your car, if it's a great car and it enhances your sense of self, if you're at that stage of identity, then it's not ultimately the car that gives you your identity, it's the

thought of my car that enhances your sense of self, but not in a lasting way.

And as we have moved, this is an entire, just a little aside, it's a topic that one of these days I will talk about in more detail. We have shifted a significant segment of the population in the past 50 years, or 60 years has shifted from being dominated very much by yang energies for a very long time to a shift to more yin energies and not affecting everybody within the population, but a significant segment of the population, which was a wonderful development because that enabled the arising of, started I would say in the 60s in the Western world, it enabled the arising of deep spirituality. It also was the breakdown of certain rigid yang, yang being masculine, yin feminine, yang structures that were very rigid, so some were, if not dissolving, they were no longer, many people were no longer identified with those structures. And there was a great deal of wonderful development and growth of compassion and empathy of human beings, awareness of other humans, their feelings, all wonderful developments.

And so, in the yin energy, as many people are now collectively a bit more in yin than in yang, what the segment of the population is varies. Many other people are still very much in yang. And now, of course, the yin has very much taken over significantly the segment of the population, very much moving into yin.

You can now see that interesting event, the identity, the strongest identity these days in the popular culture is not the victorious one, the conqueror, the one who has achieved great things. That's a yang identity. The strongest identity is the one who has suffered or who belongs to a group of people who have suffered.

And that is fine because it means there's compassion arising towards other human beings. If you take it too far, anything that you take too far becomes counterproductive and creates its opposite. So, a little bit of this has also happened and is happening.

Too far, by that I mean that it has become very popular to have a victim identity, because then you have a stronger identity than the one who has achieved, the one who has suffered in the yin culture has a more valid and stronger collective identity than the one who has achieved great things. But you have to be careful with that so that you don't fall into that trap, because that can also become a trap to see yourself as a victim or belong to a group of people or there have been groups of people who have been victims. Of course, we need to acknowledge that.

But to make that into an identity, that's where you get trapped in another form of ego. So, we need to be aware of that. At some point, I'll talk a bit more about that.

Identity, then, is very important. It comes to the point of who am I. For many people, identity is partly personal and partly collective.

For some people, it's more collective. So, you have a group identity that's us. But now,

with ego, you need the other to define who you are.

The other who is different, who is not who you are. Without the other, you cannot define your identity. It will dissolve or collapse.

You need the other to remain other in order to have this defined sense of identity. The ego, which is complete identification with this form that you are, whatever psychological identity you have, the ego likes to make the others even more other. It likes to create a picture of enemies, so to speak.

Then, you feel more strongly who you are, but that's ultimately an illusion, because that's not who you are. You're dependent on antagonism, and you're dependent on fighting with others, because that is an unconscious ego strategy. To feel more strongly a sense of identity, we need to go beyond that to awaken, which means going beyond ego.

So, how do we do that? So, here comes a little experiment or experimental meditation. The pointer is a question.

I would like to ask you a question, just to direct your attention in a certain direction. What does it feel like to be you? What is that identity of you?

Now, what does it feel like to be you? What does it feel like without any memory about your past? Because you are right now in the present moment without reference to the past.

What does it feel like? Where is your identity, your innermost identity, the you, that sense of I? And it's something very precious.

You don't want to lose that, that sense of being. And the strange thing is, you can get a sense of identity without reference to memory. You are not more fully yourself when you remember all your past than you are in this moment when you're simply aware of being.

That is the core of your identity. And this awareness of being gets mixed up with thoughts and emotions. So, then the thoughts and emotions become imbued with that sense of self.

But it comes from the formless realm within yourself. It is liberating to know yourself simply as this presence that is prior to all memories or thought. It gives you a sense of intense aliveness.

That's where all power, not egoic power, but true power emanates. You're going deeper than, much deeper than the person. And so, your true identity lies far beyond the person.

And to even have glimpses of that is the beginning of a great shift in your life, a shift in

identity from form to formless. And then you no longer desperately seek to enhance your identity on the level of form. Of course, you continue to have a form identity, but it's not the essence of who you are.

It's a reflection of the essence. It's not the essence. So, you have a former, you have a body.

To some extent, everybody identifies a little bit with the body. But if you go deeper, the identification with body grows less. And that in itself is liberating.

Particularly difficult for people who had a lovely body, whether young or even up into middle age. Good looking, strong, maybe sexy, whatever. So, they naturally identified a lot of their identities derived from body image.

That's in a positive sense. Then for many people are not happy with their body. Too thin, too fat, too this, too that, not enough this.

Compare yourself to others, not as good as other people. I don't like my body. I'm ashamed of my body.

That's the other identity. But both are strong body identities. And the positive body identity, eventually the body begins to grow older and it's no longer that strong and beautiful to look at.

Then suffering starts. Because your entire sense of identity begins to crumble. Because for many decades, it was on your body.

For many people, deep suffering. So, let's take this opportunity to transcend all that. It's not just the body, it's the whole psychological image.

These days, there's a lot of talk about race and gender, all forms of form identity. It has, of course, to some extent, you're identified with your gender. To some extent, you may be identified with your race.

But how strong is that? If that occupies the greater part of your sense of identity, then you're lost in form. You can acknowledge your form identity.

It's fine. You can honor it, but that's not the ultimate reality of who you are. So, the ultimate reality is, in part, in this moment, what is it?

What does it feel like to be you? And you can't think about it. You can only stop thinking and start to sense that beingness of you.

And there you have transcended your form identity. You still have it, but you have transcended. Transcend doesn't mean you get rid of it.

It means you go beyond it. It's still there, but you are beyond. So liberating.

So, the ultimate liberation is the liberation from yourself. This is the mind-made self, form identity. And then the form identity is no longer yourself.

It's just your form identity. So, I hope this little meditation was helpful and continues to be helpful, even as we carry on now with questions. Perhaps you can still sense the deeper being of you.

Let's go on to the first question.

[Speaker 2] (15:07 - 16:54)

Hello, everybody. Hello, Eckhart. My question is about the deep I, of course.

So, I'll just begin. There are times when I have difficulty differentiating between the deeper self that speaks from that deep I and the part of me that is my conditioning and my ego, all those patterns. I used to believe that the inner voice was a piece of you that you should always follow.

That is until I started learning about the ego and conditioning. Knowing what I know now, I can see that there have been many times when I was misled by my own inner voice and I was confusing conditioning with the deep I at that time. So, you've said that the deep I comes from a deep place within or that it feels like a deep knowing, but sometimes the ego feels very similar to me and it's hard to catch it.

These patterns can be very sly. However, there is a difference. For some thoughts, they feel more urgent and they have an intense, almost anxious energy behind them versus a time where these thoughts are more stern, less intense, but also very powerful.

Sometimes it's very obvious and I can feel that deep knowing, knowing something without understanding how I know it, versus a conditioned thought process like I should have known better, and there's just more traffic involved with those. So, my question is, is my method of feeling these thoughts just another trick of my ego or is my ability to feel the difference in those energies enough to know when my ego is taking over versus the deep I?

[Speaker 1] (16:55 - 29:29)

Thank you. Thank you. It seems to me that you're on the right path.

There's an awareness there. You don't unquestioningly believe in every thought that arises in your mind and most importantly, you have discovered that not everything that comes up is a realization from the deep I, whatever you may feel or any intuition that you may have, because there are other layers in your mind that are part of the conditioning of who you are. So, you might meet somebody and have a feeling of, oh, I

can't trust this person.

Now, this may come from a very deep level, but then you hardly need to verbalize it. There's just deep knowing and it doesn't come as I can't trust. You just know.

A lot of that knowing from the deeper place is non-conceptual knowing. You just know even without verbalizing you know. The more you verbalize, the more likely it is that it comes from other most egoic layers of your psyche.

So, you have this person and there may be a feeling of anxiety mixed up with it of this, I can't trust this person. And if anxiety is mixed up with it, it's more likely to be part of your conditioning. Perhaps this person reminds you of somebody as a child who was not kind to you or whatever it may be.

Many forms of conditioning. So, through conditioning, we very frequently misinterpret the world. Through our conditioning, we very often misinterpret situations.

We misinterpret people's intentions towards us and that creates a lot of unnecessary drama when you misinterpret other people's intention. Even to look for an intention, in many cases, is not necessary and leads you astray. So, yes, that is a very important discovery that a lot of these things are part of your conditioning, especially if it involves any form of negativity, fear, anxiety, any reactivity in situations or people, then you know it is part of the conditioned you, the ego.

Interesting, I've just talked about yin and yang coming into this world, like a shift towards more yin for many people right now. And one of the things I noticed is what used to be very common, people would say, I think this is how it is. I think this is how he is.

I think this. I think that. The number of times when people use I think is greatly reduced and it has been replaced with I feel.

50 years ago, 60 years ago, most people would still mostly say I think, unless they were specifically talking about their feelings. But here, when you have an opinion, people no longer say I think. Well, I feel that I do it sometimes too.

I feel that that is a shift, of course, from the yang, the conceptual thinking to the yin, I feel. So, that is fine, but can also be misleading. It's good to be open to your feelings, but it can also be misleading because when you say I feel something, it does not necessarily mean you are right.

Just because you feel something doesn't mean this is the correct interpretation of reality. I feel something about this person or about this situation. It is a correct reflection of what you feel.

That's fine. So, you're honestly expressing your feelings, but that it may not be the case, or it may be, it may come from a deeper level too. But very often, it does not come from a deeper level.

It just is a reflection of your conditioning. So, I feel. What do you ask?

What do you feel about this situation? Well, I feel. Another interesting thing is that you can't argue that easily with I feel.

When somebody says I feel that he is such and such a person, if you say I think he is such and such a person, you say no, I think you're wrong. If you say I feel he is such and such a person, you're absolutely not wrong. This is what you feel.

It's hard to argue with the way somebody feels. Think kind of requires a bit more logic, logical explanations, but once you have a feeling, it is just what I feel. So, awareness is the key, as you know.

Awareness is not a feeling. The feeling arises within the space of awareness, and the feeling, which may be an emotion coupled to a thought, can be seen from the level of awareness, and then you can perhaps know where it comes, whether it comes from a deeper level, an insight that you have, and it feels, and you can say this feels right. But you can't, not everybody says this feels right.

It's actually right about the situation, only saying that it feels right. Yes, that's true, but is it right? We don't know.

So, feeling is not when you feel something, it doesn't mean you're right. You may be right, but we don't know. Similarly, when you get angry about something, sometimes the more angry a person is about something, the more feel that the more right they think they are.

The more you can shout at other people, then that's proof that you're right. Of course, in many cases, it's proof that you're wrong, but you're definitely, your approach is correct. The awareness is there, so that, and here's the key, so that you don't get taken over by thoughts or feelings.

The real insights arise, they may be experienced as a kind of feeling because language is limited, but they're not really feelings. The real insights arise from awareness, not from a feeling, or the length, since language is limited, we sometimes describe these as also feelings, but feelings. So, awareness is the key.

Without awareness, you can get taken over by thoughts or emotions or feelings without knowing it. Then you are, you are being run by certain thoughts or emotions, and you think that's absolutely how it is. Awareness or presence is the key that gives you immunity from mental viruses, because mental viruses are more, can be and are more

destructive than physical viruses.

Mental viruses are thoughts that take over your mind. You can see it on a personal level, it's easy to recognize in another person, some people are obsessed with one particular thought, and they interpret a certain associated thought, and then they interpret the whole of reality through the filter of those thoughts. People sometimes get infected with the weirdest thoughts, but then it's immediately recognized as a mental dysfunction.

Somebody says, the earth has been taken over by aliens, and I'm the only human left, for example. It's a weird thought that has crept into your mind, and then you go around the world, around the city, and you look at all these aliens out there, and I'm the only human. I'm just giving one extreme example, it's not, it happens.

The thought has occupied your mind, and it's now, it spreads into all areas of your mind. It's a virus, a mental virus has taken you over. Why?

Because you believe in every thought that comes into your head. And this is just an extreme example, but in less extreme forms, it happens to many people, they don't know it, that they have been hijacked by thought, or groups of thoughts. And then we have collective, collective viruses in your mind.

So people, certain ideas that float around in the collective, they enter your mind these days, very frequently through the media, social media, all that, where people connect. This is a very dangerous place, there are lots of good opportunities too, but it's a very dangerous place, because mental viruses can spread very easily through the technology that we have developed. They spread even before we had this technology, mental viruses did spread, they could take over millions of people for a certain period of time, and make them into maniacs.

So we have certain political movements, like, that were extremely violent and destructive, communism and Soviet Russia, the Maoist Cultural Revolution, millions died, National Socialism in Germany, Cambodia, the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, where one third of the population was killed, where you look at these people, they have all gone insane, been taken over by a mental virus. And therefore, it was the psychologist Carl Jung said, the greatest danger for humanity is not some natural disaster or pandemic. The greatest danger for humanity is mass psychosis, mass collective psychosis.

And that's absolutely true. And so, for you to become immune, you need to be aware when you connect to technology, you connect with the internet and the social media and the mainstream media and other media, whatever it is, all the stuff that people Facebook and Twitter and Instagram and I don't even know the names, be very careful. Without awareness, your mind can, together with millions of others minds can be taken over.

And then you suddenly lose the ability to think rationally. To some extent, it is happening

now. I don't want to go into this now, maybe some other time.

So, there is a movement of lack of ability to think rationally among a certain segment of the population, a regressive movement, one could say, whereas another segment of the population is becoming more aware. Very interesting separation. You're becoming more aware, but a certain segment of the population are becoming less rational.

They actually lose their ability to think rationally. Temporarily, eventually they will wake up. Once you create enough suffering, eventually you wake up.

So, this is a very important topic, but you are, as I said at the beginning, you are on the right path. It's only awareness that can provide you with immunity to mental viruses. That's really what it is.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (29:31 - 30:29)

Hi, thank you so much. I don't have my question here to read to you, so I'm going to go by memory. It was very easy for me to go into presence and to know thought and to be in that state most of the time.

However, it seems lately that my mind and my thoughts will not stop. It feels kind of like my ego is holding on for dear life and to go into a meditation or even doing like the daily meditation to have a moment of presence without my thoughts arising and taking over seems like it's not happening anymore. But the thing is, I'm aware that this is happening at all the times that it is happening.

So, it's kind of driving me a little crazy and I don't know what to do.

[Speaker 1] (30:31 - 30:54)

Well, that's an important point you just mentioned at the end. You are aware that this is happening. That's very important.

So, all of the thoughts are there. They're behind them. They're still that awareness.

So, you're not 100% lost in the thoughts.

[Speaker 3] (30:55 - 31:02)

No, there are just thousands of them, which I used to be able to shut off and be still.

[Speaker 1] (31:03 - 44:20)

So, it seems to be this is not uncommon as more presence arises. The egoic self becomes a little bit anxious because it's fearing its demise. Okay.

Then it comes up with all kinds of sometimes weird thoughts. It sometimes chooses your weakest area and suddenly amplifies that and focuses on that. Sometimes the ego can use many avenues.

It can use sexuality and, for example, thoughts about sex could suddenly proliferate in your mind because the ego knows all that. That'll keep him or her going. So, it will choose all kinds of things to stay in control, to dominate you.

But if there is an awareness there that this is happening and you're saying, but you cannot shut off the thoughts, right? Well, it would be advisable not to let go of the idea that you want to shut off your thoughts. Instead, being aware, direct your attention somewhere else, but not the thought.

But that only works when the thoughts tell you, no, I can't do it. That's not the truth. If you believe when the thought says, I can't stop now, I can't stop now.

If you believe that, then, of course, you're in the grip of it. Inviting presence into your life is more powerful than trying to stop your thinking. As you invite presence into your life, thinking subsides by itself.

So, you cannot directly attack the movement of thought or to hold it down with willpower or whatever it may be. You can't. So, instead of trying to stop thoughts, when there's an awareness, you know, I would rather not be thinking all the time, these chaotic thoughts right now.

What is it that, where can I direct my attention? And then you will notice the thoughts have a magnetic pull. They won't easily allow you to take your attention away from the thoughts, to extract, so to speak, your attention from the thoughts, which is your consciousness.

So, in a way, the thoughts are forms that have a grip on consciousness, but they're consciousness too, but they're forms that consciousness has taken. So, you'll notice something in you does not want you to place your attention elsewhere that is not thought. But it doesn't mean that you can't do it.

This movement of thought pretends that you can't do it, but you actually can. And that means you can invite presence into your life, realizing the thoughts are futile, chaotic, even causing you unhappiness, destructive. And so, then you choose the most powerful, very simple places where you initially put your attention is your inner body and your breathing.

They're connected. Awareness of your breathing connects you with the energy field in the inner body. This is not the physical body.

It's the inhabiting presence that pervades every cell of your body. So, attention is

directed away from thinking. And you'll notice a little bit, the thinking will always try to get your attention back.

But you say, no, thank you. And go. If you can't now, you might say, oh, I can't feel the inner body.

That's not true either. Start with your hands. So, you ask, can I feel the energy in my hands?

And in order to have the answer to that question, you have to stop thinking for a moment, because thinking cannot tell you whether you can feel the energy in your hands. Only if you stop thinking, there is a possibility that the focus of your consciousness moves into your hands, the inner hands, and you suddenly sense the aliveness in your hands. Oh, and while you feel the aliveness in your hands, thinking has subsided.

You can't do both. You cannot feel the aliveness within your hands and think at the same time. So, you haven't tried to stop thinking, you just feel the aliveness in your hands.

Then thinking subsides. Then if you breathe consciously into the body, of course, and you feel it's not just the air that moves into the body, you feel the whole energy movement that's associated with breathing. The whole energy movement that's associated with breathing that makes the feeling of your inner body more intense.

You can suddenly, as the air flows, I always recommend that you feel as you breathe in, it moves into your abdomen. The energy of the breath or the air probably is not reaching your abdomen, but it feels as if you are breathing into your abdomen. And then for a moment, there's a three or four seconds stop, and then there's a breathing out.

And that little bit of conscious breathing, just a couple of minutes, easily puts you in touch with the rest of the energy of the inner body. Then you can feel gradually a global sense of aliveness within the body, all over. In some parts of the body, you feel it more strongly than in others.

Yes. But so what you feel is not the physical body. It's the consciousness that inhabits the body.

So the consciousness that inhabits the body is not different from who you are. When we talk about it, it looks like subject and object that I can sense the consciousness. That's because we break it up when we talk about it.

We create subject and object in a sentence. What really is happening is the consciousness that you are, which includes the consciousness that pervades the entire energy field of the body, becomes conscious of itself. And if you feel the body, the inner body, you are not thinking.

It's virtually impossible. Okay, occasional fragments may drift in and out of your awareness, little fragments of thought. But basically, you cannot sustain, the movement of thought cannot sustain itself when you are connected with the inner energy field of the body.

And so immediately you can sense this liberation from your mind. And you sense a heightened sense of aliveness pervading your entire being. So you haven't tried to stop thought.

You've just placed your attention elsewhere. So wonderful. And that shift that can happen in a space of five minutes, from being totally immersed in useless thinking, to feeling this wonderful aliveness that is within you.

Now, you may find at some point, some thought will try to come in again, and get your attention back. It'll come up, often it's something to do with an anxious thought, something that just might happen tomorrow, whatever, anxious. And so it'll focus on some anxious thought in the hope that this will lead to other anxious thoughts.

And then a minute later, you're totally back in your thinking. So you will notice thought sometimes tries to get you back, get your attention out of the body and back into your mind. And then when you notice it, you simply, the noticing is the important part, and to place attention back into the body.

Be very much, be careful with anxious thoughts, because that's a big thing. A lot of the movement of thought for many people is associated with anxiety, fear. A lot of their thought is fear thought, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously.

And even angry thoughts, often you find if you look deeply underneath the anger, there's fear, and it's disguised as anger. And then you may have developed the ability to continue to feel the inner body and contemplate the world around you at the same time. This is the practice of being present within and without.

And so you look, you listen, you may sense, perhaps there's a movement of air, breathing. And again, very little or no conceptualization, learning to be simply aware. That is the most important thing in your life, this shift, where gradually awareness becomes more powerful than thinking.

And your identity is rooted in the awareness, your identity is no longer rooted in the thinking. Then of course, at some point, you start thinking again, and it's fine, you have to think many things. When you deal with the things of this world, you have to think.

Also, other thoughts may arise that are just kind of casual thoughts, when you're not specifically practicing body awareness, or breathing. Yes, you will start thinking again. But the self-identification with thinking then disappears.

And so gradually thinking is no longer a problem, and does not create a world of problems for yourself. Because many people have no awareness, or they inhabit a very problem, their existence is very problematic. The entire sense of identity, and we come back to identity, the entire sense of identity is based around their problems.

That's what they think about all day long, to do with things that have happened, could happen, other people who are making my life so difficult, to think about that, situations, so problematic. So for many, for many people, their sense of who they are, it sounds a little funny, but their sense of who they are, is they are a problem to be solved. That's how they feel about themselves.

And then they go to seek help, psychotherapists, psychologists. Now, if the psychotherapist is a good one, he, she will be able to take you beyond that. If the psychotherapist himself, or herself has not gone beyond, you will spend years talking about your problems.

And the poor psychologist, psychoanalyst, whoever he is, the poor man or woman, whatever, has to sit there and listen to your problems for months and months and years and years. And because he or himself has not gone beyond that dimension, can't take you out of it. He or she thinks eventually if you talk long enough, you'll get beyond it.

But no, the more you talk about it, the more complex it gets. Talking is fine up to a point, but the reason why it is to become aware of the patterns in your mind in order to transcend. So that's the practice.

I wish you well, and I'm sure you will succeed in this transition.

[Speaker 4] (44:22 - 44:45)

Thank you. Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Discovering Our True Nature [25d7cbbd-d8cb-4350-b3e7-2175f9d4ffde]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:41)

Discovering our true nature. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about our dependence on people, places, things, and concepts as the source of our identity. He says most of us derive a sense of self from our attachments, but the essence of who we truly are is much deeper.

Eckhart calls it the alive stillness at the center of our being. Once we become aware of it, our attachment to external things fades and we discover our true nature. Eckhart illustrates this idea with the story of a Buddhist monk who sought to release worldly things.

His difficulties were great until he let go. Absolutely.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 33:40)

Years ago I spoke to a Buddhist monk. He was a Westerner and he became a Buddhist monk. He still is a Buddhist monk.

He's been a Buddhist monk now for over 55 years, but that was many, many years ago. I talked to him and when he became a monk, and the monks in the Buddhist tradition, and it used to be like that. Perhaps it's in some places still is in the Christian tradition.

Definitely in India, there's a tradition of letting go of everything. You become a mendicant or you become an ascetic. So in Buddhist, you can't own anything.

It's in most Buddhist traditions. This happened to be the Theravada tradition, Southeast Asia. You let go of possessions.

You're not allowed to even touch any money. You can't touch a bill or a coin. You're not allowed to touch.

You let go of your usual dress, the clothes that you wear. You have to use the monks, the nuns too, monks or nuns robes. And you have to give up your name too.

You're given a new name. It's a spiritual name. And they shave your hair because they realize that many people derive part of their sense of self from their hair.

It's true. And so I talked to this monk and then he told me a story that he noticed that what he was at the time living in a monastery in Thailand and he was the the saffron robe that he was wearing was being washed and read the diet to give it the saffron color. And when he got it back after being washed and that was after a couple of years in the monastery.

And suddenly he not he became extremely upset because that was not the color it was before. It was a different shade of saffron. And he started arguing with the person who had dyed it and noticed he became extremely upset about the color of his robes that had changed the different shade of saffron.

And for a day or so he was trapped in there when he suddenly realized his attachments had shifted. And whatever this unconscious mechanism could latch itself onto it was the robes. And then he was able to let go of that.

But then there were other steps. He then realized he was attached to a self-image as a very serious Buddhist monk. He had become a very there was a lot of gravitas in the way he spoke to people at that stage.

And he realized he was attached to a self-image of somebody who had let go of all attachments. And then he he realized that they took years of course. And then finally when I met him he had already gone beyond that and he was like a little child.

He laughed all the time. There's no sense of self-importance anymore. He had been able to let go of that.

But it was a journey of discovering how many things how clever and cunning the mind is the egoic mind in its attempt to derive identity from some external thing. So I do recommend then that you don't focus excessively on letting go of attachments because in the absence of realizing even if it's just through glimpses in the absence of realizing this deeper essence of yourself as the conscious presence you can never be free of attachment to things whether it's external things or mental creations mental concepts. So if you think first I need to go right as attachments and then I can find myself probably not going to work because you'll never get to an end of the attachments.

And the the ways in which you attach yourself and what you attach yourself to becomes more and more subtle but it's still there. So it's not a gradual relinquishment of attachments. You go to the deeper place and when gradually you begin to realize or sense realize still sounds a little bit like an intellectual thing you sense that deeper essence that is the presence that you are the alive stillness you sense that and you go to there the more you go to that the less attached you will be to the external things.

So it's a gradual fading of needing you no longer need to reinforce or feed your sense of self through anything in this world. So the need to do that gradually diminishes and so then as you become more deeply rooted in who you actually are one with one with who you are whenever we use language we create duality it's inevitable when you become rooted in that deeper essence then you will notice the need to touch yourself isn't there but you can see me you may still find remnants of that here and there in your life little things but they are relatively unimportant and when something leaves you so oh that's a

pity it no longer changes anything in your sense of who you are your sense of self your sense of identity now your ability to connect with other human beings when you no longer connect through attachment actually deepens some people attempt to let go of because they've suffered so much in relationships that they decide not to have anymore which means I don't want to get close to any other human being anymore because it's just it's going to end up ending suffering again some people go after their third divorce or fourth divorce some people have that realization or that delusion that that's the way to go and then you cut yourself off from the aliveness of this world from and you can no longer truly connect with other human beings but the opposite actually is the way to go is when you as you gradually your need to derive identity from attachments including humans that you're attached to in egoic sense it's called love but love in the egoic sense is not love it's love in the egoic sense is a deep neediness of the other of wanting the other to fulfill your unfulfilled sense of self of wanting the other to put it in the simplest terms of wanting the other to make you happy make me happy please that's why I've chosen you to make me happy and I'll make you happy so well it probably won't work unless you're able to go deeper where when the attachment to other humans goes then something deeper arises if you go deeper it's no longer it's not cutting yourself off the only you cut yourself off when you when you have no awareness of the as your essence identity but if the awareness of your essence identity arises then the attachment goes and when the attachment goes then and only then does love arise and before that what was called love wasn't love at all it wasn't a part of the egoic the insufficiency the sense of lack that is part of every egoic self every ego has that there's something terrible missing there's something very wrong with me or my life I don't that's an underlying often sometimes spoken sometimes unspoken thought there's something wrong sometimes it's projected there's something deeply wrong with the world so the entire sense of lack or insufficiency is projected outward and then you go and you look at oh it's all it's the politics it's that it's capitalism it's communism it's socialist whatever it's or you have some fantasy of what they are all doing that it's all before being planned I know exactly what they're doing it's all out there they're trying to do this who they are I don't know exactly what conspiracy theories they're projecting out but I'm not saying every conspiracy is wrong probably 1 in 20 may have some truth to it but that's another story so you can project the sense of lack of insufficiency outward or you can have it to yourself if you if you really deeply there's something deeply wrong with me then you you would perhaps seek out therapists and go to all kinds of things to solve the dilemma the conundrum of me and of course it can't be solved on that level so if you continue to try to solve it on that level you never solve it so either you it's either the internally sensed sense of insufficiency or an externally projected insufficiency in which case you would say this this world is that everything is wrong with this world everything not realizing that what you experiencing as this world is inseparable from your and the collective consciousness of humanity it's so this sense of insufficiency begins to disappear the sense of lack when you begin to realize this deeper essence of who you are which sometimes I call the present moment sometimes I call awareness Jesus called

in the kingdom of heaven buddha called it that various times he sometimes used emptiness sunyata which I translate as spacious awareness emptiness that is a dimension for then and as you the more you sense that the less you need to attach yourself to anything and the more you sense it the more love what is true love shines through and then this love which we could also use other words to point to it we could say loving kindness that arises that you can sense towards all life forms and that's other human beings and arising the loving kindness empathy to sense the other in their beingness not just the suffering of the other you might sense it too but you can send something that's beyond their suffering their beingness and that is love to sense the other as ultimately yourself one with who you are the one consciousness is you sense the consciousness in yourself and it might have started with a simple thing like this give attention to this or the sky or whatever then become aware of yourself of the presence which is the absence of the self entity and become aware of that presence there is an aliveness there too but the so in the in the case of a so-called inanimate object which is a erroneous term i wouldn't perhaps call it love i would call it appreciation you appreciate the beingness of this flower you appreciate you sense the beingness that is even that is beyond the sense possession sensation is beautiful but there's something beyond that is you only see the surface phenomenon when you see anything beautiful there's a surface phenomenon beyond that there's something deeper and the deeper is inseparable from your the depth dimension within you so here we have an appreciation of simple things and some people call that i believe one term you could use is gratitude another term you could use appreciation and gratitude of to me almost synonymous for our purposes so there's a deep appreciation of this and that is that is the love expresses itself or manifests as a deep appreciation even of the world of physical things so a gratefulness for you can be grateful for this beautiful thing here you can be grateful for things you would never notice before there's the sun coming around you can't see it but it's there's a reflection of the sun on the wall there and you can look at that and be you don't you don't tell yourself i'm so grateful what you could as a helpful pointer but you simply appreciate it you give it your attention and then you can sense the source of that attention that is inseparable from the source of who you are so anything that you give attention to you're aware of that and you're aware of the source without which that thing would not even be perceivable the light of god is consciousness god is transcendent to all phenomena beyond space and time the light of god shines into this dimension and you can know it as yourself because you are a ray of that one consciousness so at first it's returning your attention as much as possible to that dimension the dimension of sunyata a vast inner spacious awareness the kingdom of heaven that which makes all thinking all feeling and all sense perception possible without which there would be no feeling no sense perception no thinking so it's not separate ultimately from feeling and sense perception and thinking there's no duality i compare it sometimes to the ocean and the surface of the ocean so all thinking and feeling and sense perceptions happen on the surface of the ocean although some feelings go a little bit beyond the surface but not too deep and then you have the vastness of the ocean the depths of the totality of the

ocean the surface of the ocean is waves and ripples thoughts feelings the entire sense of identity form identity is derived from what happens on the surface of the ocean that's your form identity as a ripple you are a ripple effect of the ocean or as somebody once said you are something that the universe is doing in the same way that a wave or ripple is something that the ocean is doing so the the consciousness in you the consciousness that is you remember when we talk about it we create duality you have to allow for that so when i say the consciousness in you it's already a mistake but we have to use language the consciousness in you is the consciousness of the universe there's only one consciousness so you are in you the universe is actually there is an evolutionary process in this dimension not in the transcendent dimension but in this dimension there is an evolutionary process and in you and as you the universe is becoming more conscious and that manifests as the gradual increase in complexity that you find when you look at the life on our planet we know a little bit about going back millions of years through geology and so on we have made certain discoveries about the evolution of life on our planet and we know that there was a gradually an intensification of the complexity of life forms grew more and more the more and more complex life forms develop even though already i believe five times the universe suffered unimaginable catastrophe extinction events the universe already suffered five i believe it's five extinction events when 70 percent in one or two cases 80 percent of all life forms became eradicated incredible now five times and that if there had been an external observer he would have all this oh my god and of course it was in this level it was terrible and but then life regenerated didn't take long only a few million years and then life regenerated and as it regenerated the complexity the life forms that then arose were more complex than in the previous one could say the previous incarnation of life on the planet in that sense the planet has already had several incarnations of life forms and death and then a rebirth and then a death and a rebirth i'm not saying we should not do all we can to love and appreciate and protect this planet and we shouldn't say oh it doesn't matter if there's another extinction it is our job here to live conscious as conscious as participants in the totality if an extinction event another one were inevitable it would be tragic of course it would be but only in relative terms in from a deeper level it would be a dust and a rebirth again the same way that the death of a human being is tragic if looked at in isolation so the you are an expression of a manifestation of the consciousness of the universe you are the con you express you in you embody you are the consciousness of the universe the awakening consciousness of the universe why do i know that because i experienced the awakening of consciousness and i know that you most of you if not all of you are also experiencing a shift in consciousness an awakening of consciousness so that is a new stage and i believe if it's happening here it probably is happening in in many other worlds planets galaxies inconceivable vastness there isn't the universe is one awakening being impossible to even imagine or understand can we begin to understand the vastness of it but you can have get little you can get insights beyond conceptualization there's a lot that i understand about the universe but i can't talk about it because in concepts i don't understand it any concept i use are distant approximations they're

pointing to something yes there's a little bit of truth in what i'm saying that all concepts can do but if you go deep enough within and realize that that essence then the through you the universe is awakening to itself in that sense one could say that up to now at least on this planet or up to recently no recently could mean the past few thousand years the consciousness as it gradually grew through manifold ever more complex life forms it was a kind of dream that the universe is dreaming of a beautiful dream of the arising of life there's a possibility of awakening from the dream and this is what's happening to us we if an unawakened human is so identified with all the stuff in this world derive their sense of identity from or and is reactive to whatever is happening around them completely determined by their surroundings is in a kind of dream world and any human who is completely identified with their thought processes continuously deriving their identity from their thought processes lives in a kind of dream and the dream is determined by the past your past whatever thoughts you think are determined by the world that you grew up in and so on so there's a any human who does not have yet any awareness of their thoughts but is completely possessed by their thoughts and the emotions that go with the thoughts lives in a kind of dream lives a dream-like existence and is kind of predetermined the dream is more or less predetermined some humans are predetermined to to experience unpleasant events because they basically through their reactivity they amplify every problem they encounter and therefore make it bigger they create one drama after another it's karma is what what you could use of eastern term karma is the dream so it's involuntary you don't know you're dreaming you're just dreaming now perhaps all of you have had occasionally the experience of actually dreaming at night and in the middle of a dream realizing oh this is actually a dream that's a very strange realization and then you think oh i could actually could do anything and it didn't wouldn't really matter some people pursue that they want to develop that ability to be able to lucid dreaming it's called they want to develop the ability to be awake in their dreams it's interesting it's not liberating but it's interesting it's much more important lucid living is much more important than lucid dreaming so you have to awaken here to your attachment to all those things that while you're attached to them are part of your dream and suddenly you you awaken and you realize that which awakens is consciousness in you it becomes aware of itself this is why i sometimes often say can you be aware that you are aware right now can you sense that awareness with which you are perceiving can you sense that as yourself here and now wow yes that is the awakening of consciousness and this is the beginning of lucid living when yes you still inhabit this world which then assumes a somewhat of a dream-like quality but it's no longer a threatening dream as because before dreams can be quite threatening when you're completely trapped in them so the world of all these forms here are no longer threatening because you don't need them for your identity anymore you have to you're not attached in that sense so the dream then still happens around you you go on with your life and but there's always an underlying presence or witness that is not part of the dream in the same way like the ocean becoming aware of itself because the ripple has become aware of itself as the ocean if the ripple had not become aware of itself as the

ocean the ocean wouldn't be aware of itself the ocean becomes aware itself through the ripple you are the ripple and being or consciousness universal consciousness is the ocean so you are ripple on the ocean of being the ocean of being needs you i mean you're not separate from it the ocean of being needs you for its awareness this is an approximation of something i'm giving you some analogies it's an i'm not giving the ultimate explanation of the universe it's impossible to do it's it's an approximation it's a bit like this that's all one can say it's a bit like this not some ultimate thing that you need to believe in that's how it that's how it is so the you're awakening the universe is awakening in and through you and then the quality of the dream actually improves considerably and that's a relief and even if the dream temporarily is not very pleasant there's no longer that much of a reactivity to it you don't amplify the so-called bad things you're able to allow them because you are the witnessing presence for it and out of the witnessing presence very often insight arises right action can arise so you you act upon that you act in the dream but in a no longer in a reactive way you actually can act with wisdom and if you act on this dream with wisdom then the dream improves without wisdom whatever action you take in most cases makes things worse ultimately so the wisdom is not to be confused with intelligence you can be highly intelligent without wisdom in fact highly intelligent people without wisdom are very dangerous in this world because they create all kinds of havoc that a non-intelligent person might not be able to create for example build atom bombs you need considerable intelligence to build an atom bomb a low iq person wouldn't be able to do it but is there any wisdom in that no there's no wisdom so where does wisdom come from what is it even wisdom is comes from a greater intelligence that is the consciousness in you the unconditioned consciousness so it's not only love that arises loving kindness that arises empathy that arises also wisdom arises out of that dimension and that wisdom inspires can inspire and use your mind and then you can speak words that are powerful and meaningful and helpful in this world bring about a better dream make the dream a bit better without wanting to make the dream a bit better it just happens amazing amazing i'm always the truth is so amazing i've been talking about this for decades and every time i talk about it i'm amazed myself at all this it's like the first time so here we are here you are here i am ultimately it's all i it's all i am and so you let go of whatever you add to the i am is ultimately part of the dream that's fine you can take it up later but get used to being the i am without any additions and that is the i am that i am which is in the old testament maybe the most meaningful statement when god is asked what's your name god says i am that i am oh the core identity of the universe and of you thank you for your presence i wish you well in your awareness practice and gradually it will become second nature to you in fact second nature is not really the best way of putting it it's the first nature your true nature find your true nature thank you

[Speaker 2] (33:43 - 34:02)

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Eckhart Tolle Dismissing The Demand That Life Should Be Perfect [923796ac-c676-4310-8eb8-90f900ec25d5]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:46)

Dismissing the demand that life should be perfect. In this episode, Eckhart continues his talk with an audience in Budapest, explaining that if we're waiting for the world to make us happy in the form of the right person, place, job or situation, we will probably wait for a very long time. He says our expectations for the perfect life usually lead to deep disappointment.

He explains life is fragile and cannot possibly meet all of our demands. He says we ask ourselves, what is the world here for if it's not to make us happy? Eckhart explains that every person is like a seed of awakening consciousness.

Life's challenges push the seed to sprout. Eckhart implores that we must learn to drop the demand that life should be perfect.

[Speaker 1] (0:48 - 50:58)

It's in the nature of every life situation to be precarious. You can't have it all going perfectly, every aspect of your life situation. What you're doing great suddenly financially and then your wife leaves you.

Or your body is very healthy but something else goes wrong. You lose your job or something happens to your child, somebody close to you. Something problematic goes in there.

It is good to strive to make your life better. Of course it is. You do your best and that's perfectly fine.

And you should continue to do your best so that your life situation can improve. It's a wonderful thing to do. So you focus.

What can I do? What should I do? Wonderful.

The only thing that does not work is to look for yourself in your life situation. To look for a sense of completion. Because there it's very, everything is so impermanent as the Buddha already said.

Everything, if you hang on to anything, it leaves you or it doesn't make you happy anymore. Everything is impermanent. So you have to deal with your life situation as best you can.

But not have expectations that it cannot meet. And these expectations are really, I want my life situation to be in such a way that I can feel happy and fulfilled. Ultimately what it

means is, I want the world to make me happy.

The world means other people, situations, events, places where you live or where you go. Achievements, possessions, all those things are the world. So if you're looking to the world to really make you happy and fulfilled, the world can't do that because it's too fragile and too impermanent.

And yet you should do your best but not look for yourself there. And if you can drop the demand or the expectation that something should be perfect, that a place you go to should be perfect, that a job, a new job you find should be great, no problems. The job is fantastic and no unpleasant people there.

Everybody's great. Your body, nothing goes wrong with your body. If you expect that, you expect the world to make you happy, people, that's a big thing.

I'm looking for somebody to make me happy. Oh dear, that's a recipe for unhappiness. You might have noticed because the weird thing is, many of you may have experienced that or will have experienced that, the person that makes you happy today, very happy, falling in love, followed by the wedding and honeymoon.

And then daily life begins. But this person made you so happy for a year, two years, three. But then you begin to notice aspects of that person that you didn't know were there.

Somebody's recognizing it. And you're asking, who is this person that I married? This wasn't supposed to happen.

This wasn't the person I looked at, gazing into his or her eyes when we were having dinner before getting married and honeymoon. And suddenly it all turns around. And before you know it, the person that made you so happy now makes you so unhappy, so miserable.

The same person. Isn't that strange? So in a way, you could say almost everybody, you may be a lucky exception, but almost everybody will find or will have the suspicion at some point when they start living with somebody, have the suspicion at some point that they married the wrong person or something not right.

I made a big mistake. Big mistake. And you can go to another part of the world.

Perhaps I'll be happy there. I'm not happy here. But if I could live in Bali, I will be happy.

I know that. And then you go to Bali and for a while you're happy. It's the honeymoon of Bali.

And then you see, Bali is not a perfect place. If you leave the food in the kitchen overnight, the rats come in. Mosquitoes got stung by mosquitoes.

And I just can't stand the heat anymore. I'm losing my energy in this heat. I need to get out of here.

You can experience the world and enjoy the experience of every moment and so on, but not look for some ultimate satisfaction. The world cannot make you happy. No person, no place, no achievement, no possession.

Possession is another one. You feel the feeling when you just buy something and you carry it home in your bag. And then you take it out, whatever it is.

Feeling of satisfaction for a moment. With some people, even when they take it out of the bag, the satisfaction that they had while they were buying it already begins to disappear. Maybe I'll bring it back to the store.

That's not quite it. Okay. I'm looking for myself, but you don't know you're looking for yourself, but you are looking for yourself.

So the world can't make you... If the world can't make you happy, what is the world here for? The world is here to make you conscious.

The world is here to challenge you. To challenge you means it's here to confront you with obstacles. What?

Can't be. I thought the opposite was true. The world's supposed to...

No. You might have noticed that this tends to happen a lot. And many people believe that they have been singled out by life or God or some malevolent deity.

They have been singled out. Some malevolent deities have singled them out to continuously sabotage their life. It's all...

Just the moment you get something and something else happens again. Oh no. You sought out here and another problem crops up there.

Why is it always like, leave me alone. Please life, leave me alone. Occasionally, yes, you get a moment of a few days or weeks or maybe even months of...

It's great. But it won't last. So the burden of walking around with an unhappy, calling it my life.

This is your life situation. Everybody has one. Everybody has a life situation.

And very few or nobody has a life situation that is totally satisfactory. Except for brief moments. You might think sometimes when you look on Facebook, that Facebook is full of people who have totally satisfying life situations, as is shown by their photos and the photos, the meals that they take photos of.

That I'm in a restaurant and this is what I'm eating. And this is me. And here I'm doing this exciting thing.

And this is just an extension. Technology has miraculously given us the opportunity, not only to have a mind made ego in our heads, we can project it out into the world and polish it even more. And so we polish the mental image of ourselves and put it out.

And people see it. And some people who don't know how this works, they think everybody is okay except me. And then they do the same thing.

Okay, I can pretend too that I'm okay. And the whole thing is a world of make-believe. So your life situation exists in time.

It is continuously kept alive by thinking about me. The most interesting subject in the world is me. And this is why I need to think about it a lot.

Because if I stop thinking about me, everything is going to fall apart. I need to keep thinking about, especially at three o'clock in the morning. I need to think about me and my problems.

Because if I stop thinking, it means I'm not responsible anymore. I need to worry. It is my responsibility to worry as much as possible.

What is worry? Unconscious, totally useful and dysfunctional thinking. But worry pretends to be necessary.

You need to worry. It's a thought. You need to worry.

You should be worried. There's a lot to be worried about. Because you don't know what's going to happen.

Or yeah, I do know what's going to happen. It's going to be bad. Tomorrow is going to be bad.

Or let alone next year, don't get me all there. Your life situation exists in time. But where is time?

Where is time? Time is the weirdest thing in the universe. It gradually kills you.

Everybody here has a fatal illness. We just don't know the date. But everybody's infected by time.

It's a kind of virus, I suppose. And this time will kill you and me, the body. Or if you want a shorter version of what's going to happen to your body.

Let's say you're still young. What is time going to do to my body? You put an apple on the windowsill.

And a fresh apple. And you go back to it four weeks later. And look what time did to the apple.

And that's what time is going to do to your body. Oh dear. And you thought this was going to be an inspiring talk.

Your life situation exists in time. But time exists in your mind. Time seems to be all pervasive.

You can't get it. It's like an express train. You're on an express train.

It never stops. You can't get off. That's time.

Oh, let me go. Can't get. Gosh.

Can't get off. It seems to be everywhere. It seems to affect everything.

You need it to do anything. You need time. But you always experience life as the present moment.

It's always now. It's always now. It's never not now.

There was never a moment in your life that was not now. There never will be a moment in your life that is not now. And even now while you're thinking about the past, it's in the now that the past arises as thought in you.

So time doesn't really have an objective independent existence, independent from your mind. For example, no explorer has ever encountered the future. They've gone to the North Pole and the South Pole, and now they're going into outer space.

But no explorer has ever said, I found the future. I have arrived. The thing that everybody's looking to, I found it.

No, because the moment you find the future, it's the present moment. The moment the future comes, you can only experience it as the present moment. So the future and past are thoughts in your head.

You can only, the future is a thought in your head. Ultimately, it's intimately connected with mind activity. And totally fine.

I'm not saying throw away your watch, if you still wear a watch, throw away your watches and clocks, and don't look at the time anymore, because it's all an illusion. I'm not saying that because your life would collapse. You need time.

We could only meet here because we use time for practical purposes. A date and a time. Otherwise, we wouldn't have met here accidentally, even in a million years.

So it worked on a practical level. But on a deeper level, if you look more closely, time is always a thought. It's always a thought.

So this life situation exists in time. But there's something else, and I wrote about it in the Power of Now. More fundamentally, you have a life situation, but more importantly, you have a life.

And it's important to distinguish between your life situation, which is, of course, it's problematic. Every life situation is problematic, and every person here has their share of suffering in their life situation. It's challenging.

Life is undoubtedly challenging for everybody in different ways. It is challenging, yes. But do you need to carry around this burden of your problematic life situation continuously, or can you enter a different dimension where your life situation is still there, you can deal with it because you have to deal with it, but there's something deeper in you that is deeper than your life situation, and I call that your life.

And your life is inseparable from the present moment, and the present moment is now. Now, that is a doorway into a deeper or higher state of consciousness, which we may call awareness or presence. And I'm inviting you at this moment, now we get to the good part.

I'm inviting you at this moment to step out of your life situation. Don't worry, it's still there, but it'll come back to you. But step out at this moment of your life situation and just experience this moment without reference to past or future.

You have nothing to lose. So let's say right now, don't give any attention to anything in your past, including your name or whatever happened in your past, and you don't focus on any future moment. You just stay in this moment.

And now what is your experience of this moment without reference to past and future? What does it feel like to be you without reference to the past? What does it feel like to be you?

This is a very strange question, and you may not be able to answer it in words. It's an immediate experience. And the immediate experience is to experience yourself beyond concepts.

But what is there if there are no concepts? There's the sense perceptions, but what is it that makes the sense perceptions possible? How is it possible for you to perceive all this?

There's something. So you are the one that perceives all this, but what makes it possible for you to be here, to sit here and perceive? What is there left?

And that is, of course, you can sense a certain sense of presence or beingness, but it has

no attributes. It's not this or that. It's just, it's a primordial sense of I, the I.

I call it the deep I, as opposed to the surface I, which is the mind-created I. When a person says I, everybody's favorite word, I. But usually the I refers to the mind-made self, me and my life.

But here you can realize there is another I in you that is deeper. It's not separate from, but there's a deeper beingness in you, a sense of presence, where you just know that you are. I am.

That's all that's left. You know, but how do you know that you are? You know that you are.

We could say that's consciousness, and that without the consciousness, there would be no sense perception. So you become conscious at this moment. What I'm saying now sounds a little strange at first.

You become conscious at this moment of the fact that you are conscious. You directly know that, yes, I am conscious. Not because you say it, because you know it directly.

You know that you are conscious. That is the deep I that is your, I call it your essence identity. Essence identity.

The other identity I call your form identity. Everybody has a form identity. It begins with a body.

That's the physical form. But there's also the psychological form of you. That's the mind-made self, the conditions.

That's fine. Of course it's there. Everybody has a form identity, but most people, all those people who are still unconscious, spiritually speaking, they only know themselves as their form identity, which is the body and the psychological entity in the head.

They only know themselves as that. And they're continuously looking, because only knowing yourself as that is frustrating because somehow you realize that that's ultimately not you. At least it's only a tiny fraction.

It's only the surface phenomenon. But who are you underneath the surface? And underneath the surface, there's something very deep.

You are very deep. And when you begin to sense that depth that's in you, then gradually you go there more often. You sense this essence identity more often where the story of you becomes irrelevant when you sense that.

Let's say one of you might be a billionaire and you have a private jet waiting and you have mentions all over the place. And another one of you might be, whatever you did in

your life was one mistake after another and you've just been released from prison for the fifth time. And you've just made one bad decision after another and it's all a disaster.

Your entire life is a disaster. So you have the great person who made it and the other person whose life is a disaster. For the realization of your essence identity, it doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter. It is beyond the forms of your life. And then at first it's just a little, oh, a little stillness, a little sense of still presence.

And the mind might say and come in and say, well, I have more important things to worry about than this. Okay. The mind doesn't want you to go there.

It'll always tell you, no, no, no, don't go there. Go into the depths of who you are, which is the consciousness. Know yourself as consciousness.

And when that happens, you may notice, and this is so important. There is a gap in the stream of thinking because you might've noticed the thinking goes on and on in your head. There's a voice that you talk to yourself.

So most people's fate is they are lost in thought. Lost in thought. And suddenly you come to the end of one thought and there's a gap.

The next thought hasn't started yet. A gap between two thoughts. And while I'm speaking now, I'm kind of doing this gesture to illustrate the gap between two thoughts.

And right now, let's see if this gap between two thoughts can be there in you right now when you're not thinking for three seconds, four seconds, five seconds. You're not thinking. You are just aware.

It's an amazing thing. Just aware. And as that awareness, you can look around the room, take everything in, but don't call it anything.

You just see everything and yet you're just the awareness. You're not the person. You're the awareness.

That's an amazing shift in consciousness. Wow. And there's no time there this is why we could call it the timeless state of consciousness.

And so you are, and that becomes your true identity. Then you can still operate as a person and deal with your life situation, but you're no longer lost in it. And it doesn't make you unhappy anymore.

The challenges of life are not transformed into unhappiness anymore. And then whatever challenges happen in your life, they will help you to awaken more to who you are in your essence. You become more present.

And the shift happens and it's a little bit, the analogy I use a lot is, if you are a wave or a ripple on the surface of the ocean, there's a little ripple and this ripple is me. And you're surrounded by other ripples and waves on the surface of the ocean. This is other people.

And then you compare yourself to others and the whole story starts. And the ripple never realized that it is only a surface manifestation of a vast ocean. The ripple existed only on this surface level of reality.

It only knew other ripples and ripple existence. And it looked for fulfillment through other stuff on the surface, other ripples. I'm going to marry this ripple and we are going to be, she or he is going to make me happy.

And we two together can be a bigger ripple and so on. And always looking for, and always disappointed by the ripple existence. Every person that you think, oh, every person in one way or another will let you down.

It's just a limited person. Every person lets you down sooner or later. And if you know that it doesn't matter anymore, you can love them anyway because you don't expect it.

Fulfillment through this person, you don't expect it perfection. And suddenly the ripple becomes aware that there's more to who I am than this. But it was aware because for a moment, the ripple withdraws attention from the surface ripple existence, which is sense perception of thinking, thinking, thinking, and stops thinking.

And suddenly by stopping thinking, it becomes aware of, oh, there's a huge depth to me which transcends who I am as a ripple. There's something much vaster that's not separate from me and yet is much vaster than me. It's a little paradox.

And suddenly there's a great sense of rootedness in something vast that sustains you. And this is the rootedness in being. And that's the thing that we lost thousands of years ago when we started to think and become identified with thinking and started to look for ourselves in thinking.

So we've come a long way from that time when we were rooted in being ah, and then going into thought, a whole phase in the evolution of consciousness. We've come to the end of this phase where we became identified completely with thinking. And now we rise above thinking.

And so we've come full circle. Again, we become rooted in being because we've gone through the thinking stage. And it's not that we don't think anymore, but we are no longer completely lost in thought.

We are no longer being used by thinking. We can actually, for the first time, think creatively. When you are connected with a deeper dimension of consciousness, that's where all creativity arises.

Any truly creative person must, at least in the moment of their creation, when they create something, get in touch with this deeper level. And for a moment, they're not thinking. They're just kind of listening.

Many great composers have often have said this great melody that came to them, that is so sublimely beautiful, they received it almost ready-made, and then they just wrote it down. So this inspiration happens from the deeper level. Many things happen when you're in touch with the, we could call it the transcendent dimension.

It sounds a little abstract, but it doesn't need to be abstract. It's not abstract. The transcendent dimension, that which transcends all this, but doesn't exclude it, but is something deeper.

And you become rooted in that depth. And that's the end of fear. So your true identity, your essence identity is there.

So you're no longer looking for ultimate satisfaction in your form identity, but you do your best. And in fact, the way in which you conduct your life, when you no longer live through a fictitious identity in the head, the way you conduct your life, the way you interact with other people becomes much better, improves a lot. The dysfunctional nature of the ego disappears and relationships become more harmonious.

Situations, challenges become resolved more quickly because you don't fight a challenge. You accept what is, and then you do what you can. You don't complain anymore in your head about things, oh, well, this shouldn't be...

Complain about people, complain about this and that. And the ego loves complaining. You know what he said, and then he did that.

Oh dear, tomorrow I'm going to talk to him and tell him this. So you exist as form identity, but you are the essence that's deeper, far deeper than the form. So the key then is, have these little spaces in your life every day when you're not thinking.

Too many of you, this will happen naturally, but you may not, it's too easy to overlook. For example, whenever you look at something, let's say your head is turning. Oh, now I'm looking at these flowers.

Now before my mind calls them orchids, there's a gap of two seconds while I'm looking. And for these two or three seconds, I'm not calling them anything. I'm just aware of the flowers.

Then the mind comes in. If you can catch these initial seconds, whenever something new comes into your perceptual field, there's a gap of two or three seconds when you're, it could be sound too. A sound arises, you're listening.

Before you interpret it, there's a moment of just awareness and the sound. If you can catch all those initial moments, then they become longer. And during this time, when you don't label things mentally, there is a depth, you experience them differently.

You experience them, they have greater depths. Even looking at a flower, when you don't call it anything, there's another way of knowing this flower or anything. What the world knows is only conceptual knowledge.

At universities and so on and everywhere, knowledge is associated with accumulating concepts, conceptual knowledge. Then you can know the flower by learning things about the flower, it's fine. But if you neglect the other way of knowing that is non-conceptual, then your life becomes very superficial and you become trapped on a conceptual dimension alone.

So this is just another aspect of what we've been talking about and experiencing. I can know this flower without concepts too. If I contemplate this and just look at it and do not label it, I'm just aware.

And I know that I'm aware. I can feel that that which makes the perception possible of this flower is the awareness. I don't want to call it my awareness because it's not mine.

There's only one awareness, one consciousness. Your consciousness and my consciousness are the just manifestations of the one universal consciousness that has created all this. So I'm looking and suddenly I can sense the essence of this flower too.

I can sense the aliveness of this flower. I can sense its beingness. I can truly connect with it and sense it.

It's a totally different way of knowing the flower. But if I'm lost in the conceptual alone, all I know is a surface phenomenon of flower, no matter how much I know. And ultimately in this world, you need both.

You need the conceptual to operate in this world, but not lose yourself in the conceptual. So you have the other dimension, which is awareness. There's a knowing there too, a very deep knowing that is non-conceptual.

And do that to a human being. Look at a human being. On the one hand, there's a form identity and you might even, it may be somebody you've only just met, or it may be somebody with whom you've shared many years, a family member you've known all their life.

Let's say it's somebody you've only just met. It's easier because otherwise there's a lot of past. Family members are difficult.

So you're looking at a human being on the one hand, of course you take in their body.

That's often the first thing that you look at. And then you bring in a little bit of their personality or whatever they say or how they look, behave and look at you.

So that's their form identity, physical and psychological form. You're aware of that. And you might be a great psychologist and immediately figure out what their psychology is and immediately know what they're like.

Maybe you have a lot of knowledge. That's fine. But that's not the essence of who they are either.

It's still conceptual. In order to connect with another human being on the level of essence, you have to for a moment look at this human being without the interference of thought, just as an aware presence. And then you look at into their eyes and then you can, if you know yourself as the aware presence, then you can sense that presence in the other.

In other words, you feel their essence identity beyond the personality. And that's a wonderful way of connecting to the other. And this is really what traditionally the true meaning of love is to recognize the other in their essence and to recognize the other as ultimately one with yourself, because the consciousness that you are is the same consciousness that that person is.

It's their essence identity. As consciousness, you are one. As personalities, you are different.

The otherness, if you only operate on the level of personality, the other is always other. And not only that, the level of personality on the ego level, the ego tries to make the other even more other because the ego likes enemies. It likes to fight.

It likes, because it thinks it's stronger when it has enemies. It defines its identity through the other. That's crazy.

So all those things that have been traditionally spoken of as things that make life worth living and are part of a deeper human being is love, not in the romantic sense, but a deeper thing. The Lord is love, then it is the recognition ultimately of the other as yourself in essence. Jesus once said once, love thy neighbor as yourself.

And I believe that as an isolated statement, it doesn't work because if you tell somebody you must love your neighbor as yourself, you say, okay, I'll try. I'm trying really hard, but I just can't. Sorry, I can't.

I mustn't be a good Christian. I can't. But what they forgot is, Jesus said to us, find the kingdom of heaven and then you love your neighbor as yourself.

Those two belong together. But what is the kingdom of heaven? What is a kingdom?

That's an old word. Nowadays, there are not that many kingdoms anymore. The modern translation, my translation is dimension.

Kingdom is the dimension. And what is heaven? Sky.

Spaciousness. Spaciousness. Inner spaciousness is when between two thoughts, there's a space of aware presence.

It's an inner spaciousness. Jesus used this because in the sense-perceived world, the closest he can get to just give people a sense of what he's talking about, the best word he could find was to talk about the sky or the heavens because it's just space. But that he's talking about inner space, so the dimension of spaciousness and the inner space is beyond thought, in between thought.

It's the aware space of awareness. Find that dimension of spaciousness in you and then you will recognize and love the other as yourself. Now it works.

So that has to come first. And so for the rest of your life, you, of course, everybody has a different, as a personality, you have different things to do in your life and different things to deal with. Everybody's life situation is different.

But at a deeper level, there are two purposes. One is the purposes you have as a person, but there's a more important purpose and that is the purpose of consciousness. So that consciousness can awaken more fully in and through you.

Which means you awaken to your true identity. And when you awaken to your true identity, it's not just you because you are not a separate particle in the universe. You are the universe.

You are an aspect of the universe. When you awaken, the universe participates in the awakening. The universe awakens through you to itself.

It's a vast, it's a vast thing. So the person is a little bit like a seed for the awakening of consciousness. And then gradually, as you grow older or even before then, the person still operates but is no longer all that important.

You still deal with it, but something becomes more important than the person. And all the things that before that the person thought, oh, this is so important. All the stuff, the gossip and all the stuff that the drama that the person loves to talk about and think about and all that becomes a little boring.

A lot of the stuff that happens on the person level is okay. And you don't want to watch soap operas anymore on television because it's all boring. And you might even find that your friends' stories become boring if they're not awakening.

And so there's something that emerges where the person was before something

emerges. Thinking was before awareness emerges. So there's less thinking and more awareness.

Less thinking, more awareness. Especially all the dysfunctional, useless thinking such as worry begins to disappear. And the thinking that remains is no longer thinking that makes you unhappy.

It's thinking that is actually useful that can create something new. Thinking can create form. It's a very powerful thing.

So thinking becomes then helpful. Then for the first time, you can thinking is in the service, not of the ego, self-serving, but thinking is in the service of something deeper or higher. You become a creator.

The consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness create, can flow into your mind and create, use you as an instrument. And you create whatever you do. We don't know what you do, but something, this power flows into what you do.

And it emanates through you. And even if you don't do anything in particular, it even changes people who come into contact with you because you then represent a deeper dimension of the universe, higher, deeper, whatever you want to call it. Your purpose in life is to cooperate with where the universe is going.

And the universe is in the process of awakening. And the consciousness that you are, the universal consciousness is, I call it the light of God. You might remember, Jesus said to his disciples or to others, you are the light of the world.

He also said it about himself. He said, I am the light of the world. And then he said to others, you are the light of the world.

It does not mean your VIPs are very special because they were not. It can only mean one thing. You are the consciousness of the world.

You are the consciousness. And that light emanates from the source of all life, which is a transcendent. It has no location in space or time.

The unspeakable source of all life. Something emanates from there into this dimension in the same way that light emanates from the sun. There's a reason why ancient civilizations regarded the sun as divine, but it's not the sun.

I only use it as an analogy. The sun continuously gives of itself. It gives life.

It continuously, almost infinite. Yes, it has a lifespan, but compared to all, it's virtually infinite, continuously outpouring. And so we use this analogy, the consciousness that you are is the emanation from the one source of all life that's transcendent, which means God.

So the light of God is the light of consciousness in you and all beings in different degrees and different vibrational frequencies. Then when you recognize yourself as consciousness, then you recognize the true nature of who you ultimately are. But it doesn't mean that you will suddenly go out in the street and shout, I am God.

I would not advise you to do that. And it's not 100% correct. In the same way, if a ray of sunlight says, I am the sun, it's true and not true.

Yes, it's connected to the sun, but of course the sun is infinitely vaster. So it's true and not true. You are the light of the world, which is the consciousness.

So this is the transcendent dimension where you as a person become relatively unimportant or you can still deal with things better than before, but you're no longer consumed by this and you're no longer at the mercy of your thoughts. So that's a wonderful liberation. When you're no longer lost in your mind and that's the awakening.

So your destiny is something fabulous and far transcends who you are as a person. As I said before, the person is a kind of, is a seed for the new consciousness. And if the person had not encountered all his challenges in life, all the difficulties, those are the things that make the seed sprout.

So you have to be grateful because I know I would not be here if it hadn't been for all the obstacles that I encountered in my life, all the difficult stuff that brought about an awakening. And most of you are here because you went through a sufficient amount of suffering to bring you to this point of awakening. So you've done it.

You don't need to suffer much more. Now, challenge, yes, but challenges don't need to be transformed into suffering. So you come to the, as to use the words of the Buddha, the end of suffering, psychological suffering, which is most of suffering.

And it's a wonderful, wonderful thing. So all these people like Buddha and Jesus, they were the early flowers of human consciousness. And now it's happened on a wider scale.

Not if you look at politics because politicians will probably be the last people to awaken, but that's okay. They'll come too. Well, thank you for being here.

And I wish you blessings and hope you enjoy the adventure of human existence and the awakening of consciousness through you.

[Speaker 2] (51:05 - 51:25)

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listening.

Eckhart Tolle Distinguishing Between Your Life and Your Life Situation [b25aa3f3-aef9-4ca3-b354-66273324b76b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:51)

Distinguishing between your life and your life situation. In this episode, Eckhart jokes with an audience about getting a call from the Star Wars galactic fleet. He then turns to practical matters when he discusses returning home after being away on a retreat.

He says we all have a life situation which includes relationships, work, finances, and physical health. All burdens we carry with us even when we're on vacation. Eckhart cautions against having our consciousness completely absorbed by problems.

He says our real life is in the present moment which should only unfold in the here and now, not in the past nor in the future. He believes the profound difference between our life and our life situation is where our awareness remains.

[Speaker 1] (0:54 - 41:05)

More questions have been coming in. I got my phone here too, just in case there are any more questions coming in. Or I might get a call from the commander of the galactic fleet.

I distinguish between your life situation and your life. Life situation is whatever your past that has brought you here, all the circumstances of your life that at the moment are kind of temporarily on ice, so to speak, because you're here on a retreat. But then, of course, when you go back home, you will re-enter the circumstances of your life.

Everybody has a set of circumstances, relationships, work, finances, home situation, physical health. So you re-enter your life situation and, of course, I don't know to what extent each one of you have been while you were here, carrying perhaps the burden of your life situation, even here in a totally different environment. You carry it in your mind, obviously, that these are all the problematic things that exist in your life situation.

If there are no problematic things, other challenging things in your life situation, then I congratulate you. However, we don't know how long that will last. It's important not to continuously, not only here, but in your daily life, not to have your consciousness continuously absorbed in the various challenges of your life situation, which is always on past and future, but to return your attention as much as possible every day during your daily activities, return your attention to the present moment, which is where your life is.

It unfolds in the present moment. There are many opportunities for doing that, and that's a little art that you can develop when you are engaged in waiting or moving from here to there or taking a break. It doesn't matter for how long, returning your attention to the present moment.

And that usually means the stream of thinking slows down, and then it may subside for a while. It doesn't matter for how long. And awareness remains.

And as I said before, the personality of the person also recedes, and instead of being a person, you are conscious presence. Now, some of you may be able to just decide to enter the present. Let's say you've been involved in talking on the phone or Zoom calls.

That's what people do these days. Even I do it sometimes. Now, another question is, were you completely lost in whatever discussion was happening on Zoom?

Were you completely in your mind, or were you able to have some of your attention on the inner energy field? A good thing if it sounds a little bit too vague to say, have your attention on the awareness or feel the awareness. The inner body is a good portal into awareness.

So while you are watching people on Zoom and feel the inner body, while you listen, and even while you speak, that keeps some of your attention within. Being present usually involves the entire body. If you can, especially if you're sitting somewhere and you're present, being present is not a head phenomenon.

It's an entire body phenomenon. So to, when you feel, when you become present, almost inevitably, you will feel the entire inner body being alive in a very subtle way. You feel the aliveness from head to toe.

You feel your body is alive, and that is part of being present. And it happens naturally. So you, when you, when you become present, you automatically become present within the entire energy field of the body.

Or if you can also use it the other way around, you can direct your attention into the body and use that to become present. And that is, you can verify that in your own experience here and now. Be completely attentive to the present moment.

This is what is, feel. You're obviously aware of sense perceptions, but deeper than that, you're aware of yourself, but not the usual historical self, but the deeper sense of beingness that's yourself at a deeper level, which the Buddha calls the no-self. Be aware of yourself in any situation.

Not the narrative of you, which is the historical self, but something much more immediate and much more direct. That is the sense of beingness or presence that pervades the entire body, not just in the head. And so you, you, one could almost say every cell of the body becomes present a little bit more alive.

It feels alive. Breathing helps too. If you don't feel it very strongly yet, a few deep breaths, conscious breaths into the body, let the flow of the breath reach the abdomen.

Although the air doesn't reach the abdomen, your attention can go as you breathe in into the body and your attention then moves down into the, it rides on the intake of the air, so to speak. Your attention rides on the air and it goes, and then you're into the belly, the abdomen. And that is also a good starting point for body awareness.

You feel as you breathe in and out a few times with each in-breath, the abdomen expands slightly. And then with the out-breath, it just deflates, is that the word? Well, slightly.

Shrinks, and it's a good thing. I have to shrink my belly. Doesn't shrink for very long.

The belly is very important in Zen, also the Hara, as an energy center. So you feel a sense of aliveness. It starts here and then it spreads throughout the body.

Another good thing is when you do it, these are all little, you could call it meditations or practices or something that just happens almost naturally after a while. When you want to, we're talking about returning to the present moment, or even better, staying in the background, continue to stay present even while you're engaged in doing things in the world. But if you, until you reach that stage where you're able to stay present, even while you're engaged in daily activities, then at least if you are not able to do that yet, do is not a doing, but it's just language.

If you're not able to do that yet, then return to presence, to the present moment as much as frequently as possible in your daily life. So until you, there's always some presence, awareness of yourself, which is another way of speaking of presence. It's the awareness of yourself.

Now, when I talk about it, I formulate a sentence with words and immediately a duality arises. Awareness of yourself, I say, because I'm talking about it. But these are not two things.

There isn't the awareness that is aware of yourself. The awareness is the self that is self-aware. So when we break it up into language, inevitably we create a duality.

That's just how language operates. A sentence has a subject and an object. So then you can say, I am aware of the awareness.

It has broken it up into two, but it's one. It's awareness becoming self-aware, one could say. So, but when we talk about it, duality immediately arises, but there's no duality there.

So the, as you gradually move towards living more and more consciously, at first, as I said, you may need to return to presence frequently. And you do that by breathing. You can, as an entry point, use your breath or go immediately into the body or allow the breath to take your attention into the body.

And even one minute is fine. Sometimes I say, even one conscious breath is a mini meditation. One conscious breath.

It's the in-breath and the out-breath. One conscious breath, it takes about, I don't know, 15, 20 seconds. I haven't actually counted it.

The length varies from person to person. When you take a conscious breath, automatically it becomes a little longer than it would normally be when you're breathing unconsciously, which is most of the time. So most of the time you're breathing, but you don't know you're breathing.

You don't even have to remember to breathe because you would soon die. Oh, I forgot. Sorry, gone.

So breathing is something that happens to you. One can't, yes, you can regulate your breathing, you can make it deeper, but it is something that beyond extending the length of your breath or regulating your breath, you don't have a choice in the matter. You don't have a choice.

I don't believe anybody has ever committed suicide by deciding not to breathe anymore. So you, the little unhappy person, wants to die, but something in you says, no, not yet. Something in you wants to continue to live for a while.

And you can't stop it. So breathing is an unconscious process, but it's always there. And spiritually speaking, to make this unconscious process conscious is one of the most ancient spiritual practices, going back to the time of the Buddha and beyond, the awareness of your breath.

So you couple the breath with awareness, the awareness moves with the breath. So one conscious breath is already a gain in consciousness, because while you are taking this one conscious breath, which goes like this, and notice at the end of the in-breath, there's a slight cessation of breath for maybe one or two seconds. That's an important still point.

And then the out-breath happens. Let's do it one more time. And the point at the end of the in-breath, your attention has reached the abdominal area.

And it is there where you experience the cessation between the two breaths, between the in-breath and the out-breath. In the abdominal area, there you can sense that the energy that is there at that still point, at the end of the out-breath, the in-breath, the out-breath hasn't happened yet. It is, ah, so, ah.

And it feels so good that you would probably want to take another conscious breath after one. And you might even take three in the midst of your busy life. Three conscious, can you make time for three conscious breaths?

You could put it on your phone. When is my next conscious breath due? In six minutes.

Okay. I can't wait. And then, of course, you have the famous excuse in the human mind that says, I can't do it now.

Not now. I mean, just so much to deal with here. Leave me alone.

All that spiritual thing comes later. But not now. I'm too busy.

Can't you see? It's a lie, of course, because everybody, unless you engage in an emergency situation, you need to get to the hospital, or you need to take someone to the hospital, or you administer first aid, or something like that, then don't take three conscious breaths. But otherwise, many opportunities, the minimum is one.

But as I said, you may like it so much, because it's such a qualitative difference between your normal state of consciousness and that, that you immediately can sense that difference, and you can sense that power that you have touched. And so, two or three would be good. And how long is three conscious?

I don't know, a minute and a half, or a minute, I don't know, I haven't measured it. A very wonderful practice, to do that several times a day, is actually more powerful than one longer meditation period a day. Although you can have both.

But if you had a choice of either one long meditation period a day, or two, or several times during the day, take three conscious breaths. The three conscious breaths several times a day would be more effective in changing your state of consciousness, because then, the important thing is, your daily life will become interspersed with spaces of awareness, presence. Instead of having one compartment, when you meditate, and the rest of your life, you're as unconscious as everybody else.

There's the famous example of the man who has a family, and he says, look, I need to meditate now, it was such a terrible day, I just need to come. And then he goes, he needs to study. And then the door opens, and the little daughter comes in, Daddy, Daddy!

And the spiritual Daddy says, oh forget the God you see, I'm meditating. Not integrated. Awareness not integrated with ordinary life.

By the way, if you do meditate, and you probably know this, because I'm sure there are many experienced meditators here, if you do have a meditation period, then whatever technique you use, eventually, every technique is designed to take you to the realization of being. And that's good, maybe it works, as long as you don't give it the idea of needing to achieve something. Then you bring in time, and that will prevent you from the realization of being which is now, can only be now.

So that idea of, okay, I'm trying to get somewhere, don't try to get anywhere, because you're there already, you are already. You are. I am.

And so are you. And anything that disturbs you during the meditation must immediately be incorporated into the meditation. Any disturbing sound, whatever it may be, or a sensation in the body, a little pain arising there, whatever.

Usually when you meditate, all kinds of sounds happen around you, and immediately they're part of the meditation, become incorporated. Let's say there's a, you're meditating, there's a pneumatic drill, you know these things, I don't know what they're called here. They're breaking up the surface of the street, one of the worst noises you can imagine.

If you're a good meditator, you'd immediately welcome that sound as part of your meditation, and it creates no resistance. Then you're the Buddha. But here, these three breaths, many times during the day, and if you absolutely don't have enough time, one is fine too, better than nothing, definitely.

Many times during the day, you breathe in, hold for one or two seconds, and while you hold, you feel it here. It has expanded, and then the out-breath happens. And if you are really following the breath with your attention, you are not thinking.

You cannot be thinking at the same time. If you think, you're not following the breath with your attention. So that's why it's a very effective way of stopping the addiction to useless thinking, over-thinking.

So that's a return to the present moment, and it makes you feel more alive. And then gradually, even while you're engaged in doing, you may be able to hold the attention in the background, so to speak, to continue to be aware of yourself as the experiencing presence in any situation. And that is what I call, as I mentioned earlier, having the foot in both dimensions, to be present within and without, because externally, also you are present with what's going on, and then you have some presence, awareness in the inner energy field.

You're aware that you are. So, initially I recommend you practice that while, let's say you're engaged with other human beings, talking, whatever it may be. At first, you practice it particularly when you're listening to somebody, while they are talking, and you are listening.

And while you listen, feel the presence within, pervading the body. So you're there, and there you are listening. Yes, your attention is on the words, but some of your attention is in the I am, the presence.

And you feel it, you're there, your entire body is present while you listen. And you're not preparing the next thing you're going to say, then your contribution, if it's a discussion or

a meeting, your contribution will be more inspired or creative if it comes out of the present moment, and the realization comes of what it is that you need to say, and then you speak. And so while listening is important, not many people are able to really listen, because good listening implies being present.

And you're not only listening to the words, you're also aware of the other, so-called other person's beingness. It's not just the words that are important when somebody is speaking to you, you're also aware of their essence behind the words. But you can only do that if you are aware of, it's only through your own essence that you can be aware of theirs.

And then the most difficult thing is to stay present in a discussion, a heated discussion maybe. Now what is a heated discussion? A heated discussion is that people are emotionally involved in defending their mental positions.

That's a heated discussion. The heat is the emotion. So, and this happens very often, people get involved in heated discussions.

They have mental positions, thoughts that they completely identify with, opinions, viewpoints, which are thoughts. But you don't only, you don't have an opinion or a viewpoint, you are, if you're unconscious, if there's not enough awareness, you are possessed by your opinion or your viewpoint. It has you, you don't have it.

The thought has you, you don't have the thought. It occupies your mind. You are possessed by certain bundles of thoughts which are your opinion.

Now because you are identified, you derive your sense of self from them, meaning anybody who questions or even attacks verbally your opinions or viewpoints will unconsciously be regarded as an enemy. Because that person is not attacking just your viewpoint in your unconsciousness, this person is attacking your very self. Because you have identified with a viewpoint, with the opinion.

It has become your self. And so that is how a discussion becomes heated or even violent. Some people start shouting and screaming, and then it can even lead to physical violence if you are very unconscious, for nothing quite often.

Just because two people have different opinions. But they are not just opinions, they are thoughts that have taken possession of your mind and they pretend to be you and they want to survive in you. They are little, one could almost say parasitic entities that live in your mind.

You have no immunity if there is no awareness. You have no immunity against parasitic entities in your mind. Thoughts that won't go away.

You see it all the time. So this leads to a lot of extreme dysfunctional behavior and so on.

But it goes down to that.

Some people adopt collective thoughts that millions of people also have. Often these days through these things, or bigger screens too, they enter your mind and then they lodge themselves in your mind. And then you think, this is what I believe.

Well, it is what you believe, and that in itself would not be a problem. It may actually quite possibly be more rational than somebody else's belief. I'm not saying every belief is equally valid.

Some beliefs are obviously absurd, but you would be surprised how many people are identified completely with totally irrational and absurd beliefs. Almost as absurd as saying 2 plus 2 is 5. Of course it is.

So it may well be that your opinions or viewpoints are perhaps more in alignment with reality than somebody else's. That's possible. But the important thing is, even though your viewpoint may be more aligned with reality and may be more rational, there is still the danger that you completely identify with that viewpoint and even that viewpoint that may be more rational than somebody else's by complete identification could still pull you into unconsciousness.

And you would still become very upset and you could still regard the other as your mortal enemy. So even though, yes, there is a qualitative difference in beliefs, but even if your belief is rational and certainly the other person's belief is totally irrational, there is still the danger that even your rational belief could pull you into unconsciousness in the absence of awareness. So that's where you have to be careful.

It's not enough to be objectively right in something, although it's better than to be objectively wrong, but it's not enough to be objectively right because even if you're objectively right, you could still be pulled into unconsciousness through lack of awareness and then you start fighting and the other becomes almost a demon to you. You identify it with thought and that's ego. It's always ego.

If you have rational viewpoints, then probably, and other people, many others have irrational viewpoints, probably there's already a certain degree of awareness in you so that you're able to still... You haven't lost the ability to think rationally because it can easily be lost if there's no awareness at all. The weirdest idea can take possession of your mind and often it does.

The strangest thing can take possession and then that's what you believe. You have no idea where that came from, but you're completely identified with it. That has happened throughout history.

In certain time periods, collective beliefs that are totally irrational can take over an entire nation or groups of people. Be very careful with the ego's need to be right that is

associated with identification with the mental position. If you identify with the mental position, you have an enormous compulsion or need to be right and to prove the other wrong because that's how the ego survives.

The ego could not tolerate saying, Oh, I was wrong. That would be a little death to the ego because it identified with the position. So be very careful when you're engaged in discussions with other people so that you don't have this emotional...

You're in the grip of an emotional need to be right. You may be objectively right, but you still become unconscious by defending a mental position emotionally and make the other person into your enemy. Everybody needs to be extremely careful here so that you don't get taken over by mental parasites.

That can happen either on an individual level or collectively. Parasitic thoughts that just feed on you and you think that's you. But most of you are already beyond that anyway.

So I highly recommend three breaths several times a day. It sounds like a medicine. Take it five times a day, but not on a full stomach.

Breath and spirit traditionally, in many spiritual traditions, go together, are related. There's something about breath that is related to spirit. It's also formless.

Breath is also formless. I also, as you know, I sometimes often recommend while you're waiting for something to be present instead of looking at your phone, be present while you're waiting, no matter even if it's just for the elevator. While you're waiting, be present.

But you may not be able to just step into presence without any technique or entry point, so use the breath. Let's say you're waiting at the elevator for, maybe let's say it takes a minute. This is quite a long time for many, and many people think about one minute.

You can't, wow, where is it? Can't wait much longer. You can look for your next Tinder date.

So while you're waiting at the elevator, conscious breath. And it's still not there, which means there's another conscious breath coming. Abdomen.

And out. And here there's always a brief cessation of the breath when it reached the end of the in-breath. It's so good that you might even hope that the elevator won't be coming for a while.

And immediately, no thought. You're out of your thinking. The Buddha, as far as we can tell from script, many of the Buddhist scriptures that we read come actually from a later age.

They were attributed to the Buddha, but you see, well, probably not. But there are some

things about the Buddha's teaching that seem to me to come directly from him. The main things are breath awareness, anapanasati yoga, the awareness of the ingoing and outgoing breaths, very powerful meditation, and vipassana, which is the meditation on the inner body.

Vipassana meditation. Those two are very powerful meditations. And the Buddha, I don't think the Buddha ever said, stop thinking.

All he said is, observe your breath. It's the same thing. Observe your breath means stop thinking, because you cannot observe your breath and think at the same time.

So vipassana, as some of you may know, is an inner body awareness, but a very structured, slow-moving inner body awareness that you can start wherever you start, with your feet, and then gradually you feel every part of the body gradually can take a long time, and then finally you bring it all together into one. And some people may need that. They may need a very structured approach.

Others may be able to just enter the body with their awareness. The best starting points are either your hands or the belly. And if you start with the belly, that's how I teach it.

Start with the belly, then a good thing is to breathe into the belly and abdomen, and then the feeling of aliveness then spreads out from there into the rest of the body, and there you are. Then you have a global sense of aliveness, and you are present with the entire energy field. If you are not able to do that with the hands, it's another good starting point, because some people, when I talk about this, especially in talks in big cities, many people have come.

I've never heard of anything spiritual or meditation. They say, what are you talking about inner body awareness? Feel the inner body.

What does that mean, feel the inner body? Also, when you come into contact with people who you think might be helped by this, instead of talking about presence and transcendence of the egoic state of consciousness, your uncle or your mother-in-law may not be able to follow you there, but they may be suffering mentally, so you can say, let's play a little game. Well, hopefully they'll do it.

Say, close your eyes, hold your hands like this, and keep your eyes closed. Is there any way you can know, without moving your hand or touching anything, is there any way you can know whether your right hand still exists or not? How can you know?

Don't move your hand, don't touch anything. How can you know whether your right hand exists or not? Can you know it?

Now, if a person is very much mind-identified, they'll say, of course it does, I just saw it a second ago. So it exists as a memory in the mind. But that's, of course, not what you're

referring to.

You're saying, at this moment, can you know? And that will force the person to move their attention there, and then suddenly realize there's actually such a thing as a feeling of hand. And that is the beginning of the inner body.

Oh yeah, I can feel it. And then, if you leave your attention there, you can tell them, if you leave your attention there, then it gets a little stronger, that feeling of the aliveness in your hand. Oh, that's interesting.

And, of course, another thing that happens also here, very little thinking can survive when you put your attention anywhere in the body. So then with this person that you're practicing with, your family member or whatever, then you say, well, let's do the other hand at the same time. Can you feel both hands at the same time?

Are they still there? Is the left hand also still there? Yes, I can feel it.

Now, are you able to bring the feeling of hand together so that simultaneously you feel your left and your right hand? Oh yes. Okay.

Can you feel your feet in the same way? Oh. Now they're getting used to it.

Okay, yeah. And then you can work up with legs, and then the entire body. And then they know what inner body awareness is.

And for some people that's enough that they need to change their entire life if they practice that. They may not want to go any further in this lifetime. Just inner body awareness can be enough for some people, can be good enough.

[Speaker 2] (41:06 - 41:25)

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Eckhart Tolle Do You Embody the Awakening of Consciousness ? [0c59b152-307e-4352-82aa-c11d8b71bca9]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:48)

Do you embody the awakening of consciousness? In this podcast, Eckhart talks with an audience in Stockholm, Sweden, and he says, our main purpose is to inhabit the now. Ironically, he says most of us try to escape it through activities, addiction, or our thinking.

He says we avoid being anywhere other than here by saying, I got too much going on. I don't have time for presents. Eckhart explains this mindset can wreak havoc with our lives and create dysfunction.

He says the most important thing any of us can do is to embody consciousness. He says evolution on this planet is actually happening through us, and on a larger scale, we are inseparable from the awakening universe.

[Speaker 1] (0:50 - 35:18)

Just making sure that everybody is present. Almost everybody is. I can sense it in the energy field.

It's wonderful to be back here after quite a few years in time, but it's still the now, it seems. Strange. Can't get away from it.

Although many humans try very, very hard to get away from it. It's part of the inherited collective mental patterns is the compulsion to get away from the now. And that's at the root of a lot of dysfunction in human consciousness.

So here we are, the main purpose of being here. Well, both here in this space, at this time, but also the main purpose of being here on this planet, incarnated as a so-called human being. The main purpose is to inhabit the now.

Well, everybody inhabits the now, but to inhabit the now, to be in the now consciously. And we could call that the awakening of consciousness, learning to be present, which seems to be a process that happens in time, although presence itself is a timeless state of consciousness. A slight paradox, perhaps, the ability to live here and be present develops over time, which means you're present for a while, then you lose it, and you're present again, and you lose it, and then you're present for a little bit longer.

This is the awakening of consciousness, we could call it. And you're all here because something in you is awakening to this dimension of consciousness. It's no surprise that this term, awakening, has been used in many spiritual traditions for thousands of years,

awakening and to be awake.

That's the most important thing that could happen to a human being here. In fact, it's the only thing of absolute importance in your incarnation here, the only thing of absolute importance is whether you represent or embody the awakening of consciousness, that is the evolution of consciousness on this planet through you. And on a larger scale, it is the evolution of consciousness throughout the universe.

It is an awakening universe, and you are an essential part of the awakening universe. In fact, you are inseparable from the awakening universe. You look like a person, but you are the universe in the process of awakening, disguised temporarily as a little person with its problems.

So much going on in my life, I don't know. I have no time for presents. Maybe when things are going better, I'll be present, but not now.

Got too much on my plate, as the expression goes. I have a lot on my plate, they say, which means a lot of problems. Of course, there's no end to the problems.

So there's only one thing of absolute importance, and that is whether you embody the awakening of consciousness. All the rest is secondary, I call it. It may be relatively important.

All the things that make up your life, what people call my life, very problematic thing that you call my life, that is all maybe important. Yes, there are things that are important. Your health is important.

Your relationships, of course, situation, important. Your home situation, your professional work situation, important. All of those things, whether you have money or not enough money, all these things are important, relatively important, but not absolutely important.

So you have the two levels. I don't deny the relative importance of all these things that make up your so-called life, but what humans neglect and do not realize that there is a transcendent dimension to your life, and to encounter that, to consciously awaken to the transcendent dimension of your life, that is the only thing that is of absolute importance. Then everything else falls into place.

So if you focus on the awakening, whether you are conscious at any moment, the important thing in any situation that you encounter in your life is the state of consciousness with which you meet that situation. What is the state of consciousness in which you face whatever situation arises in the present moment? That determines the next thing, how it's going to go on in the next, next moment, in the next, how do you perceive, react to this, whatever is arising in this moment?

So whatever is arising in this moment, the situation that arises, they come and go,

different situations arise, is always maybe important, but it of secondary importance. More important is your state of consciousness now. If you could remember only that and live that, that's really all you need.

So whenever you encounter any situation, realize what's my state of consciousness right now? And there's a situation that perhaps you need to deal with. Perhaps you need to take action right now.

Perhaps there's nothing you can do and you have to leave it alone. We don't know. But what is your state of consciousness in the present moment?

That vital question. And in order to answer that question, and it doesn't really have a conceptual answer because you immediately know whether you are present or not. That question can help you become present.

What is my state of consciousness right now? Maybe are there certain thoughts that are happening that are telling you that something is very wrong? Emotions that are telling you that something is wrong?

There are certain thoughts that are telling you you'd rather be somewhere else? Very common thing. It's so common people don't realize it.

Some people live almost continuously as if they were longing to be somewhere else, but not here and now. To get away from here and now. This isn't right.

There's something not right. Never. And occasionally it seems right.

Ah, I have arrived. Whatever it is that makes it right for a moment, it's an illusion. I'm in love.

This is the completion of my life. I've fallen in love. There's a person who's going to complete me.

When you go to a restaurant and observe other people sitting at various tables, you can tell whether they're a couple sitting at a table. You can tell whether their relationship is relatively recent. They haven't known each other for very long.

They're in that state that they call falling in love. The way they interact is very different from those who have been in a relationship for longer or are married. The ones that have just met, they've fallen in love.

They are in a kind of state of delusion. You can see it in their eyes. Everybody's playing their part in it.

It's a theatrical performance, but they don't know it. And that comes to an end the latest when they start living together. Then the essence of all this is awakening.

Awakening, the awakened state of consciousness. And as I mentioned earlier, not surprisingly, this term awakening has been used over thousands of years since the time of the Buddha and before. The essence of the teaching of the Buddha is to awaken.

The word Buddha itself means to be awake. The one who is awake. This is a Sanskrit root of the word, is to be awake.

Buddha is not a, it's not a name of a person. It describes a state of consciousness. And then go to Jesus, and there are quite a few parables that talk about not going to sleep, about staying awake.

And these are not, he's not, these are parables. They're not to be taken literally, obviously, literally you cannot tell a person stay awake because eventually, of course, you'll go to sleep. So we are just using this analogy of awake and asleep in order to point to something that most humans are not yet familiar with.

To quote Jesus again from one of the gospels, he said, and this is quite a bit of what we read about Jesus' teaching, may not be quite what he said or distorted, but a few things I can sense are absolutely, literally what he said. A few things here and there. For example, he said, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake.

Huh? Is that, was that the Buddha or Jesus? No, it was Jesus.

Oh. No, he's not talking about the normal state of wakefulness. Nobody could stay awake for that long because there's something that pulls you into sleep.

So we are not talking about that. We are using that as an analogy. Everybody knows what it means to awaken in the morning when you've been asleep, which is a particular state of consciousness.

You're asleep. And in sleep, you have dream state and you have dreamless sleep. You have those two.

And then you wake up. You awaken in the morning. And there's a huge difference between the state of sleep and the state of being awake.

Everybody experienced that every morning. And you go, suddenly you open your eyes and you go, oh, completely different world. You've just awakened.

It's a different state of consciousness. So this analogy is used because there is something in ordinary consciousness, normal human consciousness, which really should be called unconsciousness. Normal human consciousness could also be described as a kind of sleep because it's totally conditioned by the past.

And the past makes up the content of your mind. The mental emotional field is determined by the conditioning from your past. And most humans are completely

identified with that conditioned entity, which is a mental emotional entity, an energy field.

And so they are so identified that that's all they know. In other words, the conditioned thought processes never stop continuously. There's a voice talking to you or you're talking to yourself or you're having a monologue or you're having a dialogue.

Some people argue with themselves. It's all the voice in the head never stops for most people. And that is, spiritually speaking, that is a state of unconsciousness completely identified with the conditioned mental emotional patterns, which make up the so-called person, personality, the ego.

So if you are completely identified with it, every thought has you in its grasp. Every emotion that arises has you completely in its grasp. And you think you're thinking, but you're not thinking.

Thinking happens to you. You don't have a choice if you're unconscious. There's no choice.

All your thought processes happen to you. You're at the mercy of your thoughts, the conditioned thoughts in your head and all the reactions that come with it. Every situation you encounter, there comes a conditioned reaction to the situation.

It's the person or the personality that reacts. And you don't even have a choice. Why don't you have a choice?

Because you're asleep, spiritually speaking. This thing is taking you over. It's a dreamlike state also.

And you can see often people are completely up there and they're never really, they're not really here. You can see sometimes the complete absence in a person's eyes. They're not really here.

They are asleep. But they're thinking very hard. And even at night when there's nobody around to talk to, you're still, the voice is going on.

And it's telling you, I have these problems. What's going to happen next? Awful, sick, my God.

I can't take any more of this. What's my life come to? I imagined something different when I was 20 years old.

I imagined something very different. Why did it all go so wrong? Many people actually have that feeling that something had just gone drastically wrong in my life.

And with others, it's a mixed bag. Some things went okay and others didn't. It depends

what their mind, and your mind tends to focus more on the negative than the positive.

Much more memorable, the negative than the positive. If you go on vacation and everything goes perfectly fine, okay, you'll remember some nice moments and sunsets. But if something went drastically wrong, you'll remember that for the rest of your life.

And you talk about it continuously. You tell the story of what went wrong. If everything went fine, you don't talk about it.

We had a wonderful holiday. Oh yeah, okay. So that's the end of it.

But you know what happened? We went into our room and there were these cockroaches crying on the floor. And then the water was coming through the ceiling.

And then they stole all my bags. Oh my God. So interesting.

And then you know what he said to me? He said, how dare you? And I said, how dare I?

What about you? You are the one with the biggest ego. I said, and whatever.

And the stories go on and on. And so a lot of the things you, the negative things are much more memorable. That's the ego focuses on that.

It loves its enemies. And every negative situation is the ego's enemy. And then it can enhance its fictitious identity through the more enemies you have, the stronger your fictitious sense of self becomes.

Entire nations do that too. They need their enemies. Except Sweden, so peaceful.

All the non-peace loving people have left Sweden a long time ago. They were called the Vikings. And they occupied other lands.

So then we have in Indian spiritual figures philosophy, psychology, there's a word that's been around for a long time. It's called Turiya. Turiya means the force.

First, second, third, fourth. Turiya is the force. It's the force is, it refers to a state of consciousness.

They divided the human consciousness into these four parts. There is dreamless sleep. There is the dream state in sleep.

There is a state of wakefulness, which is ordinary human consciousness. And Turiya is the awakened state of consciousness. That's the force state of consciousness.

They've been talking about that for hundreds of years, thousands of years. The possibility of this dimension of consciousness arising in humans, the force state. And this is what this is all about.

And it is not some distant possibility that you may achieve in some future lifetime, as many people still believe that. Many Buddhists, I've met Buddhists who say, I think I'll need another 15 lifetimes. And then, in fact, my teacher told me, they say, he told me 15 more lifetimes and then I'll be enlightened.

Oh, wow. Okay, that's right. Well, you have plenty of time so you can stay unconscious now.

It's okay. But the strange thing is, the awakened state of consciousness is already there within you. It's just covered up, hidden by mental noise and emotional turmoil.

It's already there as your essential reality. So that's interesting. So it means that time is ultimately not helpful as far as your awakening is concerned.

Time is not helpful. In fact, it's a hindrance in your awakening. So, no time is required for awakening.

Now, the mind says, let me try to figure this out. That doesn't make sense. Meaning I've been meditating for nothing all these years.

Meditation, if it works as it should, ultimately the purpose is, the aim is to be present while you meditate, not to seek some future condition. This is a fundamental mistake that meditators make is they imagine a future condition that they want to arrive at or achieve. And they think, if I just practice more and harder, I will eventually achieve that awakened state.

And that belief is actually a hindrance because then you are doing a meditation. And if you're doing a meditation, you miss the one thing that is the awakened state. And we could call that being.

The realization of being. There needs to be a cessation of doing, an end of doing in order to realize being. You have the two dimensions in your life.

Doing, it requires time. And being, that requires no time. Now, most humans are unaware of being.

They are lost in doing. And the primordial doing is thinking. And then you miss the now, which is inseparable from being.

So I invite you as we speak, or I speak, all the speaking happens. I don't know who is speaking, something is speaking. Invite you here now to become aware of being.

Being, here now. Now, some of you may just, as I say these words, which are only pointers, like signposts, as I say these words, some of you may be able to sense their own beingness. You sense that you are.

And if you have no idea what I'm talking about yet, you're still trying to understand it mentally, let me take you then gradually into being. Let's become aware of this moment. And the first thing you become aware of in this moment is sense perceptions, visual, auditory, and then some of the others do tactile and so on.

But the most predominant sense perceptions are the visual and the auditory. You're here and you see. This is the, you're becoming aware of the present moment, which taken the form of sensory perception here now.

And you look around the room, or you see this person, so-called person sitting on a chair, and you can take in the totality of the room. Question that arises is, are you able to take in the totality of your sense perceptions at this moment without any mental commentary? Just be like a, maybe like a one-year-old child that hasn't learned language yet and just looks in wonder and amazement at the world.

You don't have to look like that, I'm just proving. So you look around at the innocent perception without, is it possible for you, only you can answer that for yourself, but not through words, through just knowing. Are you able to be here in this moment, allow your sense perceptions to be there, being aware of all these things without commenting mentally, without interpretation.

Just let it be, like the Beatles song, let it be. Now that's, there's a shift in consciousness that's already happened because when you interpret your sense perceptions, that's the conditioning of your mind. It's a person perceiving things.

But when you don't interpret, there's still a knowing there, but not conceptual. There's a deeper knowing, but the person isn't there really at that moment when you're not commenting, not interpreting, not imposing some kind of interpretation on the world, then the person that was there before when you were commenting has been replaced by awareness or presence. So there was a person, but then the person comes to an end temporarily.

And they simply, who or what is perceiving this room when you are not commenting according to the conditioning of your past? Who or what is perceiving this awareness itself? So something has, something has receded, the person, and something else has arisen to replace it, so to speak.

Awareness. That awareness is very still. Stillness is in spiritual discourse.

Stillness is another important term. It's just another pointer. It's stillness.

So, and that stillness is not a sleepy stillness. It's an alert stillness. And so a shift has taken place from being a conditioned entity, conditioned by the past, and now the shift has happened, and suddenly just you are that space of awareness.

And so the next step in presence, you're not just, yes, you are aware of your sense perceptions, and you're not labeling, but you're also aware of the awareness itself, through which you are able to be aware of sense perceptions. Words are very limited, but we have to use them. You're aware of the being of yourself, the presence that makes sense perceptions possible, the presence of consciousness that makes sense perceptions possible, and you can sense that not as a subject-object relationship, although when we talk about it, it sounds like a subject-object relationship because language operates in that way.

Language has a subject and an object, so as you use language, you say, I am aware of awareness. That creates a duality that's not really there. When you talk about it, there's an I that is aware of awareness, so there's two of you, but there isn't.

It's only when you start talking about it, it's you become aware of yourself as awareness itself. Awareness becomes the self-aware, whatever you want to call it, but that is an amazing thing that you are able to enter the, even if it's just for brief moments, for brief moments, you can become free of the person. Oh my God, that heaviness, that burden that people carry around that they are so identified with, that they are that heaviness, and that's why many, many persons, their identity is intimately bound up with their, this burden of problems that they have to figure out how to solve my life problems.

So for many people, their identity is, I am a problem to be solved, so it's seeking a solution, and then you go to a therapist. However, if the therapist is present, that makes a huge difference, but I don't know. I'm sure there are some therapists here, and some of you are probably doing fantastic work because you are able to, even though your client or patient is talking, perhaps you are able to be present while you listen instead of interpreting everything, but be the consciousness.

And then perhaps some awakening can happen if you embody presence. So here, the big secret, it's not a secret, but it seems to be a secret, to be aware that you're conscious, to be aware of yourself as consciousness, as awareness, as presence, to sense the beingness of you, which is not the you, the limited you. It's actually the beingness of the universe in you, this transcendent dimension to who you are.

So in English, we don't have a word that applies to both men and women. I don't know if in Swedish, in German, you have the word mensch, which means, could mean it's man and woman, but the English language doesn't have that. So you have to say human being, human being.

And that's great. I like that because I realized that that points to the two dimensions that constitute your reality. You are a human, undoubtedly, which means you have a past, you have mental, emotional conditioning that makes up the person or the ego, the personality.

You have a life situation, just you are a human and you have your desires as a human. You have your goals and so on, all the things that you experience as a human, right? Okay, but what about being?

The being dimension is overlooked by most humans. They are lost in their human nature. They are completely unaware of that transcendent dimension of consciousness that actually is the essential reality to who or what they are.

I sometimes call it your essence identity, the essence. Your essence identity is the being of you. And the being is timeless.

The being is consciousness itself. And then there's the human and the two are together. And if you can awaken to the beingness of you, then of course you continue to be a human until you are no longer, until the body dissolves.

But in the meantime, your task, your mission, your purpose is to, as a human, to also embody the being. Then you have both dimensions in your life. The limited dimension of here that is temporal, inseparable from time.

And you have the transcendent dimension to who you are in the timeless realm of consciousness itself and that is a continuous realization. At first, it may only come to you as glimpses in brief moments. And you feel suddenly a sense of lightness and very peaceful, but very intensely alive.

And you go, oh. And you may realize you're not thinking in those moments. Thinking has subsided, but you haven't fallen asleep.

You're awake. And then you may remember those moments as this was so wonderful. Sometimes it happens when you go into nature.

If you can really be there, nature can help you in your awakening. If you can really be there with all the senses and be aware of the awareness itself when you're out there in nature. And sometimes it can happen to some humans almost accidentally.

They're out and they're climbing a mountain or they're swimming or somewhere in nature and suddenly the person subsides and just an awareness arises and they go, oh, oh. And they think it's been caused by the beauty that they see, but it's not really that. It's being caused by the cessation of thinking.

And you can have that in the middle of a city.

[Speaker 2] (35:20 - 35:40)

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Eckhart Tolle Dropping The Narrative of The Unhappy Me [96910e5c-b317-4295-9701-792520c51897]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:58)

Dropping the narrative of the unhappy me. In this episode, Eckhart talks to an audience in Budapest, Hungary. The crowd erupts with laughter and applause when he speaks a few words in Hungarian, especially the word for now, which is most. Eckhart then explains that the next step in the evolution of humanity is to awaken.

He says there is the potential in every person for a deeper dimension of consciousness, which is the light of God. He says many people look for themselves in their thoughts. They compare themselves to others, their childhoods, their bodies, jobs, possessions.

He explains these thoughts become a sad story and an identity, which we call my life. We keep it alive by overthinking, but it is a delusion. Eckhart says we will find liberation when we drop the narrative of the unhappy me.

Take your time.

[Speaker 1] (1:01 - 42:06)

We have plenty of time. We are in the present moment where there is no time. We'll take this opportunity.

People are still coming in to just be here for a moment in stillness, not looking for the next moment. The key word is most. Most.

Many years ago, I received a book sent by my publisher and it had my name on it. And then it said something like, my memory is not the best. My thoughts are most autonomous.

And I've always remembered that for some reason. However, that is not the only Hungarian part of my talk. Before coming here, I consulted the oracle called Google.

And I can now greet you in your native language by saying, your estate. So that was the Hungarian part of my talk. And now we go on to the English part.

And what happens here? One could say there are two dimensions to our gathering here. Two dimensions.

One is the normal dimension where I speak using words, using concepts, and you listen and your mind translates these words and concepts. So they become thoughts in your head. That's the conceptual level.

It works on a conceptual level, but that is not the main level. There's another dimension

here. And that dimension is beyond the words.

That dimension is beyond the conceptual mind. We could even say that dimension is beyond thought, beyond thinking. And whether we give it a name or not, doesn't matter.

We could call it the dimension of awareness or the dimension of presence in you. It is a dimension in human consciousness. And unfortunately, most human beings alive on the planet now, or all those who have lived in past generations, most of them were not really in touch with that dimension.

They didn't know it existed inside them. They missed it. So there's a potential in every human for a deeper dimension of consciousness.

We could also say higher. It depends how you use language. I prefer to say a deeper consciousness than the conceptual consciousness.

And of course, I use words here, which are concepts, but I'm not using words because I want you to believe in the words that I use. I'm not asking you to believe in anything. You must believe me.

The concepts are only useful because they point towards the deeper dimension in you. And whether or not you find it interesting or gripping enough to stay here in your seats, depends to a large extent on whether this dimension has already awakened in you, at least to some extent. So to recognize the essence of this gathering here, you need to have even a little bit of access in yourself to that deeper dimension that is beyond the conceptual mind, the dimension of awareness.

And a good way of finding out whether or not you have some access to that dimension is whether you find it pleasant and interesting enough to stay here, whether there's something in you that says, oh, oh, yes, is it nice to be here? Or does it become very, very boring after 10, 15, maybe already, after a few minutes? Because if this only works for you on the level of concepts, then maybe for a little while you say, oh, interesting.

He says, there's only the present moment. Well, I haven't said it yet, but I probably will. He says, there's only the present interesting.

And now he's, well, but five minutes later, he's, well, he said that already. Why is he saying it again? I know that now there's only the present moment.

Okay, that's done. Don't want to hear about the present moment again. So then it only works on the level of concepts and it's no longer interesting and you feel like getting up.

But most of you are here because that dimension in you has already awakened. Another way of putting it is to say that we could use the term spiritual awakening, or we could say the awakening of consciousness. As I see it, that is the next step in the evolution of

humanity.

Because I would like to suggest to you that the evolution of humanity is not finished yet. At least I hope it isn't, because it would be sad if it were finished. One could almost say to God, is that the best you can do?

I'm sure you can do better, but God is still working in you as you, the consciousness, which is the light of God. I'm jumping ahead. Let's come back to just this moment.

So most of you have come because this awakening process is already happening in you, but it is possible that you never called it awakening process. You never called it the deeper dimension of consciousness. It is possible that you only experienced it, perhaps after reading a certain book or books, you only experienced it as some inner peace emerging in you that wasn't there before, or less suffering in your life, less unhappiness than before.

It is possible that you experienced it as that, that certain situations that before created a lot of unhappiness for you, no longer create that unhappiness. You may also find that life becomes easier because you're no longer in conflict with the isness of things, with the present moment. And you realized, perhaps some of you realized at some point that a lot of your unhappiness was unnecessary.

It was created by unconscious dysfunctional thinking. And so many of you then experienced a diminishment of suffering or unhappiness, and perhaps a deeper sense of aliveness and inner peace, not all the time, perhaps yet. And this is what brought you here.

Another way of putting it is to say that, well, one of the most important or the most important thing in a person's life is their sense of identity, who they are, who am I? And even a child, as it begins to grow up, already begins to look for a stronger sense of identity. Even a three-year-old child already looks for an identity.

At a certain age, when the child begins to speak, one of the first things the child learns, his or her name, John. John, what's that, John? That's you, John, John.

And sometimes for a little while, the child talks in the third person. John is hungry. No, you are John, it's not here, you.

Okay, and then he begins to equate I with the concept. The sense of I merges with a mental concept. The mental concept is John.

And then this concept becomes the receptacle for many other things as the person grows up, many other things he or she looks for in order to have a more complete sense of self. So the body becomes important. The body, whether the body is stronger than another's bodies, whether the body is better looking than somebody else's body.

So the body becomes a mental image too. That's me and my body. So you identify with the body.

It's a very important thing in many people's lives. Body identification is very important. And with some people, it's so strong that they have a feeling mainly who I am is my body and the rest is other stuff.

And that can become a source of, for many people, it's a source of suffering, unhappiness, because they compare their body with other bodies. And they come to the conclusion that my body is not as good as these bodies. And so you have a diminished sense of self and this diminished identity as feeling inferior.

Me as a body feeling inferior to another body is a source of suffering. And many people, as you know, that I'm sure in this country also, there are magazines you can buy and read that continuously talk what you can do about your body. And it's important for people.

And then it might be external looks, good looking. It could be strengths. It could be looks.

And so you identify and you compare yourself. And then if you're lucky, your body is stronger or better looking than other bodies. And that becomes a source of great satisfaction to you.

And you look in the mirror every morning with great satisfaction. And every day you take selfies and you post them on Facebook out into the world. And then you wait for the likes.

How many? And that becomes more concepts in your mind about your identity. The more likes, the more your sense of identity becomes.

Oh, if we'd now jumped ahead 30 or 40 years with a person who is very strongly identified with the body and a person who every morning looks with great satisfaction in the mirror, jump ahead 30 or 40 years to another morning when this person looks in the mirror and suddenly notices that something is very wrong because time has done something to the body. Something terrible. Time has done something terrible to the body.

What's wrong with this mirror? Oh, that's me. Now there's a whole industry that, of course, if you have enough money, you can go and temporarily undergo repair treatment for your body.

And you have a few more years when you say, okay, I have stopped time. Time is no longer attacking my body, but it is. So what before was a source of great satisfaction, years pass, and then it becomes a great source of pain and unhappiness because it's not really your body that's making you unhappy.

The mental image of who you are has suffered a terrible blow. And suddenly you look at people who are 30 years younger than you and say, oh, your comparison is no longer a source of pride. It's a source of pain, suffering.

That's body identification. And that's only one way in which people look for themselves. They look for themselves in this realm of identification.

Of course, yes, the most obvious one for many people is the body. And for many people, it continues to be throughout their life. Some people are extremely unhappy almost continuously with their body.

So they're, oh, and others are very happy until they are not. But many others change a lot from day to day or week to week, or depending on how much weight you have put on or how much you have lost or whatever it is. There's a mixture of, sometimes your body is good and then it's not good anymore.

And then it's good and it's not. So many people are not happy with themselves. They have a problematic relationship with themselves.

And this shows there's a split. There's a split in their identity. There's a self that they think they are.

And it's a mind created self. It's like an image. And many other things go into this.

You can put things on the body. Even if your body is not as good as others, the clothes you wear can be better than other people's clothes. You can put on great designer things, whatever they're called.

Gucci and Prada and whatever. And this is a huge conceptual thing. They are not selling you goods.

They know that. The people who make these things and advertise them, they're not really selling things to you. They're selling you.

They're selling you an identity, an enhanced identity. But if the body doesn't work for you, some people just say, okay, I'm not paying attention to my body anymore. There are other things that are more important.

I did that when I was young. Because I was neither good looking, nor did I have a strong body. So what can you do?

And I didn't have money to put designer clothes on my body. So there was nothing to do. Okay, then other things that people look for in their sense of identity could be their family.

Where do I come from? What are my ancestors? What have they achieved?

What is my social status in the world? How do I fit in? Am I upper class?

And of course there also, I couldn't find any identity there either, because I was not an aristocrat. And I didn't know anybody beyond my grandparents. So I didn't have ancestors 500 years ago who lived in a beautiful palace.

And I could identify with that. There wasn't anything to identify with. So I would continue to look for myself.

And I kept looking for myself. So it wasn't the body, it wasn't strength. Possessions, I didn't have any money.

So I couldn't buy stuff and then have more stuff than other people. That's a great thing for your identity. But I couldn't do that either.

Oh dear, what am I going to do now? Who am I? I was looking for myself.

Every human being wants to know who they are and they want to be that more fully. Ultimately, everybody's looking for themselves. I'm looking for me.

Okay, if I buy that and add it to me, then that will become the BMW or the Mercedes that I buy becomes part of me if I buy it. But if somebody else has a bigger car, then I get diminished again. So complicated.

So everybody, they're looking for themselves. And a huge problem for many, many people is a deficient sense of self-esteem. This is a very common thing.

People, self-esteem means who you think you are. And a self-esteem that is lacking, that means you feel less than others. And that's a source of great unhappiness and suffering.

This is the human level. There are ancient stories in many different cultures on the planet. And there are ancient stories that all speak of a golden age, whether they call it golden age or call it the garden of Eden or paradise or a time when things went so well, there wasn't suffering.

The psychological suffering wasn't there and people lived happily. The golden age, it's a mythical tale. I believe it is a memory of a pre-conceptual stage of human consciousness when the problematic ego identity had not yet arisen.

And humans for thousands of years remember it was a distant and vague memory of something that they lost or seemed to have lost. And why did they lose it? They lost it because something happened in them which was an important step in the evolution of consciousness.

And it is called thinking. They developed the ability to think conceptually. This is, of course, strongly linked to the use of language because thinking to a large extent,

conceptual thinking is talking to yourself in your head.

And that was an incredible step forward in evolution. Thinking was an incredible thing to happen. Some anthropologists believe that when humans began to think, soon after as they began to speak, they began to think, they were often surprised by their own thoughts.

And they thought that God or a God was talking to them when suddenly thoughts came into their heads. Who is talking? And so progress began.

Progress began as thinking. It was very slow at first, very, very slow. But civilizations began to develop and so incredible things happened.

But we live in the world of polarities, which means you gain something here and you lose something there. There's a price to pay for everything because this enormous gain in consciousness, gradually, humans became more and more unhappy. Gradually, humans, the human existence became more and more problematic.

And gradually, humans began to lose, let's call it their original rootedness in God. The rootedness in being, the rootedness in being to feel connected to something vast. Not to feel like you're a little particle being tossed about and not feel connected to anything anymore.

To feel just always feeling that something is missing. I need something more. There's something wrong here.

Something is missing. Gradually then, instead of being rooted in being, I mean, look at a tree. The tree is not only rooted physically in the earth.

A tree, when you can really contemplate a tree, you can see that it exists in that state of deep stillness. And it has a certain consciousness too. It can respond to the environment.

It grows. But it is totally rooted in being. There's no sense of separate self.

But with humans, there's a huge sense of separateness. The separateness from everybody else and the separateness from nature, the separateness from being itself. So a word that is sometimes used in philosophy or existentialist philosophy, alienation.

Alienation, which means humans become aliens to themselves. You become a stranger to yourself. So there was this incredible development of consciousness through thinking.

And then came science, which is applied thinking, made it even empowered thinking even more. And more and more humans had the price to pay was a heavy one. The price to pay was suffering, unhappiness.

As the Buddha said, all life is suffering, dukkha. So the price to pay was you couldn't find

yourself anymore. You were lost.

And this is, I could say, loss of paradise, paradise lost. So you lost your sense of self. And then you began to look for your sense of self in the dimension of thought.

And so this is what we talked about just before. You need to add to your, always needing to add something to your mind made sense of self of who you are. So everybody here has a certain life situation and everybody here has a certain, when you can talk about your life, who are you?

So you start thinking about you and me and my life. And me and my life is mostly, for most people, it's a story in their heads that they derive their sense of self from things that you own, things that you have achieved, things that you have not achieved, your successes, your failures, your relationships, your body, all these things, the conditioning of your mind, which depends on what happened to you from childhood onwards. Their mind became conditioned in a certain way.

You identify with this and that, not just personal things. You identify also with your environment, the country you live in becomes part of your identity or your religion or your particular group, tribal group that you belong to or is incorporated into your sense of self. And there are many people who carry a very unhappy self.

The unhappy self is the predominantly unhappy self is more common than a predominantly happy self. If you have a predominantly happy self, you're very lucky or very stupid. If you are predominantly happy, it could be that you still exist partly below thought, which traditionally in mythology and so on, it's called the fool.

Or before the term became politically incorrect, it was called the idiot. So this is a person, but they said every village in medieval times, every village had a fool, a village fool. And the village fool was somebody whose mind was so undeveloped that they hadn't formed an ego yet, but they were not very good at conceptual thinking.

But they were, in many cases, they were the happiest person in the village. So they went around. Oh, there goes the fool.

Look how happy he is. Yes, no self hasn't, they existed below the level of conceptualization, but ego hadn't arrived yet. You can also see it in mythological tales where the fool is however important because the fool is connected with something that the more advanced human has lost.

And this is why the fool is important even in mythology and in even more recent literature. The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings, is a little bit of a fool because he's not as intelligent as most of the other people he interacts with, but only he can do something, only he has a certain power to do something. A famous movie that you might have seen years ago, a Forrest Gump, which is, again, it's about a person whose level of

intelligence is far below average.

And again, this is the human who has not yet developed a full ego. And so we cannot go back there, unfortunately. And I'm not attempting to take you back below conceptualization.

That's not the way to go. There are millions of people who try to get away from themselves, the self, the mind-created self. The Buddha called it the self and said it's the great illusion.

The self is an illusion. That's what we are talking about because it's a fictitious mind-created entity that makes you unhappy a lot of the time, creates all kinds of trouble and problems that are completely unnecessary. But you can't get rid of it easily.

It's there. You can travel to the other end of the earth. And when you arrive, you're still there with yourself.

Can't get away from myself. I'm now in Hawaii. I'm now in Bali.

And I'm still with myself. And so how do you get away from yourself? People tried and they've developed many ways of getting away from themselves, but they all take you ultimately below thought.

It's a regressive step. Alcohol. Okay, that helps for a little while to get away from your unhappy self.

Just have four or five whiskeys. That's a little bit of relief from your daily torture of your mind because for many people, their minds is a daily torture. Their minds make them unhappy.

They don't even, they don't know it. They think it's a situation. They don't realize it's not the situation that makes you unhappy.

It's the narrative that your mind has about the situation that's making you unhappy. And that's an egoic narrative. Try it out in any situation.

Let's not go to the very extreme situations. We may touch on that later, but basically it's true too. Any situation where you get unhappy in whatever form, you get irritated, you get angry, you get whatever it is.

In the present moment, you get happy. Why are you getting unhappy in this situation? You're just waiting for somebody to arrive.

You're waiting at the airline counter, but they are so slow and it's not moving and you get very upset and unhappy. This is a minor situation, but life is full of these minor situations. If you're unconscious, spiritually speaking, which means completely identified

with your conceptual mind.

If you're unconscious, then you believe that all these events and situations and people make you unhappy. This situation is just, it's so awful. But if you wake up in that moment, you realize it's not the situation.

It's the narrative in your mind about the situation creates the emotion of unhappiness. Very easily can be verified as an experiment. Next time you find yourself in a situation that makes you unhappy, or you think the situation makes you unhappy, you can ask yourself, let's try an experiment.

How would I experience this situation if I did not add any concepts or thoughts to it, to this situation? I'm not adding any thought to this moment. This moment is the way it is.

And I'm not going to withdraw the addition of thought to it. So here you are, wherever it may be, waiting in line. The line is not moving.

You've been standing there for 40 minutes waiting to check in or whatever way it is. How would I experience this moment if I didn't add any of the baggage of thought to it? And suddenly you realize, okay, now I am not labeling this situation as either good or bad.

I'm not labeling it. I'm allowing it to be as it is this moment. And suddenly, yes, you may still have a pain in your body or whatever it is because you've been standing ever too long.

But suddenly this moment just is as it is. It's no longer an unhappy moment because the unhappiness was there because of unconscious thinking. Mistaking a situation, an interpretation of a situation.

It's a single thing. You can go in the, let's say winter's coming. So in the morning you look out of the window and you could either, you could go, let's say it's been raining.

I suppose it rains here too sometimes. After a few days of rain, you open the window and say, oh no, it's another miserable day. I don't know how many more of these days I can take.

And it's just my miserable life and another miserable day in my miserable life. Of course, you're adding a lot of thoughts to this moment. How would you experience it if you open the curtains and you simply look outside and take in what's there?

There's no unhappiness because there's no self. You're not seeing it through the conceptual self. You're seeing it through awareness.

That's the great liberation. If you can see something through awareness instead of the conditioned conceptual self, suddenly there's clear seeing and the heaviness isn't there anymore. The suffering suddenly evaporates.

And amazing if you can learn to distinguish between the situation that is and the interpretation. And then suddenly you withdraw the narrative, the story, and there's what is left. When you withdraw the story, there's just the isness of this moment as it is.

And you're no longer fighting against the isness. You're allowing this moment to be as it is. That's an amazing liberation.

And with that, the self diminishes, it shrinks, the conceptual self, the mind-created self. And what takes its place is a different dimension of consciousness, which we could call presence or awareness. So that arises.

That's an enormous shift in consciousness. Look, for example, many people carry an enormous burden around with them every day. And that burden that they carry around with them, they call it my life.

My life. Oh, it wasn't supposed to be like that. And when I was 20, I imagined something very different.

Where did it start going wrong? Well, it started with my parents. If I'd had more conscious parents, perhaps things would have been better.

If life had treated me more fairly, I would be okay. But many things went wrong. And I don't know if I've lost faith.

It's all going downhill. Or whatever the narrative says, it has regrets, has a few successes. That was great.

It was so nice. But then it ended. It was so wonderful.

And then it came to an end. I'm still thinking about it. Can't stop thinking.

Can't stop thinking about it. I can't stop. I can't stop thinking about the good times that I've lost.

And I can't stop thinking about all the bad stuff that happened to me. Can't stop thinking about that either. And that's my life.

That's my life. Oh, dear. And millions of humans carry that mental burden, mental, emotional burden around with them.

And believe that that is their reality. They do not realize that is not their reality. It is their conceptual reality, which consists of the movement of thought, thought, thought.

So you continuously think about your unpleasant life. And you keep it alive by continuously thinking about it and being so identified with the thinking that you become that thinker, the unhappy thinker, the unhappy self. It's incredible to see how many

people walk around to their grave carrying the heavy burden of an unhappy me, unhappy self.

It doesn't need to be like that. But how can you be free of that? It's not that difficult.

What happens is that you are mistaking what you call your life for your life situation. Your life situation involves the past. It has arisen out of the past and probably involves some future where you want to get to.

Still, you have certain, perhaps you have certain hope still that your life situation one day will become, will resolve itself. This problematic thing that I carry around, one day my life situation, this is an unconscious belief or hope in many people, one day my life situation will resolve itself. And then finally I can start breathing freely when I need just the right person and just the right place to live and good health for my body and a good income and social recognition and a few other things.

Don't have to worry anymore about money, don't have to worry anymore about anything. Perhaps one day I can get there, but it's very unlikely.

[Speaker 2] (42:07 - 42:27)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Eckhart Tolle Special : Finding Death Before Death Finds You [fe75dbce-dd49-462e-87e2-a8f728be496b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

Finding death before death finds you. In this episode, Eckhart discusses a topic that is taboo for many. The subject of death.

In the Western world, he says denial and the fear of death has prevailed for centuries. However, Eckhart explains that need not continue. He says there is a much deeper dimension to who we are.

One that never dies. And if we can get in touch with that transcendent aspect of ourselves, our fear of death will ultimately disappear.

[Speaker 1] (0:34 - 46:36)

It's important to familiarize yourself with death. You can't really live in a wise way if you are not familiar with death. They go together.

From the point of view of the physical vehicle and the form identity, one could say that every one of us is infected with a lethal virus already. But it's not a physical virus. The virus is called time.

And in the end, it will consume you and destroy you. That's for sure. So, the outcome is already assured.

The seeming solidity of our world is an illusion. Especially in the Western world, the denial of death has been prevalent for a long time. Not so in medieval times, but since we moved into modern times.

In medieval times, in the Western world, Europe, humans were very much aware of death. It was all around them. Life was very unpredictable, more so than now.

Although nowadays, it's also unpredictable, as we are seeing. But in medieval times, even more so, of course. So, death could come at any moment.

And you can see in old paintings, medieval paintings, many people on their desk or table, they had a skull, a human skull, to remind them of death. Because if you're aware of death, everything else, you have a different perspective on everything else. For example, if you were aware continuously of mortality, short-lived nature of the individual life form, perhaps nothing would be that all-consuming and serious anymore.

If you knew any dispute or disagreement or semblance. And if you have a dispute with

somebody, if you remember, in a few years, we'll both be dead. Somehow, you rise above it a little bit.

This lethal virus called time, unless something else kills you first, traffic accident every year, 1,250,000 people die, many of them young. Many people in the Western world die of drugs, overdoses of drugs, which are connected with unhappiness and despair and finding something to mitigate the unhappiness and despair or lifelessness they feel. And then they are drawn to drugs and then it kills them.

They don't know who they are. They haven't gone deeper. Nobody has taught them all the most vital things and not taught to young people.

So mortality has been a taboo in the West for a long time, ever since medieval ages came to an end. In other parts of the world, death is not yet a taboo. It's still on open display, such as in India, where the dead bodies are cremated out in the open.

Anybody can come and watch dead bodies being burned and carried to the streets and then being burned. That gives you more of a sense of reality because if you deny death, you get a distorted view of things. And not only the West denied death, even old age.

Most old people are now in senior residences whereas in other countries still you see they are out in the street. So in particular at this time, people that you know may die before their time. Some others may already have been approaching old age, death, and then through this illness, they die just a little bit sooner.

So it's important to face death, not kind of think about it in a morbid way, but just to face it, the fact of it, the inevitability of it, and to see that it's very important, spiritually too, to be aware of the short-lived nature of all life forms. One of the essential teachings of the Buddha is the fact of impermanence. A lot of the fear that people feel, yes, there's fear of loss, but deep down perhaps it could all be traced to fear of death.

Because a fear of loss is your fear of losing your job or fear of losing somebody close to you. Well, that's death that's happening to somebody else. Or you have a fear of loss of job, loss of your savings, loss of home, whatever it may be.

It's the fear, a kind of loss, a diminishment of through these things. And so these are little deaths when you lose something that was important to you. There's a little death there.

Now I want to face death and talk about death just briefly without necessarily giving you too much or anything to believe in. Some people believe, of course, death is many people in Western world especially, but increasingly the East too, believe, of course, death is the end of everything, the end of you. Because life, including human life, they believe, and that's still, of course, the mainstream belief, is an accident.

Accidentally, these atoms and molecules have come together. The whole of life is an accidental conglomeration of atoms, total chance event. There's nothing behind it.

That's the belief. There's nothing, there's nothing transcendent. The entire universe, the apparent harmony of everything, the amazing life forms and everything is just a chance event.

Or as Shakespeare put it, well, he wasn't referring to that, but that is the modern view, a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing, dreadful view of life. And of course, because that, even those humans who have not done any philosophical investigations for themselves, they have all absorbed it because it's in the mainstream culture, that belief of nothing there, chance events. Complete meaning, there's no meaning.

Any meaning they believe is, it's a fabrication. There is no meaning to the universe. There's no underlying dimension.

I believe, of course, these are grave errors, but that is still the mainstream belief. And then there are some religious people who still believe that they have their own forms of belief, of life after death. Perhaps they're a little bit better off than those who believe that there's absolutely nothing.

It's all chance. There's no transcendent meaning to human life or any life. For most, it's still, even the religious people, for most, it's still, it's a belief.

It's a conceptual idea in their head. It can perhaps free them a little bit from the fear of death, but I don't know how much. So I don't want to talk in terms of belief so that in order to go beyond the fear of death, if that is possible, is there another way rather than the belief that there is something?

If you can sense that the essential you is not a visible entity, who you are essentially cannot be found in the realm of physicality. If it could be found in the realm of physicality, then a surgeon could open your brain and find you there. Or find your memories, whatever, find your thoughts, who you are, but you are not there.

You can't find a single thought because thought does not exist in the realm of physicality. In fact, science has no idea, no matter what they say, basic truth is their ego sometimes, ego doesn't allow scientists to say that they don't know. They find it hard to say they don't know.

But the basic fact is science has no idea what consciousness is. Many scientists avoid the word altogether because they don't know what to do with it. Certainly there's a relationship between the physical brain and consciousness, but they believe that the physical brain produces consciousness as a byproduct of physicality.

But that's all they can say. But they don't know even what a thought is. Where is it?

How does a thought survive in you? For decades, memories, hundreds of thousands of memories survive in you. I can remember the most crazy, insignificant things.

People have said to me 40 years ago, so many things are there, where are they? The entire you, who you are, who you are in your essence is not, you're invisible. That's the realization.

You're essentially invisible. If you can sense that essentially who you are is an invisible presence that kind of inhabits the body, not as a belief, I believe that I'm an immortal soul, that would be an old term. But right now in this moment, can you sense the essence of who you are as an invisible presence that pervades the entire body, but goes beyond it too?

The mind has to become still for a moment so that your attention can move there. But your attention and it are actually a single thing. And again, there's a very still presence there.

And even if you only have glimpses of it, then you have a kind of direct experience of who or what you are beyond the physical body. If you are very strongly identified with the physical body, then it might be more difficult. Your identity is mainly derived from the physicality, which happens to some people, particular people who are very proud of their body or very unhappy with their body, either extreme.

If you're proud of your body, derive your sense of self from it because it looks better than other people's. Your appearance and body, it's fine. It's a limitation.

I mean, appreciating if you're lucky enough to have a great body, it's wonderful. But is that all to who you are? So this sensing of yourself as an invisible presence, even if you only have it occasionally, can free you to some extent from the fear of death.

That presence is timeless. You don't remember it. It's nothing to do with memory.

It's nothing to do with what you have achieved as a person here, whether you're a big failure or big success is irrelevant. It's nothing to do with your future. It's just so comforting to know that that deeper self is beyond the decay of the body.

Now the question arises, well, what happens to it when the body dissolves? Wait and see. I don't want to give you too many ideas to believe in, but at least there's something there that is not subject to time because let's say you are 20 years now and you can sense that.

When you're 90 years old, you can still sense that. And it's the same. And then you're less fearful or no longer fearful of your own death, which will come either when you're

old or sooner or the death of other people around you or wherever they are.

Then you can see that death on one level is very sad and tragic. And on another level, it's the most natural thing in the world and part of life. And then when somebody dies close to you, you can cry or weep and at the same time feel that which is beyond death in you, which must be the same as that which is beyond death in that person who died.

One could go so far as to say, nothing ever dies, nothing real ever dies. There's only the morphosis of forms, the continuous birth and death of forms, life forms, bodies. So you can be sad when somebody dies or you may be sad even when people die that you don't know.

And at the same time, there's these two levels. On one level, death is tragic. On a higher or deeper level, it's natural and not tragic at all.

And the two can coexist in you at the same time. I experienced it when my mother died. I cried and yet I felt a great peace underneath it.

If the peace could have spoken, it probably would have said, there is no death, only forms die. But it was just peace. It didn't say anything.

And then a few months later, my dad died and they didn't even live together. And then the same thing happened again. I don't know if you've heard of, there's a famous spiritual book, it's called A Course in Miracles.

I believe it's a wonderful book if you can look beyond terminologies. And this is relevant to what we've been speaking about. It says, nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God. That's it.

Nothing real can be threatened. So what is it that can be threatened? Well, of course, the body can be threatened.

Everything in this physical realm can be threatened. It's subject to destruction and decay. Nothing real can be threatened.

So is there something that, if it can't be threatened, then it's not part of the physicality of what we perceive as the physical universe. Nothing unreal exists. In ultimate terms, and that's not just A Course in Miracles, it's in all Indian spiritual philosophy and so on.

In ultimate terms, the entire universe is a kind of dream, a dream of the universal mind. You are part of the dream of the universal mind. Everything is a dream of the universal mind, where it's going.

And then the universal mind, my suggestion is, is gradually awakening. It's becoming more conscious. But nothing unreal exists.

So only what is real exists. Nothing unreal actually exists. In this realization lies a deep peace that is knowing the source of all life, which is God.

The peace of God is not peace that is derived from some circumstance or something. It's not happy circumstances that give you peace. No, the peace of God is a realization of, ultimately, who you are in your essence.

And who you are in your essence is one with what the universe is in its essence. That is the peace of God. And then you can relax and say, OK, but not as a believer.

You know that this is all fine, but there's something beyond that. And I'm part of that which is beyond. So you might say then, as I say, well, I wouldn't mind in the realm of time, could live a few more years, maybe.

Perhaps continue to be a channel for consciousness coming into this world. But if that's not to be, that's fine. It doesn't really matter.

Now, most people believe you need more time because they believe time will eventually enable them to find themselves. A fuller version of themselves. The worst thing you can do to a person is to remove time from them.

And so you have no more time. And that happens, for example, when you have an illness and you go to a doctor and the doctor says, well, maybe six weeks. You have six weeks.

It's virtually nothing. And that would be devastating for most, especially, of course, if you are completely identified with this personality in the form. You've never sensed anything beyond it.

And it's awful because you said, I haven't. I'm not comp... But then there have been cases, some I knew personally, who were told this.

They knew only a few months or a few weeks. And because time was removed from them, they suddenly accepted it. They didn't go into, oh my God, this.

And suddenly they were lived completely in the present moment. Like a little child, almost. When I was still doing counseling sessions years ago, I had a couple of people independently who had virtually no time left.

And they became enlightened beings, just the light of consciousness shining through them. And we just sat together a few times and they kind of just looked at me. There was no person there anymore.

The person was already gone. The person had already died. But the knowledge that I have no more time didn't give any food, any fuel to the person anymore.

The personality just dissolved already. And what was left when the personality dissolved

was just the consciousness behind the personality and that pure consciousness shining through. And that is what you sense.

Again, you get a glimpse of when you sense within and feel that you are lived, that an invisible presence lives through you. And when the personality dies, which is the ego death, then of course, in some cases, the personality dies before the body dies. And then that shines through, the consciousness shines through.

And that's an amazing thing. In the Western world, the contemporary world, nobody knows what to do with that. There's no knowledge to refer to.

Perhaps in more distant past, yes, they would have been recognized. They would have become saints. Or in India, even nowadays, more readily they would have been recognized as holy men or women.

Just look at them. Wow. But it doesn't matter whether they were recognized or not.

They were not concerned with that. And time suddenly didn't matter anymore. What is another 10, 20, 30 years?

So what? No longer made any difference whatsoever because they realized that the essence of who they are, the total fulfillment of their lives, it doesn't matter how old they were. The destiny of humans is that realization.

Whether it comes to you shortly before you die at the age of 30 or shortly before you die at the age of 90, it doesn't matter. And of course, this is where the saying comes from. Find death before death finds you.

So that means that's the death of the personality. Now, here, what we are engaged in through the teaching and the practice is a gradual diminishment of the personality. Now, some of you, when you're confronted with death or death close to you and see a very situation involving death, it could be that suddenly your entire personality can also die.

It could happen. And that's a wonderful thing. It's the greatest thing that can happen to a human.

In the meantime, it's quite enough that here, through the practice, there is a diminishment of you as a person. The person or the personality becomes somewhat less important and all-pervasive because you begin to sense there is something beyond it. And that something beyond it is more essentially who you are than the person or the personality.

And that something beyond it can shine through the personality as long as it's there. And then the personality is actually a much nicer personality, so to speak. It's not as obnoxious as most personalities.

And it's not such a problem maker like most personalities, but the dimension is completely missing. Then without that, personalities are just a nuisance. You might have noticed.

Now, with some people, you have that shining through. There are people who have never come into touch with any spiritual teaching, and it's happening in them for some other reason, triggered by something else, and that's perfectly fine. So to have a deeper perspective on what's happening around you, because, yes, as we are experiencing this collective, in conventional terms, to use the old-fashioned word, calamity.

If you experience this right now, which is to gain a deeper perspective on it is very important. Then you're no longer drawn into the hysterical, fear-mongering, overreaction to it. And you are light in this world.

You are peace, because then there's some peace in you. You become at peace because that presence that you sense is at peace, your connectedness with Source. And then you can do a lot of good in this world.

Even just your presence does a lot of good, because you emanate a certain frequency. But, of course, you probably will do them, just be there, or could be. You might speak to people.

You may be active here or there to help whatever you feel called upon to do. But you're not devastated anymore. The end of the world could happen.

And you would still know nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists. Because the world, what we see as the world is, yes, one way of looking at it is, you could say it's the dream of the universal mind. It's one way of looking at it.

Another way of looking at it is it's a surface phenomenon. Underneath it, there are vast energy movements, and there is an intelligence underlying it. And that's, we could say, to connect it with the other ways, the universal mind.

Underneath it, there is an intelligence energy field that expresses itself on the surface as the manifest life-forms continuously. But the life-forms are here. What lives through the life-forms is the universal intelligence underneath the invisible energy field that is the organizing principle behind all phenomena that arise in this world.

And that is an invisible energy field. In fact, different energies, but all deriving from one energy and then separating into other one energy field is the earth itself. The earth itself is a living being.

It has an intelligence of its own. The earth itself is a manifestation of the universal mind, of the universal consciousness. And every human being on the earth is a manifestation of the universal consciousness connected with the earth.

But the earth is not a dead thing. And this is why I will speak about this in more detail. But for now, just a brief mention.

There were only five extinctions on the planet. Total chaos, chaotic, total eradication of, in some cases, 60, 70, even 90% of all life-forms in this, I believe, the second extinction disappeared. And then how was it that each time out of nothing, the earth regenerated itself with even more complex life-forms?

Because that which was the underlying intelligence is actually much greater than our limited human intelligence. And it is vast. It has a totally different view of time.

So it then produced new life-forms. But just to know what applies to the earth applies to each human. Underlying it, there is an invisible energy field and it holds the body together temporarily.

The important thing is to be able to sense it. And everything else, the world itself is no longer seen as the ultimate reality. The ultimate reality is unseen.

So that frees you, to some extent, from the world. But you participate in it. There's an ancient Christian saying, this is very beautiful, that points to a particular way of being in this world.

And the saying is, to be in the world, but not of it. That would be enlightened living. You are in the world, but you're not of the world.

It shows the two dimensions. It's an ancient Christian saying, to be in the world, but not of it. And that really is for us, for you, to realize and to live, to be a helpful, beneficial presence in the world.

But not realizing that your home is not in this realm. I like the English word home, H-O-M-E. What does that remind you of?

The Indian om, om, O-M, om. The sacred sound that points to the origin of all things. It could be either coincidence, or it could be that they are connected.

Would not be too surprising, because the European languages are Indo-European languages. They have many of their words have roots in Sanskrit. So what we've been talking about is pointing to the possibility of being peaceful or at peace, even in the face of apparent disaster and death and so on.

And it's sometimes only through the disaster that people find that dimension. There is a transcendent dimension to this universe. Just as there's a transcendent dimension to who you are.

You are who you are. There's the physical body, and there's your mind. Is that who you are?

In this dimension, the sense-perceived reality, that's not where you ultimately are. So you are invisible. You can sense that when you become very attentive and go within.

You can sense that the essence of who you are is that indefinable consciousness, the presence. It cannot be sense-perceived with the senses. But where does that come from?

What is the essence of all life? That's the light of the world, Jesus called it, the light of the world. And you are the light of the world, he said.

That's consciousness. You are consciousness. Where does it come from?

It comes from God. But where is God? And what is God?

Well, we cannot explain what God is. God is transcendent to this dimension. It's not in the universe.

There's a transcendent dimension. And from there, God emanates something into this world like the sun emanates light continuously. So God is like the sun but not part of this universe.

It emanates consciousness into this dimension. And it's this dimension of space and time. And here, the emanation of consciousness is creating a universe.

It's not finished yet. It's continuing. The consciousness that you are is a ray from the one source of all life that we call God.

So what we perceive as suffering, the birth pangs of life forms in this universe, they are like a bad dream in the process of the universe, in the process of being created still. It's not a finished thing. And there are the limited perceptions that we have create a very dream that appears like a nightmare.

But when you wake up out of it, you realize it, oh, it was only a nightmare. What does it mean on a practical level? What does it mean when a child dies in a seemingly innocent child or millions of people suffer in a meaningless way?

Now, this is very strange. If every human being is regarded as an autonomous entity, it's very tragic. But I would suggest a different perspective, just as a try it out or a higher perspective.

There's only one life. There's only one consciousness. And that manifests in countless forms, countless life forms.

It's the indwelling presence in every life form manifesting briefly, but continuously. And this one presence is the identity of each. Let's stay with human beings.

The identity of each human being is that underlying presence. That's the essence identity. Every human being is the same being on that level that gradually, that same being that lives, takes on a temporary form and then dissolves.

And in this continuous taking on form and dissolving as a form, there is an awakening process. I would suggest for a moment that you regard the entire human race, all humanity, look at it as a single organism. All humanity is one single, invisible organism.

And this organism is not separate from the source of all life. It is an emanation of the one source that we could call God if we wanted to. It's an emanation into this dimension of space and time.

And every human is, I could say, a piece of God, a tiny fragment of God in disguise. That's like a ray of sunlight in disguise. Every human.

So the essence identity of every human is consciousness. It's the light of consciousness, which is the light of God. And so what is evolving is the one human consciousness is undergoing an evolutionary process.

Every human being that ever lived and ever will live is a tiny cell, to borrow a word from the physical realm, is a tiny cell in this evolving being. It evolves in this dimension. It becomes, there's more of God that flows into it.

So there's a gradual process at work that, in a sense, you could say, a spiritualization of all matter, of all universe. Matter becomes less and less heavy and physical, including the human body. But we don't need to go there.

But to realize that your essence identity and my essence identity and the essence identity of all beings is one. And emanates from one source. And you can recognize it when you look at other human beings.

And you can, now the important thing is you need to be able to sense, if only faintly, the essence of who you are that is beyond the personality, the form, the form identity, physical, mental form, personality. The essence of who you are is not that. The essence of who you are is that which you can sense at this moment as consciousness.

Without any memory or anticipation, you sense that essence. It's only in the present. It's inseparable.

It's called presence. The presence, the consciousness. And then you realize you no longer need to believe something.

And then you can intuitively comprehend what is very misleading and could easily be misinterpreted when you express it in words. Then you can sense that there is a transcendent harmony that in this harmony transcends the apparent suffering. Because

what's suffering is just the birthing process of the one consciousness.

The birthing process of this one that is gradually expressing itself more and more fully through these forms. But the forms, you and me, do not have an independent autonomous identity. It just looks like it.

We are continuously an emanation of the one. We are never separate from the one. And even when this body dissolves, the form that is beyond the body will still persist for a while before it realizes fully where it comes from, what it is connected to.

Not the personality. The personality does not survive. But there is an essence that is you that survives for quite a while until it fully realizes its home.

But gradually you live more and more consciously, which means when you have conscious connecting it with source, then all the upheavals of this world, which come in many forms, personal forms and collective forms, do not affect you anymore at the deepest level. They can still affect you on the surface level of your person. You get, oh, I'd rather be healthy than ill.

I'd rather not catch this virus. Of course you would. But you're no longer, whatever happens or doesn't happen in this world, does not affect you at the deepest level where the rock is, that is the foundation, which really means the essence of who you are.

So the only way to become free of being at the mercy not only of things that happen around you, you just hope that everything will be okay, but it's not always okay. Can't be. Not always at the mercy of things around you and no longer at the mercy of your own mind.

Whatever thoughts go through your mind, that is the dreadful fate. Then your inner state of being is dependent on what's going on around you and then you're always fearful. Oh, I might lose that or this may happen.

What do I do then? And you're at the mercy of whatever thoughts come into your head that interpret the world and interpret yourself in terms of their conditioning, which is from the past. So to become free, to become liberated, you become liberated from the world, although you should participate in the world, but with a sense of detachment.

You're not bound to it or by it. So you participate in a more enjoyable and often joyful way in the affairs of this world and you have a relationship and you appreciate the good things without needing to attach yourself to the good things or the relationship because if you lose it, you're nobody again because they give you your identity that there's nothing anymore that you need for your sense of identity because you already have found your essence identity which has nothing to do with the things of this world or your mind. And that's a wonderful liberation when you do not need the world to provide you with ultimate satisfaction, connectedness with the source of who you are.

Then you become free of the world and then you actually participate in the world in a way that not to use almost a cliché expression that makes the world a better place. But what does it mean make the world a better place? The only thing it can really mean it has any meaning is it makes the world a more conscious place so that humans begin to live more consciously and that means no longer totally identified with their personality and the conditioning of their minds.

A more conscious world is the new earth that I sometimes speak or write about. Now, it seems very often that the new earth would more easily arise if the world would not present so many obstacles to the arising of a new consciousness of which the new earth would just be an outer manifestation. What we are really talking about, of course, when we talk about a new earth, we're talking about a new consciousness.

It's not new, but it's the awakened consciousness. It's not new because it is timeless, but it's new to you, as it sometimes say in shops when you buy second-hand goods, new to you. If you haven't experienced it before, suddenly it seems like a new consciousness.

It's a deeper dimension that had always been there, but you hadn't realized it. And when you suddenly realize it, you call it new consciousness. Why not?

So there we are. The new earth is the outer manifestation of the new consciousness, which is the awakened consciousness. And this is, your purpose is to bring this into this world by embodying it, embodying it, not just through your words.

Yes, when you speak, it tends to be more inspired, more useful, more helpful, more good speech rather than destructive speech and action that you take, no longer dysfunctional, egoically motivated action, all these things are good. And even if you don't say or do anything, just the fact that you are here as representing the awakened consciousness, and even if you're not fully awakened yet, there may still be remnants of ego. That's good enough.

You represent the awakening consciousness on the planet, and that your purpose is to be there as that consciousness. Your secondary purpose is to have a fulfilling life as a personality. And the personality can never have a fulfilling life if you don't realize who you are beyond the personality.

It's only the realization who you are in your essence that can give some sense of satisfaction on the level of your personality. Otherwise, you're always looking for yourself in this world, and it's always whatever is frustrating. Every relationship will end in frustration.

Everything you achieve ultimately will not satisfy you, and you keep looking and looking. So here we are, and your job, your mission is to align yourself with the present moment and whatever is happening here and see that it is an opportunity, this upheaval that

we're experiencing at the moment, and it probably will not be the first upheaval that's going to come on a collective level because this is a time for upheavals, but it is also a time for awakening. The two go together.

Just in a personal life, you need the adversity, as we've seen, to awaken. It's an opportunity, but not a guarantee. And there can be a more collective awakening if not, of course, not the whole of humanity, but far more humans through experiencing the upheaval that not only we're experiencing now, but the upheavals to come in the near future, and they are inseparable from the awakening of consciousness, and they are part of the transcendent hidden harmony behind the apparent opposites.

And so what looks like tragic and unpleasant on a conventional lower level is actually perfectly fine as it should be on a higher level. It would not be happening otherwise. It's all part of the awakening of the human being and planetary awakening.

And what awakens is not you. You don't awaken and I don't awaken. Ultimately, you and I are constructs, mental constructs, but that which shines through us, the consciousness that is awakening in this world.

There's only one consciousness that awakens. So awakening is not anybody's personal achievement. It's only there when you recognize that the person is a temporary, short-lived, relatively insignificant construct.

That's fine. You honor it as much as necessary in this dimension here, and something else is happening that far transcends the person but would not even happen if it weren't for that person. It's only because the ego was, and still to some extent is, a necessary prerequisite for the awakening of consciousness.

The very thing that seems to obstruct the awakening of consciousness is a prerequisite for it happening. That's quite amazing. In Buddhism, there's a saying that says, if there were no illusion, there would be no enlightenment.

[Speaker 2] (46:37 - 46:57)

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Eckhart Tolle Eckhart Tolle Special : Healing Fear Through Difficult Times [94bdc929-b437-4fc9-a737-89ec521fb1eb]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:52)

Transforming our fear through difficult times. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about how to deal with our fears, especially when confronted with a crisis. He says intelligent action cannot occur when we're gripped by anxiety and negative thinking, which can be incredibly destructive.

What's needed is wisdom. Looking at the totality of the situation, not just one aspect of the problem. Eckhart says we must free ourselves from the negative thinking that accompanies fear and align ourselves with what he calls the vertical dimension, the place where we are one with all that is.

He also urges us to pay attention to the most important thing in any situation, our state of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:54 - 50:15)

Effective and intelligent action does not arise out of fear. And no matter, this requires not only action that you take in your personal life, but also action that we need to take on a collective level. If the action that we take arises out of fear, it's unlikely that it will be effective because what is missing then is wisdom.

Wisdom that takes into account the totality of a situation, not just focuses on one aspect of a problem and tries to solve it there, disregarding how it affects other things. So what's happening collectively to us is then potentially a great awakener for many humans. And practice whenever the fearful thinking arises, realize that it is not helpful, it's destructive, and realize that the primary factor in your life is connected with the vertical dimension.

In other words, the primary factor is your state of consciousness in any situation, any problematic situation, any challenging situation. How do you respond to it? The primary factor and your primary attention needs to be on your inner energy field, your state of consciousness.

If that is not right, if that is negative egoically, ego means complete identification with mind, if the ego is there, the ego may have good intentions. It may look good at the beginning of an egoic thing that the ego says, this is what we need to do. But if you disregard your underlying consciousness, then you will find that the famous proverb applies, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

So there have been many people in the world their good intentions have led to disaster because they disregarded their own consciousness. They just had an idea in their head,

let's create a society that is a society where humans are equal, they're no longer exploited, let's get rid of the dreadful things of private property, and that all sounds so wonderful, so that's all great, it's called communism, let's try it out. And they tried it out, it just, it looked so great intention, I suppose, well there might not have been totally pure, there might have been a resentment also and other things with it, but there were good intentions there.

They just forgot about the human ego, the unconsciousness in every human being, including the people who wanted to bring about the revolution. And then it led to millions dead, killed, how I don't want to go into it now, don't need to, but you can read history books. Now it could work if there's a change in human consciousness then naturally the world that humans manifest will be very different, but there cannot be a true change outside without the inner change.

If you try to implement an outer change without an inner change, then you will lead again create a new set of problems, could be worse than the original ones. So I highly recommend that in the morning and at night that you go to sleep at night sensing the inner body, not reading the news on your phone and then go to sleep, not watching television and then go to sleep. It's better if there's no device at all in your bedroom, but if you can't help it, if you think it needs to be there, that's fine, but go to sleep from the inner body.

When you wake up, first thing, feel the inner body for five minutes, ten minutes. Don't read on your phone. You'll know soon enough what's happening in the world.

In the middle of the night you wake up, inner body, especially if you're tortured by your mind. How come I feel so much like a separate person? You say we are one being, but why do I feel like a separate entity, a me?

Why is this feeling so deep in me? On one level you are a separate person. There is a form identity.

You are this particular form and the amazing thing is there's not a single human being on the planet or ever has been who is exactly like you. Of course there may be people who very much resemble you, but it's unlikely that your mother or father would ever be fooled by somebody says he or she is you, but would immediately recognize you out of billions of humans and that's just the outer appearance and even your life story, the story of your life on the level form is very unique. There are many similarities, yes, with others and depends of course how individualized you are.

If you lived in a tribal consciousness then there would be far more similarities. If you lived in a more individualized consciousness then enormous differences between humans. So your form identity as a form identity, which is your body, your mental makeup, the psychology of you, the personality, the aspects that make up your

personality, the elements of who you are as a person, which as they're all mental-emotional formations that are in you, you identify with them, they are you.

This is your psychological form of you and again nobody is quite the same as you. You're unique and that's all to do with your form identity. Every human is different and yet, yes, there are many similarities especially in the way in which their mind functions.

The content of people's minds differs but the basic functioning of the egoic mind is the same. In other words, you derive your sense of identity from certain images and narratives in your mind accompanied by emotions. This is a conditioning of your mind.

That's the same for everybody. So the basic mechanism behind the ego is the same. The content of the ego varies.

Depends what culture you grow up in, what life experiences you've had, especially in childhood and so on. But that's all your form identity. And the ego, by the way, if you don't know what it is, ego is complete identification with the conditioned mind.

That's the ego. When you're no longer identified with the conditioned mind, there is still a conditioned mind but there's an awareness behind it, which means you're relatively free of ego, although not perhaps for quite a while. Periodically you will get drawn back into complete identification.

The ego is back and you're out again and you're back again and you're out again. I know people who've been on the spiritual path for many years and I can often observe that there's almost two humans are there in one. One is the conditioned ego personality that sometimes operates totally and at other times there is a more awakened consciousness there that speaks through them and acts through them.

And you never know who is going to be there at any given moment. And very interesting to see, at first people who meet you, if you are such a person, somebody who meets you, one state, somebody may meet you at a time when you're egoically possessed, the ego has taken possession of you again and you're in a reactive mode and a fearful mode or you want to control, you want something from somebody, whatever the ego wants to add to itself and somebody meets you there and you have a certain impression of who you are and then may not realize that the next day you may be suddenly very conscious. But that person then would already have formed an idea of who you are and might not even realize that the next day you're very conscious because that person will already have formed certain judgments about you, understandably so, because you're a jerk in that state, will have formed certain judgments about you and then of course these judgments are stuck in the person's mind, their own egoic mind and even if you behave differently you might not even see it anymore because they've already formed an opinion or judgment about who you are. The mistake is when you see a human being you think there's a single entity then. I'm not just talking about humans manifest,

humans are actually on the spiritual path, who are in the process of awakening or in whom the awakening process is happening, they can still be drawn back into egoic state of consciousness, especially when certain challenges happen.

As I said, collective or personal, they can be drawn back into fearful mode, reactive mode, until the challenges of life, whether they are personal or of a collective kind, the big collective ones, until the challenges of life, instead of drawing you back into egoic state of consciousness, reactive and so on, the challenges can also have the opposite effect and this is why they are so helpful, they can awaken you and so many of you are at this point where you could go either way, you could be drawn back through, at the moment, big collective challenges, you could be drawn back into a reactive, fearful, egoically possessed state of consciousness, especially if you listen to the news and the media too much and then you get drawn in, or the challenge is the great awakener and we are here, right here and now, in order to make sure that the challenges have this awakening function in you and in as many humans as possible and then, this doesn't mean that action is not important, action, of course we need to take action, it's important, but it's not the primary factor, action is always the secondary factor, primary factor is your state of consciousness that determines what kind of action you take, whether it's intelligent or stupid, it determines what the energy is that flows into the action that you take, so why we are here then is to use this precious time and I call it precious although normally, conventionally, the times we are living in would be called threatening, fearful, bad times, upheavals, disaster, and there may be more to come and it's a great opportunity within the totality of human evolution from a higher perspective, all these things are necessary developments, if it's happening it's necessary, there is an inevitability about whatever form the present moment takes, whatever form this moment takes, right here now, is to do with the whole history of the universe has brought about this moment, the form it takes, so it couldn't be otherwise, but that doesn't mean that it has to stay the same, is as it is, and that's an interesting thing, that acceptance doesn't mean you are stuck in it, you're more likely to be stuck in it if you resist what is, famous saying, what you resist persists, so you're more likely to be stuck with this on a personal level or collective level, if you resist inner resistance, but if you can accept that this is what is, and then you can say, okay, fine, and where do I go from here, but you might need to take some action, but once you've said fine to the isness of this, you're more intelligent, because you're no longer reactive, you cannot say okay to what is, no matter what the appearance of it is, the okay to what is, to be friendly with the present moment, no matter what form it takes, enables you to have some access to the vertical dimension, the depth in you, which means also access the unconditioned intelligence, so it's the moment you are no longer resistant to the present moment, you become truly intelligent and capable of intelligent action.

There are people who are in conventional terms called intelligent, they might have a PhD or two, but live in continuous reactivity, denial, and they're against what is, and the

action is not ultimately intelligent. I call it intelligence in the service of madness. If you build an atom bomb, or you build chemical weapons, or you build something that is extremely destructive to the environment just for profit, of course, yes, it requires intelligence to build these things, it requires great intelligence to build an atom bomb, or chemical weapon, or some huge thing that uses nature and destroys it, but it's not true intelligence, it's egoic cleverness.

The real intelligence, which is inseparable from wisdom, a rare word these days, you won't hear much about wisdom, and you can't get a PhD in wisdom, so that arises from that deeper level, where the wisdom and intelligence are a single thing. Here's a question. Do we need all this suffering and adversity that the planet is currently facing to bring forth a new Earth that you wrote about?

Apparently, yes, otherwise it wouldn't be happening. Well, that was a short answer. Oh, I just realized that I haven't fully answered the previous question, which was, how come I feel so much like a separate person?

You say we are one being, but why do I feel like a separate entity, a me? Why is this feeling so deep in me? So I already gave one half of the answer, and then I got sidetracked, so the one half of the answer was, yes, you are a separate being.

As a form identity, you are a separate being, and that's how it's meant to be, and it's fine. The only problem arises, or the suffering arises, if this separate being is the only way in which you know yourself. You only know yourself as this separate being, then, yes, then you are in a state of delusion, ultimately, because you don't know the most vital fact about yourself, and I don't talk about conceptual knowing.

So there's nothing wrong with being that's a separate being, as long as you have this body and so on, you are a separate being. But is that all? If you only know yourself as a separate being, then your life is frustrating, and you suffer a lot, because you ignore an entire dimension of your existence, and that is the vertical dimension.

And in the vertical dimension, you are connected, one with all that is, not only with every other human, you're connected with a source of all life that sometimes is called God, and you need to know that. How do you know that? It begins with a simple thing.

Here and now, this moment, stop thinking, just a moment of no thought, like now, doesn't matter how long, 5 seconds, 10 seconds, no thought, stillness. And in that brief moment of stillness, strange thing is, from the point of view of the horizontal you, you no longer know who you are in that moment of stillness, where there's only still presence, you don't know who you are. On the horizontal dimension, you know very well who you are, you can talk about it endlessly, can think about it endlessly.

But on the vertical dimension, the moment you enter it, in the moment of no thought,

you no longer know who you are. And that not knowing, in conceptual terms, activates a deeper knowing that's non-conceptual. So in that moment, you know who you are, but you can't talk about it, because you know that you are that presence.

But it's not differentiated, and you can't remember it. So there's a deep knowing there, in that unknowing, there is a deep knowing. You have to have the courage to go into that unknowing and be rooted in that unknowing, and then the other dimension of you can operate much more effectively, fruitfully, harmoniously, compassionately, in this world.

The horizontal, the personality of you, can only become transformed if you realize the other dimension. I sometimes call this vertical the transcendent dimension of consciousness. So you need both as a human being here, your destiny, your fate, your purpose, your mission, is to live in both worlds at the same time.

There, where you don't know yourself, but you do know, but no longer conceptually, and the horizontal. It expresses itself more and more in the horizontal dimension of life. It expresses itself more and more here.

It transforms what's here. And that's the secret of life for humans at the present time. And to realize that is why we're here.

I hear a question, why do I choose to react when I know better, in quotation marks? Is being exhausted an excuse for making a shameful choice? Do I actually want to react and be bad?

That's interesting. People who are in the process of awakening often experience periods when they are very unawakened again. They revert back into reactivity and ego consciousness.

And then they are back in a more awakened state. And when they get into a more awakened state, they look back on something that perhaps they did the other day, or yesterday, or this morning, and say, how could I have been so, why was I suddenly so, whatever, I don't know what the questioner refers to, why was I so reactive to that person? Why was I so angry?

Why did I do that? How could I have done that? Then it happens repeatedly, and he's asking, why do I choose to react when I know better?

Now, the answer, of course, is you don't choose to react. And you know better only afterwards. So in the moment, you have no choice, because you are run by the conditioned mind, the mental-emotional field with its conditioned patterns.

And to be run by the conditioned mind means to be trapped in ego. So it's the ego in you that does it. You have no choice.

The choice only comes in when you're aware. So the choice would be there if you've noticed, let's say, in a conversation or an interaction with somebody, and you can suddenly feel the impulse to react and to say something, or whatever it is. And at that moment, if you could know it for what it is, an awareness is there.

And at that moment, you could choose either to say what you wanted to say, what the impulse wanted you to say, or you can let it go, not suppress it. Let it go, because you realize it as, to use a Buddhist term, unskillful. Buddhists like the term unskillful living.

Basically, that means, I call it unconscious, and Buddhists call it unskillful, unskillful action. And so you recognize it as unskillful, and you just let it go. But until that happens, when the awareness is there, yes, the impulse is about to take you over.

What tends to happen is the awareness comes in afterwards, but the time interval between having to act something out and realizing that this is what you did, the time interval gets shorter. So at first, you may act something out, and two days later, you think, oh. And then you act something out, and one day later, you act something out, and an hour later, you say, oh, the awareness comes.

And then you act something out, and a minute after you did it, you know it, oh, you did it again. Sometimes, of course, you find people apologize to others. They say, I'm so sorry I said that.

At that time, they were not sorry, because something else was in them that did it, almost another subpersonality, and the ego was there, did it. And most egos have different subpersonalities. They're all aspects of the ego.

So you have one subpersonality that, in certain circumstances, acts like a little child, oh. And then another one, when it gets triggered by something like money, suddenly gets extremely angry and fearful. Oh, you took that money away from me.

So you have a multiplicity of people inside you, and others who meet you happen to just meet one of them at that particular time. And you never know which one is going to come up any given day or in any given circumstance. I had close observation with people when I lived for a little while in a commune in England many years ago with a shared house with a bit of land.

And I could so clearly observe with many people living there how many of them were different people on different days, completely different. And I was often sitting at breakfast downstairs, and I could hear steps coming down. I wonder who is coming down now.

It could be the same human being, but a different incarnation of that same person. A very cheerful person. What a wonderful morning.

Great, isn't it? Great to be alive. We should be grateful to God for being here in this wonderful...

And the next day, God talked to me. Leave me alone. Don't want to know.

Same person. But in all cases, unconscious, taken over by certain patterns. Now, when there's awareness, then the different sub-personalities, which are aspects of the ego, are kind of more contained.

So you don't lose yourself in one or the other. They are more contained, and gradually they dissipate. So you're no longer many different people.

And then as you grow more conscious, you find yourself, you're basically the same, same, same in every circumstance. And you don't act out roles anymore, which is, you're the same whether you meet the Pope or the Dalai Lama, or you meet a person sweeping the street. It's exactly the same, because you don't have a mental image of who you're meeting, and you don't operate through mental images anymore.

You're meeting a human being. You're meeting the being. It's the same.

So when it happens, you don't have a choice, so you don't choose. The questioner asked, why do I choose to react? You don't choose.

It happens to you. Now, the next part of the question is, is being exhausted an excuse for making a shameful choice? It is true that when people who are beginning to awaken often find that when they have low energy, their consciousness is also low.

So they are tired, or they had a long day and exhausted, and then they just can't be present anymore. They don't have the energy to be present. Don't talk to me about presence.

I don't want to know just what is all that rubbish, presence. They're exhausted. A time comes when they begin to realize that, and then even when they're exhausted, they can still know that they're exhausted without it making them unconscious.

And the last part of the question is, do I actually want to react and be bad? No, you don't want to react and be bad, but the ego wants to react. And being bad is not bad either for the ego.

Trouble is good. To have an argument with somebody is great. To try to prove somebody's wrong is great.

The ego loves that. It needs to be right. It needs an enemy somewhere.

Please give me an enemy. Because if I don't have an enemy, I don't know who I am anymore. I define myself through the other.

And so I need to emphasize the otherness of the other, because otherwise I don't know who I am anymore. Individual people do it. Entire countries do it.

So they point to another country as those are the bad guys over there. The mainstream media, they participate. They habitually create an image of another country as bad.

And it's ego. It's collective ego. They don't know what they do.

So the question is not, do I actually want to react and be bad? No, you're not even there when it happens. It's happening to you or inside you, and you can't know anything about it.

You're asleep at that moment. Spiritually speaking, you're asleep. In other words, unconscious at that moment.

The moment you become conscious again, you look back and say, oh, I did it again. Well, you didn't. It happened to you.

But you have to suffer the consequences. Now some people, when this happens, there are people who are very unconscious and have violent tendency, very unconscious. They can even perpetrate acts of violence in moments of deep unconsciousness when they overcome.

They may not even be really aware at any time, but they can function normally for some of the time. In other words, I call that normal unconsciousness. You still can function, be a part of society.

Yes, in conflict with others, yes, but nevertheless, in normal unconsciousness, you can be part of society and function like millions of others, normal unconsciousness. And then periodically, from normal unconsciousness, they go down to deep unconsciousness. And such deep unconsciousness, they can perpetrate acts of violence.

Sometimes it happens through alcohol. Many crimes are committed because people get completely drunk, and then they get a gun, and then they shoot somebody. Just an argument is enough, and something dreadful happens.

So one could say, is this person who is now going to prison for the rest of his life, is he responsible? If he was completely unconscious when he did that, it just happened to him, and he did it, is he responsible? Now, if he's not responsible, as I seem to imply, because it's unconscious, then naturally, you would have to say, well, then he shouldn't go to prison, should he?

Well, then the reason you should give why he should go to prison is to protect others, because it probably will happen again. That's one reason why he should go to prison. And I would agree with that.

There's another reason, and that is, even though people may not be responsible for their unconsciousness, they still have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness. And this is how evolution happens. Many humans, they don't necessarily go to prison.

There are other consequences for unconsciousness. So even if you're not responsible, because it is the destiny of humans to become more conscious, to grow in consciousness. And for very unconscious humans, the way they become more conscious is to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness.

And by suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness, they become more conscious. In other words, some people become more conscious after 20 or 30 years in prison, or just a few years, and suddenly, suddenly the personality subsides and something else arises, and they go, wow. And they can't, who did that?

So it's a little paradoxical, but this is how evolution happens. For very unconscious humans, they perpetrate, they do bad things. Sometimes the consequence is their own premature death, because if you kill a few people, one day somebody kills you, or they get maimed, or whatever it is, you suffer the consequences of your unconsciousness.

And through that extreme suffering, there's an opportunity of awakening. So quite a few very unconscious humans awaken in that way. So you could say the ego, their very unconscious ego, ultimately becomes an instrument for their awakening, which is the ego's own death.

My final answer to the question then is, it may be that there's certain situations that you go into in your daily life that you know are more likely to trigger your unconscious reactivity, in other words, make you unconscious. It could be a person that you go visit, and this person always makes you unconscious, and that could be somebody you work with, or it could be somebody you've known for a very long time in your family, whoever it may be, maybe your parents. Whenever you visit your parents, the same script is being played out.

Your mother or father accuses you of not being good enough, or whatever they do, and you react, and you storm out, and you shout, oh, this is one of many possible scenarios. Or you, before having contact with your ex-spouse, for some reason you still need to be in contact to know that you're going to be triggered, and then instead of just going into the situation, use it as a spiritual practice to see if you can stay present while you talk to them. But you have to really feel your entire body when you talk to your ex-wife or ex-husband, and you have to go, okay, don't tell them I'm just practicing being present, that doesn't work.

Just be present as much as you can, so that's opportunity. And that's, of course, people with whom you share a lot of history are often like that. You need to, they trigger you.

And so before you interact with them, know, okay, I'll stay present now. And then you go into this high degree of alertness when you talk to them, so that you're not forced to act out the same script again, the same reactivity again, and again, and again. So as Ram Dass said, famous advice, if you're so enlightened, go and spend two weeks with your parents.

If you think you're so enlightened, go visit your parents for two weeks. Ah, well, that will give you good feedback where you're at. And it is often the case that other humans give you feedback as to your state of consciousness, because it's easy to fool yourself when you're alone in the room, or out in nature, and you say, oh, I'm completely enlightened now.

Nothing is bothering me. Wonderful. And then the next thing happens.

You meet somebody. What? How dare you say that?

How dare you? There's an interesting division. That's another challenge in our present age right now.

Not as acute a challenge as the pandemic, but there's a division between people, not only in the United States, but in many other Western countries, but perhaps, maybe stronger in the United States, but it's definitely also there in other Western countries, a division between, it's hard to put a name to it, maybe traditionally it was called left-wing and right-wing, but they seem to be, the polarities become more pronounced, as if they can't meet anymore, they can't have a conversation anymore.

And here's a question about what advice do you have when someone finds themselves in conversations with family members, friends, or co-workers, and it is obvious there are strong differences of opinion on a particular topic, such as health care, guns, same-sex marriage, immigration policies, homelessness, and politics. Yes. Well, what advice do you have when somebody finds themselves in conversations like that?

The way the question is asked, I don't see a problem. I know what the problem is. Strong differences of opinion.

Well, that wouldn't be a problem, would it? But there's more to it than that. It's not just strong differences of opinion, because that would be fine.

You have a different opinion than I. Okay. But that's not how it is.

What the questioner means, of course, is that people are identified with their opinion. What is an opinion? It's a thought form in your head.

And you've probably adopted that taken from somewhere outside, from watching the internet, mainstream media, or some alternative source. You took in some opinion about

any of these topics, and it becomes your opinion. What's an opinion?

It's a thought form. Now, an unconscious person, lack of awareness, awareness being at the deeper dimension of consciousness or higher dimension of consciousness, an unconscious person derives their sense of self from thought, plus emotions. Thoughts give them their sense.

So if you derive your identity from a thought, then you need to be right. Your opinion is regarded as the truth. You derive your sense of self from your opinion.

Therefore, if anybody questions it or contradicts, this person is actually perceived as attacking you, not as somebody who has a different opinion. The unconscious perception is that this person is attacking you. And then you react as if you had been almost physically attacked.

And this is how a discussion about these topics becomes very toxic. And it's not only when you're physically together, it operates in an exaggerated form when people only communicate online. And they communicate with people they haven't never even met.

All they have of the person is a statement that this person posted. And they react as if this person were the devil and their mortal enemy. They know nothing about this person.

And then they post something to insult that person, say what a dreadful human being you are. And once you've posted this thing, your ego feels a little bit bigger. But then of course comes a reply of that person.

And then you have to react to that. And then other people post things in reply to that. And then you find yourself in the middle of this.

Some people are behind you. Others are behind this other guy. And you can sit there for hours.

And the ego loves it. Completely crazy. It's one of the insanities of our civilization.

And there are many is that kind of interaction, complete identification with conceptual ideas and mistaking who a person is reducing another human being to a mental concept. Completely insane. And this is a new technology has enabled the human ego to proliferate and grow in that way.

And the people who participate in that don't even know that it's insane. And that's making them more and more unconscious. So the polarity has become more pronounced in viewpoints and opinions.

So you have basically, that can be kind of divided into left and right. Where is that going? Well, how is it going to end?

We don't know. Is there going to be some actual civil conflict? Is it going to end peacefully?

It depends how human consciousness, human consciousness will grow. It either grows through violent conflict, or it grows in a more peaceful way. In every age, the ego, the collective ego, manifests in different forms, but they differ from time period to time period.

In the 20th century, you had the collective ego manifesting in certain ways, for example, leading to the insanities of the First World War, and the Second World War, First World War, everybody was eager to fight in every country. They would say, Yeah, we're having another war. Great.

If you were there, you'd have been have to be very conscious to see the insanity of it all. Because it's not easy, you need to be pretty awakened to recognize the insanity in your own cultural environment, retrospectively, you can see it more easily, or they were crazy. Or you can go back to the Middle Ages, and many of the beliefs and what they did, and they burned people and they put the most absurd ideas.

Yes, there were some enlightened people, too. But the general culture was pretty crazy. And you can see how can they make it easy to see how crazy the human collective ego can be.

But how crazy is it? No, you could be part of it. Some of your opinions could be part of the insanity of the collective ego, and you wouldn't even know it.

I'm not going to tell you what it might be, because it's for you to become aware enough to find out for yourself. But yes, this age has a growing craziness about it, too. It's always what applies to the individual, what applies to the collective.

It's easier to see the unconsciousness in others than it is to recognize the unconsciousness in yourself. Just as it is easier to see the collective unconsciousness in a certain culture in past ages, or somewhere totally different on the planet, easier to see that than to see the craziness in your present, your own culture, where you are living. You need more awareness to see it.

I do not attack verbally any crazy beliefs that I see around in the popular culture because it's pointless. It would be like saying when somebody comes to me, if I were a psychologist or psychiatrist, and somebody comes and says, I am, well, let's say, what's a common delusion? I am a reincarnation of Napoleon, but nobody believes me.

I would not question and say, no, you're not. That's a delusion. I would just listen.

There's no point in, because if I question the delusion, he'll just run away or attack me. So I just listen. Okay, that's interesting.

And then perhaps by acting as the presence for his belief system, perhaps I can bring more presence to him just by being the presence there for him. And then perhaps he will have enough awareness to recognize his own delusion. And then I wouldn't have had, instead of me trying to convince him that he is deluded, I'm just there as the presence.

And I do the same. I don't comment on contemporary culture very much, except in general terms, because it's not helpful. It's my job to help people awaken.

As they awaken, they become aware of their thought processes, and they will also become aware of certain thought processes that are completely deluded, that they have taken on from somewhere, probably the internet. So I still need to complete my answer to this question. What advice do you have when you find yourself in conversations with people and so on, completely different opinions?

Well, what is your state of consciousness when you're engaged in these conversations with friends or family members and you disagree? That's the question to ask yourself. What is your state?

Do you experience certain emotions? How do you interact with them when you have a discussion about this or that? Are you completely identified with your opinion?

Do you become defensive or aggressive when you talk? Then you are part of the unconsciousness. And for the unconsciousness to operate, it needs at least two.

It needs two sides. If you don't offer any opposition to their viewpoints, then the conversation would quickly come to an end. Is it possible to have a conversation with completely different viewpoints about these topics without involvement of the ego?

Yes, it is possible. You do not have to give up your opinions. You can have your opinions on whatever these subjects you mentioned or others, but what you have to give up as you awaken, you do give up, is your identification with your opinions.

In other words, deriving your sense of identity, your sense of who you are from your mental positions. That's a delusion. And as long as you do that, you're engaged in a very unpleasant discussion where you're actually not defending the truth.

You're defending your fictitious sense of self. And the more you defend your fictitious sense of self, the more unconscious you become, up to the point of physical violence sometimes. That's it.

So it's up to you. It's not so much what others do. It's up to you to see, are you able to express your opinion even almost forcefully?

This is what I believe, but you are not in it. It's just that your opinion is there. It is.

Because, so where are you? You are behind that much deeper. You're the presence.

It's nothing to do with thought. So you derive your identity from the deeper place, your essence identity, and then you can play with ideas and discuss them. Now the question is, can the other person also do that, or are they completely identified?

Well, maybe they're still completely identified with their opinions, in which case it would be a very strange experiment to have a discussion with one participant not identified with their opinion, the other participant completely identified with their opinion. It would be interesting to see where that goes, or whether the conversation will quickly come to an end. There certainly would, that person who is identified, would they perhaps suddenly run away, because it's so weird to be, to have somebody who has no ego involvement in the discussion.

And that's for you to practice. Are you identified with your mental positions, or are you able to explain your mental positions without the self involved in them, your egoic self? Interesting experiment, so next time be very conscious when you have these discussions.

Now when you're discussing online, on the internet, it's a different matter. You're not really meeting a human being there. Do you dehumanize people by responding as if these people, who have different opinions, were the devil or your personal enemies?

So you have to be very conscious how do you interact with people if you do online, people that you've never even met. So be very, very much aware of your inner state while you don't post anything, or give it some time. That's perhaps a good recommendation.

Before you write something, but don't post it. Give it at least half an hour, one hour, or even better, have a good night's sleep. In the morning, look at it again, and then see, do I want to post this or not?

In many cases, you may want to say, okay, I don't need this. So the time interval perhaps is a helpful thing.

[Speaker 2] (50:17 - 50:36)

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Eckhart Tolle Eckhart Tolle Special : The Paradox of Order and Chaos [9b15f602-78fc-4793-9940-602bedae116d]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:28)

Order and chaos. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the paradox of order and chaos. From the minor disruptions we experience in daily life to bigger events like the loss of income or someone we love, Eckhart says chaos and disorder are an essential part of a higher order.

If we surrender to the present moment, life's challenges will shake us out of our complacency, transforming our consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 43:12)

Two fundamental opposites in this world, without which the world could not even be, are the opposites of order and disorder. Another word for disorder, when it becomes more extreme, would be chaos. Order and chaos, or order and disorder.

Usually we would prefer, of course, to have order in our lives, which means to have things going well, things growing, we learn things, we experience new things, your life unfolds, we would like relative harmony in our lives, and yet that very often is marred by the eruption of some form of disorder. And usually we resent that. We can get resentful or angry or despondent or sad.

Things in our lives are not going in a way we would want them to go. And so disorder can come in many forms. What I call disorder, although it may not usually be recognized as disorder, a simple thing, whenever the smooth way in which your life unfolds on a daily basis is interrupted by some form of adversity, let's say you lose your wallet, so suddenly something comes in which looks like an act of sabotage against you, and you're thrown into fear or panic or confusion.

Suffering arises, and that's a relatively small thing. You're at a meeting, and suddenly there's a huge disagreement and people shouting at each other before it was going well, and then one person made a comment and everybody reacted, and before you know it, the meeting has degenerated into disorder. It comes in so many forms, small forms, missing an appointment, missing the plane, contracting a small illness or having a small accident.

Disorder comes in many, many forms, big and small, and usually when disorder comes, it creates a kind of havoc sometimes in our lives for a while, and there's definitely the strong underlying belief that there's something very wrong, that this should not be happening, or the underlying belief there's something wrong with me, or somebody's against me, maybe God is against me, otherwise why would this be happening to me?

Slightly bigger forms of disorder, breakdown of a marriage, you lose your job, you lose your home, a more serious illness, something bad happening to somebody very close to you, a child, a spouse, or something connected with a collective pandemic, financial breakdown, civil unrest, hurricanes, earthquakes, and so usually it brings up a very strong reaction.

As I said, the ways in which you can react is through anger, through fear, through panic, becoming sad, despondent, say what's the point of it all, I strived so hard to build up this business and now this has to happen. Now we need to understand that, again, disorder, which earlier we called adversity, is inevitable and is an essential part of a higher order. Normally when we look at order and disorder, we look at order, which things are going as they should, they're going well, we call that that's harmonious.

Disorder is lack of harmony, something comes in, or could even be worse, could be chaos. So we usually look at order as desirable, it's harmony and things going well. Disorder is undesirable, lack of harmony, things going wrong, and that's true on this one level, that's true.

But there is always other levels, you can look at it from a higher perspective, a higher level, the existence of order and disorder, or order and chaos, are a necessary part for the evolution of life. A few examples, I sometimes walk in the forest, and when you walk in the forest, there's the typical smell that you have of this vegetation, but part of what you smell in the forest is actually the soil, especially when it's been raining, you can smell the soil. Now what is the soil?

The soil is mostly decaying matter. The soil is trees that have fallen or other plants that have died, and these plants are returning into the molecular structure of the plants and so on. It's no longer ordered, the atoms are separating, they are dissolving into disorder.

It's no longer structured, it's not orderly, the decaying matter is a manifestation of disorder or chaos. It's death, and yet the death is necessary for the new trees to thrive and to grow. They grow out of the chaos of decaying matter, grows the new order of new plant life and new trees.

You cannot separate them. Every day, when you eat, whatever you eat, you create disorder or chaos to that which you eat. You bite into an apple, the apple has a very orderly molecular structure.

When you bite into an apple and you start chewing it, you destroy the order that created the apple, the molecule that makes it into an apple. You create chaos or disorder, so that's what you do every time you eat. Then the apple goes into the digestive system and things happen to this.

It's now become disorderly, but then your body absorbs the nutrients and this becomes

part of the, again, the orderly structure of your body. So the food is destroyed, chaos is created, so that life can be sustained and continue. Interesting way of looking at it.

Many people have found that they experience a deepening and a deeper sense of self or beingness, a deeper peace or some kind of renewal in their lives after, immediately after and as a result of having endured a period of disorder or chaos. That is, I don't know if you're familiar with the spiritual term which comes from Christianity, medieval Christianity, dark night of the soul, dark night of the soul. Christian spiritual teachers and mystics in the Middle Ages, I think they created this expression.

What it means is, before you awaken spiritually, it's before quite a few of those teachers awakened spiritually, they experienced extreme forms of despondency and depression, where everything suddenly became meaningless. So they experienced in their mental chaos, so to speak, often even a mental breakdown. And out of that, and in this mental breakdown, the old self kind of died, experienced a death.

So there was the eruption of disorder, of destruction, the destruction. Then out of that, a deeper realization arose. And so that is, the dark night of the soul is basically the experience of inner chaos or inner disorder.

When things don't make sense anymore, that's a form of disorder on the level of mind. And other people, they experienced some kind of breakdown in their lives. It could have been sometimes two or three things happening, bad things happening at the same time.

At the same time, their marriage collapsed, they lost their job and their income, and then somebody very close to them died at the same time. The eruption of, to use our terminology, the eruption of disorder suddenly came in multiple forms. And when something that you had identified with, that had become part of your life, suddenly dissolves, is taken away, that's what you could call disorder.

I sometimes compare that to a tapestry. And when you have a tapestry, that's your life, the various elements that make up your life, let's say in this analogy, it's like a tapestry. These are the people that you know, your family, your work, your home, all the tapestry of your life.

And suddenly, something is torn out of this tapestry of your life violently. It could have been an accident, could be, as I said, complete financial breakdown, or whatever it may be, end of marriage. And suddenly, it leaves a gaping hole in the tapestry of your life.

And it's yes, basically, yes, certainly is disorder. And yet, often people report that they experience spiritual awakening when holes appeared in the tapestry of their lives. So the tapestry of their lives represents whatever it is that these people identified with and called it my life.

And suddenly, what you called my life, a big chunk of what you called your life is not

there anymore. And that can be very painful. But the strange thing is, it's precisely there that many humans experienced a transcendence to remain for a moment with this analogy, the hole that was torn into the tapestry of their lives, this hole pointed to something beyond the forms of life, there was a space behind that hole is an empty space.

And so they suddenly experienced an empty space within where something had been before, let's say, your spouse died, or even worse, your child died, or your mother died father. And suddenly, this weather before there was this presence, it was part of your life, there is an empty space. I mean, when somebody dies, you can look next day, there's a chair, they sat in this every day, they would sit in this chair.

And now the chairs empty, very strange, this emptiness left behind. And at first, it's very painful. But it can be that when you come to a place of acceptance, the emptiness brings about an inner emptiness in you, but not in a negative sense, an emptiness in the sense of spaciousness, where something you become aware of, just the content is gone, this particular content of your consciousness is gone.

And what remains when you remove the content of your consciousness is the consciousness itself without the content. One could also say to use another analogy, the ripple on the surface of the ocean, this particular ripple has dissolved. It's not there anymore.

But what's left is the ocean, the ripple had a particular form. But the ocean has no form. And that's what's left is the formless consciousness.

And that is the realization of the transcendent dimension within you. And that often comes with breakdown, loss, death. In other words, the experience of some form of disorder or chaos.

In other words, again, something that would normally be labeled as bad, or very bad. And that's very strange. So here we have that something that normally would be called good.

And then we have something that's normally called bad. But that which was called good, actually kept you in a relatively confined and limited place. Whereas that which is conventionally called bad, created an opening in you.

This loss created an opening in you. Strange fact is that the good, and usually perhaps when you say, my life is going well, you're in a relative comfort zone in your life, things are going well. And when something so called bad erupts, it then destroys the comfort zone.

But the strange fact is that it almost never happens that people awaken spiritually, while they're in their comfort zone, or that they deepen, become more deeper as human

beings, which would be a partial awakening. It almost never happens. So the place where people truly, where the evolutionary shift happens, or the evolutionary step forward, the evolutionary leap, is usually the experience of disorder in a person's life.

But not only in a person's life, we'll see in a minute. And so your life then moves between order and disorder. You have both, and they're both necessary.

And you don't have to look for disorder, because you want to awaken spiritually, and then say, okay, I need to make myself suffer, and I need to give up everything and make myself suffer. Many people have done that in the past, because they could see how it operates. They could see that when somebody suffers, there is a possibility of transcendence and awakening.

Not a guarantee. They may be stuck in their suffering until they die, or they may die off their suffering. There's no guarantee that when disorder erupts, or when you suffer, that this will bring about an awakening, or at least a deepening.

There's always the possibility. It is an opportunity, but often it is not. It is missed.

And then the person becomes even more deeply entrenched in their egoic sense of self. It becomes very rigid. You can see it with some people who have had a bad life, and what's left of them towards the end of their lives is a personality whose main component is a deep sense of bitterness, grievances, and resentments.

Instead of giving them an opening into transcendence, it has made the ego more rigid. That's not uncommon. So you get older people, sometimes even younger people, who already have an important part of their personality is their grievances, their bitterness, and their resentment.

And that colors everything they see and perceive and every relationship. And that's very sad. Nobody has told them, because it's not common knowledge yet, that experiencing suffering can be a great opportunity, and is actually inevitable in everybody's life.

They didn't know. Nobody at school teaches these things, which should be one of the most important subjects at school. There's no guarantee then that it will happen.

It's just an opportunity for it to happen. Sometimes suffering is already a disorder, is already experienced early in a person's life. Some children are born into a very chaotic environment.

There could be violence where they live in their family, between their parents. One parent or both parents could be alcoholics, could be drug addicts. Some children are born into very disordered and chaotic environments, and other children experience great loss at an early age.

Some children experience the loss of one or both of their parents at a very young age, like six, seven, through accidents and so on. That's a huge challenge early in a person's life. Nobody can predict what effect this will have on the child.

Without guidance, it could easily mean that, especially in a child that grows up in a very dysfunctional household with alcoholism, violence, and drug addiction, the chance that this child will, through experiencing this type of chaos or adversity, that this child will grow into a very conscious adult, the chances are relatively small, especially if the child gets no guidance from anybody at all. All that happens there is the perpetuation of the dysfunction, and then the child would then have a relationship and perhaps create a similar environment again. And then the next generation, until perhaps sometimes it happens after a generation of several dysfunctional family backgrounds, finally one human can break this vicious circle and suddenly step out and awaken spiritually and become an enormous power for good in this world.

But this person came out of sometimes generations of suffering and dysfunction. There are children who experience early loss in their lives, through loss of a parent, and some of them become mature at a very early age. That can happen, too.

I've seen that a few times, where children who've already been through that great loss already have access to wisdom. Even at the age of 11 or 12, they say wise things. So it can go either way.

So the important thing is to realize it is inevitable that you will experience both opposites in your life. Usually, it is advisable that you strive for order in your life. It's advisable that you think positively, if you can, that you acknowledge the goodness of life in every moment, that you live in a state of gratitude, because the more you live in a state of acknowledging the good that is here now, the more good will manifest in your life.

It does not mean, however, even if you live like that every day, you will still experience certain forms of disorder erupting into your life, but probably much less so than a person who is very unconscious and whose daily life is fairly negative, with continuous complaining, with harboring grievances, with bouts of anger, with always accusing other people of this or that, always criticizing everything and everybody. There, already, you have a lack of harmony, even in their daily lives.

And often, these people experience a succession of disasters and drama and so on. The periods then for creating something new, there's a new order that you create. When you create something new, you create whatever it may be, a new structure, a new business, and you write a book, you make music, you create some artistic, whatever it may be, you create something new in this world.

That means you bring about a new structure that is an ordered structure into this world. That's all order, and that's good. So the creative periods in your life is when you manifest

a new order, an orderly structure, and this is wonderful.

But even if you do, at some point, you will still experience, from time to time, the eruption of disorder in whatever form. Perhaps what you created will still, of course, what you created is still subject to the law of impermanence of all things, so nothing lasts for too long. So whatever you create may not last.

If you get too attached to what you create and you said, I did that, if there's ego in it, then you suffer a lot when things begin to dissolve or leave you. No matter how consciously you live, a certain amount of disorder will occasionally appear. And, of course, we're all moving towards old age and finally death.

Of course, death is the ultimate disorder or chaos for the human being because it's the same as the forest where the trees have fallen and the soil is basically decaying matter. So when you die, that which held the atoms and molecules of the body together in an orderly way, very highly intelligent structure, suddenly is totally disordered. It begins to dissolve.

So on a physical level, we are all moving towards, obviously, disorder. And even when you get old, you begin to get old, you experience the body doesn't function as well anymore. Just athlete, you reach a certain age and suddenly you can't do this anymore, you can't do that anymore.

If you were too identified with the order in your life, if you derived your sense of identity from the order in your life, then you suffer. So you appreciate, you can appreciate the order in your life, the order is going well. You have certain abilities that other people may not have.

That's wonderful. You have achieved perhaps certain things that other people have not achieved, but things that have contributed to enriching people's lives or making people more conscious, all that's wonderful. But if there was a sense of I in whatever you'd created, which means you derived your sense of identity from that which you created, and it's not going to last, all the abilities that you have that others don't have, it's not going to last.

So anything you identify with creates suffering because it will leave you or it'll dissolve or not satisfy you. It's subject to the law of impermanence. In other words, it will go back to disorder.

Everything in this world is subject to impermanence. Everything in this world, including your body, and yet there's something within you that is not subject to impermanence. We'll come to that in a little while.

I just want to mention one more thing to see how order and disorder operates on all levels. We talked about the forest, we talked about when you eat, you create disorder so

that a new order can then manifest. On a huge global scale, the planet itself periodically experiences the eruption of extreme disorder or chaos.

This has been found through geology and virtually all scientists agree with those findings. And what they found is in the evolutionary life of our planet, the planet has already experienced five extinctions. Five times in the life of this planet, life became almost extinct.

It was always the borderline of extinction of all life. I believe, if I remember correctly, in the second extinction, which I don't know when it was, 400 million years ago over there, almost 90 percent of all life forms disappeared. The last one they say was 60 million years ago and I believe that was the one the dinosaurs and many other species disappeared fairly quickly, probably created by a meteor impact.

Now that's a great example for disorder. Before you had an orderly planet, harmonious life, suddenly a huge thing comes from outer space and rams into this planet and totally changes everything. The climate, everything immediately changed.

Temperature would have probably fallen very, very quickly because there's not much sunlight coming through anymore. That was about 60 million years ago. Now the interesting fact is, yes, it took the planet each time several million years to recover, so to speak, but every time it did more than recover.

Every time the life forms that came became more complex. There was greater complexity of life forms. And then the complex life forms were destroyed again like 100 million years later and again to destruction and then rebirth.

So the planet has experienced destruction on a vast scale, rebirth and destruction already five times. Some people say we are moving into a sixth extinction. That's a very interesting subject and very relevant.

But here I'm just giving it as an example for this law of opposites, order and disorder, operates on all levels. So it's the same law when you bite into an apple. It's suggested as the law that brings about massive extinctions on the planet.

Humans are surprised because they don't know these things. When suddenly disorder happens, as it's happening now, for example, with a pandemic, life seemed so safe and secure and suddenly it doesn't seem that safe and secure anymore. It's a great shock to many people.

They didn't realize that the life that surrounds us is not that secure. Everybody is one heartbeat away from death. Everybody who listens to this will be dead in a few years, but by a few I mean could be anything from one or two to 80 or 90 years.

Not that much. They are amazed that when a pandemic happens, then you become a

little bit aware of your mortality. And that can be a great, at first perhaps painful, but then a deepening realization.

Mortality, the awareness of mortality, is happening to many people now. And they are fearful, as if nobody had told them that death could happen at any moment. Now you might think, well, if you're young, you're in your 20s or 30s, you think, I don't need to think about death.

It's a long way away. Or as I heard somebody say not a while ago, a young 20-year-old said, she said, oh, I'm not worried about death. By the time I get old, they will have found a cure for it.

It's such a long way in the future. We should not dwell on death in a morbid fashion, but to be aware that death can happen easily and not necessarily when you grow old. If you're lucky, you grow old and then you die.

Some people would say if you're unlucky, you grow very old and then you die, experience some years of disability. But many young people die. We are not aware.

There are certain things that we take for granted. For example, every year, approximately 1,250,000 people die in traffic accidents on the planet. 1,250,000.

Many are young. Out of these, at least two or three times as many experience serious disability through traffic accidents. They survive, but serious injury.

There's despair, suicide. 800,000 to 1,000,000 people commit suicide every year. On average, every 40 seconds somebody commits suicide on the planet.

And people, of course, die continuously. In this very moment, several people are dying right now and now and now and now, continuously. Others are being born.

Amazing. Now, death, suffering and death. Interesting, when the Buddha was a young man, he grew up in a very wealthy environment, very protected because his parents, his father especially, protected him from all adversity.

Only surrounded by beautiful things, good food, pleasant experiences. That was how the Buddha grew up. Then when he was already, I don't know how old, 20 or something, for the first time he left the sheltered environment of the palace grounds.

Maybe his parents were kind of probably kings of a small kingdom. And he went to the village and a town and there he saw an old person because you had always been surrounded by lovely young people because his father wanted him to not experience unhappiness. It had been predicted that the Buddha would either become a great spiritual master or he would become very successful in business or as a ruler of a kingdom.

His father wanted him to be successful as a ruler. He said, he must not become spiritual so we're not going to show him anything that might give, would put bad ideas into his head. But he did leave his parents, his palace on an excursion when he was maybe 20 or 21.

And he saw a 90 year old man is there close to death and he was so shocked. What is this? He said, he's old.

Old? What's that? He said, well it happens to everybody sooner or later.

What? This is terrible. And then he walked a bit further and he saw a sick person.

I don't know, probably coronavirus. And the sick person was there. Oh, so painful.

What's that? This person is sick. Sick?

He said, yes, everybody eventually gets sick. Everybody experiences it. What?

When he saw a dead body, he said, what's that? He said, this is a dead body. What?

Yes, everybody dies. He couldn't believe it. If this is our destiny, then everything I've experienced so far is delusion.

If he had experienced it from an early age, he would have gotten used to it. But because his father waited for so long to release him into the world, it was such a shock to him to experience sickness, old age, and death that he said, I need to find something, whether there's anything beyond that. Because if there's nothing beyond it, everything is meaningless.

And that was the beginning of his spiritual search. He left. And then what he did then is what he had never experienced before.

He inflicted adversity on himself because he became an ascetic monk who lived on virtually no food. They eat locusts and leaves. And for several years, he practiced extreme deprivations of all sense pleasures.

And he became very, very thin and almost wasted away. So he knew he needed to experience something beyond. And after that, he said, No, this is not the way either.

Then he started eating and drinking again. And then he became enlightened. So some people say he realized that adversity or extreme deprivation or suffering doesn't get you there.

But that's not really true. He had to go through extreme suffering and deprivation, which he inflicted on himself. And then he went, he stopped it.

And if he hadn't gone through that and realized you don't really need that, but he did.

You don't really need it, but you do need it. There's a there's a paradox here.

People have recognized how it works that through disorder and suffering, you awakened. In many traditions, they have tried to recreate adversity in a spiritual setting. They've tried to recreate the experience of deprivation, of even sensory deprivation, of deprivation of food, of in many, many traditions, in order to bring about a spiritual awakening through extreme forms of adversity.

I don't think that's necessary. And in very few cases has it actually worked. Although I can see the idea behind it seems to make sense.

But you don't need it. Life is enough. Normal life is enough.

Normal life will give you exactly what you need for your spiritual awakening. Normal life will give you good experiences. And normal life will also give you the experience of disorder or chaos.

The important thing is to come to realize that to believe that there is something fundamentally wrong when you experience disorder or chaos, that's a delusion that prevents you from fully, one could almost say, taking advantage of this opportunity that loss or disorder brings when you believe this should not be happening to me. Why to me? Well, it happens to everybody sooner or later.

So if you complain about it, if you have a strong inner resistance to it, then you cannot accept what's happening. You are in opposition to the flow of life. You have an antagonistic relationship with the present moment, because what is happening in the present moment, you condemn as dreadful.

You have a narrative around it. So you cannot use this opportunity of deepening and awakening. So harmony, disharmony on this conventional level, order is harmony, disorder is disharmony or chaos.

But on a higher level, there is a higher hidden harmony, which includes disorder and chaos. Because these two, life moves between these two opposites and evolves between these two opposites. So there is a higher order that includes all the bad things that on our level where we look very bad.

Hidden harmony that is transcendent. And that's helpful to know, but not just as a mental belief that doesn't help very much. If you said, well, Eckhart said there's a hidden harmony, so it must be true.

Well, no, it's not true unless you at least have a glimpse of what that means. Harmony that's beyond the so-called good and bad, that is beyond good and bad. And you can see what it means, perhaps in your own life, if you've already been through a certain amount of suffering and seen that it has taken you already this far.

So it has had a purpose. It's brought you here. Of course, it could have killed you.

What then? Now, that's an interesting question. The usual argument or very the most common argument against the existence of God is a fact of suffering.

And so usually when you argue with an atheist or two atheists talking to each other and agreeing with everything they say, the person who denies the existence of God, whatever that is, but they talk about it without really knowing what it is. But let's put that aside. When you use the word God, it doesn't mean you know what you're talking about.

You're just using a sound. So the usual argument is for the non-existence of God is the fact of human suffering and violence and disorder. And they say, look, if God is omnipotent, as God is supposed to be omnipotent, because if he's not omnipotent, he's not God.

If God is omnipotent, would he allow this suffering? Would he allow a child to die of disease? Would he allow millions to die in a pandemic?

Would he allow genocide in concentration camps and labor camps? The dreadful things that have happened to humans, mostly actually done by humans to other humans. Would he allow these things?

If I were God, I wouldn't allow. I would have created a much better world, a just and fair world, and not this. So therefore, I would be morally superior to this God that you talk about.

This is the argument. Therefore, there is no God, because if I'm morally superior, then what kind of God is that? And so that's the traditional argument against it.

Non-existence of God is the seemingly meaningless suffering in this world on a huge, vast scale. But it could be that the starting point for the discussion was already a mistake. And the starting point for this discussion was the belief that there is a controlling entity somewhere that could control things, that has created all these imperfect things, could improve them, and could control them, but is refusing to do so.

So you start with this idea that there's an omnipotent entity who is not doing what he should be doing. And therefore, either he doesn't exist, or he's not worthy of being called God, and maybe he's just a demon. There was actually a belief in the very early Christianity.

There were the Gnostics, a Christian sect, and some of them believed that the God of the Old Testament and the God that created this world was an inferior deity, that not God at all, because if it were God would not have created this extremely imperfect world. So here we have the starting point for this discussion was already the erroneous assumption

that there is an omnipotent being somewhere that could control things, but doesn't do it, or takes pleasure in torturing people. So we have to remove the erroneous foundation for this discussion, say this is not what God is at all.

God is not an entity somewhere that's controlling. So what meaning does God have then, the word God? Very hard to talk about.

The moment you talk about it, you can almost say you've already distorted it.

[Speaker 2] (43:13 - 43:32)

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Eckhart Tolle Eckhart Tolle : Essential Teachings (Trailer) **[8403392d-e702-498e-814e-ad210187625c]**

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 0:12)

Hello podcast listeners. I'm Oprah Winfrey and I'm truly delighted to bring you a new weekly podcast series from someone I believe is one of the great spiritual teachers of our time, Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 2] (0:13 - 0:20)

The purpose of human existence is evolutionary. It's awakening, one could say, to become fully human.

[Speaker 1] (0:21 - 0:31)

For the first time starting May 21st, the Essential Teachings podcast by Eckhart is the home for his groundbreaking wisdom, gathered for nearly four decades.

[Speaker 2] (0:31 - 0:40)

You are an emanation of something very profound, very deep that connects you with the totality of the universe.

[Speaker 1] (0:40 - 0:43)

You'll learn how to become more fully present.

[Speaker 2] (0:43 - 1:00)

Are you able to stop thinking, for example, right now? Don't answer it until you know for sure. And to live your life in flow and purpose.

Sometimes life may ask you to do something before you may think you're ready for it, but life knows better.

[Speaker 1] (1:01 - 1:08)

If you're interested in leading a more awakened life, Eckhart's insights will help us transform your state of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (1:09 - 1:16)

For things that you think are the most difficult obstacles in your life, they can become your greatest opportunity for spiritual awakening.

[Speaker 1] (1:17 - 1:34)

I hope this series of Essential Teachings will resonate with you as much as Eckhart's wisdom has with me and provide you with an inspiring, instructive, and spiritual experience. Follow Essential Teachings on Spotify or wherever you find your podcasts.

Eckhart Tolle Eckhart's Inner Journey [7753fd75-6c1c-4fa2-ac93-ad73015e1976]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

Eckhart's Inner Journey. In this podcast, Eckhart shares the story of his own personal journey, beginning with his childhood in Europe. His years at university and ultimately the anxiety and depression that pushed him to the brink of despair.

Out of that pain, Eckhart says, he experienced a profound spiritual transformation that forever changed his life. Eckhart went on to share his newfound wisdom with others, which set him on the path to become a best-selling author and a groundbreaking spiritual teacher.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 47:19)

I grew up in northwest Germany up to the age of 13. My father was a journalist, my mother a housewife. Then my parents got divorced when I was 12, and my father dropped out of conventional life and society.

He was an early dropout before the term dropout even existed. My father left to live in Spain, and I was very unhappy at school. So at 13, I refused to go to school any longer.

That was my only act of rebellion as a child. I was on the whole a very meek, obedient child, but something within me prevented me from going to school. I just couldn't do it anymore.

So I stopped. My mother didn't know what to do with me. So finally it was decided that I should join my father in Spain, who had remarried and lived a very unconventional life.

He lived on his savings for a few years, and then he started working there. So I spent my teenage years from 13 to 19 in Spain, and so the Spanish language became my second language. I was taken out of the culture that had surrounded me for the first 13 years of my life, and then placed in a completely different environment and culture.

That probably was a good thing, because if one spends one's whole life in one particular cultural environment, one tends to become conditioned by that particular culture without knowing it. So by experiencing different cultures as a child, that somehow perhaps made the cultural conditioning less deep, less rigid. And my father was always a very unconventional person.

Some people would call him eccentric. So when I got to Spain, he asked me, do you want to go to school here? And of course I said no.

And so he said, okay, then don't go to school and do what you like. And that's what I was

able to do. I was reading certain books that I liked to read.

I began reading some literature. I went to language classes in the evenings and afternoons and studied some other subjects that I was interested in, like astronomy and so on. So I grew up without, especially in my teenage years, without the pressure that most youngsters experience.

And then at 19, I went on my own to live in England. In England, I was offered a job, although I didn't have any formal qualifications. Miraculously, somebody offered me a job, and I was actually teaching German and Spanish for a few years at a language school.

And then a kind of quest started. What also started at that point was already the beginnings of depression that I would experience periodically, living in a state of increasing anxiety, a kind of generalized anxiety. And I was looking for some answer to the dilemma of life and living, and I was looking to philosophy and the intellect for an answer.

So I began to read a lot, and then I thought the answers would probably be found at the universities, the professors would know. So I took the exams that I needed in evening classes to get to university, and then I went on to London University, where I did languages and literature, and increasingly became more and more unhappy, and continued to search and absorb more and more knowledge, and gradually beginning to realize that they didn't really have the answers to life's dilemma. I remember there was one professor at London University that I liked very much.

I would go to his classes and admired him. Very knowledgeable. And one day we arrived on a Monday morning, and we were told that he had just committed suicide.

And that shook me inside, and I realized that certainly these people that I looked to for an answer didn't have it either. And so my depression intensified, and I did very well in the degree examinations, because I studied so hard, out of fear really. I was driven by anxiety.

Then after graduating from London University, I didn't do anything for about a year, and that was the year in which I became even more unhappy and depressed, and when an inner shift suddenly happened inside me. It was in my 29th year, I woke up in the middle of the night, and this was not uncommon for me, waking up in the middle of the night and feeling intensely depressed and in a state of great fear at the same time. And that happened again that night, and the thought occurred to me, I can't live with myself any longer.

And that thought repeated itself in my mind. I just, I can't live with myself. And then suddenly I looked at the thought.

I kind of stood back from that thought and looked at it and said, that's a strange thought. I cannot live with myself. Am I one or am I two?

This thought seems to show that there's two people here, I and the self that I cannot live with. I didn't have an answer to that question. It's just that question, that puzzle arose in my mind.

Much later, it reminded me of koans that they have in Zen that are puzzles that are designed to stop the mind. For example, what is the sound of one hand clapping is a famous koan, and it doesn't have an answer on an intellectual level. And so the question that arose in my mind also didn't have an answer on an intellectual level.

Who am I and who is myself that I cannot live with? But that question triggered an inner shift. Something inside me, and I didn't understand it at that point, must have disidentified from the self, the unhappy me, as I later called it.

So a kind of an inner disidentification happened. The I am, which I later recognized as the consciousness that I am, separated itself from the conditioned entity, the conditioned consciousness that provided me with my sense of identity, the self. And that consisted largely of an unhappy story.

So then I felt I was like being drawn into some kind of vortex of energy, as if I were disappearing in that. And there was still a moment of resistance, and I heard something almost like a voice inside me that said, resist nothing. So I gave up resisting the feeling of, almost the feeling of disappearing into nothingness.

Don't remember very much else of that night. All I know is that the next morning I woke up, and I opened my eyes, and I looked around the room, and everything seemed as if I was seeing it for the first time, fresh, new, alive. The light coming through the windows, familiar objects on the table, they looked fresh, new, and alive.

So I got up and went out for a walk, and I looked around, and everything seemed so peaceful. Even the traffic in the city seemed so peaceful, and I knew something strange had happened. Suddenly everything was filled with aliveness and peace, and I didn't know why.

And that went on. And then this inner peace as the background to all experiences, and the background to all sense perceptions, even as the background to my thinking, that then never really left me again. But it took me a long time to understand it, to be able to put it into words.

And so a little later I started investigating other spiritual teachings for the first time, Buddhism, Christianity, and more contemporary spiritual teachings. And very quickly I recognized the truth that is, in many cases, hiding underneath sometimes centuries of cultural additions, interpretations, and misinterpretations. And I could see the truth

that's in Buddhism, that's in Christianity, the original teachings.

And in turn, they shed light on what had happened to me. For example, I picked up the New Testament, and I read Jesus' words, the peace that passes all understanding. I said, that's exactly what I feel.

I have this peace, and I don't understand what it is. So he must have had the same experience. Peace suddenly arose, which was not causally related to anything in the external world.

It wasn't caused by something wonderful happening in my external environment. So it didn't seem to have a cause, an external cause. And then later I visited Zen teachers, and so on.

And again, I recognized the truth of Zen immediately. But they also helped me to understand what had happened to me into a wider context. For example, I remember talking to one Buddhist monk who talked about coming to the end of always having to think, thinking.

And he said, Zen is about not thinking, ultimately. I immediately realized something that I actually, strangely, I hadn't realized before, that my thought processes, ever since that happened that night, had become reduced by maybe 80 percent. So I wasn't actually thinking that much anymore.

And that's why there was so much peace. So I realized the continuous mental noise, as I now call it, which is the compulsive and largely useless thinking that most people are continuously engaged in, that had come to an end. And there would still be some thought, and thought I could use thinking when I needed it, and occasionally thoughts would come in and out.

But there were huge stretches of no thought. And in those long gaps and intervals of no thought, there was that wonderful experience of inner peace. And I realized that inner peace had been there before, even when I was still anxious.

But it had simply been covered up by the anxiety, by the hyperactive mind. And so this then gradually developed into a spiritual teaching. So the spiritual teaching now attempts to show people that they have within themselves already what they may perhaps are looking for on the outside.

The aliveness, the peace, the sense of deep inner fulfillment is already present in every human being as their innermost essence. So it's not a question of needing to obtain or acquire something new, which is often what spiritual seekers are looking for. Everybody's looking to acquire something to fulfill him or herself.

They may be looking for it on a material level, or on the level of experiences, or on the

level of accumulating knowledge, or accumulating wealth. Or spiritual seekers want to add more spiritual experiences to who they are, or find themselves at some point in the future. And you can't, because if you're looking to the future to find yourself, you're missing yourself already, the essence of your being, which you can only find in the now.

So my realization that night took me years to understand. And in the process of understanding it, at the same time, people would already come to me occasionally and ask questions. So gradually I was able to talk about it.

And I was able to recognize in others what I had been through. The same dilemma, perhaps with the exception that I was suffering from it more acutely than many others. That's all.

I was even more deeply immersed in the mental noise and the emotional turmoil than would be normal. But the same mechanism operates in everyone. So the teaching now is to point out that there is a dimension in you that is deeper than what you normally identify with as yourself, that is deeper than the me, the personal history that most people believe is who they are.

And so the recognition of that dimension comes when you make room inside yourself for the present moment, because it can only come out of an inner alignment with now, as I call it, which is life itself. The stream of thinking is always concerned with past and future. So for most people who are identified with thinking all the time, every thought is invested with a sense of self, a me.

Every thought grips you completely and you are in it. This is what identified means. Every thought that arises becomes a me, and you think it and you're in it.

And so most people are dragged along all day long by this mind stream, one thought after another. And within that mind stream, there is a mind-made sense of self, a me, consisting of past memories and experiences and things that my mind has identified with and that contribute to my identity. They are all thought forms.

For example, my possessions, my knowledge, my experiences, or what people have done to me, what I have done to people, things that whatever you identify with and then hang on to in your mind becomes a me. And that was really the self that that night I recognized as not really me. So there's the mind stream, there's identification with the mind stream, and there's the possibility of stepping out of the mind stream by accessing the present moment.

Now to most people, the present moment almost doesn't exist, because what they're really interested in is the next moment or the one after that. So they live always towards the future. They live towards the next moment.

And unconsciously, they regard the next moment, the next point in the future that they

need to get to, unconsciously, they regard that as more important than this moment. Not realizing that the future moment that they so desperately want to get to, tonight, tomorrow, whatever, or in any activity, wanting to get it out of the way as quickly as possible, needing to get to the end point on a small scale, on a large scale. And so they don't recognize that the future has no existence except as a thought form.

So when you always live towards the future, you live your life trapped in a conceptual reality of thought forms, which assumes a greater significance for you than the immediate reality of life, which is always now, because your life consists entirely of the present moment. If you truly realize the significance of that statement, your entire life consists of the present moment, your life is never not this moment. Even when you remember the past, you can only remember it now.

And when you think about the future, you can only think about it now. But people live as if the present moment were an obstacle that they need to overcome in order to get to some better point, which never arrives. So that's a mad way to live.

And it makes living hard. It makes living into an effort. We have been conditioned over thousands of years, the human mind, which was a wonderful thing, the ability to think at some point, a long, long time ago, must have arisen in humans, the ability to conceptualize mentally.

And this has opened up a whole new dimension for humanity. And of course, it has made humanity the most powerful species on the planet, because humans are not physically the strongest species, but they were able to dominate all the other species because of their ability to think. And so that developed slowly, probably in mythological form, it's expressed in the story of Genesis at the beginning of the Bible, when they eat this apple that comes from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, to differentiate this, that, that comes only through the ability to think, to analyze, to separate.

And so that gradually developed in humans. And at first, it wasn't a problem, it opened up new possibilities. Then over thousands and thousands of years, the thinking mind became stronger, it grew and grew.

And gradually, they lost connectedness with something that is deeper and more essential within themselves. We could call that being, the sense of aliveness, a deeper intelligence, even, that is more than just the thoughts that go on in your head. So gradually, humans, because of the growth of the thinking mind, lost their ability to sense their deeper connectedness with life.

And then, now we have arrived at a point where our whole sense of who we are is caught up in the mind and in thought. So we have been through an evolutionary stage, which was a necessary one for humanity, and we could call that the stage of mind, the stage of thought. And to such a point now that we are completely possessed, I use that word, we

are possessed by the mind without knowing it.

We cannot stop thinking, it seems. We can, but for most people, that's not yet a reality. They have to think, the compulsion to think, and to derive your sense of self from the movement of thought.

We're arriving at the end of this whole evolutionary stage. And for humanity now to go on, it needs to transcend the mind, no longer be possessed by the mind, to go beyond the compulsion to think into a deeper level of being. So it's almost like regaining what they have lost.

When you regain something that you lost, you regain it with a deeper awareness. And this is the process that we are involved in now, that humanity is involved in now, because an evolutionary transformation, a transformation of consciousness, really is no longer a luxury, so to speak, is no longer optional for humanity. For the first time in the history of humanity, a transformation of consciousness is a necessity if humanity is to survive, because we are creating havoc on the planet.

We are creating hell to a large extent, on a planet that potentially is paradise. Being a teacher was the response to a demand that came to me. It wasn't a conscious choice that, oh, I want to teach or I need to teach.

It simply arose out of, first of all, individual people coming to me and asking questions or wanting some kind of help or becoming drawn, becoming interested in what I had to say and experiencing an inner shift after coming a few times. And so being a teacher that developed organically without me ever deciding I want to be a teacher. And so from seeing individuals, it gradually developed into occasionally meeting in small groups, and that went on for a few years.

And out of all these meetings with individual people and small groups, I took notes after meeting with people often, because things that I said in those individual sessions or group meetings were things that were new to me also. They came out of that moment. They came out as a response to a person's question.

So I would often take notes, and I had a collection of notes after a few years. And some of those notes later became incorporated into *The Power of Now*, the book. So *The Power of Now* is in part the result of my work with people over a number of years, and in part the arising of also a new teaching in the process of writing it.

After the transformation happened that night, my external life for a few more years went on as if nothing much had changed on the external level. I went on to do graduate work. However, my heart was never fully in it anymore, in intellectual pursuits, in analytical work.

But my external life had a certain momentum, so it went on for a few more years, and

then that momentum came to an end. And a point arrived when I was at Cambridge doing graduate work and some teaching, and suddenly I realized this has come to an end, and I simply walked away from it all. And after that, two years followed in which I did very little, and I didn't have a home of my own.

I would drift from here to there, spend most days just sitting. When it was warm enough, I would sit outside on park benches or walk around. I was then in London at that time.

And I was so deeply immersed in the peace, almost the bliss of the simple experience of being, the simple feeling, the goodness of life every moment, that I lost interest in future completely. There were no ambitions, and I wasn't even interested in doing anything. So from an external viewpoint, one could say my life for a while became unbalanced.

I became so deeply immersed in being that I lost interest in doing. One could almost say I lost the ability for a while to be active in the world, and then gradually the ability to be active in the world came back. So a balance after a while re-established itself.

So I'm now able to be active in the world, and at the same time be rooted in being. One does not exclude the other. But for some reason, I had to go very deeply within for a while.

Perhaps even on a larger scale, it may be that some people for a while have to go very deeply into being simply to provide a balance on the level of the collective consciousness, because most human beings are totally lost in doing. So it may require a few humans who go very deeply into being to provide a balance, although on a personal level it might look as if they were unbalanced. I live in a surrender to the present moment, and so that is always there.

Whatever happens right now, I recognize that it is futile to argue with whatever is happening at this moment. So emotions occasionally still come. If I see human suffering, I sometimes weep.

I can cry. And yet even then, there's a deep sense of peace in the background, even though I may cry externally if I see especially humans inflicting so much suffering on other human beings, and on animals, and on nature, on the planet. So sometimes tears come, and yet deep down I know that ultimately life is timeless and indestructible, and I know that death is not the opposite of life, but only the opposite of birth.

Life is beyond the forms of life. Life is timeless and immortal, that which underlies the entire manifested world, and that dimension is present in each human being. My life is now very different from what it was before, especially before the book came out.

I was already teaching before the book came out, but soon after the book came out, the book grew very quickly. At first through word of mouth for one year, and then other people discovered it and started writing about it and speaking about it, and then it

accelerated. So soon after the book came out, the teaching developed a momentum that was almost overwhelming, and it turned my external life around completely, from living a very sheltered life, a very quiet life, almost a hermit-like life.

Suddenly, everybody wanted me to teach and demands for this and that were coming in, invitations flooding in from all over the world, and then I responded at the beginning to almost every invitation, and then I realized it's impossible. I can no longer respond to every invitation. So nevertheless, my life is now almost public, and the groups become bigger and bigger.

In the United States, the average number for talks is 2,000 people now, and so I'm very much out there in the world, and this is not something that naturally I would have chosen for myself. My natural inclination would be withdrawn, not to be known. I like to be invisible in public places, not to be noticed, and that becomes more difficult now, and yet I accept the fact that this is how it is, and so I've had to surrender to the fact that my external life changed completely.

It's been wonderful, too, to see how many people are being reached by the teaching, the book, and the talks and the retreats, how many people are open to the message. That was the greatest surprise after the book came out, because when I was writing the book, the book wrote itself, one can almost say, my feeling was that only people who had already been on the spiritual path for a long time would respond to the book, and that was not the case. People responded to the book, both people who had been on the path for many years, they responded, but also people who had never read a spiritual book in their lives, who had never had access to that dimension, they wrote to me and said, my life has changed.

This is incredible. I've read this book several times already, and it's fresh and new every time, and there's so much peace in my life suddenly. So the book seems to have reached all kinds of people, no matter what their background is.

Also, education doesn't seem to matter very much. Some highly educated people are open to it, and others who are not are equally open, because it's not difficult to understand on an intellectual level. For a large part of my life, I lived with very little money, and probably people would have said I lived below the poverty line, as they call it, and yet I never felt poor.

I always felt I had quite enough, and now I don't feel wealthy anymore than I did then. So it's exactly the same feeling. It's a very abstract thing, the fact that now there is more wealth in my life on an external dimension is only an abstract truth to me.

It has not affected me inside at all, and it's only very slightly affected my external life. I walk around cities and look at shops, and I sometimes like to look at things, but very rarely do I actually feel the impulse to go and buy something. It's enough to look at a

beautiful object and then walk on.

I wouldn't know what to buy with it. There is the possibility at some point that there may be a center, a spiritual center coming into being. That is something that I'm not actively planning now, but I have a feeling it may happen.

Before, it used to be the way that anybody who wanted to see me could just call me and talk to me on the phone. I would talk to them and say, can I see you? Yes, come.

And then after the book came out, that became impossible, because the phone kept ringing. So in one sense, when I was only reaching a small number of people, however, there was the satisfaction of having close personal contact with people who came to me. Now the close personal contact, because the numbers have grown so much, that has become lost to a large extent, and yet the teaching is reaching far, far, far more people than it did before.

So really, and this is very much the same in any situation in life, every situation has its own limitations. There were certain limitations to my life on an external level when the teaching was not yet reaching many people. The teaching was very limited in that sense, although it was very satisfying.

Now the limitation is that people cannot access me personally very easily. I have to have several people in between me and the world, simply because on a practical level, it's the only way I can live. I cannot reply to every email or answer every letter, and thousands and thousands of letters come in all the time, and emails, and I cannot just pick up the phone and answer it, so that it's harder for individual people to reach me.

It's difficult, if not impossible, and that's simply, I need to accept that is a limitation that's unavoidable. It's always a question of surrendering to whatever the present moment presents you with, and whatever limitations there may be at this moment, there's no situation that is free of limitation of one kind or another. In the group sessions, nothing is ever prepared.

I don't come with a script. I don't even come with any idea in my head what we are going to do today or talk about today. When I sit down on the chair, I have no idea, even a few seconds before opening my mouth, what's going to come out.

So, in that sense, you can say it comes really out of the immediacy of the present moment, and so what words come out depends very often on the energy field of the group, and so there is an interaction between the teaching, the teacher, and the taught. There's an ancient Eastern saying that says, the teacher and the taught together produce the teaching, and that's how it is, and that's why the teaching has great power, because it doesn't come from the accumulated knowledge of the mind, but it comes out of the immediacy of the present moment. It's not prepared, and even on a retreat that

lasts for three, four, five days sometimes, there's absolutely no pre-planned structure to the retreat.

It all grows organically out of the present moment. Surrender means only accept this moment as it is, but you won't be able to surrender unless you're completely fed up with suffering. You've had enough suffering, and at some level, you recognize that most of your suffering is self-created.

It is created out of resistance to what is. It is created out of an interpretation of something that is. It comes from a thought, from an interpretation, not from the situation.

So you realize really that I've had enough suffering, and only when you've truly had enough suffering in your life are you able to say, I don't need it anymore. Suffering is a wonderful teacher. Suffering is most people's only spiritual teacher, and suffering deepens you.

It gradually erodes the mind-made sense of self, the ego, and for some people, the point arrives where they realize I have suffered enough, and that, for example, is the case with almost all the people who come to a retreat. If you ask them, they've all had their share of human suffering. Otherwise, they wouldn't be open to the message.

They've had their share of human suffering, and they have reached a point where they are ready to listen to the message that says there is another way to live. There is another way in which you can live that does not create further suffering for yourself, because to a large extent, humans create their own suffering. And so when you are ready to hear that message, and that's really the message that is in every religion.

The central message of Buddhism is the end of suffering, and even the central message of the teaching of Jesus is finding the pearl of great price, finding the kingdom of heaven that is within you, here and now, as Jesus says. And that, of course, is the end of living in a state of suffering. So one could say that you need suffering for you to realize, for you to come to a point of realization that you do not need to suffer anymore.

There's a paradox here. If I had not suffered, this teaching would not exist. So you could say it has come partly as a result of intense suffering, because as a human being, I would not have evolved spiritually if I had not suffered.

So suffering was my main teacher, and suffering is for many people their main teacher. But then some people, when they are ready, they come into contact with a spiritual teaching or teacher, and that can speed up the process of realization that you don't need to suffer anymore. You're ready to hear that.

The Buddha talked about nothing else already 2,600 years ago, that there can be an end to self-inflicted suffering. And when you don't inflict suffering on yourself anymore, and

remember, it's the thoughts. Your thoughts make you suffer more than anything else.

It's not usually the situation. It's your interpretation of the situation, of how dreadful it all is. And so when you see that, then you see there is another way to live in which I no longer mentally argue with what is.

And that's the end of self-inflicted suffering. And if I no longer inflict suffering on myself, I no longer inflict suffering on others, because the two go together. It's acceptance, but acceptance won't come unless you've reached this inner point of readiness.

And this is why I never try to convince anybody that what I'm saying is true, or they should practice something. I never say, you should do this, or try to convince somebody who doesn't want to believe it. That is pointless.

Only if you are ready internally for it, and so one way of putting it is to say, if you have suffered enough, then you're ready, then you're open to it, and you immediately see the truth of it. You immediately see that you ultimately make yourself suffer. It's not the situation.

It's the mental interpretation of the situation, which in most cases is a form of resistance. And that creates the suffering. When you hear these words, if you don't immediately recognize the truth, if there's an inner arguing, that's fine.

There's no should here. The teaching never says, this is how you should live. It's only if you can hear the truth of it, it will make sense to you, and then it can help you.

So it can only help those who have an inner readiness. But there are many, many people alive now in whom the readiness is there. They are able to hear it, to truly hear it, and immediately recognize, yes, this is true.

Convincing never works. One thing is certain, that the world would look very different from the way it is now. We can't possibly imagine how the human world would look if everybody lived in a different state of consciousness, in a state predominantly a state of inner peace.

What kind of civilization would we create out of a state of inner peace? It's impossible to predict. All we can say is that probably it would not be as complex as it is now.

People would not be running around continuously engaged in largely pointless activities. It would probably not be such a noisy civilization as it is now, because no civilization has ever been as noisy as this one, and that's simply because whatever human beings create externally is a reflection of their inner state. So we are polluting the planet simply because our inner selves are being polluted by an enormous amount of negativity, of continuous resistance.

So the outer is always a reflection of the inner. So if the inner is predominantly a state of inner peace, we create a peaceful world on the outside. What exact form that would take, we don't know.

We'd have to see what it is. It would very probably be a much more simple world, more harmonious and beautiful. The essence is very simple and the essence could probably be taught and perhaps one day will be taught to very young children at school, and children are very close to it anyway.

The essence is, I could put it in the most simple terms, because the most simple is often the most powerful. The essence is to make the present moment into your friend, not your enemy. To always ask yourself, what is my relationship with the present moment?

At this moment, of course. What is my inner relationship with the present moment? Am I friendly towards the present moment or am I hostile towards the present moment?

Is the present moment my enemy? And then that would be enough to bring about a change, because when you realize that you are making the present moment into your enemy and you also know that that's all you ever have in life, then you realize it is a mad way to live. To treat this moment as if it were an obstacle to where you want to get to.

And you never get there because it's always now. Then your relationship towards the present moment changes. It changes and your relationship becomes one of yes rather than no to what is.

It does not mean that you become passive or that you will never do anything again. It simply means that the foundation for any action you take is the state of yes to what is. And if the inner state of yes to what is, that is the state of inner peace.

And inner peace is much more powerful as a foundation for right action than the state of resistance and negativity. So that is the essence. Find that state of inner alignment with the present moment which comes with the yes.

And then see what happens. See how your world changes as you no longer resist the isness of this moment. And that's why I say I don't really have anything to teach in the sense of adding information to you.

There's nothing that you need to add in order to find yourself and be yourself. You can add on an external level. It's nice to learn new things.

It's nice to explore this or that. And yet the essential level is the level of who you are, your innermost sense of self. It's the level of being.

On the most essential level, no matter where you are at in what your life situation is, on the most essential level, nothing needs to be added to who you are. So the spiritual

teaching is not a more. It's not an addition.

It's simply a pointing towards that which is already there. And those who are ready then suddenly recognize the truth of it. Recognize means they already knew it.

It's almost like remembering. Ah, yes. And then there's no question about it.

Convincing is not necessary. It's immediate realization. Then spiritual teaching works as it should.

So that's how it operates. And that's the difference between a conventional teaching and spiritual teaching. In some sense, one could say the teaching is almost the opposite of the conventional teaching.

If anything, it takes something away from you. It takes away that which covered up who you are. But it is not taken away by the teacher.

It's taken away by yourself when you see it and become conscious of it.

[Speaker 2] (47:20 - 47:40)

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Eckhart Tolle Empathy And the Suffering of Others [9da606a0-b0b8-495f-a6ac-5650b15a5237]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:40)

Empathy and the suffering of others. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about our growing awareness and how it can be used in service of others. He says when presence is the foundation of our lives, we are more available emotionally.

He explains that this is when the pitfalls of the ego no longer block us. Eckhart believes that when we are confronted by the pain of others, if we have a clear channel connected to the source of consciousness, we will exercise empathy and compassion. In this state, he says, we will not be shaken when the winds of misfortune blow because we are rooted in the deepest part of our being.

[Speaker 2] (0:42 - 2:29)

Hi, Eckhart. It's an absolute honor and a pleasure to see you. I've been studying the Upanishads and the Vedas for a while.

And the thing that everyone talks about is the non-attachment. I began to feel somewhere that it was almost selfish not to identify with the pain of someone else because individual pain body, I can understand. I can wrap my head around it.

But this collective pain body, you sometimes feel so helpless about the things that are happening around. And it sometimes almost feels very, very small to not identify with it and yet do what is required. But sometimes it feels that am I am I missing out on feeling that emotion and identifying with it?

Because if you bring that awareness of being the witness consciousness to what is happening, there is no feeling that you feel there. And then you look at people around you suffering and then you feel like am I being insensitive? So it's a very confusing state sometimes.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:30 - 20:51)

Yeah. Yes. I understand exactly what you're talking about.

It does make sense. So let's see what there is to say about it. There's a wonderful quality that is possible for human beings.

We could call that empathy. Empathy. Empathy is to feel what the other is feeling to have to tune into another and to some extent feel the suffering, the pain of the other.

You can even have you can have empathy with animals too. You can feel the suffering of an animal. You can feel the suffering of a human.

And the ego is not capable of empathy. So people who are ego possessed to a high degree feel little or no empathy for other humans because their sense of separateness, separation is so strong that the other only exists for them as a conceptual entity. They cannot sense the other as human and they cannot let alone sense the other as the being beyond the human.

So when you have empathy this can only arise when there's some absence of ego. So they said it doesn't mean that a person with empathy is completely egoless. But even empathy could be used by the ego.

Anything can be used by the ego. Your spiritual practice can be used by the ego. Anything.

But there's an opening there. And I remember various occasions when I felt what you describe traveling and so on, looking at human suffering and I wept. One can only help a little, but what I wept, that's the human.

On a human level, you feel that. Compassion is another word that's sometimes used. It's very closely related to empathy.

Compassion is a feeling can lead to action, but you know that whatever action you take in the face of human suffering is probably limited. So there's compassion, there's empathy. The German word for compassion is quite interesting when you break it up and translate it literally.

The German word for compassion is mitleid, which translated literally is suffering with. To suffer with someone. Mit means with, leid means suffering.

Mitleid means with suffering, to suffer with someone together. That's a German word for compassion. So it's inevitable that that arises as you gradually free yourself from egoic consciousness.

More and more empathy arises. And then you feel that. I feel it for many instances when I just, I was in a country somewhere, saw a beggar sitting in the street and I felt tears.

Another strange thing I remember, we were in Italy in a small town, perhaps it was Assisi where we had a retreat. I walked, there was a church and the bells were ringing very slowly. And then people were coming out of the church carrying a coffin.

So I realized it was a funeral. I don't know who died. Somebody died.

And I couldn't stop crying for 10 minutes. I was, it was, I cried because this for me meant the death of every human being. And I thought I just was very strange for 10 minutes.

I was just crying, crying. And even when I talk about it now, I almost cry. Why?

How could you cry? Because that was on a human level, everybody's, every human's destiny is that. And on a human level alone, it's tragic.

But as I cried, now this is hard to describe, underneath the crying, there was a very, very deep peace underneath it. One could say almost perhaps when one talks about it, it's incompatible almost say, how can, but there was, there was a, there was peace. And on the surface, there was the weeping.

I can feel it even now. Because on a human level, the human destiny is tragic. Everybody's attention's to death.

It's just amazing. On a human level alone, each one of us in the not too distant future is going to die. Then that's it.

And sometimes before you die, you may have to suffer a bit more, physical suffering, whatever it may be. But now where's the peace? Where does that come from that you feel in the face of, where you even, you feel it even more strongly in the face of death, which when you observe the fact of impermanence, as the Buddha called it, the fact of impermanence of all forms, and don't deny it, but really face it.

Then by completely looking in the face of impermanence, you become aware of something that is beyond impermanence in you. The Buddhists sometimes called it the deathless. Buddhism likes negative terms.

It denies something, the end of suffering, the deathless. Jesus didn't use those terms mostly. He used more positive terms.

He said, the equivalent of the deathless dimension in Buddhism, Amaravati, is the term that Jesus used, which is eternal life. Jesus spoke about eternal life, the possibility of finding eternal life. Sometimes in bad translations of the Bible, it's translated as everlasting life.

That's the wrong translation. Eternal doesn't mean everlasting. It goes on and on and on.

No, eternal means timeless, the timeless dimension of consciousness. Now, I believe I wrote that in a Stillness Speaks book. This is just a little analogy to explain what I'm talking about.

If the entire world were green, let's say everything is green in this world, there's no other color other than green. That means green would not exist. There would be no word for it.

Because for anything to exist, you need the other. So everything is green, there's no green. You could even apply it to race.

If everybody were exactly the same skin color, there would be no race. You could not derive your identity from your race. Because you can only have an identity because somebody else has a different identity on that level of the human level.

So now, impermanence, the fact that you become aware of impermanence, you can become aware of it, brings up that which is beyond it. Because if there were nothing beyond impermanence, you wouldn't even know it. You'd be so much part of it.

But there is a knowing. So if there's a knowing that this is green, there must be something that's not green. It's a little analogy.

So to become aware of the fact of impermanence means there's something that is beyond impermanence. Only that can become aware of impermanence. And this is why it's so helpful to, and I love going to cemeteries for meditations.

So you walk through the cemeteries and you look at the gravestones. What could be better reminder of impermanence than a cemetery? You look at the gravestones.

One of the greatest meditations, highly recommend walk around and then experience two things, the sadness of impermanence and the deeper peace underneath it. And again, that brings us back to where we started, the human and the being. The human and the being.

The human is subject to impermanence. The being is the transcendent dimension, the consciousness, the being that is not yours, but it's the essence of it all. And to be aware of both simultaneously is very liberating.

And it's really, it's ultimately that in itself is a healing sling when you are aware, when you, let's say you're with a human who is dying, that can also be a very deep meditation. If you sit with someone, perhaps a loved one, a father, mother, whoever it may be, and you sit with a dying person. And if you become still and alert without any more denial or anything like that, without needing some kind of explanation in your mind or seeking some kind of explanation for it all, you'll become aware of the two levels, the sadness of it.

And, but as you completely accept that, the impermanence of all forms, you become aware of something underlying, something deeper. That's the consciousness. And that's also the essence of this human who died, the being.

That is eternal, eternal life. And you know very well when the moment this person has passed away, only the body remains and you realize he or she is gone. And the physical body was never who that being was.

The physical body was never it. And so it comes, it brings you to the realization that you also, that you are essentially invisible. What you see, what I see of myself or what I see

of you is very little, almost the body.

You see the body. You see the, you can't even see the thoughts. The thoughts already exist already in the realm of the invisible.

You cannot find a thought. You can examine the brain, but you cannot find a thought. We don't even know exactly what a thought is.

And I can remember at this moment, my grandmother who died when I was 11, but only this one, where was she all this time? In, as a thought, as a memory, would a scientist, if he opened up my brain, would he or she have found my grandmother there, the memory of my grandmother? No, because thought already is invisible, exists in the realm of the invisible.

And thought is only the upper layer of consciousness. It's the, so thought is a ripple on the surface of the ocean. So if you can sense that you are also invisible, what you, nobody can find you through the senses.

You don't exist ultimately in the so-called material realm. Nobody would find you. They open up your brain.

Where are you? Gone. So the death is something that is a very important portal into awakening, potentially, the fact of impermanence.

And it's both, it's tragic, and it's perfectly fine. Nothing real can be threatened, as the miracle says at the beginning. Nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God. Nothing real can be threatened.

So in ultimate terms, the body is not real. It's just a temporary apparition. Nothing real can, nothing unreal exists.

Ultimately, it doesn't even exist. We don't need to go into that. It's like a dream.

Herein lies the peace of God. In knowing this, you have this deep peace. And that's the being, the realization of being.

And you can still weep. And you can also take action to remedy, to some extent, as much as possible, the suffering of others, without being consumed by the suffering of others. Because there are many humans who feel they want to help, and eventually they experience burnout and frustration.

That's the danger when you feel like, I must help, help, help. Yes, it's wonderful to help. But are you losing yourself in that?

Or are you able to help without losing connectedness to the source? And then an

additional dimension flows into what you do. And that is through help.

Then you emanate that. And that also then changes the way in which you act upon the world and help others. A very last, before we finish the answer to this question, a very great form of healing, if you want to help others by healing in whatever sense, whether it's physical healing or deeper healing.

Deeper healing, of course, means self-realization, awakening. It's the only true healing. To heal, to help others with, to heal others is to recognize the, let's say, somebody is seriously ill.

Instead of focusing on the illness, which is on the human level, you focus on the being. On the level of being, that human is already complete and healed forever. In the state of oneness with source, with oneness with God.

So you can, if you focus in another human being, not on the external manifestation of the human, but on the, who that human is in the essence of their being, where they don't even need any healing, where they are already complete. Nothing can be added on that level to who you already are. Nothing can be added, needs to be added.

And if you focus on that, sometimes a person suddenly feels better or gets better. So you acknowledge the deeper reality in that human being. Thank you so much.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (20:52 - 21:03)

Hello. Thank you. So my question is, what do you consider a true limitation to manifestation versus a limitation of the mind?

[Speaker 1] (21:06 - 38:51)

Good question. Thank you. Now, when you read what Jesus said, when you have faith, faith is, faith in the terms that Jesus used is to be connected with the power within you that is inseparable from the source consciousness.

When you have faith, you can tell a mountain, move from here to there and it will happen. Now, there could be a kind of parable or analogy, or some people might want to take it literally. He also said, as you know, I've had before the one statement that encapsulates the entire secret about manifestation.

Jesus said, when you asked for something, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. They just encapsulate, believe that you have received it. I've spoken about that at length in other sessions, to believe that you have received it is to feel connected with the essence of being where you, anything else is, that's the cream, everything else is the skimmed milk.

So if you have the cream, you can manifest anything in the realm of the skimmed milk. Now, that would mean that you can entirely change, if the statement about the mountain is to be taken literally, then it would be saying that it is possible to completely change external reality, so-called physical reality, simply by the power of your mind. And I believe that is the destiny of humans.

Eventually, humans will be able to simply manifest through the mind. At the moment, you can manifest quite a bit, not immediately, you always need a little bit of time, mostly. There's a lot you can do, and even sometimes things that you think might be almost impossible, that is too far, that is possible to manifest.

But there are limitations, you're absolutely right, and you need to recognize those limitations so that you're not engaged in completely useless manifestation practice, aiming at something that is not within the realm of possibility. For example, let's say I suddenly got it into my mind that I'm going to participate in whatever capacity in the Olympic Games, the next Olympic Games, whenever they are going to be, and I'm going to win a gold medal in boxing or whatever, and no matter how powerful my manifestation is, that is not going to happen. So I know that is an impossibility, or I want, let's say I got it into my mind, I want to become the world's greatest ballet dancer.

Okay. Now, if I'd been 10 years old, it might have worked, but it's not going to happen, that's for sure, no matter how powerful my manifestation practice is. So there are, now these things are kind of obvious, that there are physical limitations to what you can do or what your body can do, there may also be mental manifestations.

Sometimes people have an image in their mind of what they want to be. I remember watching years ago, when we still had cable television, all these people who perform, they want to be chosen and all kinds of singing and dancing and so on. And one is sometimes amazed at the discrepancy between what people thought of themselves, how good they were at singing or dancing, and how bad they actually were when they performed.

It's just, the discrepancy was just incredible. They thought they were the potential greatest singer, but they were just awful. Just everybody could see that they can.

Now that could be that they haven't practiced enough. It could be that they haven't, that they forgot that in to achieve mastery in anything, you have to focus your mind and you have to enjoy what you're doing for quite some time before power flows into what you do. So they have just a mental projection, I'm going to be a rock star.

But then all this, the practice, you have to live it, you have to live the music, you have to live, or you compose the music and you live it every day. And you live, your instrument becomes part of your very being, and you live it, and you enjoy it. And then you go into the subway and you play there for a year or two, and then you go somewhere else, a

little bar and you play there.

That's how many great stars have started. And then you live, and there was this book he found and he looked at the various great musicians and dancers who had achieved great things. He calculated that they had 10,000 hours of practice before mastery was achieved and something was able to flow through them that made them great.

With the Beatles, for example, he examined for how many years the Beatles performed in just little bars in Liverpool and in Hamburg, they were performing in little beer cellars and tiny bars, and he calculated and he came to the average figure of 10,000 hours of practice. So very often the people don't achieve the heaven, the goal may not be totally unrealistic, it may be within the realm of possibility, but what they miss is the journey towards the goal and they don't enjoy the journey and they don't want to, the energy is not there to practice every day, to do every day, so that the power increases and flows through them. Now many, quite a few of those people, they never manifest, they never consciously manifested something.

The Beatles, I'm sure, it just was a gradual evolutionary process for them before they, what they created was very deeply inspiring. I mean, the songs are relatively simple, but they have an essence, there's something there that makes them, they'll still be around in two or three hundred years time, there's something there that suddenly came and it wasn't there initially. So are you able to enjoy the doing, if the present moment really comes back to the present moment, do you enjoy the journey towards it?

Or let's say you want to become a, people have an image of what they want to become, but are not able to give it attention in the continuous, in the present moment, so that the journey must be joyful to be empowered. And when I was writing *The Power of Now*, people sometimes asked me, what do you do? And I said, I'm writing, I'm writing a book, spiritual book.

And they say, what about? I said, it's about present moment, living in the present moment. And several times people said, oh, forget about it.

It's been done so many times. This is something that's already been overdone. You should think of something else.

This possibly present moment is old hat, just don't do it. There's no point, you're wasting your time. Somebody actually told me literally, he had read many spiritual books, and said, if you are writing another book about the present moment, you're wasting your time.

And I was writing *The Power of Now*. I didn't listen to him. I knew I wasn't wasting your time.

I loved the process. It was, there was an empowerment that happened. It didn't have, it

didn't matter to me very much that whether the book would be successful or not, which was very much secondary.

I knew the book had to be read. If I had not written it, I would have become ill and I would have died. That's how strong the energy flow was.

If I had not responded to it, I would have died or become seriously ill. So don't necessarily listen to others. But yes, it is true.

On the one hand, there are things that are not possible. Certain things are impossible. And you need to just use your discrimination and look at it without limiting yourself unduly.

Because many things that other people might tell you are impossible, are actually within the realm of possibility. And even certain things that your mind will tell you are impossible, may be within the realm of possibility. And again, there's a fine line there.

Important thing is make sure that you enjoy the doing of it. And then you can, you focus on your destination, but enjoy the doing in the present moment. And then whether or not you even arrive at your destination, becomes secondary.

Because there's such deep enjoyment in the present moment. So, because the arriving at your destination, which means achieving your goal, is a relatively short lived phenomenon. Let's say your goal is, I want to live in a nice big house.

And then you've somehow, you're able to manifest it. And in the meantime, presumably you engage in a certain activity that enables you to have that. And then you sit in the big house.

And very quickly, you will experience the state of unsatisfactoriness again. Very quickly, any destination you arrive at is already the end. And this many people have become famous actors and others.

I've spoken to quite a few. And most of them have said, a little while after they became famous, after the initial euphoric high that they were on, subsided, they became very unhappy. Or they would have, before they thought when I'm famous, I'll now be happy.

Because everybody will love me. And everybody will acknowledge how great I am. I'll be happy.

I can do anything or anywhere. I'll be happy. Yeah, the euphoria was there initially.

And then suddenly there was a huge depression set in, unhappiness set in. And they didn't understand it. So the arriving is very little, unless you break through into the deeper dimension of who you are.

But you do that now. The realization of being needs to happen now. Then you're not looking to the arriving to free you from a state of unsatisfactoriness.

Your manifestation will become useless if you look to the arriving for a state of liberation, from a state of unsatisfactoriness or insufficiency or feeling you're not something missing. This feeling that there's something missing does not derive ultimately from not achieving this or that. It derives from not having accessed the vertical dimension in your life, which is to realize the being and you're still trapped on the level of the human, the doing.

That's where ultimately the feeling of something missing arises. It's because of from the in the level of being, nothing is missing. You're already complete.

The rest is a more, is a secondary thing. It's quite nice to achieve certain things on that level. It's fine.

You enjoy it up to a point. You enjoy what you achieve. If you don't look to these achievements for some kind of liberation or or fulfillment of who you are, that's true.

Expecting too much. The world can't give you that. A certain amount of satisfaction can come, not ultimate lasting satisfaction.

A certain amount of superficial satisfaction when you achieve this or that is fine. And then of course it changes. Sometimes it leaves you or it evaporates again.

So it's a very subtle thing to know just to summarize the answer to your question. Yes, on the one hand, there are things that you should not pursue because they are not clearly not within the realm of possibility. But on the other hand, quite a few other things you could pursue because they are possible even though people may tell you they are not, or your mind may tell you they're not.

But whatever it is, do make sure that you enjoy the present moment. The step you're taking at this moment is really the most important step ever. There's only ever the step you're taking at this moment.

If you don't honor that and give it your fullest attention, then the rest would be very frustrating to honor this, the step you're taking at this moment. And then perhaps in order to achieve mastery, you need to take 10,000 steps with the 10,000 hours that this man did. Okay, but you enjoy, you enjoy.

While you take this step, you're not counting and saying, okay, or you don't count the hours. If you practice dance or music or being an artist or a writer, you don't say, okay, this guy said I need 10,000 hours, so I better start now. And then you count, okay, I've now done 150 hours.

How many more to go? You're not present. When you give it attention and honor it, acknowledge it, there's a quality in the doing.

It's hard to define, but there's a quality in how you do what you do and that empowers it. Yes, thank you. Thank you so much, everybody, for being here, sharing presence, not your presence, not my presence, just presence.

And become aware of yourself, not mainly as a human with a history, a past and a future, but become aware of the invisible being that you are. So easy. You just have to remember to be aware.

It's not a memory. It's coming back from, get lost in the human, reconnect with being. Stop thinking for a moment and sense that you are still there, not as a historical person, but as a living presence.

[Speaker 3] (38:52 - 39:14)

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Eckhart Tolle Every Setback Is Part of The Journey [c475eddf-47ee-4c3e-b51e-a8857cfb8bd3]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:43)

Every setback is part of the journey. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the coming changes for humanity, including a shift to a different level of consciousness. He explains collectively, we are going through difficult times now because real change only occurs when society is pushed to the brink.

He says without adversity, there is no transformation. He believes we need not be afraid when hardship strikes because that too will be a catalyst for more spiritual growth. Eckhart says historically, humanity has gone through many regressions and collective disasters.

He explains they are intrinsic to the process of awakening because every setback is part of the journey.

[Speaker 1] (0:45 - 32:12)

When you become spacious or realize the spaciousness within you, then what is it that's being realized? You realize that the most fundamental, primordial fact about who you are is that you are conscious. Or even that's not quite correct because by saying you are conscious, I'm separating you and conscious.

There's a kind of duality which is created by language. Every sentence has a subject and an object. So you say, I am conscious.

That's already misleading because that would imply that apart from consciousness, there's still you. But there isn't. So it's more accurate to say, I am consciousness.

I am consciousness. So when you realize at this moment, can you be right here now, can you be conscious that you are conscious? Sounds weird, but that's how it is.

Yes, it's a direct knowing. You can't analyze it or even describe it, but you know that you are. I am.

I am. And this consciousness is described, again, going back to Jesus. He said, I am the light of the world.

That's in the gospel of John. In another gospel, he says, he's talking to his disciples and he says, you are the light of the world. What could that possibly mean?

You are the light of the world. It is the light of consciousness that illuminates the entire world. You are consciousness.

The light is an analogy. Light is an analogy for consciousness. It's the inner light.

So where does it come from? If it's not a byproduct of the physical brain, or there's a relationship, but consciousness pervades the entire universe, consciousness is in this flower. It manifests as this flower.

It manifests as all the things that we see. It manifests as the sun, as the universe, the galaxies, the blades of grass. Okay, we're going now to a deep place that may look a little bit mystical or speculative, but it isn't.

What you can sense as consciousness in yourself could be compared to use the term light that Jesus used. The closest analogy I can find is, there's the sun, and the sun in many ancient civilizations was regarded as divine or God. And there's a reason for that, because the sun emanates almost endlessly life energy.

It emanates light for millions and millions of years. One could almost say eternally. It's not eternal, but relative to our lifespan, it's, we could call it eternal.

The sun continuously emanates light. When you go out, the light that you can sense on your body is sunlight. Now, that light, let's say, continue with this analogy a little bit further.

Imagine a ray of sunlight becomes conscious suddenly that it is a ray of sunlight. The ray of sunlight becomes self-consciousness. Oh, and then it looks around.

It's a strange analogy. And then it looks around and says, oh, look at all that. And then it starts to identify with things.

It forgets who it is. It is a ray of sunlight continuously and eternally connected with the sun, because this ray of sunlight isn't connected to the sun. It's an extension of the sun.

But the ray of sunlight becomes so interested in all the stuff that it loses its realization of its origin. And it identifies with stuff. And stuff becomes very important.

Stuff being the stuff of thoughts, of minds. Physical stuff, yes, but more importantly, mental stuff. It enters a kind of dreamlike world of where the stuff becomes incredibly important.

Every thought goes, oh, oh, oh. And at some point, it suffers so much that it can't stand it anymore. Who am I?

And suddenly, it stops thinking about stuff. And it's going, hmm. Suddenly, there's a spacious stillness, and it begins to feel its connectedness to something very deep and profound.

And it realizes, it remembers or realizes again its true origin. Not a historical fact, but a

present fact. It realizes that it is continuously part of the sun.

It is an extension of the sun. So, I'm using sun as an analogy for the source from which all life emanates, which is traditionally called God. We can't really talk about God, because whatever we say is so absurdly limited, it is virtually pointless to even say anything, and yet I'll say something.

Consciousness is the emanation from the transcendent source of all life. Transcendent means it is not a source that can be found in space or time. I can say it's there or it's there.

Where is it? Is it a million light years from here? None of that.

It comes from the transcendent dimension that emanates, the source emanates into this dimension. And as it emanates into this dimension, it gradually creates all the life forms of this dimension. And it gradually, this dimension awakens gradually to its true identity, its origin.

So, the source wants to realize itself in and through this dimension. So, the essence of who you are, which you can, it's not something to believe in. Say, I believe I am consciousness.

I believe it. Not to realize it immediately, indirectly, here and now, because it's the most immediate thing or no thing in you that you're conscious. That is the emanation from source, from God.

So, you are the light of the world. That is your true identity is that. And temporarily, this light of the world, the light emanation from source, temporarily incarnates, pretends to be this, that, and the other.

There's a very brief flash. Every life form, let's say every human on this planet, is like a flash of light, of consciousness on the planet. The lifespan is quite short on a universal scale.

So, every human life is this flash that appears, if you could see it from a bird's eye view, far away, you see the planet and all the conscious, the life forms of humans on the planet, you speed it up. So, if you speed it up, you see the human is born, and then it grows, it runs around, and then it goes, and then another one comes. The one being incarnating, the one light manifesting as.

And if you speed it up even more, all you see is flashes of light appearing continuously, like sparkles of consciousness. And each sparkle that appears for a fraction of a second is a human lifetime. And this human, unless the human awakens to his or her transcendent identity, is completely identified with its external form.

It doesn't know who he or she is. It's lost in the dream of form. It's unaware of the formless dimension, the spaciousness, the origin, the source.

So, this is the realization that you are predominantly the deep I. Your true identity is the I am, the deep I, the spaciousness. I am consciousness.

And you can sense yourself as this presence, this beingness. And once you can sense that and sustain that, although you might initially, you lose it, or you forget it, and you return to it. But more and more, this becomes the foundation for your sense of self.

But the Buddha called it the no-self. Jesus called it, sometimes called it the fullness of life. I want you to have the fullness of life, which is realizing who you are in your essence.

And that's the awakening. Then you live in two dimensions. And this is your destiny.

And ultimately, every human's destiny is to live in the two dimensions of the formless being and the temporary entity. So, this is why you are a human being. Human is the form, not only the physical form, but also the psychological form, the person, the personality with the history.

You're the human. This is the surface level of reality. And yes, you have to deal with it.

You can't just say, I'm no longer interested in the surface level. I'm not doing anything anymore. Because it's all an illusion.

And then, if that is a belief, because you've heard somebody said it, or you've read it in a book, it's all an illusion. I'm not dealing with any stuff anymore. I've had enough.

Then you will be surprised how real the surface dimension, it will really challenge you. Part of the awakening is to be challenged in and by the surface dimension of life, and to confront the challenges of the vertical, without losing yourself in it, without taking it so seriously that there's nothing else for you but that. And then every little drama becomes a big thing for you.

Oh my God, what's happening now? Oh, the continuous fear of the next damn thing happening to you. Oh, and then you go through your life just waiting for the next thing to happen.

That's the surface level of reality. That's where the surface I lives, and has to live, while it's here in this dimension. And it gets challenged, and eventually the challenges drive it deeper, deeper into a realization of its essence identity, which is the deep.

And then the two, you bring the two together, and then the deep I is present while you engage in the surface activities of life, and deal with the stuff that you have to deal with. And you have this connectedness in the background with the source, which means in practical terms that you begin to experience frequently, throughout the day, moments of

spacious presence in the midst of situations. Initially, brief moments of spacious presence, where you just, perhaps you just look at something, a sky, or a tree, or a traffic light, but you're just there.

A few seconds perhaps, but moments, and you actually, you begin to invite moments of spaciousness into your life, and there's nobody who is that busy that they cannot have brief moments of spaciousness in their life, their daily life. How often you wait for something every day, there's always little waiting times. The seductive thing, especially with our technology these days, you're never free of the clutter.

It was a challenge even before they came up with these things. But now, whenever humans have to wait for something, immediately they get this thing out of their pocket. They must just be standing at the elevator.

They have to get this thing out. There's nothing really to look at, but they have to look at it. So, the clutter in their minds, this amplifies the tendency that's already been there for hundreds and thousands of years for the mind to be cluttered and to completely lose yourself in the clutter of your mind.

Lost, the human condition could be described, the unawakened human condition could be described as lost in your mind, which is lost in the clutter of your mind. And now we have invented these things that amplify the clutter, give you even more seductive, even more addictive than your own mind. So, you need to be very careful that you give yourself time for spaciousness.

Don't get this thing out unless there really is something to do or look at. Even when it does make strange noises, it's another, yes, somebody has posted something on Facebook, but why would you be interested in this right now? It's more clutter.

Or some newsflash has come in, but do you need to look at this now? Or maybe you receive tweets from countless people and your phone makes a noise, more clutter for the mind. What has he tweeted now?

This time he's gone too far. He's already gone too far 1,000 times, but this time, and then you have to turn on the TV. This is a situation room.

What's happening today? Very serious, very, very serious. And then the interviewer goes, asks the question, politician, what's this?

I'm not saying cut yourself off completely. There's a time for everything. There's a time for reading the news, finding out what's happening without losing yourself in it.

And yet always realizing the very foundation of life, of your life, and realizing all the things of this world may be important or are important. Many things are important, but they're all relatively important. But there's only one thing that is absolutely important,

and that is realizing who you are in the depths of your being, who you are in your essence.

Ultimately then realizing the one thing that is of ultimate importance is knowing who you are. And that's why the ancient Greeks already said, know thyself. It's on the temple, Apollo's temple in Delphi in ancient Greece, 500 BC, carved in the temple.

Know thyself. My ancient Greek is not very good. Know thyself.

What does that mean? Know who you are in your essence. And people would go to this temple to receive messages from the transcendent realm.

They asked questions, and there was a priestess sitting there and channeling answers in modern terms, just channeling answers to their questions. What do you do with my life? What should I marry this person or not?

What do I do? How do I get more money? How do I do all this?

But at the end of the temple was the thing that is of absolute importance. Know thyself. The rest is secondary.

Einstein said, I don't know whether this is what he actually meant, but this is how I interpret it. Einstein said, I want to know the mind of God. The rest is details.

I want to know the mind of God. How can you know the mind of God except by knowing your own mind or your own consciousness, which is an emanation, an extension of the mind of the transcendent that we call God? I want to know the mind of God.

The rest, and all this is the rest, your entire life situation, all the drama of your life is the rest. It's details. It's fine.

Yes, you have to deal with it. It's there to challenge you, but realize what is relatively important. That's all this on the surface dimension of life and what is absolutely important, and that is your connectedness with source.

And so bring moments of spaciousness as much as possible into your daily life by stopping, let go of thinking, without loss of consciousness, remaining alert and present. Sometimes it just involves becoming aware of sense perceptions, listening, looking, without labeling anything mentally. Just listen, look, listen, look.

But sense perception is not all. That's the entry point into who you are. Come to your senses and then realize yourself as the consciousness behind the sense perceptions, which you could call the stillness.

Realize the stillness, the alert stillness as a background, the spaciousness in which sense perceptions happen. So there's a twofold awareness. There's an awareness of sense

perceptions, even occasional thoughts.

You're not losing yourself in the thought. There's an awareness of that, but more fundamentally, there is an awareness of awareness. That's a weird way of putting it.

There's an awareness that you are aware. That's the source dimension. That's the deep eye.

That's the alert stillness. Then you're aware of awareness or conscious of consciousness, and then you perceive the world from there. At first you practice it when you're, moments when you're not being challenged by life.

There's a moment you're waiting for the elevator. Okay. Instead of getting out your device, you are suddenly, you contemplate and you become aware that you are the awareness behind the sense perception.

Not through words, through direct realization. There's a stillness, an alert stillness. That's beautiful.

And so invite these moments, spaciousness into your life. It could just be a little thing like looking at a flower for 10, 15 seconds and sensing at the same time, the awareness that's looking. So you look in stillness, bring spaciousness into your life more and more.

And then after a while, the moments of spaciousness become a little longer. And then a time comes when the sense of spaciousness doesn't leave you even while you're thinking. Even while you're talking to somebody, you're talking to another human being.

Okay. Maybe you're buying or selling something. How much is that?

Okay. But while you're talking, you're aware of the two dimensions also. One dimension is a human dimension, which is to do with whatever the interaction involves.

But at the same time, you're not losing yourself only in the human dimension, because as you talk to this person and listen to this person and look at this person, you're aware of that still background while you're talking and listening. And that means you're aware of yourself as the presence. But the miracle is, the moment you're aware of the deep I in yourself, you're also aware of the deep I in the other.

That's the beauty of it. And that means you truly recognize the other in their beingness. And you don't get stopped on the level of the person or the personality, which is usually not easy to deal with.

So you acknowledge the personality, but you can sense beyond the personality of the other, and realize that a beingness in the other as one with your own beingness, which isn't your own, we just call it that. And that realization that no matter how different the personality of the other is, in your essence, you are one with the other. In other words,

the other is no other.

That is called the realization of oneness. And another term for the realization of oneness is the often misused word, love. That is true love, not egoic love, which says, I want you, I need you, don't you dare leave me.

Not that. Love is recognizing the other as yourself. So the weird thing is, when you love another in the truest sense, you're always just, you're loving yourself.

Because you always see yourself in the other. This is what Jesus said, love your neighbor, neighbor means the other, love your neighbor as yourself. Now, this is an impossible commandment in isolation, because how am I going to love my neighbors?

I hate my neighbor. I knew somebody many years ago, she would go to church every Sunday. And then at some point, many years ago, in the Catholic church, they introduced the custom of, at some point during mass, you would have to shake hands with the people next to you and in front of you and behind you, and wish them peace, peace.

And she said, I'm not going to church anymore. Because I have to shake hands with all the people I hate. So she stopped going to church.

Now, this happens when you take love your neighbor as yourself in isolation does not work. But when the gospels were written, they brought all kinds of fragments together. It only works in conjunction with the dictum, find the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness that is within you.

That's all that ultimately matters. Find the dimension of spaciousness within you, then you will love or recognize your neighbor as yourself. Now it makes sense.

But if you take in isolation, if you have not found that inner dimension, you cannot love your neighbor as yourself. It's impossible to do, because he's a jerk. Says the mind, says the personality, how do you want to lie?

I don't like anybody really. As Jean-Paul Sartre, the French philosopher said, hell is other people. That's the ego talking, of course.

So that's love is that recognition. And it's not only love. That is also where compassion arises, originates, where empathy originates, all the things that would transform the world, if more humans were able to live in and from that dimension.

And then even the way in which you deal with the surface reality of your life changes, because you're no longer trapped in it. You're no longer totally confined to it. You deal with it, but you don't take it that seriously anymore, because it will all evaporate like smoke.

Just give it a few, sometimes it's days, sometimes it's weeks or a few years. It'll all evaporate. I love watching old, very early movie clips.

You can sometimes see them on YouTube from city scenes, 1890 New York, Fifth Avenue, London, 1900 London, people walking around the city streets, hurrying, still horses and carriages, or a little bit later, 1910, 1915, first cars. Where are they now? All the drama of their life, nobody even remembers anybody's name.

These hundreds of people running through the streets, now you look at them, what were their names? Nobody remembers. So these are how ephemeral the human form is.

And even if they did remember, maybe if you do something, they will remember your name, but that doesn't make any difference either. You evaporate as this form is very short-lived. So yes, seeing how importance, relative importance, absolute importance.

We've been addressing tonight the secret of life for humans at their present evolutionary stage, and what we are witnessing is a shift to a different level of consciousness for humanity, and this is why we are going through critical times. Huge shifts only happen when huge challenges happen. Again, we see from once and before, challenges coinciding with huge transformations.

Without the challenge, no transformation. There are huge collective challenges coming towards us, and that's fine. And that can become, will eventually become a trigger for a collective transformation of consciousness.

Whether or not we need to experience a regression, it's possible through collective disasters. We may have to go through that. It's fine.

There's nothing wrong with that. The one being that continuously incarnates, the light of consciousness is gradually flowering in this dimension and growing in this dimension. Every setback is part of the journey.

Every obstacle is an essential part of the journey. What seems to be in the way often turns out to be the way. It becomes the opening.

So it's a wonderful adventure to be involved in this, especially if you realize that in addition to a person, in addition to personal meaning to your life, there's a deeper and more important transcendent meaning to your life, far more important than whatever you may be doing as a person, but they're connected. So this is how it is. And with this, I leave you and wish you wonderful journey more deeply into the essence of who you are.

[Speaker 2] (32:34 - 32:38)

More Enlightened Teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Everything Has A Soul [cef9e6e7-2fdf-46de-b893-e419330837d7]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:54)

Everything has a soul. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about an inspiring trip he took to Alaska. He describes the awe he felt on a tour through a majestic forest.

Eckhart explains at one point he lagged behind his guided tour group so he could feel the sacredness of the nature around him. He says we have lost touch with a form of knowing which transcends conceptual learning. He believes beyond our five senses there is a more profound form of knowing that we must revive.

Eckhart explains ancient people sense the aliveness of the world around them. He says when we define our existence only through mental concepts, sacredness is lost. Eckhart believes for the sake of the planet and ourselves, we need to realize that everything is alive.

Everything has a soul.

[Speaker 1] (0:57 - 37:07)

If I had sufficient time, I would experience the forest alone, non-conceptually, and walk through it. Just being there as the perceiving presence and sense it deeply, connect with it at a deep level, free of concepts. Just pure experiencing of the not only individual life forms, but the totality of that energy field.

And then, at the end of that walk or hike, if somebody had asked me what have you learned about the forest, I would have to say nothing. I haven't learned anything, not conceptually. I have experienced it deeply, but conceptually I don't know anymore about it.

But I knew it, I was able to know the forest in a different way, because that is also a kind of knowing. And then, perhaps the next day, if I had still been there, would have asked the guide for a tour of the forest with explanations and learnings. And on the third day, I would go through the forest again and have both dimensions.

I know something about it, but I'm not trapped in my conceptual knowledge. I'm also able to step out of my conceptual knowledge and know the forest more deeply than I could ever know it through concepts. And that is the balance between the two modalities of knowing.

Everybody in this world is familiar with the first modality of knowing, that's all we know. But we lost knowledge of the other modality of knowing. We don't, or very few humans, have access to it.

But in the past, all over the world, humans had that, had access to that way of knowing. Because in all indigenous cultures, whether it's in South America or North America or Polynesia or Australia or Asia, China, Taoism, a very deep empathy with the natural world and the energies behind the natural world. I mean, also in ancient Europe, also that deep connectedness with nature, the Druids, the ancient tribes in England, the Germanic tribes and so on, and the Romans and the Greeks, they all had it.

So with reference to indigenous cultures, the anthropologists call it animism, animism from animus, the soul, that everything has a soul. Now, how is it that all over the world, different cultures came to the same conclusion or had the same belief? How is that possible?

Well, the answer is simple. It wasn't a belief. It wasn't a mental thing.

They all had the ability to sense that. So it was sensing a reality underlying sensory perceptions. There's more to the world than sensory perception, what is accessible to us through sensory perception.

And then the conceptual mind became more and more developed in humans. And through this overdevelopment of the conceptual mind, they gradually lost the ability to sense the aliveness in the environment and especially in the natural world through excessive conceptualization. And through excessive conceptualization, also the ego grew stronger and stronger because the ego is a conceptual sense of self.

So you reduce the world to mental concepts. And not only the world, you reduce yourself to a mental concept. And that becomes a mental image that you live with.

You call it me. And so that was the enormous price we had to pay, so to speak, for our gain in scientific knowledge, technology, and so on. We gained enormous knowledge there and we lost something equally enormous.

And then, of course, as a result of excessive or extreme conceptualization, then in the 19th century, we began to develop seriously science and industry. An industrial revolution happened in England. Darwin came along and discovered, well, he wasn't, other people also discovered it even before him, but he became famous, as everybody knows, through the discovery of the evolution of species.

Obviously, it wasn't quite a realization that there has been, there is an evolution, there has been an evolution. But the unfortunate thing is that the evolution is regarded as a random process. According to this theory, there is no intelligence behind it, and not even a purpose, except perhaps survival of the fittest.

So there's no, as the theory of evolution came and began to come into serious conflict with, obviously, with Christianity and et cetera, and gradually that seeped into the collective consciousness or unconsciousness, and even humans who had never even

heard of Darwin became affected by this. It seeped into the main, into the culture, the belief that the universe actually is meaningless. It doesn't make sense because it's a random coming together of molecules and atoms, and it is devoid of any kind of purpose.

And that seeped into the consciousness of humans, even though humans had never heard of the theory of evolution, and that became gradually part of the mainstream belief system and culture, and still to this day, many scientists, but not all, have this belief that the material world is all there is, and that all evolutionary processes are random events. And so the entire universe that we see is a random coming together of atoms and molecules, the beauty we see, or the beauty we create, everything is meaningless according to that. Before we had this idea that the belief, a Christian story, the story, biblical story of creation, God created, it's less a kind of architect, created gradually the world, and then the idea of God gradually disappeared, and when Nietzsche discovered in the 19th century when he was writing his famous realization that he called God is dead, I don't think he referred to the actual God, because that would not be possible, but to humans, God would become dead. And God, meaning there is a greater, deeper, higher intelligence behind creation.

And then we came into conflict with nature, and we started to destroy nature, because we lost the ability to sense the sacredness of nature, which all the ancient cultures had, and because we could no longer sense the aliveness of it, and then we had the belief that it's all meaningless anyway, it's all random. Now there are many scientists, other scientists that say, well, there isn't enough time for this universe to have come into existence as an orderly universe, a cosmos, cosmos means order as opposed to chaos, there were just even billions of years would not be enough time for randomly these things coming together as they are. There's a famous example of the monkey and the typewriter, it goes back to the time when people used typewriters, but nowadays you would use a monkey on the keyboard, so if you, according to this, if you give the monkey enough time, the monkey of course randomly will type in numbers on the keyboard, if you give the monkey enough time, eventually the monkey will come up with one of the works of Shakespeare. Now how long would that take? And probably billions of years, probably even that would take more than the entire lifespan of the universe as we know it.

I've heard another slightly funny, similar story, somebody's inviting some people for a sumptuous, fantastic dinner, beautifully cooked and prepared, and they enjoy this fantastic dinner, best ingredients, and at the dinner they are asking, is there a chef? Does a chef exist? The cook, is there a cook?

Do you understand? It's an absurd question, because obviously there is a chef, you had this wonderful dinner, there must be a chef, but you are questioning it, you can't, I don't believe there is a chef, because I can't see him, he's probably gone home. The chef has retired, and the dinner has come into existence, into existence randomly, it cooked itself.

So it is not necessary for us to believe that the ancient humans, indigenous people, ancient people throughout the world, we do not need to believe the same thing that they believed, or they didn't just believe it, they sensed it. It's not for us to persuade, convince ourselves that there is an intelligence behind all that, an organizing principle, a power, a spirit presence that pervades the universe, it's not a belief, the question is, are we able to regain the ability to sense that? That is the question, not changing our belief system, it's nothing to do with belief, in fact every belief is a hindrance, because it's a concept.

Are we able to regain this ability to sense the aliveness that pervades the universe, throughout the universe? Not only the ancient indigenous culture spoke of it, later on also the great religions of the world came to that realization, in Hinduism and in Taoism in China especially, they had a very deep ability to sense that which is hidden, the energy that is hidden behind our sense perception and the spirit presence. This is true religion, is the ability to sense the ultimate sacredness of the universe which includes you, to sense that.

True religion isn't really a conceptual belief system that comes in later or it comes when humans perhaps lose the ability, then religion becomes conceptualized and it becomes in many cases when you lose the ability to sense that, when you lose that completely and then you still have a religion, then your religion has become an ideology. It then has become an ideology which is mental constructs and not only that, you identify with those mental constructs, in other words they become incorporated into your egoic sense of identity and so religions have in many cases become incorporated into the human ego and become corrupted because originally they originated from the deep realizations and then gradually in many cases, not in all cases, it doesn't apply to every human being, but in roughly speaking it's become lost and become replaced with mental concepts. In Christianity if you say I believe that this and this and this happened, then you are saved. I don't think that's true because if you, it just means I believe that the story that somebody's telling me is correct.

It's a story I have no way of verifying whether it's correct or not, but I believe it's correct and therefore I'm saved. Of course throughout history many Christians said they believed that and very obviously they were not saved because quite often they did dreadful things. But perhaps there have always been some individuals who were able to go deeper in every religion including Christianity and usually it's not been the people who were in the hierarchy, high up in the hierarchy of the establishment, established churches.

Those humans, I don't know how many of them who were still able to sense the deeper truth that is the core of all religions, they tended to be the humble and simple people who had a low place in the hierarchy of the established churches and religious structures, simple monks and nuns quite often. So we need to dwell on this for a little

longer. I was going to have a question and answer session here but whether or not this will happen I don't know yet because I don't know how much more I will be saying now.

There's a little bit more I need to add and as soon as I run out of things to say we'll have questions. This could be tomorrow. I have here, I want to just read you just a few lines from the Tao Te Ching.

If those of you who haven't read the Tao Te Ching, the great book, Chinese book written approximately 2,500 years ago, 500 B.C., at approximately the same time that the Buddha lived but no connection. There are many, many translations. I have about seven or eight and you should probably read at least two or three translations and compare them.

The few lines which I just want to read to you, just an illustration of what we've been talking about. This is translated by Stephen Mitchell which is a good translation. Another good translation is by Jane English.

There are many others. Some of them are also quite good. The word used to describe that spirit presence that underlies the universe is the Tao is the word used here.

The Chinese spirituality uses the term the Tao. This book speaks of the Tao, the Tao Te Ching. The really translated Tao Te Ching, the real translation is the power of the Tao.

Sometimes they say it's the virtue of the Tao but it's not. It's the power of now. And it says at the beginning of the very book, in the first line, it says you can't really talk about the Tao.

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao. In some translations it's not the real Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The unnameable is the eternally real. And then of course he starts talking, continues talking about it and then it becomes a book. So first it says you can't talk about it and then he talks about it.

And somehow it works. All the words are just pointers. They're not explanations.

There's nothing to believe in. They're just pointers. Either they work for you or they don't as pointers, as signposts.

So just a few lines, just an illustration of what we've just been talking about. There was something formless and perfect before the universe was born. It is serene, empty, solitary, unchanging, infinite, eternally present.

It is the mother of the universe. For lack of a better name, I call it the Tao. It flows through all things.

And now the translator has a little footnote and points to a quote by a scientist, Albert Einstein, which happens to be my favorite quote by Einstein who has said many wonderful things. And he mentioned it in the back of the book. This was Einstein's answer when somebody asked him whether he was religious.

And so he said, he starts by saying, the scientist's religious feeling, he described it as the scientist's religious feeling is like this. What he really means is my religious feeling. But he says the scientist, I don't believe most scientists have that religious feeling that he's talking about.

He's really talking about himself, his religious feeling. So that's how I'm going to read it now. My religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that in comparison with it, all the systematic thinking of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection.

This feeling is the guiding principle of my life and work. Now this means that I believe that he had to some extent the ability still to sense that most humans had lost. He had the ability to sense that.

And he was very much had a connectedness with being more than a normal regular scientist, which was very much totally immersed in mental concepts. He developed very slowly as a child, too. He learned to speak at quite a late age.

And when he was around four years old, he wasn't just didn't speak very much. His conceptual mind was not that active. And he continued to have this ability to completely switch off when he went out for walks in nature.

And I read somewhere that the theory of relativity actually came to him when he was not thinking of his actually lying in his bathtub. One more quote, and this is from the Upanishads, another great, well, this is a selection of some of the Upanishads. There's over 100 Upanishads, the ancient scriptures of Hinduism.

Some go back, the oldest ones go back 800 years B.C., 2800 years, and then over a long time span. This book I've had for probably 40 years. It's a little paperback.

The pages are beginning to turn yellow. That's how old I am. And I have to tell you something before I read this about, I love books, not only for the content, but also for their simple presence.

Now, this is not an expensive book. It's a simple paperback. But I've had it for so long, and I can, many of my books I can identify by smell.

I have this habit since childhood. I've always smelled books and loved handling them. They're little, they're little beings.

In Hinduism, that spirit presence that underlies the universe is called Brahman. Brahman is, has no form. Brahman is the intelligence that underlies all manifestation and pervades the universe.

When you realize Brahman within yourself, that's called Atman. Atman is the divinity within you, that is the pure consciousness that you are, is Atman. That spirit presence that pervades the universe within you can be realized.

The essence of it is the consciousness that you are. There's a little line here in one of the Upanishads that says, we should consider that in the inner world, Brahman is consciousness, and that's Atman. And we should consider that in the outer world, and this is interesting, it says in the outer world, Brahman is space.

Now, that's interesting for a moment. Let's see if we consider that possibility that space is spirit presence. In the inner realm, it's the inner space of consciousness.

These are just little pointers, nothing to believe in. Either they work for you as pointers, or they don't. It's space is spirit presence.

And when you become present, thinking subsides, awareness remains, then you may be able to sense that this presence that is within you is also without, meaning outside. There's a presence that is both within and without. So you can sense when you become present within, you can sense that there is a presence that pervades the universe, even in this room.

So, in theistic terms, you could say that presence, what we describe as presence, that spiritual presence, is the presence of God. One could almost say this beautiful presence is a state of, an analogy one could use, is in a state of acute listening. But it's not really listening, we just use listening as an analogy.

It's as if you were listening for a distant sound that requires a high degree of alertness, but there is no sound. And what remains is the listening itself. But what is the listening in this analogy?

The listening is pure presence, pure consciousness, because there's nothing to listen to if there's silence. So the listening really is the consciousness that's behind the listening. And this is, I believe, why Jesus had a few parables about waiting.

You're waiting, somebody's waiting for the return of the master. So he's waiting, the master could come at any moment, and the servant is waiting, and has to stay awake and listen, because the master could come at any time. This is interpreted in a certain way in conventional Christianity, but I believe that it is an analogy, and it points towards a certain state of consciousness.

And that state of consciousness is a state of wakefulness, spiritual wakefulness. And it

actually, somewhere in the Gospels, Jesus says, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. Stay awake.

So there are parables about staying awake, and in being in an attitude as if you were in an attitude of alert listening. When you're in that attitude, and then you go out into nature, then you begin to be able to sense what the ancients were able to sense, the presence that is there beyond the outer manifestations. And this is just a little, simple, very simple little story about a father and a son having a conversation, and the father says, bring me a fruit from this banyan tree.

And the son comes and says, here it is, father, break it. It is broken, sir. He calls his father sir.

In ancient cultures, you show great respect towards your parents. So it is broken, sir. What do you see in it?

Very small seeds, sir. Break one of them, my son. It is broken, sir.

What do you see in it? Nothing at all, sir. Then his father spoke to him, my son, from the very essence in the seed, which you cannot see, comes in truth, this vast banyan tree.

Believe me, my son, an invisible and subtle essence is the spirit of the whole universe. That is reality. That is Atman.

Thou art that. You are that. Tat tvam asi in Sanskrit.

Thou art that. You are that. So that spirit presence is not just out there.

It is the essence of who you are, of what you are. So it's regaining this, and then this is the only way we can go beyond the meaninglessness of our civilization that will destroy it, unless a sufficient number of humans are able to go deeper and reconnect with the transcendent dimension. When you have lost something, and then you find it again, you regain it, you regain it at a deeper level.

For example, the ancient cultures, they lived more in harmony with nature. Then we lost that because we couldn't sense the aliveness and sacredness of nature anymore. And now the possibility arises of regaining that.

But there will be an added dimension to it, because for them, that was their natural state of connectedness. Before the human ego developed, human beings probably, most likely, lived in a less problematic state than humans are now, because the ego creates an enormous amount of dysfunction and suffering. So there was a time when humans lived in natural connectedness with beings still, in the same way that plants and animals, they are naturally connected with being.

And humans then, they lost that. They had it before, and that most likely explains, in all

cultures, you have the myth of ancient times, the so-called golden age, when there was happiness and harmony on the planet. Many ancient cultures have the same mythological tales of the golden age.

Even the paradise in the Bible could be interpreted in that way, when humans lived in natural connectedness. And then they began to develop the ability to think, which was an enormous, enormous event. Perhaps that is symbolized in the Bible by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to be able to divide and say, this is that, that is that.

So it could point to the beginning of thinking. The thinking function was the end of paradise, in the same way that the ancient mythological tale from ancient Greece of a young man called Narcissus. And this mythological story contains deep wisdom, because it points to the arising of the human ego, which is to have an image that you carry of yourself, and you have a relationship with it, and it makes you unhappy.

And so that's enormous wisdom contained there in those tales. The myth of the golden age, natural connectedness with being was then lost, but it can be regained. When we regain it, we are then consciously connected to the being dimension, instead of you're unconsciously connected because you don't know anything else.

You've never not had it. If you have something, if you have something in your life that you were born with, a beautiful thing, you've never not had it. Yes, it's fine, you live with it, but if you then lost it, and then regained it, found it again, you would appreciate it at a much deeper level.

So there is an added dimension when you lose something, and then you regain it. You regain it at a deeper level. As we regain this connectedness with being that humans lost a long time ago, before the arising of ego, then we regain it as ego begins to be transcended.

We are able to regain that connectedness, but now being fully conscious of it, of your connectedness with it.

[Speaker 2] (37:07 - 37:28)

It's a big difference. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast. Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Expressing Our Deeper Purpose [0d9ebdff-7bea-44bc-9c73-8a625527ca2e]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:40)

Expressing our deeper purpose. In this episode, Eckhart discusses our deeper purpose. He emphasizes how important it is for humans to be connected to the kind of higher intelligence that comes from presence.

While our careers matter, he says what we do in our work life is secondary to our state of consciousness. He explains there's a vast intelligence underlying the world that we perceive with our senses and our job is to connect to it. Eckhart believes we are all manifestations of the one great consciousness emanating like rays of sunlight.

[Speaker 1] (0:42 - 31:35)

So when your attention is in the present moment, then there are many moments when you're not actively doing something. You're just sitting somewhere or standing somewhere or walking. That is a more kind of passive state of presence.

And that's very important too. Are you the observing presence at this moment as you're sitting on the plane, looking out of the window or looking at the aisle if you don't have a window seat and you're sitting there. Now you might say, well, this environment on the plane, maybe you don't have a window seat.

It's not particularly inspiring. And after you've looked at it for a few minutes, you say, okay, what else is there to look at? Nothing.

And then you might get drift off into something else. So it's important to realize there's not just present moment awareness. It's not just the awareness of what is around you.

It is more fundamentally the awareness of yourself in that moment. So it doesn't, your environment does not need to be particularly interesting. And if it's not interesting, like as it would be if you're going out into nature, there's wonders all around you.

But if it's not particularly interesting, like you're trapped on, you're sitting on a plane or on a bus or whatever, or at the airport, then direct your attention to yourself. This is the essential part. The deeper part of being present is to be consciously, to realize that you are, not to realize who you are, but to realize that you are.

And that is the sense of beingness or presence, present within. When you are conscious of your surroundings, you're present without. Then being conscious of yourself as the presence being present within, one could say.

Both should be operating really simultaneously. But there may be times when you may

close your eyes and then you can sense very strongly that you are. In other words, I am.

Not that you are anything, this or that, just I am. That's the key. That's what God called himself, herself, itself, the I am.

And as I'm speaking about this now, the important question is, do you realize at this moment what it is that I'm talking about? Thinking has nothing to do with it. If you think you need to understand what I'm saying, you're wrong.

You cannot understand it. It's nothing conceptual. Can you sense the beingness of you, the presence, here and now, which you cannot define in any way, but there's a silent power, one could say, at the center of your being, there's a silent power.

That's one way of putting it. It's very still, but it's alive. So the question, who am I, has two answers.

The first answer, who am I, is I'm a man or a woman, and I'm of such and such age, such and such a race, such and such profession, such and such physical condition. All those things describe who you are on that level. So when you ask people that question, this is what they refer to as I.

Who am I? Well, obviously, I'm a so-and-so old, I'm an old white male, in my case. That's my form identity, as people would call me nowadays.

Maybe in the past, they might have said a wise old man, but now I'm an old white male. It doesn't sound very good. But what can you do?

So that's one answer, and you have different answers, of course, for that. That's who you are. But the second answer, who you are, comes from a deeper place.

So if I ask you again then, who are you, but from the deeper place, beyond all the things that you just told me about who you are, gender, et cetera, et cetera, age, et cetera, who are you? Now, the second answer to the question, it can come through words, but that's not the real answer. You could say I am the consciousness, and that is true, but that's still a conceptual answer.

The real answer is silence, and in the silence or stillness, there is a realization of being. So that is the depth's dimension, the deep I. You are both, but the depth's dimension is a more fundamental.

The only real thing is that. The rest is an insubstantial movement of a dreamlike movement of fluctuating forms. Another Buddhist monk I talked to, I must have spoken to many Buddhist monks.

And he said, there are no people. What do you mean? He said, no, there are no people.

There are only karmic formations. So now you know what you are. You are a karmic formation.

That would be the personality, as I call it, with all its attributes. And of course, who you are on that level is determined by the past. You have come, even your body is determined.

It goes back hundreds of thousands or a million years of people reproducing bodies, one body after another, after another. And finally, you appear briefly, and then you disappear. And then there's your whole past, cultural past, genetic past, past lives, whatever.

All that makes up who you are. That's what he meant, karmic formation. That's your whole karma.

Karma is the, karma literally means action, but karma is the conditioning that you identify with as yourself. And that is the unconscious state. Karma gets perpetuated in the unconscious state.

So the same conditions you perpetuate in your lifetime, and you transmit it to your children, and you infect other people with your karma, people who are around you. The moment you wake up and become aware of your conditioning, which is a person with its characteristics and idiosyncrasies and all the things that make up the person, the moment you become aware of yourself as an ultimately not really being the person, but the awareness that's behind the person, you come to the end of karma in the traditional sense of perpetuation of the stream of unconsciousness, the wheel, the wheel, that then a different dimension enters through that awakening. The karma ends in the present moment when you are able to respond to situations instead of react to situations. Because the way in which you react or respond to a situation is usually determined by the conditioning of your mind, your mental or emotional conditioning.

So what happens or is much more important in your life, people think things that happen to me determine my life, but they're ultimately not true. The way in which you respond to what happens to you determines how you experience your life. So not so much what happens, but how you respond or react to what happens that determined your life experience.

It also determines what happens next, how you deal with the present moment. In the unconscious state, you react to life situations, and thereby usually it means any challenge, you usually make it worse and you amplify it through your reaction. That is the case with human beings when you have a confrontation with another human being.

It's the case with any challenge that anything that happens to you in your life, you contract an illness and then you react, oh my God, it's horrible. Your psychological

suffering is often far worse than the physical suffering. And then you get old, oh my God.

For many people, psychologically, they suffer more than physically. So we can use the two words, react, respond. The way I use them is react means it's a karmically determined reaction.

You react out of the conditioning of your mental emotional field. Response implies that you are present, and your action is no longer determined by the mental emotional conditioning of the person. There is a higher intelligence, one could say, I call it wisdom.

But in other words, there's a high intelligence that can then operate in your daily life. A higher intelligence, which we could call wisdom. So it's not the conventional intelligence that you can measure in IQ tests.

That's a very limited version of intelligence. There's a higher intelligence that comes in through presence that deals more intelligently with any situation that arises in your life. That's the only possible way of dealing intelligently is by dealing with the situation through presence.

Especially important, of course, in human relationships, because there's so much unconsciousness that happens in the interaction between human beings, between two human beings, and larger numbers of human beings, and then groups of your collectives of your millions of human beings here, and another million there and there. You can see when you look at politics and affairs, and so what's happening in the world, there's very little intelligence, the way they deal with things. And you would be, you're amazed.

How can they be so short-sighted and ultimately have to use a simple word, stupid. But these people have degrees, they have university degrees. How can they be so stupid?

Well, they only activated a very limited version of intelligence that you can measure in IQ tests. That's not enough. I'm sorry, I don't want to offend anybody who has a very high IQ.

And, or is a member of this, there's an organization called Mensa, I believe. So if you have a very IQ, you can be a member of that. And that's good for your identity, of course.

So I don't want to take anything away from you. But there is, that is what real intelligence, it's a, yes, it's a form of intelligence, but it's a relatively low form of intelligence. A much higher intelligence comes in through presence, and that is lacking in the world.

There are, occasionally you see, very rarely you see a politician, actually you can see, oh, this person has some real intelligence and insights. And it's usually not the people who are running things. It's, if it's a politician, it's usually somebody who's been pushed

to the periphery of politics.

And from there, he or she comments on the stupidity of what's happening in the world. I've observed it. It's in different countries, similar phenomenon.

There are a few people here and there who can see clearly where we are going and what we're doing, and it's crazy. There is a lack of this higher intelligence that is beyond the egoic mind. And at the moment, it doesn't look good because we are going, oh, no.

I was going to use that weird expression about the hand basket again. No. No.

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

Now, it's important when you look at the state of the world, it's important that you do not enter a reactive mode because that will draw you into unconsciousness. If you watch too much television or current affairs, you will be drawn into, most likely, unconsciousness unless you watch it as an anthropological study of how misguided humanity can be. So you need to stay present while you look at all this and see what's happening.

Question may arise, shouldn't I be doing something to, well, there may be something you can do. Bring some sanity into this world, perhaps through saying something, speaking out, pointing out something, not creating enemies. If you see people are deluded in what they say or do, don't make them into enemies and attack them and say, you are totally crazy.

It may be that what they do may be and probably is dysfunctional and stupid, or the opinions they hold may be extremely misguided and irrational. So you can address the opinions that they hold, their mental positions, and point out the irrationality and so on without making the people who hold their opinion into enemies. So don't equate the mental positions that people hold with who they essentially are.

You can speak out, maybe you can post something on one of the many platforms that are available, something that is sane rather than insane. Perhaps you can post something that points out the insanity of it all. So some people do that, so that's a good thing.

No, because some people may suddenly say, oh yes, that's true. So higher intelligence comes in and that can then deal with situations and that's the end of karma. What humanity is doing now collectively is karma playing itself out, the movement of unconsciousness.

And so with reference to individuals, we talked about responsibility. Can you hold a person responsible for what they do if they are unconscious, if they are in the grip of

their mental, emotional conditioning? That is part, that's their karma.

Can you hold a karmic formation person? Can you hold a karmic formation responsible for what they do? Not really.

So there's a deep wisdom in what Jesus said, forgive them for they know not what they do. Forgiveness means the realization that they are not responsible, they cannot do otherwise. But we also, and this also applies to the collective, what all the politicians are doing and so on.

They don't know any better. They are in the grip of egoic reactivity and short-sightedness that comes with it and so on. But as is the case with individuals, although they may not be and are not, cannot be held responsible, and yet they have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness.

This is how humans ultimately awaken. They are not responsible, they still have to create suffering for themselves and others. And through the suffering that's created by the unconsciousness, an awakening happens.

So in other words, the ego is necessary for the awakening to happen. The ego ultimately self-destructs. It has built into it a self-destruct function.

That is ultimate wisdom. So that also applies to the collective. Already, if you look at the 20th century, the wars that happened and the internal conflict in countries that happens, the countless millions upon millions killed by other humans, what they did, the terrible suffering, this is all the movement of unconsciousness.

They don't know what they do. And then humanity suffers and suffers and suffers. Through the suffering, gradually an awakening happens.

So the ego's dysfunction creates suffering, and ultimately the suffering acts as an awakener. It's just a question of how much longer is the suffering going to go? And what's the next stage, you may ask, on the scale of collective suffering?

I don't know, but it doesn't look good at the moment. But you are here to represent, to embody the higher intelligence. I mean, hopefully you don't make that into a mental concept.

I embody the higher intelligence. It is true, but it should not become a mental concept that you identify with. And so the sanity, you embody the sanity in a world that is still predominantly, one has to say, insane in many ways.

Not all of it is insane, but a lot of it, some important parts are insane. So let's then see what the, whatever comes is maybe bad from a lower perspective, doesn't look good. But ultimately, everything happens in the service of the evolution of consciousness, even

in your own life.

And if it applies in your own life, it also applies to the collective of humanity. So don't allow yourself to get drawn into these dysfunctional states that are associated with ego. For example, fear and anxiety.

And the other would be anger or despair. Or another very dangerous and dysfunctional state is called nihilism or nihilism, which is the sense that it's all completely pointless. One could slip into that.

There are many millions of humans these days who are in a nihilistic state where the whole world does not make sense and everything is pointless. Whatever I do is pointless. They see things are not going well in the world.

What's the point of it all? It's all meaningless. Nihilism is particularly started in the 19th century, when the notion that there is a purpose disappeared when Darwin discovered the fact of evolution, but unfortunately, the misinterpretation was that evolution is entirely random.

There is absolutely no guiding intelligence behind it at all. It's a random process. By chance, atoms and molecules come together and after billions of years, we appear.

And Beethoven's Ninth Symphony suddenly appears out of nowhere through the accidental coming together of atoms and molecules. It's all meaningless, absolutely meaningless. As the Old Testament prophet said in the book of Ecclesiastes, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

Vanity, the old meaning of the word is pointlessness. It's all pointless. That book almost got into the Bible.

I don't know how, but it's wonderful literature, but not particularly inspiring, but great to read. So that's nihilism, the idea that there's no purpose behind this, nothing behind the phenomena that we see, there's no deeper intelligence. That's probably what Nietzsche was talking about when he talked in the 19th century, God is dead, that insight.

And then he wrote about what that means, what repercussions it have. And he saw that at an early stage. He saw that it would result in widespread nihilism.

So the dysfunctional states then, fear, anxiety, anger, nihilism. That means there's still, you don't see things clearly and deeply enough, and you haven't gone deep enough within yourself, then you experience a fear, you experience anxiety and all those things. It's strange that I've observed in this country and some other countries, the reaction to the pandemic, one could almost divide the collective reaction into two camps.

One camp says, this is so very, really dangerous. We need to be very, very careful and

we're anxious and fearful as to, oh, this is, of course it is dangerous, but fearful. The other camp says, you're overblowing the whole thing, it's an overreaction.

We should, all these things, they just want to control us, all these things, be brave, just step out, go outside. All this is, the mandates are pointless and controlling and so you have this, and they get angry about it. Ah, the others are fearful, oh.

And then the two camps dislike each other very much. And the fearful ones then get angry on top because the others are not fearful, they're angry and then they're angry with them. It's.

So you represent, you embody the sanity in this world. You have to, and it's a challenge, but that is the purpose of your life. Talking about nihilism, that's the opposite, is the realization of how important you are, not conceptually, don't go there, how important your consciousness is in this world.

How important it is for this world, for human beings to be sane and connected to the deeper or higher intelligence in this world. That is your purpose in life, no matter, that's your deeper purpose. Your outer purpose is whatever you do in your work situation, in your life situation, it matters to some extent, but it does not matter absolutely.

It matters, but not absolutely. There's only one thing that matters absolutely, and that is your state of consciousness, your connectedness with being, embodying presence. So in other words, what you do is secondary, but how you do what you do is primary.

The how refers to the state of consciousness that underlies what you do. The what is secondary, the how is primary. So there is an intelligence, a vast intelligence that underlies the phenomenal world that we perceive with our senses.

Even Einstein said that very strongly. He could sense that very strongly. I don't have the actual quote in my head, I wish I did, but he said he was aware of that, he acknowledged that.

That's why he had a connectedness with it, and why deep inspiration came to him. He was a great thinker, but the realizations of theory and relativity, they came to him, that came to him. So there is a vast intelligence underneath it all that is the intelligence that operates in you.

There's only one, not many. Not my consciousness or your consciousness. We are manifestations of the one consciousness, like rays of sunlight.

And with that, let's just have a brief silence, stillness.

[Speaker 2] (31:59 - 32:19)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the

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Eckhart Tolle Feed Drop : Real Good Podcast [e8c568c5-ec82-4d0f-9684-11f7bfe4b34b]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:29)

We're going to do a little something different in the feed today. We're sharing another episode of a podcast called Real Good by US Bank. Every season, Real Good seeks to tell stories of people putting in the work.

It's a podcast that shows us that while the world is an imperfect place, there are people out there trying to make it better. They've put out four really great seasons and they've just started their fifth. You're about to hear a clip from the fifth season.

If you like what you heard, go listen and subscribe to Real Good wherever you get your podcasts.

[Speaker 3] (0:31 - 1:55)

This is Real Good by US Bank, a podcast about helpers. I'm Faith Saley. Eric Toda is a master marketer, brand visionary, and strong supporter of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community.

Professionally, Eric is the global head of social marketing and executive director of Meta Prosper, both at Facebook's parent company, Meta. Yet in the years following a slate of AAPI-directed violent crimes, Eric's grown a reputation as a vocal advocate for his community, both in business and broader society. Eric doesn't shy away from tough issues or hard talk.

He shared stories of violence directed at his grandfather, discrimination he grew up with in Northern California, and the moment that propelled him into public advocacy. He also spoke with us about the world he wants to leave for his children. But before we tackle the future, we're going to take a trip to the past.

We begin the conversation with a topic that can be daunting for anyone, parental expectations. All right, Eric, I just want to start out by getting the hard stuff out of the way. We're going to we're going to go a little dark, and I would like you to explain how you disappointed your mother because I've heard you say that she wanted you to be an optometrist.

Go.

[Speaker 1] (1:56 - 4:06)

Man, she really did. She really did. This will actually be the first time I ever speak about this.

And this piece of information is the first time it'll ever be truly, truly public. I'm actually blind in the left eye. Really?

Yeah. So, Faith, you know, you did your research on me. This is one thing you didn't know.

I'm blind, legally blind in the left eye. When I was five years old, I was a bit rambunctious of a child. And I wasn't listening to my mother when she was telling me to not go into, you know, some bushes in the middle of January where there was just literally just sticks.

It was like like like little spears everywhere. And unfortunately, unfortunately, one of those little spears hit me in the eye and I lost my vision. And so at a very early age, I had to deal with a little bit of, you know, a little bit of, you know, an adjustment, only having one eye.

And I saw a ton of optometrists during the time, a ton of ophthalmologists during that time. And my uncle was actually one of our optometrists. And my mother saw that profession as so honorable because of how they were helping me and how they were supporting me.

And so, you know, when when my cousin started to go down the path of being an optometrist, she really wanted me to be an optometrist as well. She really wanted me to. She said that I could help relate to kids like me.

She thought that I could, you know, show empathy to kids that didn't listen to their mothers, all that stuff. And so, yes, that, you know, I've. You know, when I didn't become an optometrist, my mother was certainly disappointed.

I haven't asked her how she feels now. Something tells me that maybe she would still want me to be an optometrist. I don't know.

There's still time. Hey, there's there's always time. There's always time.

[Speaker 3] (4:06 - 4:08)

As long as you're a global optometrist.

[Speaker 1] (4:09 - 4:21)

Yeah. You know what? Like, it doesn't matter if I'm on TV.

I know that she wants she really wanted me to be an optometrist. So, yes, I she was certainly disappointed when I chose another path, for sure.

[Speaker 3] (4:22 - 4:52)

So I didn't. So thank you for sharing that, because I didn't realize that's where it was

going to go, because I have heard you kind of casually mentioned your mom wanted you to be an optometrist in the context of talking about some stereotypical expectations of Asian-American parents, which is and I'm quoting you, which is a lot of a lot of parents want their kids to be doctors and lawyers. Right.

I did not see it veering in that rather heartwarming.

[Speaker 1] (4:52 - 5:59)

Oh, I wanted to give you something that, you know, you didn't have yet. I mean, here's the thing. There's still certainly that pressure.

Right. I think my mother being an immigrant from the Philippines, you know, the the level of success to her is postgraduate degrees. Doesn't matter what they are, just postgraduate degrees.

So when I when I decided to be an optometrist, she's like, great, then you'll be an attorney. And and and I took the LSAT, you know, I got a law school, all that good stuff. Right.

And so, you know, and obviously I didn't go. But, you know, even after that, she's like, well. You're going to get your MBA, right.

And I was like, what is it? What is with this? So so again, there's certainly still that aspect of it, for sure.

There's always been that pressure. There's always been, you know, that undercurrent of the the immigrant mindset expectation of what success looks like to what the reality looks like of what success is actually redefined in America now. And so, yeah, I mean, you're not wrong.

I just wanted to give you something a little different.

[Speaker 3] (6:00 - 6:19)

I love that your success in a field that is decidedly not medical or law is is a challenge to stereotypes, but also you have been really transparent about the fact that, again, quoting you, you barely graduated high school.

[Speaker 1] (6:20 - 7:32)

I mean, that's not untrue. I, you know, I think. High school was really difficult for me for a number of different reasons, and the easiest thing for me to say was, ah, this school is not for me.

Right. But I've done a lot of work on myself with my therapist and taking care of my

mental health and really understanding why I do things and understand why I think things. And when I think back during my high school time, it wasn't that just high school or it wasn't that school just wasn't my thing.

It was because school is very difficult for me because I grew up in a town that was predominantly white, that didn't have a lot of people that look like me. And immediately you feel pretty isolated. You feel different.

So that's one thing that you're thinking about alongside school. The second thing is, it's that when when you have that and you also have these expectations of, OK, well, if he is one of the only Asian people in the school, he must be amazing at math. That's another thing you have to think about alongside the other thing and alongside and alongside just the basics of school.

[Speaker 3] (7:32 - 7:37)

And then and alongside the fact that you were blind in one eye. But I mean, there's certainly that.

[Speaker 1] (7:37 - 7:54)

Yeah, I mean, there's certainly that, too. But, you know, and then and then on top of all of that, you do feel and sense and witness and experience discrimination. And that happened pretty frequently to me.

And for a long time.

[Speaker 3] (7:54 - 8:02)

Can you can you give us I'm sure there are countless examples, but what kind of stuff were you dealing with growing up in Moraga, California?

[Speaker 1] (8:03 - 11:19)

Yeah, for those of you don't know, Moraga is a suburbs of the Bay Area. It's it's an affluent, predominantly Caucasian town. And, you know, being one of the only Asian families there, you know, and I grew up there from when I was five until I graduated high school.

I actually live about two minutes from Moraga now. It's and we can go into that. There's a whole little reason for that.

But the things that you experience are significant otherness, where you open up your history books and you see parts of American history in your history books as you're a child. And you see things that have defined the United States and the people who that have defined the United States, good or bad. And when you don't see yourself in those

history books, you they immediately say, well, who the hell are you and do you even belong here?

When did you come to the United States, Eric? And for a little bit of history, my family came to the United States pre-Gold Rush. So I'm fifth generation, fourth generation Japanese-American from Central California.

And, you know, I don't speak another language. My grandparents were born here. My great grandparents were born here in Monterey.

And when I get I get asked, you know, where are you from? I'm from Monterey. And they're like, well, that's not true.

You're from another foreign you're from a foreign place. And you feel that that you feel those questions in your heart. You feel the weight of those questions.

You feel ashamed to be different. You wish that people didn't you wish that people looked at like you like at you. But they saw themselves so they wouldn't have to ask questions.

You wish that you didn't bring the foods that you did to school because I love Filipino food and my mom made a ton of Filipino food. I couldn't bring it to school because it's very aromatic. And because of that, the weight that you pull with you through your education and through and through school is something it's additional to the already unique pressures of being a teenager in high school, trying to figure things out.

And, you know, we there are many times in which my family, when I was growing up. Left the restaurant early because someone on another side of the restaurant didn't like how we look like, you know, before the food didn't come. There are many times where, you know, in high school, I asked a girl to homecoming and she point blank tells me, I don't like it.

Asian guys, why would you even ask me? And that's totally OK in her mind. Right.

And so I think I do think you harbor all of these things. And then again, like alongside the pressures of high school, the pressures and this is I went to a very great high school that is, I think, top 20 in the state. And so the pressure is already there to succeed.

And I just couldn't do it. I just couldn't couldn't do it. And that's why I barely graduated high school, because I barely survived high school.

[Speaker 3] (11:20 - 11:35)

You know, just a side note. Sorry, I just have to say this, Greg, in case it gives anybody hope. My niece, who is 13 and is black, has announced she will never date anyone who's not Asian and she will only marry an Asian man.

So I don't know if we can all look at that as progress.

[Speaker 1] (11:36 - 12:47)

You know, I think the bigger thing for me is, first off, like you learn saying that to someone somewhere. Right. Oh, I don't like Asian people.

You learn that. That's a learned behavior. You know, my kids are mixed race.

They're Jewish and Asian. And, you know, there are there are many people that won't look like them. There are many people that do look like them.

But the reality is, is that you will never hear from me and my wife telling our kids, like, you know, you can't be with them because they don't look like you like you. You love who you love. You do you.

Right. But I do think I think, yeah, there's that's certainly progress. I also think, too, just generally speaking, generally speaking.

I would love for us to be to be in a place in which that's not the first thing that you think about when you get asked the homecoming, like you tell me, tell me I have bad breath or something, like, tell me, tell me I don't dress well, tell me I can't dance, tell me I can't dance, like to tell me to tell me that's like that's the first thing that you tell me, like, like, let me down easy, you know, have some tact here, have some tact.

[Speaker 3] (12:50 - 12:51)

Greg, you were going to say something.

[Speaker 2] (12:52 - 15:15)

No, I think this is such an interesting area we're exploring because it it's the minority tax, you know, it's the it's all of the other stuff that you'd have to navigate just to compete, feel accepted, a sense of belonging. And I think all these things that Eric is describing, you know, it's oftentimes referred to as that tax and, you know, it's the extra burden that you carry. And not only do you I don't know if you felt this, Eric, but, you know, similar to your experience, mine was was was very much the same.

But the other side of that coin is sometimes you don't even feel accepted in your own community because you're you're trying to navigate the majority world and you're trying to do everything you can. And as a young child, you don't have that. You don't have the tools yet to navigate that.

You don't have the tools to say just be yourself and just do you. And just because you're trying to deal with all of your your peer group and and just fit in and you're not yet equipped with the sense of self-esteem and self-awareness and self-worth to say, you

know what, I am who I am. Now, there are some kids who are there are some kids who early on to sort of adapt that that coping mechanism and they're just going to be who they are and they're able to push through.

But most kids aren't equipped. And so you're doing that and you overcompensate. And so I used to come back to my neighborhood and the kids in my neighborhood used to like I went to a Catholic school and so we used to have to wear these ties and come home with my little clip on.

And like the kids in my neighborhood would like snatch my clip on off and I'd have to fight. So I was fighting at school and when I got home, because when I got home, the kids, oh, you're trying to be white or you think you're cute or you think you're smarter than us and you think you and so you're sort of caught too much and never enough. And you don't know who you are.

You don't know who you are, who you should try to be. And it's a really challenging thing. And the other thing that I think, Eric, that you touched on and I would I think we should explore a little bit is.

Is it also causes friction between minority groups, right? Because it's then it's like who is accepted, who's not accepted? Well, just don't be like them.

Yeah, right. And then you might be actually be able to fit in or we might accept you as long as you're not like them and it causes divisions between groups. And so I think this is such a powerful thing that you're sharing, Eric, that faith that is worthy of exploration as well.

[Speaker 3] (15:18 - 15:42)

Eric, I my my kids go to schools where that are my kids go to two separate schools. Both of their schools are more than 50 percent Asian-American kids. And a couple of years ago, my son came home with a book about a baseball game being started in a Japanese internment camp.

[Speaker 1] (15:42 - 15:43)

The game that saved us. Yeah.

[Speaker 3] (15:44 - 15:44)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (15:44 - 15:45)

Great book. Game that saved us.

[Speaker 3] (15:46 - 16:04)

And he also came home and with tears in his eyes was bursting to tell me, mom, have you ever heard about Angel Island? I think where where where there was a prison for Chinese immigrants who were just just trying to come over to America in the 1800s.

[Speaker 1] (16:05 - 16:05)

Yeah.

[Speaker 3] (16:05 - 16:54)

Indefinitely imprisoned. And and his class was learning about the poetry they left on the wall. And I thought.

Thank God, my kid, no matter what color my kid is, thank God he's learning this history of America now, because I didn't learn about Japanese internment camps until I was going to grad school and my Japanese-American friend said, oh, you don't know about I mean, no shame. She was like, you don't know about this. My grandparents were in them.

So so I hope you're not that old, but I hope that your experience is of not seeing yourself and and not seeing the stories of Asian-Americans as part of a curriculum in school. I hope that is going extinct.

[Speaker 1] (16:55 - 18:55)

You know, I I hope so, too. And, you know, I think, you know, there's only so much I could hope. And that is why I joined the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center as the as one of the board directors, because our hope is that.

If you look at the National Mall. And you think about the museums that are on the National Mall celebrating the rich history of the United States, you certainly have the the National Museum of African-American history and culture, which is incredible if you haven't gone yet. But it details the rich history that may not be told in history books.

I think that's going to change now because it again, it's on the National Mall so that you kind of force feed that into K through 12. The American Latino, the Natural History Museum of the American Latino, the natural the National Women's History Museum and the natural the National History Museum of the indigenous people of America. But you if you when you have those alongside and also alongside the Holocaust Museum.

Right. And so I think the more that you have and celebrate the rich history, good and bad, because, again, no history is really clean of of a people, especially in the United States, you gain something called perspective and perspective breeds empathy. And so I do think that, you know, the curriculum is going to change.

And I think it's going to change with the work that we're doing at the Smithsonian, because we will have a we will have a place on the National Mall to be celebrated. But also that will help us get into curriculum for K through 12. And that's the ultimate end goal for me is that hope wasn't enough.

Hope is not a strategy to me. Action, you know, to me, especially in this time of my life, was more important to me and succeed or fail. At least I tried because, again, like to me, hope is not a strategy.

[Speaker 3] (18:57 - 19:21)

Greg, it's we're pretty lucky that not only are we talking to Eric today, but Eric, Greg and I have talked with Jorge Zamanillo, who is yeah, well, you know who he is. But I'll remind folks that he he is is leading the creation of the Hispanic Museum of the Smithsonian. So it's I mean, it's no coincidence you got two of us.

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (19:21 - 19:27)

Storytelling is not approved by the Smithsonian to be talking about it. But here we are. I love it.

But here we are. I'm sorry, Smithsonian.

[Speaker 2] (19:32 - 20:32)

Well, it's public enough that the U.S. Bank has contributed a million dollars to that museum, and so we look forward to supporting the Asian Museum, too, whenever you know when that effort really gets underway. I think I think those things are important and they're important for corporations and business to understand their role in it. You know, it's things like, you know, obviously our partnership with you, Eric, and Meta Prosper and.

Which is all about advancing the Asian Pacific Islander community, you know, it's it's a it's an important time for companies to continue to lean forward and lean in, not only because it's the right thing to do, but what we're talking about in all of this, it's actually good business, too. It's great business. It's actually good business.

The reason representation matters is clearly it's the right thing morally. It's the right social thing to do. But the reason it's the right thing to do is because it's more profitable.

[Speaker 1] (20:33 - 21:34)

I mean, I mean, I mean, let's just look at the numbers, right? Like, listen, most CEOs who don't look like me and you probably went to business school in business school. They

probably outside of partying and drinking, they probably had to go to an economics class.

Right. And in that economics class, they probably said, hey, if you're running a business, look, it might be a good thing to look at the census report. And if you look at the census report, the two fastest growing populations in the United States are Asian-Americans, half of that fueled by immigration and the African-American population combined.

You're looking at trillions and trillions of dollars in total addressable market. Now, if you are going to deprioritize DEI and if you are going to deprioritize two of those populations, guess what? New York Times estimates before 2042, those two populations will be the majority of the United States.

That means they are your consumer today. And so if you're not building equity with those consumers today, your business will cease to exist.

[Speaker 2] (21:36 - 21:37)

That is the truth.

[Speaker 5] (21:37 - 21:38)

That is the truth.

[Speaker 2] (21:39 - 23:46)

It's to your point, it's simple economics. And I think, you know, all of all of this is a wake up call to business to really understand, because the real business case and faith has heard me say this a number of times, the real business case today around DEI church. We don't we don't go to church.

We don't go to church today. The real business case today about DEI is all about inclusive growth and innovation. Like that is the business case.

Like it's it's inclusion in terms of looking at the marketplace in the broadest possible perspective and doing things at scale. That's what inclusive growth is. It's it's it's it's approaching the marketplace at scale.

And who doesn't want growth and scale? It's innovation in the sense that you're you're looking at your products and services and trying to serve the broadest possible market. And if you start with insights from the Hispanic, Asian-American, African-American and other, if you start with those insights at the very beginning as you're developing and designing your products and services, you're actually designing for everybody.

You're actually including everybody into the into the product design. And so I think it's such an exciting time for for those of us who represent and deeply care about these

communities to be in leadership roles. The responsibilities that we carry, I think it always is the extra burden of shouldering your community.

I don't know if you feel this, Eric, in the sense that. When you're in these leadership positions in these companies, you recognize that you're not only representing yourself, but you're representing a whole community behind you. And so you feel an undue sense of burden that if you fail, you're actually letting your community down.

And and, you know, you should have followed mom's advice to be an optometrist. Or what did you say? Potato, potato.

I should have done that. But no, seriously, like you actually do sort of understand that it's an undue burden in that sense. But it's also fuels you because you're actually trying to serve something bigger than yourself.

And that's how you that's how you go forward.

[Speaker 1] (23:46 - 26:06)

I mean, the burden is real, right? The burden, I mean, the weight that you feel is not for the faint of heart because you do carry you carry the hopes and the ambitions of the community in the actions that you do. But you also carry and we don't talk about this a lot.

I think you mentioned it earlier. You also carry the criticisms. Majority of the people who critique and criticize my actions, the things that I've built, my career, the way I talk, the fact that I don't speak another language, the fact that I'm not married to, you know, a full Asian woman or Asian, those people are Asian and you carry that with you.

And again, growing up in this town, not seeing other Asian people, this is this is all new to me, right? This is like this Asian versus Asian thing is very new to me. But but that's why when you talk about failure and when you talk about you, you, you, you, you acknowledge that if you fail, you don't just fail yourself.

You fail the ambitions and the dreams of the community. That's why I won't fail. Yeah, I just won't.

I just, you know, I think there's going to come a day where. I can't do the things that I do, and that's the day that I stop, but that's not that's not today, you know what I mean? And that's why that's why I just won't I have a relentless drive.

To continue to push, but to succeed and to succeed for not just my community, but for all the other communities that are adjacent to us, because to me. It's not enough that I lift my community. It's not enough that I lift my community in the black community.

It's not enough that I love my community and Hispanic community. It's because I don't

just represent half of my children. I represent the totality of them and the totality of their friends.

And so it's my drive to succeed and to change the perspective of people who look like me, of people that I put on that may not look like me. And and that's why, again, you know, I just I refuse to fail. Refuse.

Yeah.

[Speaker 3] (26:06 - 26:38)

I want to talk about how you became so vocal about this, how you how you really found your purpose in in making this kind of personal mandate public. And I don't want to just make the Japanese internment camp a passing reference because this plays a part in your journey. Your your grandfather, Kenji James Toda, was was he put in an internment camp?

Was his family put in one?

[Speaker 1] (26:39 - 28:13)

Yeah. So my grandfather was a strawberry farmer in Watsonville, California, which is a little bit on the outskirts of Monterey. And during World War Two, right after Pearl Harbor, they have that United States mandate that all Japanese people are enemy of the state and they will be placed into an internment camp.

And while his family was getting shipped off by the U.S. Army into into an internment camp in Arizona, posted in Arizona, he decided on the way there that he was going to enlist in the U.S. Army. While the U.S. Army was taking away his farm and the ultimate the U.S. Army actually ultimately gave like, you know, there's that there's that there's that saying like, oh, you gave the farm away. They literally gave the farm away to a family, to another family that, you know, some families held it on, held on to it for when the family came back.

This family took the farm and we never saw it again. And so we lost the farm. You know, my grandfather's family ultimately went to post in Arizona and my grandfather enlisted in the U.S. Army in a all Japanese regiment codenamed the 442nd Regiment. The motto for them was go for broke. And it was all Japanese again. It was all Japanese, all Japanese American.

And they are still to this day the highest decorated U.S. Army regiment in all of armed forces.

[Speaker 3] (28:14 - 28:15)

That gives me chills.

[Speaker 1] (28:16 - 29:09)

To this day, to this day. And many of you, many people don't know this, too. There was I forgot, you know, I forgot the name of it, but there was also and again, during this time, there were other regiments dedicated to other minority groups, too, like, you know, the black community and the Jewish community.

And they fought alongside them because I remember what's really interesting. My wife, my wife's late grandfather, I remember the first one of the first things he asked me when he met me, he's like, did your grandfather fight in the 442nd? I was like, he did.

He's like, he did. He's like, I fought alongside the 442nd in Germany when, you know, when we were fighting, when we were fighting the Nazis. And I was like, and he was he was Jewish.

He's Jewish. And so he fought in the Jewish regiment. And so it's a very decorated history of the United States that not a lot of people know about.

[Speaker 3] (29:10 - 29:17)

So you're to be clear, your grandfather was what, third, third generation American, correct?

[Speaker 1] (29:17 - 29:19)

Yeah, he was born, he was born in Watsonville.

[Speaker 3] (29:19 - 29:21)

Yeah. He didn't even speak Japanese.

[Speaker 1] (29:21 - 29:22)

No, he did not.

[Speaker 3] (29:23 - 29:41)

And and his his family's farm was taken away. He he he enlists. He's a World War Two veteran.

And then when you were talking about the challenges you faced as a teenager growing up, your your grandfather was brutally attacked when you were a teenager.

[Speaker 1] (29:42 - 31:03)

Correct. When I was 14, my grandfather was a victim of a hate crime in San Francisco. You know, he used to go for walks all the time, you know, in the around Golden Gate

Park.

And that used to be like his thing. And yeah, he was he was targeted in a very brutal hate crime that left him, you know, in a hospital bed for a long time. They never found the perpetrators.

They just heard from some eyewitnesses that there are racial slurs thrown at him. And, you know, I think the when I think about that, you know, the biggest thing that I think about was. This guy fought for the freedom and democracy that allowed people to walk free on the streets, you know, and like he looks a certain way, sure, whatever.

But this guy fought in what is known as the greatest generation and probably one of the greatest victories in world history, you know, to be treated like that. And I thought, again, when I was 14, I thought that was and again, middle of high school, I thought that, you know, that was so wrong. And I wish I wish every day that back then I could have done something more.

[Speaker 3] (31:05 - 31:33)

And then you did you you you really have done something more so. So in 2020 and 2021, you became an incredibly vocal critic of racism and violence facing the AAPI community. Can you talk about the moment when you realized you I mean, you wrote something called My People Are Dying in Silence and I'm Here with a Megaphone.

What was your moment of realizing I have this megaphone, I have to use it?

[Speaker 1] (31:36 - 35:36)

You know, I think. Even before that, I think the United States was going through a significant cultural awakening. And I think we still are to this day, you know, starting with in 2017, the Me Too movement in which, you know, we started to question, again, treatment of women in the workplace, you know, the pay gap representation of women.

And ultimately that opened the door for the black community to start doing the same. And rightfully so. And you start to see.

A lot of voices that look like yours that. Maybe like me for the first 12 years, 15 years of their career, just focused on their career, right? I'm going to put together a good marketing career, I'm going to be a great business executive, you know, I'm going to do me.

But then one of the things that inspired me the most was I started to see friends that came up with me that are other executives from the black community to start to really advocate for who they are on all levels. And. One of the things that I saw through that, especially during that time, that's the summer of 2020, was that the xenophobia against

the Asian-American community and the rhetoric against the Asian-American community was at the highest and no one was really talking about it.

Certainly, we were talking about other things and rightfully so. But, you know, one of the things that I saw was that. While the black community and the female community were still very, very, very vocal, the Asian-American community was silent, like absolutely silent, and I think many people were scared, I think many people didn't know what to say.

I think, Greg, like Kyla, what you mentioned, and I fit on this too, it's you don't feel like you have the credibility to speak for an entire community. For me, I grew up in an all white town, I was the only Asian, one of the only Asian people, and then my cousins are from San Francisco and they see me and they're like, look, look, look at this white guy. And so, therefore, I'm on this spectrum of ethnicity, right, I'm like somewhere in the middle, I'm not, you know, I'm not as Asian as they want me to be, and I'm more white than they don't want, right, and so I never felt like I had a place, you know, to really speak for the community because, one, the community never accepted me because of where I sat, and two, I've been really taught to just keep my nose clean, keep my head down, and, you know, and don't speak up. What is also not said during my grandfather's hate crime attack was that the question was asked, do we continue to search for the perpetrators, and my family said no. My family said no, like, they're like, let's just leave it, let's just leave it, let's just leave it the way, you know, it's all right, like, you know, we didn't want to cause a stir, right, and I think a lot of that's generational trauma.

If you think about it, you know, my grandfather and his family were in incarceration camps with an AK-47, like, to your face, right, of course you're not going to speak up, of course you're not going to look them in the eyes, of course you're not going to kind of ruffle some feathers and, like, I'm going to press charges. No, of course you're not going to do that, right, because all you want to do is get that gun out of your face and get on with your life and go into your little corner that you've been given, and so that's been passed on, you know, through my family, you know, even to when I became an executive, you know, some of the tips that I got was, like, Eric, don't speak up, Eric, be great at math, Eric, don't challenge people, Eric, when a white executive looks you in the eye, don't look at them in the eye.

Those are all things that were passed down to me because of all the things that we've been through as a family throughout history, and so...

[Speaker 3] (35:36 - 35:42)

That's like a DNA inheritance, right? Was it your dad who told you not to look white executives in the eye?

[Speaker 1] (35:43 - 36:22)

That was generational trauma. I think that is something that you carry with you, right? And you hear it quite, like, a lot of my Black friends tell me that that is something that they carry with them as well, is that, you know, when you see, when you carry something that's so ingrained in your history, it's hard for you not to escape it.

It's hard for you not to hear in the back of your head, even though you know, even though, you know, you might have the potential to change the trajectory, right? And for me...

[Speaker 3] (36:23 - 36:33)

Eric, I, you're giving me this really, you're illuminating for me the really pernicious, really pernicious side of model minority.

[Speaker 1] (36:33 - 36:34)

Right.

[Speaker 3] (36:35 - 36:53)

Which is that this head down compliance, don't speak up, which has, is it fair to say, enabled a lot of Asian American communities to succeed to a point comes from such a horrific and destructive place.

[Speaker 2] (36:53 - 37:24)

It is, and it is in some of it too, Faith, I'm glad you brought up the model minority myth, because it's success at what cost. You know, it's, it's success in quotes. And like, what did you have to give up in terms of who you are in order to achieve that success?

Which breeds more trauma, which gets passed down from generation to generation.

[Speaker 1] (37:24 - 45:16)

It breeds more trauma because it does isolate you. I think too, the further you get away from the exact, like catalytic moment of that, you, you, you wonder like why you do things. You wonder why, why you, why you are afraid of other communities.

You know, why you don't trust, you know, certain people that don't look like you. And I think that's absolutely wrong. I think it's absolutely wrong.

And so to go back to your original question, Faith is, you know, I started to see a lot of these things happening and I started to see my black friends start to grapple with the same type of truth, especially being an executive. And what, the thing that tipped the scales for me was at the, I wouldn't say the peak, but at a surge of anti-Asian violence in New York and Oakland and San Francisco, there were about eight, nine days straight of

attacks against the community that left a few people, a few elderly people dead. And then we go into the Superbowl and all the Superbowl spots are very positive, you know, Joe Biden's in the administration now, hooray, you know, and like we got through the summer, you know, and I thought that was really wrong.

I thought that was really wrong, mostly because as an advertiser and a marketer, all it takes is for one, it's going to take consistency to defeat racism. It's going to take, it's going to take consistency, you know, to stand with minority communities. It's going to take consistency of messaging, you know, to reinforce your commitment, you know, to your employee base that probably isn't just one race.

And none of the brands did that. And it was very disappointing to me. And I get a phone call from Adweek asking if I wanted to write a thought piece on what's happening to the community as an Asian American executive.

I said, no, pretty quickly. I was within 10 seconds. I said, no, I was like, wrong person asked.

Sorry. And the reason is because I was like, I don't have a place to do this. Like, this is what possibly could I say?

What possibly could I say that could help people? And well, and the convincing argument to me from them was, Eric, you're actually our last call. There were about eight other executives that said no to us.

Eight other. And I know every single one of those eight. Right.

And I respect them. I respect them. I respect why they said no.

And to me, I was, I felt ashamed. I felt super ashamed. And, you know, those other eight executives speak other languages, you know, they're further down the spectrum than I am, you know, and I was like, you know what?

Like, I might have something to say. I might. And that's when I put pen to paper and I wrote it and I sat on it for about 48 hours.

And we kept calling like, did you do it? Did you write it? We don't touch this thing, man.

And I was like, I wrote it. I don't know if it's any good. I don't know if people are going to read this, but I wrote it and I wrote what was in my head and my heart.

And I remember sending it in to Adweek and crying, crying quite a bit. I remember not sleeping. I remember my wife asking me why I'm not sleeping.

And I was just really nervous. I was really scared. I was scared for a couple different reasons.

And this is kind of what part of the evolution of me. I was scared because I didn't think I had a place to talk about the community or lead the community or even be a leader in the community. I've always known I've been in a great executive, a great leader that certainly looks like other people.

But that was never like a con. I was never like, yes, and that's me, an Asian-American leader. Let's go.

It's always, yes, that's me. I'm a marketing executive and I just happen to be Asian. And that still continues to be true.

But now there's this other part of me where I'm like, but the part of my identity that I was not proud of before, I am proud of now. And that was the change that I am proud of now. I am proud of it.

And even if you don't like it, and even if you don't think I should be proud of it, or even if you don't think I have the right to be proud of it, I'm going to be proud of what I see in the mirror. And that was the change when I sent that piece in was I became proud of what I saw in the mirror and my faults, where I was on the ethnicity spectrum, all that stuff. I was like, that's it.

Now, as an advertising and someone that's also in corporate comms, launching something on any publication on a Friday is not advised. It's not advised. And Adweek was...

It's Shabbat, man. And they're like, you know what? This is launching today, Friday.

And I was like, guys, no one's going to read this. It's also President's Day weekend. No one's going to read this.

I was like, this is doomed. This is doomed forever. And I was so sad.

I was so sad. I was like, I poured my heart into this piece. And now no one's going to read it.

And I went to sleep. And when I woke up, I look at my phone. And I'm, you know, as a brand marketing professional, you always tell your agencies and, you know, the people internally, like, I'm going to make this go viral.

You know, like, watch this go viral. Watch this start to trend. Like, watch this.

And then you do things and you make work and it goes viral and it trends. And like, I won like one literal awards for doing just that. But seeing what I wrote that represented me, that represented my truth, that represented my experience, do what I do for a living, do those types of numbers, have those numbers dance, have those numbers shut down Adweek because they didn't have the server space.

Um, it, it showed me that I shouldn't have waited so long. And I felt really bad about that. I felt super bad about that.

And it opened the floodgates to a number of different people. Um, speaking up, I think a lot of people saw me go into the fire and not die. And so they spoke up to, um, but the biggest thing that I felt was, damn, I didn't know.

I didn't know it was going to be so easy to be proud of who I was. I just didn't know. I had no idea.

And, uh, my only hope is that those actions made other people proud of who they were, no matter where they are on their journey. And so the piece that I wrote, like you mentioned, my people are dying in silence. I'm here with megaphone led to a number of different actions.

One of which being the foundation and launching of a completely new organization dedicated to supporting Asian American small businesses in which I'm the founder and executive GM of, um, that we launched at the white house a year after I wrote that piece. And so, um, and that's meta prosper. And it changed my life writing that piece changed my life.

I think it, uh, it opened up a slew of new concerns for me. Um, but it's totally worth it. I think it's totally worth it to be proud of who you are.

And it's, it feels weird to say that, but, um, before I didn't think it was worth it.

[Speaker 2] (45:18 - 46:24)

Demonstrating courage is never easy. I mean, it is, you know, I, it, what you demonstrated in that moment was incredible, um, courage and that gave others, um, the license and the, the space to feel safe to do so, which is why it's so incredibly powerful. Um, and why it's so important that companies like us bank and others are supporters of meta prosper and, and helping to provide, um, resources to these small businesses and entrepreneurs who previously may have been hesitant or may have not known, um, you know, what are the steps to launch my business and what does success look like?

And now you've empowered all of them and given them the sense of, uh, courage that is necessary to be successful. So, uh, you're a trailblazer, man. Like that, that's, it's, it's crazy.

And I don't, I hope you don't beat yourself up about that because that, that, that courage, that, that takes, um, a long time to get to that place and space where any of us feel safe enough to demonstrate that kind of courage.

[Speaker 1] (46:24 - 48:35)

You know, I think a lot of what I thought about in that moment, uh, with my grandfather, you know, I think, uh, I remember asking him, you know, right before he passed away, like, cause I lived with him for a little bit after my grandmother passed and, you know, just take care of him, make him dinner and stuff like that. And so I got to know him really, really well. You know, he was, he was part of that generation that just doesn't talk right.

That's just like, you know, kind of rough, kind of gruff and like very, like hyper-masculine and like, you know, I had like calluses on his hands cause he's a farmer. He likes to do things himself, you know, doesn't like to ask for directions. But as he got older and as I started to take care of him more, I started to ask more questions, you know, about where he was from.

Um, you know, what, what was his favorite things to grow on the farm, things like that. But the biggest question I asked him, and I was really nervous to ask him this, uh, this is, I asked him, you know, why would you join the U.S. Army? You know, what, what went through your mind when you went, when you joined the U.S. Army as they were giving your farm away and putting your, putting your family in, in prison camps? And I remember he told me, and this is the only time he ever talked to me about it because he wasn't really, I don't, I don't know why, but he, I know why he just didn't like talking about it. Um, I joined and everybody else joined, uh, because our hope was that it was our last chance to show that we were American. Yeah.

Cause you don't know what happens, right? You don't know what happens. You saw what happened with the Holocaust.

You saw what happened with slavery. You saw what happened with all these different things. And if you, if history were to repeat itself, you don't know if you're going to get another chance to really prove you belong here.

And so he felt putting on that uniform, fighting for the democracy and freedom that this country has afforded his family for generations, really generations, um, it was worth it. And his hope was that eventually someone like me or my dad or whoever would be able to exercise those freedoms.

[Speaker 6] (48:36 - 48:36)

Your kids?

[Speaker 1] (48:37 - 48:53)

Yeah, my kids. And so when I wrote the piece, that's what I thought about. That's beautiful.

If I don't write this piece, I'm not exercising the freedoms that, that this man fought for.

He fought for, no doubt.

[Speaker 3] (48:55 - 50:42)

Eric, at the time that you wrote that piece that in which you gave yourself a voice, but also empowered so many others to feel like they had a voice. Um, it was a time where so, so much of America's focus on discrimination was specifically anti-racist discrimination against black people, right? Because we all know that George Floyd was murdered at the beginning of the pandemic.

And there was so much, finally, so much attention and black lives matter movement. And it feels like America a lot of times only has enough attention to pay to one minority at a time. And Greg, I, with your guidance, I want to return to something that you kind of, you know, posited at towards the beginning of this conversation, which is, which is, and I just defer to the both of you.

Like, what do American minorities do when they're sort of pitted against each other, either through minority myths or how much attention white America has to turn to discrimination for one minority at a time? What I don't know how often I get to hear a conversation between someone who is a black American and someone who is an Asian American about this, this, this kind of us versus them mentality that has bubbled up recurrently in our history.

[Speaker 2] (50:43 - 54:12)

You know, one of the things that was really so troubling to me that. It got touched on a little bit, but didn't get enough attention was how often some of the violence against Asian Americans was actually perpetrated by black Americans. And that was that was so unfortunate and so disappointing and distressful to me because the issue is faith and not solely there's no silver bullet in any of this, but it actually is education.

When you don't know your history or you've been miseducated about your, your, your experience and you don't know the sacrifices that your grandfather and others have made and what they went through. You do suffer this trauma and the unfortunate thing is in many cases, particularly in certain urban areas, Asian communities and black communities are in proximity to each other. And so they're fighting for similar resources.

They're fighting for the same sort of recognition and awareness and clawing for for crumbs in many cases. Because they don't know their history and they don't know their shared history. Many people don't know the shared history between Asians and blacks in this country.

But it's important we start to examine that, which is why educating our young people, not only on our history as individual ethnic communities, but the history of other ethnic communities is absolutely critical. Because you start to see how much we share, how

much we share in common. And, you know, every one of our, you know, communities has so much richness that we've contributed to this country.

That we will get past this notion of otherism and it becomes this collectivism of us versus me versus Eric versus Jose versus it's like, hey, man, like we like we're better together, bro. Our history and our talents and what we contribute are complimentary and our cultures are all complimentary and they all add the beautiful, you know, cultural texture of America, which is this incredible quilt. And so that's part of it.

You know, faith is so much of the incidents that Eric was referring to. And it was really heartbreaking to see how much of that was being perpetrated by the, not only, but a lot of it was being perpetrated by members of the black community. And I think it's because there's so much pain and there's so much trauma that you tend to lash out to those that are in proximity or you think are taking something away from you.

When there's a scarcity, when you have a scarcity mindset and you believe the pie is only so big and you think that some group is actually taking something from you. And when you have a culture that is being fed nothing but fear and entertainment and news, what I call like has become angertainment, is only making us more angry and fearful of each other. And all of that is being fed to us.

I think the solution is really to really get back to the fundamentals of teaching our kids and getting back to educating us on what makes us better and what makes our common experiences an additive to this whole American experience.

[Speaker 1] (54:14 - 55:09)

I mean, I couldn't say it better myself, right? I think a lot of it's education and education breeds perspective, which breeds empathy. And I think if you, I mean, the reality is, is you don't hear my voice without the black community.

You don't see Meta Prosper without the black community. Our executive sponsor, our executive sponsor and biggest investor of Meta Prosper is black. And I can tell you this right now, the hesitancy as we were building so much of this wasn't from the white community, wasn't from the black community, wasn't from the Hispanic community.

The hesitancy while we were building this was from the Asian community internally. They're like, why are you doing this? Like, is it really worth it?

All this stuff? Black community is like, oh, we're all in.

[Speaker 6] (55:10 - 55:12)

We're all in. Hey, hey.

[Speaker 1] (55:12 - 55:18)

It puts it like, well, let's go. The bet's on the table, Eric. You take it through.

[Speaker 3] (55:19 - 55:21)

What's that about? What's that about, Eric?

[Speaker 2] (55:25 - 56:20)

I don't know. I think there's a lot there. I think there's a lot there.

Because the thing is, and I'm not sure if it's true in this example. The one thing I can say, and again, I'm not trying to speak for my community, but from my perspective, the black community is not concerned. We're going to have no interest in assimilation.

Ever. That is not part of our success equation. It has never been.

Because we've never been accepted. When you start out in the founding document as three fifths of a human being, you understand how people view you, right? And so assimilation was not really something that was of interest.

It always had to be sort of this courageous, you know, like, we're just going for it because we have nothing to lose. You know, when you feel you're on the bottom, you have nothing to lose, Faith. You are going to put all your chips in because what do you get to lose?

[Speaker 1] (56:21 - 58:48)

I think what they saw from Prosper and from me was maybe someone that could break the cycle. Maybe someone that could break history and start something new, right? And I think that's why some of the most support that we've ever, like some of the most support we've ever received internally and even externally, too, is from the black community.

And I'm so grateful for that. I think the mentorship that I've received, the encouragement to not assimilate, the encouragement to continue to speak my truth, the encouragement to succeed is all from the black community. It's like it's pretty incredible.

And again, I think my hope is that the more I can talk about that, right, the more I can talk about that, the more that I allow people to understand this, the more that they realize that we are better together, that we are better in partnership, we are better in bridges. And, you know, a lot of times you see my Asian critics or even critics from other communities saying like, well, Eric Tote is successful because he just he got a cheat code. Like he he found the secret elevator that Asian people found for him.

Right. And like he has like he probably has like a bunch of Asian leaders that are just paving the path for him like that. You know, he's like their golden boy.

No, I've never had an Asian manager ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever. And the voice that you hear today, the success that you've seen on my resume, the awards that I've put up, the numbers that I've driven, the million billions of dollars that I've driven for businesses is because. Of the white and black and Hispanic community, because they see more than just the model minority, they see more than just a preconceived notion, they see hopefully something different.

And my hope is that the more I can model that and more selfishly, the more that my kids can see that, that that's what I'm modeling. And heaven forbid they decide to do what I do. I made it a little bit easier for them.

[Speaker 2] (58:50 - 58:59)

Maybe that part. That's an abundant mindset like that, like that's the that's that's the complete opposite of that scarcity mindset I talked about.

[Speaker 3] (59:00 - 59:06)

And Eric, I've heard you say that your catchphrase is how can I help you be better?

[Speaker 1] (59:07 - 1:00:28)

I was in my catchphrase. I would say it's more like. I think it's just what set me apart from my career, to be fair.

You know, I've I've always been I've always had this, I guess, understanding in my head that if I could help more people, it'll open more doors for me. Right. And maybe in a Freudian slip way, if I could help more people, maybe I could help myself.

Maybe I could figure some stuff out for myself. Right. Maybe it'll make me feel better about who I am.

Maybe make me feel better about myself. Right. And so no matter who you are, CEO, an entry level person right out of college, I will always end the conversation every single time without fail.

It's good to talk to you. If I could ever be helpful, let me know. Like, just let me know.

Nine times out of ten, no one picks up. But that one time opens up a ton of doors. You know, I've I've never applied for any job I've ever had in my entire career.

I've always been recruited. And that recruitment is always because and I believe this is because I've been helpful to the people who recruited me. Mm hmm.

Never once have I applied for a job. I mean, the first job. But everything, everything after that.

After that.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:28 - 1:00:29)

Everything after that.

[Speaker 5] (1:00:29 - 1:00:29)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:30 - 1:01:00)

Because I, you know, from from Facebook to Nike, Nike to Snapchat, Snapchat to Airbnb, Airbnb to Gap, Gap back to Facebook. Recruited. And because every single person that has recruited me.

I've facilitated and built a relationship and equity into that relationship where if I could be helpful, let me know. That's the secret. The secret is literally just being helpful.

Right. It's just having that mindset of like, how can I help more people?

[Speaker 2] (1:01:02 - 1:01:58)

To hopefully make their lives a little bit easier. Being in service to something bigger than yourself and that that draws people to you. And that's what that that brings incredible value to not only individuals, but to organizations.

That's what that's what makes organizations successful is when you have people who understand. What the first lesson you learn as a leader is that it's no longer about you. Yes.

Yes. It's actually about the team. It's actually like it's no longer about you.

Like it's about everybody else around you and how you help them perform at their best. How you bring value to others around you. How do you move people and resources around ideas like that?

To me, if I ever have the opportunity to teach at a university, like that's the first thing I learned in leadership. It's like it's not about you anymore. It's about everything but you.

[Speaker 1] (1:01:59 - 1:02:16)

It's extraordinary. Right. I think it's extraordinary when you think about leadership styles.

You know, one of the biggest criticisms that I get is. I'm too flashy. I'm too loud.

You know, I'm too self-promotional.

[Speaker 3] (1:02:17 - 1:02:18)

From whom do you get those criticisms?

[Speaker 1] (1:02:19 - 1:02:41)

Oh, I could throw a rock and I'll hit someone. But here's the thing. But here's the thing.

And like I get those criticisms, right? And I understand it. Because one, they're probably not used to seeing someone like me do those things.

Two, I mean, that's probably the biggest one, to be fair. They're like, whoa, look at this Asian guy.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:41 - 1:02:44)

Yeah, they're rooting for you to be successful.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:45 - 1:04:23)

Being proud about what he's built in a career, you know. They're rooting for you to be successful until it happens. Exactly.

And, you know, I think you've been told to be invisible for so damn long. That anything past invisible is self-promotional. And it's not self-promotional.

You're being a self-advocate for yourself. And here's the reality, too. If you don't.

Here's the thing, too. I will never tell. I have a young daughter, right?

She's four years old. I will never tell my daughter, don't be proud of who you are. Don't be proud of the things you did.

You should feel proud first. Before anybody else is proud. Right?

And if people don't like that, forget them. Right? And does it suck, you know, when people say those things about me?

Absolutely. But the thing about it is that if I could give and build an elbow more space to make that normalized for other people that look like me, especially females that look like me, because they're disproportionately underrepresented, disproportionately affected. You know, they make they make 60 cents to every dollar of white executive.

Sixty cents. That's 40 cents difference. That's humongous.

And if I could elbow out and normalize. Being an advocate for yourself. So hopefully they feel more comfortable doing it.

I'll take all the hits then. Send them my way. Send me all your anger in my DMs. If it allows those people to be proud of themselves, send them my way. I'll take it.

[Speaker 3] (1:04:25 - 1:04:29)

Eric, I'm going to quote my husband here. The loudest boos come from the cheapest seats.

[Speaker 1] (1:04:31 - 1:05:00)

Ain't that the truth? Ain't that the truth? And it takes a certain type of person to be on the court.

It takes a certain type of person. It takes a certain type of person. It's very easy to have opinions.

It's very easy to point out flaws. It's very hard. Very, very hard.

And I say this because I feel like I have to go into the fire. Very hard. It's not for the faint of heart.

That's for damn sure.

[Speaker 2] (1:05:02 - 1:05:04)

Doing the work is hard.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:04 - 1:05:53)

It's hard. It's hard work. This is another first that I'm talking about this.

I struggle with... I'm working on it. I've never had a panic attack in my entire life until I wrote that piece.

And since I wrote that piece, I've had five different panic attacks. Five different panic attacks. I've struggled with anxiety since then.

And I'm doing work on that. I'm doing work on that. A lot of the catalyst of that is me not being able to please everybody.

Me not being able to hit 100%. Me not being... Especially with my community.

In my head, I'm like, of course, I'm going to hit 100%. I'm doing good stuff for the community. They're going to love me.

They're going to love me.

[Speaker 5] (1:05:53 - 1:06:02)

They're going to love me, right? No. No.

Maybe like 60%. But that triggers a lot of things.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:03 - 1:06:25)

And the panic attacks that I face... I put a lot of good people around me. I have a great therapist.

They help me work through it. Because I think in this evolution of where I'm going in my life and in my career, it's only going to get more intense. But I also need to have...

Just as much as I'm preaching empathy and perspective for other communities, I need to have empathy and perspective for myself.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:26 - 1:06:27)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:27 - 1:07:22)

And that is a very tough thing. A lot of people don't understand that. When you step onto that court, and you're trying to do the good work, and you hear everything...

I hear everything. I see everything. Right?

And if I open my DMs right now, it's nasty. It's real nasty stuff. And that affects you.

That affects you deeply. And it could ruin a day very quickly. And that's what I want people to understand.

Yeah, I understand why you might not ride with me. I get it. Right?

But you have to understand, this is not for me. I promise you it's not for me. I promise you.

It's honestly for my kids. It's for something greater. It's for something greater.

And most times when people have those opinions or concerns about me, they've never even spoken to me. They don't even know who I am.

[Speaker 3] (1:07:22 - 1:07:39)

No, they don't know you. That's information about them and not you. I really want to thank you for sharing that, something Greg and I have talked about multiple times in the past, is how rare and essential vulnerability is to leadership.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:40 - 1:07:40)

Yeah, and grace.

[Speaker 3] (1:07:40 - 1:07:42)

And you're embodying that.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:42 - 1:09:09)

And we've talked about it as grace, and it's not only giving grace to others, which is something we certainly don't do enough of in general, but giving grace to ourselves. Like giving grace to ourself to not have to always be right. You know, it's funny, Eric, because I talk about this a lot.

And it's, you know, as leaders and somebody like yourself, who is so prominent in that way, we're so hardwired to be the teacher and to show up with the answers that we don't give ourself enough grace to say, you know what? I don't know. I don't have the answer.

I don't have it figured out. And I'm not even concerned with, you know, trying to please people and have those answers, or always to show up as this huge brand and this superhuman, as long as my kids and my wife and my family loves me, and they think I'm great. Like that's a hard thing to do.

It's easier said than done, especially when you've had that kind of success and you feel this undue pressure to always meet that level of performance, to always meet that level of acceptance. And, you know, and I'm speaking for myself, and it's hard to let go of that and say, I don't always need to have my cup filled that way. It's enough to be in the arena.

And sometimes I'm a hit and sometimes I'm a miss. And I'm probably going to miss a lot, you know, but that's okay.

[Speaker 3] (1:09:12 - 1:09:51)

And this part of your strength and purpose is to have people witness you trying. That's it. They're witnessing you trying, whether you fail or win.

Eric, I don't know if this will resonate with you. I heard it a couple weeks ago. It soaked into my body, and I was like, yes.

I heard someone of note quoting Billie Jean King, who said, pressure is privilege. And it reminded me that when I choose, that I have a choice to put myself in these pressure-filled situations. Which, of course, is what you're doing on a huge stage.

[Speaker 1] (1:09:51 - 1:13:36)

No, again, like I feel really, I feel very honored, you know, to be able to speak my truth and have the platform that I do and, you know, use it to hopefully do more good. And you're right. I think that to hit 100% is just massively unrealistic.

And I do think, you know, I had to, I'm still working through that. It's a work in progress. And, you know, for me, it's just understanding that I'm just trying.

Right? I'm just trying. I continue to try.

I'm not going to give up. Especially, you know, to be fair, a lot of people are giving up. You know, a lot of people are, you know, moved on to the next thing.

And I think for me, the fight that I have in me has broadened out now to just hopefully making business more diverse, hopefully making perspectives more diverse, hopefully generating more empathy. But I think the bigger thing for me is just allowing for different variations of people who look like me to be successful versus you just have to be one type of person that looks like me. And that person is typically quiet.

That person doesn't speak up. And that person doesn't, you know, ruffle feathers. You know, I always talk about this and I was talking about this to an internship group the other day is that they're from multiple different walks of life.

And they're like, well, Eric, what's your biggest tip, you know, for us as we embark on our internship journey? And I was like, well, you want like the executive response or do you want like the real talk? And they're like, what does that mean?

And then like one brave woman from Harvard, she was like, I want the real talk. And she's from the black community. And I told her straight up, I was like, I told all of them.

I was like, you know, all of you look like variations of me, right? You're all shades of brown and you're going into the marketing industry. I'm going to give you the real talk that it's not going to be easy.

It's not easy. I wish I could tell you it's like it's easy, but everyone's going to do it. But it's not going to be easy for not the reasons that you expect.

It's not going to be easy because you're going to find yourself in rooms where you're the only person with a diverse perspective. It's not going to be easy because you're going to see that you are making 70, 80 cents to the dollar, you know, to a white executive. It's not going to be easy because you're going to see work that represents your community that you're not going to like.

And you have the decision to challenge that. It's not going to be easy for all those things. But hopefully what is going to be easier for you and hopefully because of the work that I'm doing and hopefully the work that my colleagues are doing is they always say that

you can't be what you can't see.

And my hope is what's easier for you is for you to see what you can be. That's my hope, right? All those other things, I can't protect you from that, right?

What's going to happen is going to happen. You have some choices to make when that does happen. But what I can hopefully promise you is because of our fight, because of our resolve, because it's not just this fine-tuned stop Asian hate thing, but instead like a larger drive for the rest of my life is I need to be what you can see so that you can be it too.

[Speaker 2] (1:13:38 - 1:15:52)

I love it. And what I really love about that is because it doesn't let individuals off the hook from having some accountability for our own success and failure. So often when many of us don't achieve what I think we maybe anticipated coming out of big schools and landing in these companies and when things don't necessarily work out, which is why you're counsel on, this is going to be hard.

It's probably going to be harder than you think it's going to be. And actually, it's not going to play out the way that you did. Like the way you have it mapped out in your head, I guarantee you it's not going to play out that way.

Exactly. It's just not. It's not.

It's not to say that you won't reach your destination, but it's not going to play out the way that you've got it planned. So just understand that right off the bat. And there are systems that need to be changed, and you might have a bad manager, and there are a lot of factors that will determine your success or failure here.

But the most important one is you. The most important one is your ability to fight, to navigate, to perform. Like nothing is more important than performance.

So regardless of all these other things that happen to you, you've got to have performance. And the advice I always give people, Eric, and I hope you agree with this one, is I always tell people there is nothing more performance, as I said, nothing more important than performance. But the second thing after that is you have to have sponsors.

I'm not talking about mentorship. I'm talking about sponsors because everything about your career and your career trajectory, everything about your career is going to be discussed in rooms that you're not in. Exactly.

That's 100% true. And so you better have somebody in that room who is advocating for you, who knows your skills, your capabilities, who's willing to advocate to put their own

personal equity on the line for you. And I think that's the stuff that young people don't fully understand.

Like I hear sometimes young people will come into the workplace and say, I don't want to tell people all my business, and I don't know why they want to. They actually don't really care what you did over the weekend. Like they ask you that because they just want to know a little bit about you so they can trust you.

Because it's all based on trust.

[Speaker 5] (1:15:53 - 1:15:54)

It's relationships.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:55 - 1:16:20)

Yeah, they don't really care what you did on your vacation. They only ask to see how vulnerable you're willing to be, how much about yourself, because they are seeking to trust you. And I think it's so important when we talk to young people to give them, like you said, give them the real, like this can be hard, and it's not going to be what you thought it is.

So make sure that you're sort of sharing and building these relationships grounded in trust.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:20 - 1:17:01)

Again, you don't hear this voice. This voice is not the product of the Asian community. It's not the product of that.

It's the product of, again, a handful of white executives that are just like, that's our guy. Like that's our guy for the business. Not that's our Asian guy, but like that's our guy for the business.

Like he is a business leader, right? And this is also like they have said my names in rooms that I've never been in. You know, the black community have said my names in rooms that I've never been in.

And the black community doesn't see me as like, that's our Asian guy. They're like, no, no, that's our guy.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:02 - 1:17:02)

Right?

[Speaker 1] (1:17:03 - 1:17:51)

And you're right. The foundation of that is excellent. It has to be excellence.

It has to be excellence. Like you can believe all different things and you can advocate all you want. But what has made my voice resonate and I think give me a platform is because I've had an excellent career.

And I've had, you know, a very successful and award-winning career that the marketing industry and advertising industry has respected. And so I do think it's not just, it's not one or the other. Right.

You can be both for sure. But you have to, for one to be successful, you have to be successful.

[Speaker 3] (1:17:54 - 1:18:25)

Eric, you are turning your excellence into, you're enabling your community to succeed with MetaProsper. After listening to the two of you talk, I want to sign up for the Greg and Eric three-day empowerment retreat. But I'm going to ask a very, let's do it.

Yeah, I'm in. I want to just get to a very rudimentary question, which is how does MetaProsper work? What are your goals and what are you doing?

[Speaker 1] (1:18:26 - 1:21:28)

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, MetaProsper is, well, let me define it this way. Right.

Every, most companies have an ERG for diverse communities. Right. And those are more ERG, an employee resource group.

So you have one for, you know, for Asians, you have one for black community, Latino community, et cetera. And it's more for your internal employee base to find support, to find like-minded folks, et cetera. Very internal focused.

You know, one of the things that I saw three years ago is that coming from that soul of how do we support, you know, people who look like us? You know, one of the things that I was thinking about is how much of our content to onboard people in small businesses is in languages that people like me speak. And I did an audit and it was almost zero.

And I was like, okay, great. That's an easy one. Great.

Let's do that. Let's do that. Right.

Let's translate content to onboard people onto the business. And maybe by doing that, we'll build equity with them. Maybe we'll have some, you know, stronger revenue potential.

Maybe we'll build an economic engine and boom, just like that. It happened. It was like

one little move like that to translate content into 20 different languages, you know, that represent a multitude of Americans generated economic opportunity for the company and for the community.

And I thought to myself, what if we did this on a long-term basis? What if we did this every single day for every single month? And that became MetaProsper.

MetaProsper is the official external support program for Asian American small businesses, creators, and nonprofit. And really what we're looking to do is not just provide them with good training, not just provide them with opportunities like U.S. Bank sponsorship of the 626 Night Market, where we brought together a ton of different, you know, mom and pop shops, you know, training for financial literacy, you know, all of that stuff. It's how do we partner with our biggest brands and clients so that they can speak with the probably one of the, you know, one of the biggest and fastest, not probably, it is the biggest and fastest growing community in the United States to build equity.

And how do we set better precedent to do that with the black community, with the Hispanic community? And, you know, we have a sister program called MetaElevate that does just that for the black and Hispanic community. And so for us, for us, it's how do we continue to show that representation isn't just a good thing to do, but it's a business imperative.

It's a business imperative. And, you know, the reality is the reason why I am so, I have such conviction for this is because I'm a business person. I've been one.

[Speaker 3] (1:21:28 - 1:21:30)

Greg Cunningham is nodding so hard.

[Speaker 1] (1:21:31 - 1:21:33)

I'm a business person.

[Speaker 3] (1:21:33 - 1:21:35)

I can hear you nod, Greg.

[Speaker 1] (1:21:35 - 1:23:08)

I'm a business person, right? I'm a business person. And there's something to be said about doing the right thing.

There's something to be said about doing what's good, but whether or not you believe in what's good and what's right, you can never, ever, ever, ever deny revenue and business results. My numbers don't lie. Elevate's numbers don't lie.

And so whether you believe in what's happening to our communities, whether you, whether you're still grappling with it, or whether you're on the journey to understanding and having more empathy for people who don't look like you, you cannot deny dollar in, \$2 in. You cannot deny \$2 become \$5. You cannot deny that.

And so that's why all these programs that we built have to be rooted in business, because if we could change, if we can change the mindset of supporting diverse communities from, this feels like a good thing to do versus no, no, no, our business will cease to exist unless we do this. Because majority of American businesses grapple with that today. Just as they grapple with globalization, most American businesses right now, they're like, whoa, this is like the supply chain's all over the place.

Right. Fantastic. That's exactly what was always going to happen.

Right. Evolution is always going to happen. You cannot stop.

You cannot stop the evolution of the American people. And unless you understand what the American people looks like tomorrow, your business will cease to exist. That I promise you.

[Speaker 3] (1:23:11 - 1:23:14)

I love when Greg agrees so hard, it makes him laugh.

[Speaker 2] (1:23:15 - 1:25:45)

Yeah, no, bro, you just, you. There's so much I could say. I mean, Eric, man, thank you for, for all of that because it is such a.

It is such a poignant thing and so aligned, which is why U.S. Bank is so excited to be a part of Men of Prosper, by the way, because we do understand that these businesses that Eric talked about, how prominent the issues and the gaps are in terms of getting the appropriate tools, resources, information and capital to these small businesses. And Eric, we spent a good part of this season on our podcast, talking about how languages access and you use the word translating and how you're translating content for in over 20 languages. And, you know, we've got this little film out there, Eric, that I'm going to put a plug in because, you know, I'm a, I'm a closet marketer too.

So I got to do a little promo for our film. It's called translators and it's folks who are listening can go watch it at translatorsfilm.com. It's a short little film, 20 minute documentary about these families who translate everyday life for their family.

And, oh, by the way, we actually won best short film at Tribeca X this year with the film. So it's, it's a topic that is really top of mind for us because we know that language actually is access. And the more that we can remove barriers for individuals, families,

small businesses, we can actually help them fulfill their full potential.

And the reason it's so important with small businesses and the folks that you're working with, and the reason we are so proud and happy to be excited to be a part of Meta Prosper is because when these businesses succeed, all of us succeed. Wealth disparities go away. Communities are able to become more vibrant.

There is no separation between racial justice and economic justice. They're inseparable. They're inseparable twins.

You can't have one without the other. And so if we can help these small businesses grow and scale and create jobs and create vibrancy, we start to see improvement in all other dimensions of our society. And so I, I could not be more supportive of what you said.

I cannot be more supportive of the work that you're doing. And, you know, on behalf of everybody at the bank, man, just seriously thank you for all that you're doing and thanks for your partnership with us.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:45 - 1:27:13)

No, I, I, I appreciate you all. I appreciate Della Ang. Obviously Della is a, is a huge advocate for, you know, that's one of the biggest surprises to us, you know, as we were building Meta Prosper.

Again, like Prosper is was something that was born out of an idea. You know, we, we got that out, you know, we, we, we pulled it out the mud, you know, to, you know, you know, to get it, to get it launched. And I think one of the most beautiful things, I wouldn't even say surprising, the most beautiful things is the amount of fortune 500 businesses, successful, successful financial institutions like us bank that have reached out and said, we love this.

Like let's partner, like there's something here. Right. You know, and I think it shows externally that there's still a drive, that there's still potential that there's still opportunity, you know, to, to continue to one, broaden the perspective, broaden the empathy, but also just build better business, you know, overall and set better precedent.

I think too, it shows internal validation of just like, wait a second, US bank wants to partner with you. Like, like this is for real. Like I, to be fair when us, when, when you partnered with us, you know, I had this Apple ticker for the, for the meta stock for the meta stock ticker.

Right. That US bank announces partnership with Meta Prosper showed up on the ticker. Wow.

You know how real that is. Wow. That's real.

[Speaker 5] (1:27:13 - 1:27:19)

You know how real, this came from an idea of just translating contents. That's real stuff.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:19 - 1:28:03)

That's real, real stuff that like I've never seen. I was like, Oh my, you know, and I have, I have friends that work in financial institutions texting me about that. They're like, I just saw this man.

Is this the thing that you started? And I was like, yeah, I think so. You know, so again, it's, it's beautiful because it shows we're not alone.

And I think that's one of the greatest things in the human existence to find is the feeling of not being alone and whether it's a business, whether it's your personal life, finding your tribes and finding the people who support the vision is something that keeps the fire going, you know? So I, I appreciate US bank and Della and all of you for being such great partners with us.

[Speaker 3] (1:28:04 - 1:28:20)

Eric, you do not need to ask us if you can be helpful today. You have been, I thank you. You've been so inspiring, so real, so generous of spirit.

I can't thank you enough for this conversation.

[Speaker 1] (1:28:21 - 1:29:04)

I mean, I, I appreciate you two inviting me and having this conversation again. Like it's we're in a really interesting time right now where the conversations naturally evolving. I think people are hitting you know a plateau a little bit of, of, of equity and diversity, but you know, it's up to people like us to continue that conversation because it's going to affect way more than us.

And that's why, again, I think that's why the work of prosper and the work at us bank together, you know, focused on business focused on the bottom line, I think is so important because we show that it's not a good thing.

[Speaker 3] (1:29:04 - 1:29:15)

It's a strategy to legit business strategy, the legacy of your grandfather and his regiment, because you are, you are for sure going for broke. So don't stop. Okay.

[Speaker 5] (1:29:18 - 1:29:19)

I appreciate it. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (1:29:20 - 1:29:25)

Oh my gosh. We told you it'd be an hour. This has to be a two parter.

We can't edit this.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:28 - 1:29:30)

Great. Cause you got to do part one and two.

[Speaker 3] (1:29:30 - 1:29:34)

Thank you so much. And Greg, Greg, thank you so much.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:34 - 1:29:40)

Thanks for giving us so much time, Eric. Of course. That was a great conversation.

Yes, I mean, Eric, seriously. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (1:29:42 - 1:29:50)

Thanks for listening to another episode of Real Good. If you like what you heard, subscribe anywhere you get your podcasts. We'll see you soon.

Eckhart Tolle Finding Death Before Death Finds You [447853fb-02bc-4882-8272-ad2f0030af82]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

Finding death before death finds you. In this episode, Eckhart discusses a topic that is taboo for many. The subject of death.

In the Western world, he says denial and the fear of death has prevailed for centuries. However, Eckhart explains that need not continue. He says there is a much deeper dimension to who we are.

One that never dies. And if we can get in touch with that transcendent aspect of ourselves, our fear of death will ultimately disappear.

[Speaker 1] (0:34 - 46:36)

It's important to familiarize yourself with death. You can't really live in a wise way if you are not familiar with death. They go together.

From the point of view of the physical vehicle and the form identity, one could say that every one of us is infected with a lethal virus already. But it's not a physical virus. The virus is called time.

And in the end, it will consume you and destroy you. That's for sure. So, the outcome is already assured.

The seeming solidity of our world is an illusion. Especially in the Western world, the denial of death has been prevalent for a long time. Not so in medieval times, but since we moved into modern times.

In medieval times, in the Western world, Europe, humans were very much aware of death. It was all around them. Life was very unpredictable, more so than now.

Although nowadays, it's also unpredictable, as we are seeing. But in medieval times, even more so, of course. So, death could come at any moment.

And you can see in old paintings, medieval paintings, many people on their desk or table, they had a skull, a human skull, to remind them of death. Because if you're aware of death, everything else, you have a different perspective on everything else. For example, if you were aware continuously of mortality, short-lived nature of the individual life form, perhaps nothing would be that all-consuming and serious anymore.

If you knew any dispute or disagreement or semblance. And if you have a dispute with somebody, if you remember, in a few years, we'll both be dead. Somehow, you rise above it a little bit.

This lethal virus called time, unless something else kills you first, traffic accident every year, 1,250,000 people die, many of them young. Many people in the Western world die of drugs, overdoses of drugs, which are connected with unhappiness and despair and finding something to mitigate the unhappiness and despair or lifelessness they feel. And then they are drawn to drugs and then it kills them.

They don't know who they are. They haven't gone deeper. Nobody has taught them all the most vital things and not taught to young people.

So mortality has been a taboo in the West for a long time, ever since medieval ages came to an end. In other parts of the world, death is not yet a taboo. It's still on open display, such as in India, where the dead bodies are cremated out in the open.

Anybody can come and watch dead bodies being burned and carried to the streets and then being burned. That gives you more of a sense of reality because if you deny death, you get a distorted view of things. And not only the West denied death, even old age.

Most old people are now in senior residences whereas in other countries still you see they are out in the street. So in particular at this time, people that you know may die before their time. Some others may already have been approaching old age, death, and then through this illness, they die just a little bit sooner.

So it's important to face death, not kind of think about it in a morbid way, but just to face it, the fact of it, the inevitability of it, and to see that it's very important, spiritually too, to be aware of the short-lived nature of all life forms. One of the essential teachings of the Buddha is the fact of impermanence. A lot of the fear that people feel, yes, there's fear of loss, but deep down perhaps it could all be traced to fear of death.

Because a fear of loss is your fear of losing your job or fear of losing somebody close to you. Well, that's death that's happening to somebody else. Or you have a fear of loss of job, loss of your savings, loss of home, whatever it may be.

It's the fear, a kind of loss, a diminishment of through these things. And so these are little deaths when you lose something that was important to you. There's a little death there.

Now I want to face death and talk about death just briefly without necessarily giving you too much or anything to believe in. Some people believe, of course, death is many people in Western world especially, but increasingly the East too, believe, of course, death is the end of everything, the end of you. Because life, including human life, they believe, and that's still, of course, the mainstream belief, is an accident.

Accidentally, these atoms and molecules have come together. The whole of life is an accidental conglomeration of atoms, total chance event. There's nothing behind it.

That's the belief. There's nothing, there's nothing transcendent. The entire universe, the apparent harmony of everything, the amazing life forms and everything is just a chance event.

Or as Shakespeare put it, well, he wasn't referring to that, but that is the modern view, a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing, dreadful view of life. And of course, because that, even those humans who have not done any philosophical investigations for themselves, they have all absorbed it because it's in the mainstream culture, that belief of nothing there, chance events. Complete meaning, there's no meaning.

Any meaning they believe is, it's a fabrication. There is no meaning to the universe. There's no underlying dimension.

I believe, of course, these are grave errors, but that is still the mainstream belief. And then there are some religious people who still believe that they have their own forms of belief, of life after death. Perhaps they're a little bit better off than those who believe that there's absolutely nothing.

It's all chance. There's no transcendent meaning to human life or any life. For most, it's still, even the religious people, for most, it's still, it's a belief.

It's a conceptual idea in their head. It can perhaps free them a little bit from the fear of death, but I don't know how much. So I don't want to talk in terms of belief so that in order to go beyond the fear of death, if that is possible, is there another way rather than the belief that there is something?

If you can sense that the essential you is not a visible entity, who you are essentially cannot be found in the realm of physicality. If it could be found in the realm of physicality, then a surgeon could open your brain and find you there. Or find your memories, whatever, find your thoughts, who you are, but you are not there.

You can't find a single thought because thought does not exist in the realm of physicality. In fact, science has no idea, no matter what they say, basic truth is their ego sometimes, ego doesn't allow scientists to say that they don't know. They find it hard to say they don't know.

But the basic fact is science has no idea what consciousness is. Many scientists avoid the word altogether because they don't know what to do with it. Certainly there's a relationship between the physical brain and consciousness, but they believe that the physical brain produces consciousness as a byproduct of physicality.

But that's all they can say. But they don't know even what a thought is. Where is it?

How does a thought survive in you? For decades, memories, hundreds of thousands of

memories survive in you. I can remember the most crazy, insignificant things.

People have said to me 40 years ago, so many things are there, where are they? The entire you, who you are, who you are in your essence is not, you're invisible. That's the realization.

You're essentially invisible. If you can sense that essentially who you are is an invisible presence that kind of inhabits the body, not as a belief, I believe that I'm an immortal soul, that would be an old term. But right now in this moment, can you sense the essence of who you are as an invisible presence that pervades the entire body, but goes beyond it too?

The mind has to become still for a moment so that your attention can move there. But your attention and it are actually a single thing. And again, there's a very still presence there.

And even if you only have glimpses of it, then you have a kind of direct experience of who or what you are beyond the physical body. If you are very strongly identified with the physical body, then it might be more difficult. Your identity is mainly derived from the physicality, which happens to some people, particular people who are very proud of their body or very unhappy with their body, either extreme.

If you're proud of your body, derive your sense of self from it because it looks better than other people's. Your appearance and body, it's fine. It's a limitation.

I mean, appreciating if you're lucky enough to have a great body, it's wonderful. But is that all to who you are? So this sensing of yourself as an invisible presence, even if you only have it occasionally, can free you to some extent from the fear of death.

That presence is timeless. You don't remember it. It's nothing to do with memory.

It's nothing to do with what you have achieved as a person here, whether you're a big failure or big success is irrelevant. It's nothing to do with your future. It's just so comforting to know that that deeper self is beyond the decay of the body.

Now the question arises, well, what happens to it when the body dissolves? Wait and see. I don't want to give you too many ideas to believe in, but at least there's something there that is not subject to time because let's say you are 20 years now and you can sense that.

When you're 90 years old, you can still sense that. And it's the same. And then you're less fearful or no longer fearful of your own death, which will come either when you're old or sooner or the death of other people around you or wherever they are.

Then you can see that death on one level is very sad and tragic. And on another level,

it's the most natural thing in the world and part of life. And then when somebody dies close to you, you can cry or weep and at the same time feel that which is beyond death in you, which must be the same as that which is beyond death in that person who died.

One could go so far as to say, nothing ever dies, nothing real ever dies. There's only the morphosis of forms, the continuous birth and death of forms, life forms, bodies. So you can be sad when somebody dies or you may be sad even when people die that you don't know.

And at the same time, there's these two levels. On one level, death is tragic. On a higher or deeper level, it's natural and not tragic at all.

And the two can coexist in you at the same time. I experienced it when my mother died. I cried and yet I felt a great peace underneath it.

If the peace could have spoken, it probably would have said, there is no death, only forms die. But it was just peace. It didn't say anything.

And then a few months later, my dad died and they didn't even live together. And then the same thing happened again. I don't know if you've heard of, there's a famous spiritual book, it's called A Course in Miracles.

I believe it's a wonderful book if you can look beyond terminologies. And this is relevant to what we've been speaking about. It says, nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God. That's it.

Nothing real can be threatened. So what is it that can be threatened? Well, of course, the body can be threatened.

Everything in this physical realm can be threatened. It's subject to destruction and decay. Nothing real can be threatened.

So is there something that, if it can't be threatened, then it's not part of the physicality of what we perceive as the physical universe. Nothing unreal exists. In ultimate terms, and that's not just A Course in Miracles, it's in all Indian spiritual philosophy and so on.

In ultimate terms, the entire universe is a kind of dream, a dream of the universal mind. You are part of the dream of the universal mind. Everything is a dream of the universal mind, where it's going.

And then the universal mind, my suggestion is, is gradually awakening. It's becoming more conscious. But nothing unreal exists.

So only what is real exists. Nothing unreal actually exists. In this realization lies a deep peace that is knowing the source of all life, which is God.

The peace of God is not peace that is derived from some circumstance or something. It's not happy circumstances that give you peace. No, the peace of God is a realization of, ultimately, who you are in your essence.

And who you are in your essence is one with what the universe is in its essence. That is the peace of God. And then you can relax and say, OK, but not as a believer.

You know that this is all fine, but there's something beyond that. And I'm part of that which is beyond. So you might say then, as I say, well, I wouldn't mind in the realm of time, could live a few more years, maybe.

Perhaps continue to be a channel for consciousness coming into this world. But if that's not to be, that's fine. It doesn't really matter.

Now, most people believe you need more time because they believe time will eventually enable them to find themselves. A fuller version of themselves. The worst thing you can do to a person is to remove time from them.

And so you have no more time. And that happens, for example, when you have an illness and you go to a doctor and the doctor says, well, maybe six weeks. You have six weeks.

It's virtually nothing. And that would be devastating for most, especially, of course, if you are completely identified with this personality in the form. You've never sensed anything beyond it.

And it's awful because you said, I haven't. I'm not comp... But then there have been cases, some I knew personally, who were told this.

They knew only a few months or a few weeks. And because time was removed from them, they suddenly accepted it. They didn't go into, oh my God, this.

And suddenly they were lived completely in the present moment. Like a little child, almost. When I was still doing counseling sessions years ago, I had a couple of people independently who had virtually no time left.

And they became enlightened beings, just the light of consciousness shining through them. And we just sat together a few times and they kind of just looked at me. There was no person there anymore.

The person was already gone. The person had already died. But the knowledge that I have no more time didn't give any food, any fuel to the person anymore.

The personality just dissolved already. And what was left when the personality dissolved was just the consciousness behind the personality and that pure consciousness shining through. And that is what you sense.

Again, you get a glimpse of when you sense within and feel that you are lived, that an invisible presence lives through you. And when the personality dies, which is the ego death, then of course, in some cases, the personality dies before the body dies. And then that shines through, the consciousness shines through.

And that's an amazing thing. In the Western world, the contemporary world, nobody knows what to do with that. There's no knowledge to refer to.

Perhaps in more distant past, yes, they would have been recognized. They would have become saints. Or in India, even nowadays, more readily they would have been recognized as holy men or women.

Just look at them. Wow. But it doesn't matter whether they were recognized or not.

They were not concerned with that. And time suddenly didn't matter anymore. What is another 10, 20, 30 years?

So what? No longer made any difference whatsoever because they realized that the essence of who they are, the total fulfillment of their lives, it doesn't matter how old they were. The destiny of humans is that realization.

Whether it comes to you shortly before you die at the age of 30 or shortly before you die at the age of 90, it doesn't matter. And of course, this is where the saying comes from. Find death before death finds you.

So that means that's the death of the personality. Now, here, what we are engaged in through the teaching and the practice is a gradual diminishment of the personality. Now, some of you, when you're confronted with death or death close to you and see a very situation involving death, it could be that suddenly your entire personality can also die.

It could happen. And that's a wonderful thing. It's the greatest thing that can happen to a human.

In the meantime, it's quite enough that here, through the practice, there is a diminishment of you as a person. The person or the personality becomes somewhat less important and all-pervasive because you begin to sense there is something beyond it. And that something beyond it is more essentially who you are than the person or the personality.

And that something beyond it can shine through the personality as long as it's there. And then the personality is actually a much nicer personality, so to speak. It's not as obnoxious as most personalities.

And it's not such a problem maker like most personalities, but the dimension is completely missing. Then without that, personalities are just a nuisance. You might have

noticed.

Now, with some people, you have that shining through. There are people who have never come into touch with any spiritual teaching, and it's happening in them for some other reason, triggered by something else, and that's perfectly fine. So to have a deeper perspective on what's happening around you, because, yes, as we are experiencing this collective, in conventional terms, to use the old-fashioned word, calamity.

If you experience this right now, which is to gain a deeper perspective on it is very important. Then you're no longer drawn into the hysterical, fear-mongering, overreaction to it. And you are light in this world.

You are peace, because then there's some peace in you. You become at peace because that presence that you sense is at peace, your connectedness with Source. And then you can do a lot of good in this world.

Even just your presence does a lot of good, because you emanate a certain frequency. But, of course, you probably will do them, just be there, or could be. You might speak to people.

You may be active here or there to help whatever you feel called upon to do. But you're not devastated anymore. The end of the world could happen.

And you would still know nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists. Because the world, what we see as the world is, yes, one way of looking at it is, you could say it's the dream of the universal mind. It's one way of looking at it.

Another way of looking at it is it's a surface phenomenon. Underneath it, there are vast energy movements, and there is an intelligence underlying it. And that's, we could say, to connect it with the other ways, the universal mind.

Underneath it, there is an intelligence energy field that expresses itself on the surface as the manifest life-forms continuously. But the life-forms are here. What lives through the life-forms is the universal intelligence underneath the invisible energy field that is the organizing principle behind all phenomena that arise in this world.

And that is an invisible energy field. In fact, different energies, but all deriving from one energy and then separating into other one energy field is the earth itself. The earth itself is a living being.

It has an intelligence of its own. The earth itself is a manifestation of the universal mind, of the universal consciousness. And every human being on the earth is a manifestation of the universal consciousness connected with the earth.

But the earth is not a dead thing. And this is why I will speak about this in more detail.

But for now, just a brief mention.

There were only five extinctions on the planet. Total chaos, chaotic, total eradication of, in some cases, 60, 70, even 90% of all life-forms in this, I believe, the second extinction disappeared. And then how was it that each time out of nothing, the earth regenerated itself with even more complex life-forms?

Because that which was the underlying intelligence is actually much greater than our limited human intelligence. And it is vast. It has a totally different view of time.

So it then produced new life-forms. But just to know what applies to the earth applies to each human. Underlying it, there is an invisible energy field and it holds the body together temporarily.

The important thing is to be able to sense it. And everything else, the world itself is no longer seen as the ultimate reality. The ultimate reality is unseen.

So that frees you, to some extent, from the world. But you participate in it. There's an ancient Christian saying, this is very beautiful, that points to a particular way of being in this world.

And the saying is, to be in the world, but not of it. That would be enlightened living. You are in the world, but you're not of the world.

It shows the two dimensions. It's an ancient Christian saying, to be in the world, but not of it. And that really is for us, for you, to realize and to live, to be a helpful, beneficial presence in the world.

But not realizing that your home is not in this realm. I like the English word home, H-O-M-E. What does that remind you of?

The Indian om, om, O-M, om. The sacred sound that points to the origin of all things. It could be either coincidence, or it could be that they are connected.

Would not be too surprising, because the European languages are Indo-European languages. They have many of their words have roots in Sanskrit. So what we've been talking about is pointing to the possibility of being peaceful or at peace, even in the face of apparent disaster and death and so on.

And it's sometimes only through the disaster that people find that dimension. There is a transcendent dimension to this universe. Just as there's a transcendent dimension to who you are.

You are who you are. There's the physical body, and there's your mind. Is that who you are?

In this dimension, the sense-perceived reality, that's not where you ultimately are. So you are invisible. You can sense that when you become very attentive and go within.

You can sense that the essence of who you are is that indefinable consciousness, the presence. It cannot be sense-perceived with the senses. But where does that come from?

What is the essence of all life? That's the light of the world, Jesus called it, the light of the world. And you are the light of the world, he said.

That's consciousness. You are consciousness. Where does it come from?

It comes from God. But where is God? And what is God?

Well, we cannot explain what God is. God is transcendent to this dimension. It's not in the universe.

There's a transcendent dimension. And from there, God emanates something into this world like the sun emanates light continuously. So God is like the sun but not part of this universe.

It emanates consciousness into this dimension. And it's this dimension of space and time. And here, the emanation of consciousness is creating a universe.

It's not finished yet. It's continuing. The consciousness that you are is a ray from the one source of all life that we call God.

So what we perceive as suffering, the birth pangs of life forms in this universe, they are like a bad dream in the process of the universe, in the process of being created still. It's not a finished thing. And there are the limited perceptions that we have create a very dream that appears like a nightmare.

But when you wake up out of it, you realize it, oh, it was only a nightmare. What does it mean on a practical level? What does it mean when a child dies in a seemingly innocent child or millions of people suffer in a meaningless way?

Now, this is very strange. If every human being is regarded as an autonomous entity, it's very tragic. But I would suggest a different perspective, just as a try it out or a higher perspective.

There's only one life. There's only one consciousness. And that manifests in countless forms, countless life forms.

It's the indwelling presence in every life form manifesting briefly, but continuously. And this one presence is the identity of each. Let's stay with human beings.

The identity of each human being is that underlying presence. That's the essence identity. Every human being is the same being on that level that gradually, that same being that lives, takes on a temporary form and then dissolves.

And in this continuous taking on form and dissolving as a form, there is an awakening process. I would suggest for a moment that you regard the entire human race, all humanity, look at it as a single organism. All humanity is one single, invisible organism.

And this organism is not separate from the source of all life. It is an emanation of the one source that we could call God if we wanted to. It's an emanation into this dimension of space and time.

And every human is, I could say, a piece of God, a tiny fragment of God in disguise. That's like a ray of sunlight in disguise. Every human.

So the essence identity of every human is consciousness. It's the light of consciousness, which is the light of God. And so what is evolving is the one human consciousness is undergoing an evolutionary process.

Every human being that ever lived and ever will live is a tiny cell, to borrow a word from the physical realm, is a tiny cell in this evolving being. It evolves in this dimension. It becomes, there's more of God that flows into it.

So there's a gradual process at work that, in a sense, you could say, a spiritualization of all matter, of all universe. Matter becomes less and less heavy and physical, including the human body. But we don't need to go there.

But to realize that your essence identity and my essence identity and the essence identity of all beings is one. And emanates from one source. And you can recognize it when you look at other human beings.

And you can, now the important thing is you need to be able to sense, if only faintly, the essence of who you are that is beyond the personality, the form, the form identity, physical, mental form, personality. The essence of who you are is not that. The essence of who you are is that which you can sense at this moment as consciousness.

Without any memory or anticipation, you sense that essence. It's only in the present. It's inseparable.

It's called presence. The presence, the consciousness. And then you realize you no longer need to believe something.

And then you can intuitively comprehend what is very misleading and could easily be misinterpreted when you express it in words. Then you can sense that there is a transcendent harmony that in this harmony transcends the apparent suffering. Because

what's suffering is just the birthing process of the one consciousness.

The birthing process of this one that is gradually expressing itself more and more fully through these forms. But the forms, you and me, do not have an independent autonomous identity. It just looks like it.

We are continuously an emanation of the one. We are never separate from the one. And even when this body dissolves, the form that is beyond the body will still persist for a while before it realizes fully where it comes from, what it is connected to.

Not the personality. The personality does not survive. But there is an essence that is you that survives for quite a while until it fully realizes its home.

But gradually you live more and more consciously, which means when you have conscious connecting it with source, then all the upheavals of this world, which come in many forms, personal forms and collective forms, do not affect you anymore at the deepest level. They can still affect you on the surface level of your person. You get, oh, I'd rather be healthy than ill.

I'd rather not catch this virus. Of course you would. But you're no longer, whatever happens or doesn't happen in this world, does not affect you at the deepest level where the rock is, that is the foundation, which really means the essence of who you are.

So the only way to become free of being at the mercy not only of things that happen around you, you just hope that everything will be okay, but it's not always okay. Can't be. Not always at the mercy of things around you and no longer at the mercy of your own mind.

Whatever thoughts go through your mind, that is the dreadful fate. Then your inner state of being is dependent on what's going on around you and then you're always fearful. Oh, I might lose that or this may happen.

What do I do then? And you're at the mercy of whatever thoughts come into your head that interpret the world and interpret yourself in terms of their conditioning, which is from the past. So to become free, to become liberated, you become liberated from the world, although you should participate in the world, but with a sense of detachment.

You're not bound to it or by it. So you participate in a more enjoyable and often joyful way in the affairs of this world and you have a relationship and you appreciate the good things without needing to attach yourself to the good things or the relationship because if you lose it, you're nobody again because they give you your identity that there's nothing anymore that you need for your sense of identity because you already have found your essence identity which has nothing to do with the things of this world or your mind. And that's a wonderful liberation when you do not need the world to provide you with ultimate satisfaction, connectedness with the source of who you are.

Then you become free of the world and then you actually participate in the world in a way that not to use almost a cliché expression that makes the world a better place. But what does it mean make the world a better place? The only thing it can really mean it has any meaning is it makes the world a more conscious place so that humans begin to live more consciously and that means no longer totally identified with their personality and the conditioning of their minds.

A more conscious world is the new earth that I sometimes speak or write about. Now, it seems very often that the new earth would more easily arise if the world would not present so many obstacles to the arising of a new consciousness of which the new earth would just be an outer manifestation. What we are really talking about, of course, when we talk about a new earth, we're talking about a new consciousness.

It's not new, but it's the awakened consciousness. It's not new because it is timeless, but it's new to you, as it sometimes say in shops when you buy second-hand goods, new to you. If you haven't experienced it before, suddenly it seems like a new consciousness.

It's a deeper dimension that had always been there, but you hadn't realized it. And when you suddenly realize it, you call it new consciousness. Why not?

So there we are. The new earth is the outer manifestation of the new consciousness, which is the awakened consciousness. And this is, your purpose is to bring this into this world by embodying it, embodying it, not just through your words.

Yes, when you speak, it tends to be more inspired, more useful, more helpful, more good speech rather than destructive speech and action that you take, no longer dysfunctional, egoically motivated action, all these things are good. And even if you don't say or do anything, just the fact that you are here as representing the awakened consciousness, and even if you're not fully awakened yet, there may still be remnants of ego. That's good enough.

You represent the awakening consciousness on the planet, and that your purpose is to be there as that consciousness. Your secondary purpose is to have a fulfilling life as a personality. And the personality can never have a fulfilling life if you don't realize who you are beyond the personality.

It's only the realization who you are in your essence that can give some sense of satisfaction on the level of your personality. Otherwise, you're always looking for yourself in this world, and it's always whatever is frustrating. Every relationship will end in frustration.

Everything you achieve ultimately will not satisfy you, and you keep looking and looking. So here we are, and your job, your mission is to align yourself with the present moment and whatever is happening here and see that it is an opportunity, this upheaval that

we're experiencing at the moment, and it probably will not be the first upheaval that's going to come on a collective level because this is a time for upheavals, but it is also a time for awakening. The two go together.

Just in a personal life, you need the adversity, as we've seen, to awaken. It's an opportunity, but not a guarantee. And there can be a more collective awakening if not, of course, not the whole of humanity, but far more humans through experiencing the upheaval that not only we're experiencing now, but the upheavals to come in the near future, and they are inseparable from the awakening of consciousness, and they are part of the transcendent hidden harmony behind the apparent opposites.

And so what looks like tragic and unpleasant on a conventional lower level is actually perfectly fine as it should be on a higher level. It would not be happening otherwise. It's all part of the awakening of the human being and planetary awakening.

And what awakens is not you. You don't awaken and I don't awaken. Ultimately, you and I are constructs, mental constructs, but that which shines through us, the consciousness that is awakening in this world.

There's only one consciousness that awakens. So awakening is not anybody's personal achievement. It's only there when you recognize that the person is a temporary, short-lived, relatively insignificant construct.

That's fine. You honor it as much as necessary in this dimension here, and something else is happening that far transcends the person but would not even happen if it weren't for that person. It's only because the ego was, and still to some extent is, a necessary prerequisite for the awakening of consciousness.

The very thing that seems to obstruct the awakening of consciousness is a prerequisite for it happening. That's quite amazing. In Buddhism, there's a saying that says, if there were no illusion, there would be no enlightenment.

[Speaker 2] (46:37 - 46:57)

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Eckhart Tolle Finding Meaning in The Existential Void [c7f4748f-2a07-4212-bff8-e813ae80c49d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:05)

Finding meaning in the existential void. In this episode, Eckhart talks about suffering consciously and how to deal with difficult emotions, including fear, anxiety, and regret. Eckhart also discusses nihilism, the belief that life is pointless and devoid of meaning.

He explains the idea, dates back to Darwin and his idea that evolution is a random chain of events, molecules and atoms aimlessly coming together over millions of years. Eckhart says this very limited negative view still affects millions of people today. He says nihilism in its extreme form can lead to despair and even death as many seek to medicate themselves with drugs, alcohol or other substances to escape suffering, alienation and emptiness in their lives.

Eckhart explains that we all have a deeper purpose which is connected to the purpose of the universe. He says if we align with that, then we become a bringer of light. Eckhart says the world is in dire need of awakening.

We all must ask ourselves, am I aligned with the light of consciousness?

[Speaker 1] (1:08 - 45:27)

Suffering in your life, if it still arises, use it so that the ego gets burned up by the suffering, so to speak. The ego gets burned up in this fire of suffering. Now we can call this conscious suffering.

That's a very interesting concept, conscious suffering. When suffering arises, become aware of it and accept that it's there. In the form of fear, anxiety, regret, you have self-pity, you have unhappy sense of self, complaining about your life, many forms of you've lost things, you don't know things that you had identified with, taken away from you.

Who am I now? I'm nobody. I'm nobody.

Well, that's great. Be nobody more completely. Realize fully your nobody-ness.

I don't know who I am anymore. I've lost everything. All the things I've worked for, I've begun.

Everything is so pointless. Their mind is still talking. It's all been for nothing.

It's all meaningless, meaningless. This is your mind talking. Don't believe in the things it says, but it continues talking.

Many humans in this world are suffering from what we could call nihilism. I don't know if

you know that word, nihilism. Nihilism means the belief that everything is absolutely and utterly pointless.

That's a deep form of suffering. Nihilism, it doesn't make what's the point of it or just this awful life of mine. The whole world is pointless.

It's so awful. And that's very deep suffering, the total lack of meaning. Everything is arbitrary, random, and meaninglessness is a mental disease that is afflicting millions of humans because the mainstream culture still believes.

It goes back to the 19th century. It goes back to Darwin, Origin of Species. He said life evolved, which undoubtedly is true.

But he said life evolved, but the evolution of life on this planet is an arbitrary, random course of events. Molecules and atoms at random coming together and forming life forms over millions of years. Random, the idea of randomness in the theory of evolution put forward by Darwin and others, the idea of randomness means there is no purpose or intelligence behind it whatsoever.

It's a random process. In other words, it's the belief that all life on this planet has no meaning. It just is a meaningless conglomeration of atoms and molecules.

It's ultimately meaningless. That basically is the underlying assumption behind the theory of evolution that many people still believe. And it has seeped into mainstream culture.

And even people who have never even heard of Darwin, it has seeped into their belief system that we live in a meaningless universe. Before that happened, we had certain religious beliefs. So there was some meaning.

A lot of that perhaps was ideological and ego driven. Nevertheless, in the ancient religion, there is access to the transcendent is still there, here and there. There were still little openings into the transcendent, even though many forms of religion developed into ideological belief systems that strengthen the ego.

Nevertheless, religion still carried on still carry the secret of transcendence is still there hiding within the religions. And that became inaccessible to many humans. So now we have the pandemic of nihilism.

This is one of the pandemics far worse than any physical pandemic, that everything the belief that everything is meaningless. And you can have a meaning in your life that is very limited, like for many people as a meaning, okay, I want to have a career that gives you limited meaning in your personal life, working for a career, nothing wrong with that. I'm working to create a better life for myself and my family.

That's also wonderful and great. I'm working to achieve recognition in this world, etc, etc, that's fine, too. But at some point, a meaning that is purely personal may begin to lose its power.

So that let's say you've spent two or three decades working for your career, which is nothing wrong with it, you may arrive at a point where your career doesn't mean anything anymore, or you lose it. That you lose your career and your status, or it is it consumes you so completely that you become ill with stress, or in some other way, turns into something that's not satisfying at all that actually creates suffering. So something can give you limited meaning for a while for years, and then suddenly turn out to be ultimately meaningless.

Some people suddenly wake up and all my life, some people fall ill, seriously ill, and then they look back on their life and see all this was so pointless, accumulating possessions. Why did I do that? What was the point in that?

All the things that I was so anxious about, when they're now, let's say they're seriously ill now. All the things that I was so anxious about, that was so unnecessary and pointless. All the things that I'd been striving for were ultimately pointless.

That can be an opening. Suddenly, wow, the limited personal meaning, which was fine, it's better than no meaning at all. To have a personal meaning in your life, better than no meaning at all.

But ultimately, that's not satisfying in the long term. You have to go to a deeper meaning that transcends who you are as a person. And that is, am I aligned with the purpose of the universe?

That is the ultimate true meaning. Am I aligned with the purpose? And what is the purpose of the universe?

The purpose of the universe is consciousness, bringing more consciousness into this dimension. That's the purpose of the universe, bringing more consciousness into this dimension. Am I aligned with that?

Then, if that is the case, if you're aligned with that, you're a bringer of consciousness, a bringer of light. That is the ultimate true purpose. And it could be that your personal purpose and the deeper purpose can go together.

That's fine. So you can have a career, and yet it's not totally ego-dominated. While you are active working, you bring in the light of consciousness.

You do things in your work that bring more consciousness into this dimension. That's wonderful. It is not necessarily a case of either having a career or being aligned with universal purpose, which is you can bring the two together.

That's the balance between being and doing, as I sometimes call it, the balance between being and doing, bringing those two together. So there's only one true purpose in your life. And you have to discover that.

And that is, am I aligned with the consciousness? And am I a bringer of consciousness? So the end of nihilism is that your entire past becomes relatively unimportant when you realize the meaning of life is to be a bringer of consciousness.

Let's say your entire past was one disaster after another. Some people's life is like, unfortunately, it was like that. Let's say you ended up in prison because you did one wrong and bad thing after another.

But then you look back in your so-called life and say, my God, that was a disaster. My entire life was just a disaster. Okay.

But at this moment, I realize the consciousness that I am. And I've all the suffering that I have created for myself and others. All the suffering I've created for myself and others was part of the egoic dream, the delusion, the egoic delusion and the conditioning that I came into this world with.

And then you awaken at this moment. If a totally disastrous life brings you to a point of awakening now, the whole thing was great. It suddenly has a purpose.

Retrospectively, all the disasters brought you to this moment of awakening. So in retrospect, what was totally absurd and meaningless, suddenly, it fulfilled a purpose. The past can suddenly be realized as having fulfilled its purpose by creating the suffering that led to your awakening.

So there's no regret anymore about the past. It all made sense. So the meaning arises retrospectively.

It only remains absurd and disastrous if the awakening doesn't happen. Then you're trapped in the dreadful dream. Continue to be trapped in it.

Wow. So be aligned with universal purpose. That is the ultimate purpose.

No matter what you do, no matter how it expresses itself through you, that doesn't matter. Realize that. And if you want to look at your life in terms of failure and success, as many people do, is my life a failure?

Is my life a success? What criterion do you use for failure or success? Do you allow this world to tell you whether you're a failure or success?

To a large extent, this world is insane. So are you allowing an insane world to tell you whether your life is a failure or success? If this world cannot tell you, then what is it?

Obviously, the only true criterion is whether you are conscious or not in this moment. If you're conscious in this moment, instead of being totally immersed in the dream of your conditioned unawareness, the fictitious person, if you are conscious in this moment, then that is the greatest and only true success there could be in this life. Your entire past becomes irrelevant if it has taken you to this point.

In that sense, it is relevant, but ultimately it's irrelevant. You are awake in this moment. You represent the awakened state of consciousness in humanity.

Well, nothing else is success if you even want to use the term success, but I would probably recommend even here not to use the term success because that would imply that there's somebody there that says, I have achieved consciousness. And again, you would create a sense of another conceptual identity in your mind, another form of ego that says, I am conscious other than all these people are not conscious. I have achieved something.

I have achieved awakening. That's a delusion again, because the ego that claims to have achieved awakening is the ego that claims some kind of achievement. You can only awaken if the ego subsides and the ego becomes transparent.

Then awakening happens, but it's not an achievement. There's nobody there to have achieved anything. It's something that happens through you.

The ego in some way created it in a negative sense because the ego created the suffering that led to the awakening. In that sense, perhaps the ego did achieve it, but ultimately to claim I have achieved awakening is a delusion. It's an ego delusion.

So nihilism then is something, a form of suffering that can lead to an awakening. It can also lead to suicide. It can lead to despair until you die.

In many cases it does. It can lead to bitterness and resentment to desensitize yourself against the suffering of meaninglessness. You take drugs, you become addicted, and this is an epidemic of drug addiction around these days.

There's a desperate, very urgent need for the awakening of humanity, the awakening of humans. There's a great urgency now because we're moving into a critical, collectively critical situation on this planet, and that is absolutely necessary for awakening. Nobody awakens in their comfort zone.

Your mind might say, these are the optimum conditions for awakening. Nobody disturbs me. I get peace and quiet all around me.

No particular worldly challenges to distract me from my meditation periods, excellent food, everything pure and clean, two massages every day, getting rubbed with essential oils, fantastic conditions for spiritual awakening. Let's say in this spa where you pay

\$2,000 per day, let's say you've won the lottery, so you go to the spa, optimum, fantastic conditions for awakening, and would you awaken there? You could become very peaceful.

It would be just very pleasant, very pleasant, and you would be very much like a plant that grows from seed in a protected environment like a greenhouse, just the right temperature, and the plant grows very quickly and blossoms, but it's very weak. The moment the greenhouse, let's say the plant is then put outside, immediately it would shrink and collapse. It hasn't developed the inner strength to exist in the real world.

So the optimum way of awakening is to use the challenges you're facing in your daily life. Instead of believing, if I could only find an ideal situation, then I would easily awaken spiritually. No, you wouldn't.

You would actually, after some initial very pleasant experiences in this imaginary spa, you would actually, your level of consciousness would go down, you would gradually go back to, you go to sleep. It's so pleasant. Presence only arises when it's necessary, when it's necessary.

Nothing comes unless it's needed. There needs to be a call for it. In other words, there needs to be a gap between the current situation and what is needed to remedy the current situation.

Things need to be difficult, otherwise change doesn't happen on every level. In the physical level, if you want to get stronger, if you wanted to have change on a physical level, what do you do to get stronger? Well, you have to exercise, you have to maybe start jogging, you start weightlifting, you start whatever you do.

But what does that mean? What does it mean? Okay, you do weightlifting, you want to have a stronger body, fine.

Or you go jogging. You're making life difficult for your body. You're making life difficult for your body.

Then the body says, if we could speak, life is, it's so difficult I need more energy, otherwise I can't cope. The body cries out for more energy. You're forcing the body to cry out for more energy, just give me more energy.

And at some point, let's say jogging at first is arduous and it's, at some point you experience an influx of energy and suddenly the physical exercise becomes invigorating. Oh, it's great, you feel more powerful, there's an influx of energy. And even the weightlifting becomes, oh, you're straight, oh.

Energy comes in, but why does it come? Because there was a cry, there's a need for it. If you had not created the need by making life difficult for your body, it wouldn't have

come.

You would have remained on your couch as a couch potato and get weaker. So even on that level, it works. On any level, there needs to be a gap between the energy that's there now and the energy that's needed.

So this is where suffering comes in. Ultimately, everything is consciousness in different vibrational frequencies. There's only one energy.

The one energy can express itself as physical energy, can express the sexual energy, can express itself as emotional, as mental energy, and it can express itself as spiritual energy, which is pure consciousness, in the same way that water can be there as a solid, as ice, can be there as liquid. It's still water, but it looks something totally different. So you have a block of ice, then you can have water, which is liquid, and then you can have vapor, which is, you can't even see it.

It's water in the air. It's all water. In the same way, consciousness has different vibrational frequencies.

It can be there as physical energy, can be there as mental energy, as thinking, and it can be there as spiritual, as the highest frequency of consciousness, spiritual energy. So as I said, you have to make life difficult for your body so that your body can get stronger. And in the same way, your life experiences difficulty, which you experience as suffering, so that there can be an influx of energy, but not on a physical level necessarily, but on a higher level, an influx of spiritual energy, ultimately, that dissolves the suffering, but wouldn't have come without the suffering.

It dissolves the suffering, but without it, it wouldn't have come. There needs to be a cry for help. So you can, if you can welcome the suffering in your life, even let's take a simple thing.

Say you feel unhappy. Usually unhappiness is created with some kind of narrative in your mind that creates it. You tell yourself the sad story of my life, me and my life, and you tell yourself it's sad, or how sad it's going to be, might be even worse than the past.

So the narrative in your mind, and you feel unhappy, or you might just feel unhappy even without the narrative, because you're telling yourself a sad narrative for so long that you have an emotional equivalent of the sad narrative in your mind, and you carry that in your emotional field, this sadness that you carry here, and that expresses a feeling of unhappiness, probably associated with certain thoughts, yes, or perhaps it's nihilism, it's so pointless, whatever, I have failed, or whatever it may be, doesn't matter. Unhappiness is there. Oh, I'm so unhappy.

I'm unhappy. Okay. Now, a little experiment.

It sounds a little strange. Can you be completely okay with being unhappy? Okay, I'm unhappy.

That's fine. Let me be unhappy. Can you completely accept that you're unhappy?

Instead of not wanting to be unhappy, which is a normal thing, it's not wanting to be unhappy. I'd rather be happy than unhappy. But as an experiment, if you're unhappy, and especially if you have frequent states of unhappiness, and I'm not talking about certain situations that require action, but you haven't taken the action yet, and that's why you're unhappy, take some action, if you can do something about it.

But if unhappiness arises frequently in you, in your life, no matter where you are and what you're doing, practice complete acceptance of whatever it is that you're experiencing at this moment. As an experiment, complete acceptance of whatever it is you're experiencing at this moment. Okay, unhappy.

All right. That's okay. Let me be unhappy.

I'm just unhappy. It's okay to be unhappy. I'm unhappy.

I'm so unhappy. Let's see what happens if you completely accept that you're unhappy. I'm unhappy.

I don't want to make a prediction, but you may find that the unhappiness cannot survive if you completely accept it. It sounds very paradoxical. But anything that you completely accept does undergo transformation.

And complete acceptance is also a diminishment of ego. The ego shrinks in the state of acceptance. Now, acceptance means accept whatever you're experiencing at this moment.

That's all, just this moment. Accept whatever you're experiencing at this moment, because you might as well, because this is what you're experiencing at this moment. If you don't accept it, it gets worse.

So, accept unhappiness. Okay. You can do the same with fear.

You have anxiety, say anxiety, and you feel it in your body. Okay. You completely accept there's anxiety in your body.

You can feel it. It's a contraction. You can feel it's in your stomach.

There it is. I accept it. It's there.

Accept. Now, you may find, especially anxiety or fear, when you completely accept it, it becomes transformed into presence. So, before there was a contraction of the fear,

acceptance opens it up.

Contraction is no longer there. And you just become intensely present. Where before there was fear, there's now intense presence.

And if presence is lost, you can go move back into fear. So, practice with that. Acceptance is a quick way of transcending ego, because ego thrives and lives on resistance, resisting what is.

So, practice and see what happens, especially with any form of unhappiness. And then, gradually, you live in state of alignment with the present moment. No matter what form it takes, you're aligned with what is.

And that ego subsides immediately. And there you can enter presence without more suffering. Until you practice that, you need the suffering to force you into presence.

But you don't need to wait any longer for suffering to force you into presence. If you are here now, listening to this, you've already had enough of that. You had enough suffering to bring you to this point, to this point of realization.

For the further evolution of your consciousness, you do not need more suffering. You just need to invite presence into your life, more presence into your life. And you do it by aligning yourself with the present moment, no matter what form it takes.

And then, the transcendent dimension opens up with the acceptance of the present moment. The transcendent dimension opens up in your life. And there it is.

It's a wonderful, wonderful process. Again, I use the term conscious suffering. Conscious suffering means you accept the suffering.

And by accepting the suffering, you will experience a transformation of suffering. Now, one little thing to be careful of, accepting suffering, do not mistake this for meaning that you continue to be engaged in creating an unhappy narrative in your mind about you and your life, or whatever situation it may be. That's not the acceptance of that.

You have to feel the suffering, and then accept it. But don't allow it to use your mind and continuously create an unhappy narrative in your mind. Then you'll be unconscious, and you cannot accept, because you're not even there to accept anything.

So acceptance means the narrative dissolves. And all that remains is a feeling, whatever it may be, unhappiness, anxiety, whatever it is, the feeling, and that you accept. Then the transformation happens.

That's the beauty of it. In this world, you have to be careful with what kind of thoughts you absorb from the collective, because there's so much unhappiness in the collective energy field of humanity. So it's very easy to get drawn into that.

You're not careful and participate in the suffering of the collective, fear, anxiety, anger, that's everywhere. It's also very easy to be affected by certain thoughts that can take over your mind, that come from the collective thoughts and thought patterns. Anybody who is not sufficiently present, sufficiently aware, is susceptible to being infected by certain thoughts.

Certain thoughts become lodged in your mind. Every thought is an energy formation, like you could say a little entity. Thought gets lodged in your mind and attracts associated thoughts and becomes a bundle of thoughts.

And without awareness, you identify with the thoughts, and then you're being possessed by certain thoughts. They may arise from your personal, but very commonly they arise from the collective. In your personal life, you could develop some kind of thought that, of an obsessive nature, that occupies your mind, and you can't get rid of it.

It could be the thought of one, directed to one particular person, very negative thoughts. At the simplest level, you can have a melody that you can't get rid of in your mind. You can have a whole day or two days, and you can't get rid of this thing that's in your mind.

It repeats itself again and again. You can have certain assumptions about this world. They may be totally absurd and irrational, or there may be some truth to it, but only there may be an aspect of the truth.

The most absurd thoughts could be there. You might think that the extraterrestrials are already here. Well, they may be.

And every other human is actually an alien, and you just have to look at them carefully to figure out whether they are aliens or humans. And I'm not excluding the possibility that some aliens may be here, but we are really, I'm talking about obsessive thoughts that are probably not correct. And then it covers your subsequent perception of reality, gets totally colored by the obsessive thoughts, and it can explain everything in those terms.

All the evils of the world have suddenly one explanation. Another one that's also in the collective, you can have a thought that the entire world is divided into oppressor and oppressed. Any human being either belongs to the oppressors or to the oppressed.

That was an idea in communism, in economic terms, in terms of social power. They divided humanity into oppressors and oppressed. And then they look at, you can look at any human being and say, he's oppressed, he's an oppressor.

The thing is, of course, oppressors and oppressed have existed, and some areas still exist. But to take one fragment of truth, because the totality of human life is much vaster than that, this is one aspect. But if you take one aspect that then occupies your mind because of lack of awareness, you are possessed by a thought.

And this thought says the entire world, this is just one example, it could give many examples. The essential identity of any human being is either they are oppressed or they are the oppressor. Now, of course, if that is the thoughts that dominate your mind, then obviously you would probably regard the oppressed as the good ones and the oppressors as the bad ones.

So that simplifies life enormously. You immediately can decide who is good and who is bad. And you are probably good, presumably.

Even if you are an oppressor, traditionally, you now recognize your sins and you will atone for your sins of being an oppressor and you side with the oppressed, and therefore you become one of the good people. So we have the same phenomenon in very extreme form. We all know about Soviet communism, we know about Chinese Mao Zedong Cultural Revolution, quite a crazy time period, we know national socialism in Germany, all the evils perpetrated by all these collective delusional systems that divided people into good and bad, entire groups gave them an identity.

I was in Cambodia a few years ago and visited the death camps of the Cambodians. It's a small country, so not many people are familiar with the recent history of Cambodia, but they had an extreme communist regime under a mad dictator called Pol Pot. And in that extreme communist regime, Cambodia experienced dreadful suffering.

One third of the population was killed by their own government because they were the oppressors. An oppressor was anybody who could read and write, because obviously they were exploiting the peasants. Anybody who wore glasses, they would be sent from the city into the countryside to work on the fields where they didn't have enough food, and most of them starved.

Total lack of humanity, total lack because of the entire country was dominated by one absurd and obsessive thought that made it impossible for them to relate to any human being as a human being. They relate them through the conceptualization that thought had created for them. They couldn't sense the humanity, the being of the other human anymore, the moment that imposed a conceptual identity on them.

This is an extreme example of what can happen to you when you're taken over by certain thoughts in your mind. This is not to mean that, of course, oppressor and oppressive existed and exist, but it's not the entire explanation. There are many other facts in this life.

But I'm saying all this because you need to be very alert so that your mind is not taken over by certain thoughts that invade your mind and color your view of reality. There are certain irrational thoughts that are floating around in the collective at the present time. It's very easy for you to absorb some of them and being possessed by certain thoughts that may be so irrational that it's unbelievable, but I'm not giving any examples.

You have to find it out for yourself with awareness you can. Be very careful with observing your mind. Be there as a witness of your mind so that you don't get taken over by certain thoughts, that your mind does not get taken over by certain thoughts, and then you cannot perceive reality anymore as it is.

Everything is colored by the veil of irrational thinking. Nowadays, these things can spread very quickly and easily, these irrational things. In the past, they were confined to either one country or one area in a particular country.

But nowadays, certain irrational thoughts can go through the entire world through the technology we have and can quickly affect millions of humans all over the world. So in the past, you had it, as I said, limited. Let's say the hunt for witches in the past, totally absurd and irrational.

It's a mental disease that affected certain countries or areas in certain countries. And this mental disease, then, there were some places in Europe, there were villages and towns in Europe in the Middle Ages. During that time of collective insanity, there were almost no women left in some villages and towns at that time because they're all being burned or drowned because they were called as witches, absolute insanity.

So don't underestimate how insane humans can become. The only antidote that you have against it is awareness so that your mind does not get affected by a mental virus. The awareness is aware of what your mind is doing so that your mind does not get occupied by one particular way of thinking, which is probably irrational.

When there's lack of awareness, you can be taken over by, in politics, one of the other thought stream, some may be called right wing or left wing. If there's no awareness or very little awareness, one or two or the other of those streams can take you over completely. This is a thought stream that takes you over and you don't know it because you identify with it.

And then you are drifting towards an extreme, either to the right or to the left. And the more you go to an extreme, the more irrational you become without knowing it, and so on. So again, what we call politically left and right are simply streams of thought.

And every stream of thought attempts to grow in you. That's what thought does. A thought comes in, and then it attempts to get a bit bigger and suddenly attempts to survive in you.

That's fine. But without awareness, you get hijacked by a stream of thought. So in political terms, you get hijacked either by one or the other side.

And the more people get hijacked in one direction, the more they create another segment of the population that is hijacked in the other direction. So then the extremes become more pronounced, as it's maybe happening in the United States and some other

Western countries these days. So aware, stay aware, aware, so you are the space of awareness for your thoughts.

Be the witnessing consciousness. Even when you watch the news, be the witnessing consciousness. Don't get drawn into, yes, have your opinions, but don't get hijacked by opinions, which are only thoughts.

Don't get taken over by them. Through presence, develop the immunity against toxic thoughts. Because if you don't have that, an entire country could be taken over by what ultimately would be mass psychosis temporarily.

It can last for a few years. Mass psychosis is not uncommon. It can take over, as I pointed out before, it can take over entire countries when then millions of people become deluded and usually involves a lot of suffering and destructiveness and violence.

All you can do is take responsibility for your space of awareness, be the awareness, so that you do not participate. If there should be a mass psychosis, you won't be part of it. You will be there as the awareness.

And the more people can be there as the awareness, the less likely it is that it will develop into a mass psychosis. And if it should develop, the more people are still aware while it happens, the more short-lived this episode would be. So we are moving into very interesting times.

As you might have noticed, the next few years will be very challenging collectively. But this is strangely, from a higher point of view, is necessary for the evolution of consciousness. It doesn't look like that, but it is.

Humans don't evolve except in critical situations, which often are self-created, both either personally or collectively. But you are well-prepared, you are all aware, and it's very unlikely that any of you will actually become part of the collective insanity that to some extent is already here and might even grow. It is very unlikely that you will be part of that.

You will represent the sanity within the insanity if it should grow even further. All right.

[Speaker 2] (45:28 - 45:48)

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Eckhart Tolle Finding Our Timeless Essence [1b492153-8cb9-407e-9ded-1efa2c0ffbe5]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:01)

Finding our timeless essence. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the sense of guilt which has plagued humanity through the centuries. He says it's part of the ego's dysfunction.

The feeling that not only is there something wrong with the world, there's also something wrong with me. Eckhart explains certain religious traditions have interpreted this as God's punishment. We believe somehow we are at fault when bad things happen.

He says this results in a heavy pain body, burdened by resentments, grievances, and also the sense of being a victim. Eckhart says there are ego identities based on faulty thinking. He believes what's needed is wisdom so we can free ourselves to find our true identity.

Some traditions call it our Buddha nature or Christ consciousness. Eckhart says this aspect of us cannot be harmed by what has happened to us. It is not touched by suffering.

He believes we must look inside to find this timeless essence that lives within each of us.

[Speaker 1] (1:11 - 37:23)

Perhaps this is going to be the silent talk. Stillness speaks. It's a little paradox.

I just realized that this title of the little book I wrote is a paradox. We talked about a belief or more accurately a living realization in all ancient indigenous cultures, a realization of the aliveness of the world beyond what we can see with our senses. So the anthropologists call that animism.

A later term is panpsychism. Pan means all or everything. Psychism means it has aliveness in it, whatever you want to call it.

I call it consciousness. Everything is endowed with some degree of spirit or consciousness. Many religions of the world also have that in Hinduism and certain forms of Christianity.

There is an enigmatic term of the Trinity in Christianity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. You could interpret that as meaning the Father would correspond to God, the transcendent God, the One, the Godhead that does not exist in space and time, is transcendent to this dimension. The Son would be the realization of that reality within the human being.

In esoteric Christianity that would be called the Christ within. In certain schools of Buddhism that is called your Buddha nature, your innate Buddha nature, that which transcends the conditioned personality. That is the inner realization of what on the outer level we can call in Christianity the Father, the transcendent Godhead.

And then in between we have the Holy Spirit which is that which pervades the universe, the emanation of God that pervades the universe, that is in everything. So we have the three, the inner realization that when it is known within the human, that is the, call it the Son in Christianity or Christ within or Buddha nature. But of course Buddha nature is the spirit that is within everything.

So in Buddhism they say for example, they ask, does a blade of grass have Buddha nature? Yes, everything has Buddha nature. And so another term for that which pervades the universe, which is of course consciousness, is anima mundi, it's a Latin ancient term for the soul of the world, the soul of the world.

So that is that which underlies all things you perceive in this dimension. Behind it there is a vast intelligence, but that can be realized within the human being. It's not just a belief system or some kind of dogma, it's more than that.

And once you realize that within, then and only then, even if you don't realize it fully, just glimpses of it, distant glimpses even, or more fully, and only then can you recognize it, sense it in the outer world. And that is, I call it sensing, it's kind of, it depends how one uses language, feeling, sensing, sensing I believe is the best word I can find. So you sense it in the outer world.

The world is then no longer dead, because it has been deadened by conceptualization in the human mind, excessive, excessive thinking. Thinking, the most wonderful thing that enabled humans to do the most amazing things, also became a burden and something that was turning against humans when it became excessive. And when thinking became excessive, then humans began to derive their entire sense of identity, their sense of self from the movement of thought.

And this is kind of where we are at now, where the world is perceived as devoid of intelligence, the external world, it has become deadened to our senses, to deeper senses, and then all kinds of dreadful things arise like a sense of meaninglessness that can seep into millions of individual human beings, a sense of pointlessness of it all, a sense of nihilism or nihilism, nothing makes sense, what's the point? And then all you can end up with is hedonistic pursuits, in other words, seeking temporary pleasures, which give very temporary satisfaction and then always end in more suffering and pain.

And another one associated with that is the seeking of power or whatever the ego believes will satisfy it, satisfy you, you have become the ego then. But there's always this dreadful thing hiding behind every apparent achievement of the ego, that sense of

pointlessness that is now affecting millions of human beings. It's not entirely new in the history of the human race, that sense of pointless already existed in certain individuals here and there.

There's a book in the Bible, the Old Testament, that is kind of an expression of that sense, probably being written, we don't know who the author was, well the book is called Ecclesiastes and it begins with a famous statement, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Vanity in the older sense of the word means pointlessness. So it will presumably be written by an old man, we assume, who saw that everything is so short-lived and he describes all that in the book.

It's beautifully written, it's a great work of literature and it's a reflection of that state of consciousness. So basically he says just get out of life whatever you can because you're going to die and no matter what you achieve you're still going to die. So even if you achieve wisdom you're still going to die and it's all pointless anyway.

But he writes in more beautiful language than I'm summarizing it here. But it's funny how that book found its way into the Bible. Somebody's wondering about the pointlessness of it all.

So that afflicted certain individuals here and there, but not vast numbers of people as it does now. And a lot to do with it is the fact that in the mainstream culture the entire universe is regarded as a random coming together, an accidental coming together of atoms and molecules and then accidentally all this comes into existence. Then of course there is another religious theory that God regarded as an architect or something like that who created it all.

At some point God created it all. And what did he do then? So some people would say well he must have walked away after he created it all.

Because if he were controlling things now then that wouldn't make sense because I could do better than that. So that happens when the belief is there's an external creator who does it all and then according to some beliefs he's still in charge of things. Omnipotent, an omnipotent entity somewhere looking over things.

Traditionally the belief was that if bad things happened it's God's punishment. Traditionally not many people dared say how dare you God punish us or punish me. They immediately said it's our fault, I know, it's my fault, I know.

That was the traditional approach. Even when I was a child I was brought up as a Catholic and in those early days I believe I seem to remember the mass was still there was a lot of Latin in the mass which is very nice. And even as a child at ten years old we had to say, we had to beat our chest and say mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa, mea culpa.

My guilt, my blame, I am to blame. As a child I tried to figure out what that was, why I was to blame. And at the age of ten came the first communion, that is a big event in the life, I don't know if it still is in the life of a Catholic child.

The first communion is preceded by the first confession of your sins in the cubicle, dark, dark cube, very scary. And then before you do that, the day before or days before you have to what was called searching your conscience for your sins. And I took it more seriously I remember than other children, because other children were playing in the streets saying, are you coming to join us?

No, I was sitting at a table, I had stacked up books upright around me to hide the paper which I was going to write down my sins. But it took a lot really to think very hard, it must have done something really bad. I came up with a few minor things and I even invented one or two because there wasn't enough on the paper.

But the sense of guilt goes through the millennia of deep seated guilt in the human mind and that is also part of the egoic consciousness, the sense of not only is there something wrong with the world, there is something wrong with me too. And even more fundamentally that sense which is part of egoic consciousness in the sense there is something fundamentally wrong with me. However, in religious terms it expresses itself as this, it's immediately saying we deserve your punishment God, because we feel bad, I feel so bad, I deserve what I'm getting.

And that is the feeling of guilt. So whenever a disaster happened in the past, a natural disaster, earthquake, pestilence, the black death, all the dreadful things that happened, floods, fires, volcanic eruptions, whatever it may be, humans immediately said, they didn't say how dreadful this is, why is this happening, God is punishing us for our sins, we deserve it, it's our guilt, we need to atone. And then came global warming and then bad things happened perhaps through that and who knows perhaps for the first time when humans say, we caused all this, it's our fault, maybe for the first time they are right.

So the dysfunction created by the egoic consciousness that brings about a lot of havoc on every level in the human life, on the individual level and the collective level. So all these are things that can now be transcended. We don't need a feeling of guilt, just a clear, we need wisdom, we can let go of guilt as we let go of egoic consciousness, guilt also disappears because guilt is on an individual level, it means that you have done something bad in the past.

At that time you didn't know that it was bad, we presume, you did it because this was a manifestation of your level of consciousness at that time. Then you become a bit more conscious, then you look back on your past and say, oh I did that. And that can easily develop into a feeling of strong guilt which strengthens the ego.

So in other words, you transform human unconsciousness as it manifested through you at that time, you transform the human unconsciousness into an identity. So you manufacture an identity for yourself out of that and say, that's me, I am a bad person. So it's equating unconscious action with identity.

And then again, that becomes another heavy part of the egoic identity. Many people carry a sense of individual guilt about something they did or failed to do but should have done in the past. And they cannot let go of, I'm speaking, I know that quite a few people usually ask me questions about that, so this will be relevant to quite a few people for quite a few people.

So they carry an identity around not recognizing what you manifested was human unconsciousness at the time. But you recognize, you know that it created suffering in some way to other humans and yet to transform that into an identity is a mistake, it keeps you trapped in egoic consciousness. But this also applies to other people.

If other people did something bad, then what is called guilt, then that becomes, you have a resentment or grievance towards somebody else. And again, it is quite likely that whatever happened at that time, almost certainly it was perpetrated by a human being who was, maybe he, she still is now, if they're still alive, who was unconscious, forced by the egoic, the dysfunction of the egoic self to perpetrate that. And again, the danger is if we equate the unconscious action of another if we make an identity for the other out of that, that is also a trap for the ego again.

So whether you do it to yourself, in which case it is guilt, a guilt-ridden sense of self, or somebody else did something to you and then you are burdened with a sense of deep resentment or grievance or a sense of having been a victim of somebody and then you adopt a victim identity, which again is a very strong egoic identity. So you see yourself as a victim, you think of yourself as a victim of this or that event or those actions, but those are all egoic identities. You can recognize what somebody did in the past and you may not.

Forgiveness is something we need to be very careful with because it's often used in a superficial sense. People say you need to forgive yourself for something you did and they say you need to forgive somebody else for what they did and then sometimes people say, I forgive you, but how deep does it go? Perhaps they have an image of themselves as quite spiritual and then that what they say corresponds, they want simply to reinforce the image they have of themselves as a spiritual person who does not harbor resentment.

I'm too spiritual for resentment. I forgive you, you're fine. But deep down there's still many negative emotions when you have a strong self-image of a particular kind, for example spiritual or religious, you have that this is who I am and then it can easily happen that you deny certain things that contradict your belief in who you are, the exact

opposite of your belief of being a spiritual or religious person.

There are many cases that happened over many centuries to many religious people, impossible to recognize the negative emotions within themselves because they would have conflicted with their self-image and if you then repress them, they get even worse and then they come out in bursts of extreme anger or even violence. Even that is justified then by the egoic mind. So the unconscious parent who beats their child in a rage but who thinks of themselves as spiritual, say I'm doing it for your own good.

So they reinterpret what they are doing which is bad, they reinterpret it so that it fits in with their self-image as a good person. So you lie to yourself continuously. Crazy.

So all these things happen because there is lack of awareness and you are looking for an identity and you are grasping wherever you can find your identity in the past, you are grasping at something, certain memories, images, so you haven't found your deeper identity which is the indwelling consciousness itself and then you need some substitute identity. So these are all cases where people have substitute identities, they have conceptual identities of who they are and basically you live in a kind of, in your own matrix conditioned by egoic mind and you cannot see reality, you can't see what you are doing. Jesus said the famous words on the cross, forgive them for they know not what they do.

What he means of course, maybe if it had been in recent times he would have expressed it slightly differently, would have said forgive them for they are totally unconscious. Now the forgiving, the real forgiving happens when you recognize that there is a dimension in you that has not been affected by whatever happened to you, or whatever anybody did to you. There is a dimension in you which is why we are here to access that more deeply and again whether we call that the stillness, the consciousness itself, the unconditioned consciousness or if you are religious, Christ consciousness, the Christ within the inner Christ, the inner Buddha, Buddha nature, whatever you want to call it.

There is something that actually cannot be touched by anything that happens to you as a person. As a person you can suffer a lot in this world and some people suffer more than others but everybody suffers. As a person you suffer, as a human you suffer.

The being beyond the human, because as you know you are a human being, the being beyond the human is actually not touched by suffering. So you have to find that, that timeless essence that is within you, that is the inner aspect of what we call the world soul, which also the world soul also is beyond suffering. And the world soul continuously creates and recreates although things die all the time.

The world soul, there have already been 4 or 5 mass extinctions on the planet over millions and millions of years when each time life on the planet became 80% destroyed, 70%, even 90% on one mass extinction on the planet. Almost all life forms wiped out.

And you would say this is definitely the end.

But it wasn't the end. The planet regenerated after several mass extinctions, it regenerated again, just took a while, not too long, just a few million years. It regenerated and then the life that then arose was of an even greater complexity of life forms.

There was something that could not be destroyed, even when the meteorites hit, they say the last extinction perhaps was when the dinosaurs became extinct. A huge meteorite hit the planet and led to extinction of life, a lot of, most of life on the planet. But there was something beyond it.

There was this planetary intelligence, Anima Mundi is the soul of the world but one aspect of the larger soul of the world is the soul of the planet. The soul of the planet is an aspect of the world soul and your soul is an aspect also of the world soul, they are not separate. So the planet is a life form that has its own intelligence which is an aspect of the one intelligence.

And out of that the recreation happens again and again and each time chaos erupts and destroys it, a higher order develops out of the chaos. Which is not to say that we should welcome the next extinction that we perhaps create. So we should, it is our task to learn to recognize again the sacredness of life on the planet that is vital part of the awakening of human consciousness.

At the very beginning of the Course in Miracles there are two or three sentences that are supposed to summarize the whole course. If you understand those, and the Course in Miracles is the same length as the Bible so it is a lot to read and a long, very long. If you understand those two or three sentences at the beginning, you don't need to read the rest.

So that's good. And so the summary of the Course in Miracles according to that is as follows. Nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God. Can you say that again?

Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.

I'm not going to explain it now. I'll let you to figure it out for yourself. You have enough wisdom.

So that's a very deep statement. So ultimately, all the forms... Oh, I'm beginning to explain it now.

OK, since I've started I might as well finish. Ultimately, all the forms of life that you see are only the forms of life, including your physical form and even your psychological form. They are forms of life but not life itself.

Life itself is indestructible. And life itself can be equated with consciousness itself. Consciousness itself, which is the essence of every life form.

And the essence of every life form cannot be destroyed. Only the outer, what we perceive as the outer form, of course, is very fragile and is subject to impermanence and its existence is very fleeting. So in those terms, the only absolutely real thing is that which gives life to everything and that cannot be destroyed.

Which is not to say that we should disrespect the forms of life. It is very important that we come into a relationship of reverence and love with the natural world because after all, it's another manifestation of who you are, who or what you are in your essence. So you always, when you recognize more deeply other life forms and you recognize, you sense the inherent aliveness in these life forms, that recognition is a form of love, real love.

And that is of vital importance to come to that realization. So what you love is, well, there is a Christian expression, it's not an absolutely ideal expression, it's not absolutely right, but it's an approximation of the truth. So the Christian expression is, you don't love the creature, you love the creator in the creature.

So what you love in the creature is the creator of the creature, but it's not really the creator, it's the essence of the creature. So in ultimate terms then, if you want to use theistic language, what you love in the other is ultimately always God. So that's when you love a form of life, what you really love is God hiding, having taken on the temporary disguise of that particular form of life, God, or rather the emanation of God, which is consciousness.

The consciousness that you are, that you can sense at this very moment as the essence of your being, do we ask, is that God? Well, yes and no. You can't ask the same question of whether the light of the sun is the sun or not.

The light of the sun that hits your skin and you can feel its warmth, and the life-giving energy of the sun that is the very warmth in your body, is derived from calories, which is derived from sun energy, so we are here physically because of the sun, and the rays of the sun that reach us, are they the sun? Yes and no. Obviously they are connected to the sun, they come, there is a oneness, but in the same way, the consciousness that animates all life forms, including you here, is an emanation of that one that is ancient cultures regarded the sun as God, because it is the closest analogy you can have, except that God has no physical existence in space and time.

It's the transcendent one of which we can say nothing, but we cannot imagine or visualize anything. It's the transcendent one that emanates consciousness, which is the light of God, into this dimension, and in this dimension there is an evolutionary process, where God itself is beyond time. So, if you say, is consciousness God?

Well, yes and no, in the same way that you say, is the light of the sun that I can feel, am I feeling the sun now? In a way, yes, but there is still a huge difference between the actual sun, which is of inconceivable energy, can't even imagine, and the sunlight that you feel, so yes and no. The consciousness then, the closest I can get to it, is to say it is an emanation of God, it is still one with God, so you are an emanation of the one.

So what you can sense in yourself as consciousness is the light of God, and this is why Jesus said, you are the light of the world, because you are consciousness. So that frees you from the absurd belief that all there is to you is this little person with its little problems and its short past and its short future. That's all that's me, that is not very satisfying.

I feel that there is more to you than that, and there is a deeper dimension to who you are. This dimension of who you are is the consciousness of the universe. We think of ourselves as entities, but ultimately we are not entities, we are processes.

One could go so far as to say that all nouns that we use, like tree, table, flower, whatever, earth, all nouns are actually a misperception that they are separate entities, whereas in reality there is a web of interconnectedness. The entire universe is one being in this web of interconnectedness, so ultimately there are no things, nouns, everything is a verb, everything happens. An event rather than a thing, and here these events unfold in what we call time in this dimension.

[Speaker 2] (37:25 - 37:44)

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Eckhart Tolle Finding Peace; Accepting What Is [3ec4ccab-fcb6-4cfd-b280-229fd242af44]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:36)

Finding peace. Accepting what is. In this episode Eckhart talks with a live audience.

He says the world is not here to make us happy. It's here to make us conscious. So if we are looking for fulfillment in a particular relationship, job, or life circumstances, we may find disappointment instead.

We find peace when we let go of the demand that people and situations should fulfill us. When we accept what is, it becomes possible to find freedom in the here and now.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 38:46)

The world is not here to make you happy. If you believe the world is here to make you happy, you're in for a lot of frustration. Because then believe that your relationship is meant to make you happy.

Then you believe that whoever you are with, boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, meant to make you happy. Then you believe the place where you live is meant to be totally satisfying. The place where you work is meant to be totally satisfying.

It's meant to make you happy. So then you believe that any condition, any place, any person, any situation is meant to make you happy. And if it doesn't make you happy, there is something wrong.

That is an erroneous belief. The world is not here to make you happy. The world is here to make you conscious.

And it can only make you conscious by challenging you. So all is well. And as the world challenges you and makes you conscious, your so-called happiness, which is a somewhat maybe, I don't use it that much to talk about the deeper state.

But the so-called happiness, you no longer look for it. To look to happiness to be provided by certain things or people in your life. And that's a great liberation when you realize this situation or this person is not here to make me happy.

It's here to make me conscious. And then you become happy. Something deeper arises that does not depend on what's going on there, whether a certain situation being in a certain way.

You become happy when you let go of the demand that people and situations and things should make you happy. Because if you interpret this on a superficial level, you might think, oh, that's a very negative thing to say that the world can't make you happy. It's

not.

You just give up looking for happiness where you can't find it. But you can find it in yourself. Here and now.

But I don't call it happiness. It's called presence. And then you meet the challenges of life through presence.

And through the challenges, your presence becomes stronger and stronger. And even if you lose it completely through a huge challenge, then it reemerges stronger. Sometimes presence gets obscured, can get obscured by some huge thing happening in your life.

And then ultimately it emerges again and it's stronger. So without presence, no matter where you are, you will always encounter misery, ultimately, because the world is so frustrating. Relationships are so frustrating and difficult.

And human beings are so difficult. Most humans are. Jean-Paul Sartre said, hell is other people.

And so whether you are alone, you're miserable when you're alone, you're miserable in the relationship. There's one man who texted after breaking up with his girlfriend, texted, I don't know if that's what it was, but he texted, I'm so miserable without you, it's like having you here. So that's your destiny if you think the world is here to make you happy.

I mentioned one way of finding out how much progress you're making on the spiritual path, and that is how you deal with challenges in your daily life. Little challenges, big challenges. Of course, there are more little challenges than big challenges, but the big ones come occasionally.

These are the external challenges. Then there are the internal challenges. And the internal challenges are the challenges that come through your mind.

Your mind wanting to possess you completely. You're being challenged by repetitive, destructive, and negative thoughts. Realize, don't confuse the two levels of challenges and think that what is a challenge that arises in your mind is actually an external challenge.

Many challenges that you think are external are actually internal. There are external challenges, of course. You suddenly are confronted with losing your home, you're losing your job, somebody leaves you, or you leave somebody, or somebody close to you becomes ill.

You become ill, that's a kind of external challenge. Even that I would call externals. Or somebody close to you dies, a loved one dies, or has an accident, or you have an

accident.

These are challenges on an external level. But a huge amount of challenges, a far greater amount, actually originates in your mind. But most people confuse that with an external challenge.

In other words, many, many times when you think you're in certain situations that make you upset or angry, cause you suffering, when you look closely, the situation itself does not cause you the suffering. But the way in which your mind interprets the situation is how the suffering arises. And you can verify that for yourself anywhere where you get upset about a situation, about having to wait for too long somewhere, and you go, this is so upsetting, why can't they, can't they organize things better?

I don't, I shouldn't, they shouldn't be doing that. Why do they hire people like that? This is so, just, such an annoying situation.

Okay, now this person has not separated the situation and their mental interpretation of the situation. It's an annoying, really annoying. Okay, what's annoying?

The fact that you have to stand here and wait for something? Or what your mind is commenting about it? Where does the annoyance arise?

What is the annoyance? So in many, many instances, you will find when you separate a situation from what your mind is saying about the situation, suddenly you realize the situation is not challenging at all. It just is as it is.

And if I breathe and look around, there's nothing wrong with standing here and waiting for something. But a minute ago, my mind says this was a very annoying situation, and you felt the corresponding emotion. I can't take any more of this.

Why am I even doing this? I can't believe it. You're being challenged not by a situation, you're being challenged by your mind.

So a lot of the things in your life, including bigger things than just having to wait in line and be feeling upset, a lot of things, if you separate the narrative in your mind that judges a situation in a certain way, if you look at that as an interpretation or narrative or judgment, and then look at the situation without imposing the narrative on it, you suddenly see, well, this just is as it is. In itself, it's nothing.

It's not annoying at all. The annoyance is something that I give to it. My mind unconsciously looks at it in a certain way and creates suffering.

So a lot of the time, you can be able to observe in your daily life, when you get upset about this, that, or that, it's not the situation that you find yourself in. It's the story in your mind about the situation. It's the suffering.

And that, of course, is connected with identifying with thinking, being completely identified with thinking in the absence of awareness. When there's no awareness, that's the reality that you inhabit. To become aware of the narrative in your mind and being able to separate a situation and the narrative implies that there is already enough awareness in you to be able to do that.

If there were not enough awareness in you, you would not be able to separate the narrative and the situation. They would be experienced as one. And so that's the essence of unconsciousness.

So look at challenges very carefully. Is there a real challenge here? In which case, either you take action or you accept what is, or is there a challenge that arises in my mind, is being supplied by my mind?

What would this situation be if I did not think these thoughts about it? And even you can go back into your past and say, for example, I was deeply betrayed by my ex-partner, ex-wife, ex-husband. I was very deeply, deeply betrayed by him or her.

On one level, that may be true. On another higher level, it's a story in your mind. And when you recognize that your ex-wife or husband or partner only acted according to their level of consciousness at the time, because no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness at the time of acting, then you say, well, that was their unconsciousness.

And suddenly you're not suffering anymore because you don't keep alive in your mind the narrative that he betrayed me. This is a very painful thing. If you want to be free of that, you can let go of that particular narrative and just look at the events.

And look at also, yes, at the time, went through painful emotions. That's what you experience. And occasionally, you might still experience painful emotions, but if the narrative gets locked in your mind, you will experience a painful emotion for the rest of your life.

There might have been a place for the painful emotion in the moment of this thing happening, but by being identified with that particular narrative, you are forced to re-experience that emotion continuously because the narrative reminds you of it. Again, not being able to separate the situation and the mental interpretation of the situation. Awareness.

Only awareness can free you of that. Only awareness can recognize that this is an illusion, ultimately. So the challenges are the twofold, external and internal, and very often, they are confused.

They are not recognized, that you cannot separate them. This is vital to practice. And so that's one way of finding out how much progress you're making on the spiritual path.

And the other is, whether in your daily life, you're able to have little moments of spaciousness or presence. Many little moments. How many little moments can you have of spaciousness or presence?

Now, this could just be a moment when you look out of the window of your room for 10 seconds, 15 seconds, observe what's there, the sky, the tree, the cars, without labeling it mentally, so that the sense perception happens against a background of spacious presence. In other words, your mind is still while you perceive. That is progress on the spiritual path.

If you meditate, of course, if you practice formal meditation, then that the aim of meditation is also to bring you to that point of pure awareness. And sometimes the act of meditating, if not done rightly, can be an obstacle in itself, especially if you have the idea in your mind that you are practicing, that you're doing a meditation, which implies you need to get somewhere with your meditation. Meditation is not a doing, ultimately.

Meditation, you can't really do a meditation. Meditation is the realization of being, which isn't a doing. So the realization of being is another word for becoming conscious of yourself as presence.

So when you then look at something, I'm just using as an example the visual perception. I could also use auditory perception. I could also use touch.

But the predominant sense for humans is seeing. When you look at something, you can look at something without imposing interpretation. Are you able to do that for just a brief moment?

Are you able to look around this room, take it in, and at the same time as being aware of what you are taking in, the sense perceptions in this room, you are also aware. Let's do it right now. It's not a doing.

We'll just have to use words. At the same time as you're taking in the totality of this room visually, and you hear the noise, my voice and any other noise. And at the same time, are you able to be aware of yourself?

Not yourself as the person, not yourself as the historical person that has a name and a history. No. Are you aware of yourself as the underlying presence?

Can you sense that presence that is the, so to speak, one could use an analogy, it's the canvas on which the sense perception is painted. So can you be aware of the canvas, which is your presence, as well as be aware of the picture on the canvas? Whereas before, you were only aware of the picture on the canvas, or identified with the picture.

But now you become aware of the underlying canvas. I recommend this very highly to practice that. Don't demand that you should hold this for long periods of time, and do it

in a non-formal way, just as often as you can, especially when you're waiting for something.

How many times are you waiting for something? Waiting is an important part of people's lives. Unfortunately, nowadays, waiting is usually filled with looking at your phone, your smartphone.

Before the arrival of smartphones, you just were stuck with yourself. Now, of course, you can escape the situation of waiting by looking at your phone, and then you're somewhere else. But if you can, let's not give in to that, because there's probably nothing really important to look at.

If you can use the moments of waiting and transform them into presence, just look around, and look in your room, be in your room, whether it's a hotel room or a room at home, sit in your room for just a minute, maybe even two. If you enjoy it, it might be more. And look around, and just feel your own presence as the presence of awareness.

And that awareness, without that awareness, you wouldn't be able to perceive anything. So you perceive against the background of awareness, innocent perception, in which you don't know anything conceptually, but there is a deeper knowing there that is non-conceptual, that to the conceptual mind looks like a state of ignorance. There's a depth suddenly.

You become deeper. The more you're able to access the dimension that is beyond thought, the deeper you become as a human being. And the more creatively you can actually think when you do use thinking, because then the thinking is connected to the deeper awareness, and then can be inspired by that dimension, which is the dimension where all creativity arises.

So if you want to become a better thinker, if you want to be able to use your mind more effectively, including using your mind to manifest, which the mind is a hugely powerful thing, you can manifest incredible things with your mind. But you can only develop a better, more powerful mind if you're able to get out of your mind. You become a better thinker by developing the ability to refrain from thinking.

Then you have the balance in your life. Two dimensions. You suddenly become aware of two dimensions in you.

There's two of you. There is a form identity of you, your body, your personality, your history, the person of who you are. And then there is a dimension of depth in you.

There's a presence. There's a deep presence. There's an awareness.

There's a stillness, an aliveness, a spaciousness. That is a dimension that transcends thinking. Then you can use both.

After a while, you're able to bring the two even together. At first, they seem separate states. You step out of thinking, and it's a great liberation.

It's rising above thinking, not falling below thinking. You can do that when you go to sleep. You can do that when you go to the bar and have a few drinks.

You fall below thinking. And here, the real spiritual practice is rising above thinking. And so you become familiar with that state of not thinking.

And then your thinking becomes more fruitful, more creative, more original. You have occasionally original thoughts. Now, most humans don't have original thoughts, not a single one.

All the thoughts that they have are learned thoughts from the conditioning of their mind. And then this is another way of putting it, is to say it's the dimension of form and formlessness in you. There is the timeless essence of who you are, which is formless presence.

And for a little while, there is you as this particular form, which is fine too, which has its place too, which is to be also acknowledged and honored and looked after and accepted, including its imperfections. You don't demand that you as this form identity should become this perfect being, perfect body, perfect looks, perfect articulation, perfect everything. It's not going to happen.

Well, if it does happen, it won't last for very long because this body is impermanent and this personality is impermanent. The person is impermanent, but underneath the impermanence is hidden something deeper and timeless. And so to sense that in yourself, that is liberation so that eventually your sense of identity is not derived anymore from the person, although the person is acknowledged and honored, but you realize that's not really who you are.

Really who you are is the presence. And that's what the Buddha tried to point to. That's what Jesus tried to point to.

The Buddha calls it emptiness as the essence. But I would suggest another translation of that term. I would suggest spaciousness or formlessness.

And Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven. What is heaven? Heaven is the sky.

That's another word for sky. And what's the sky? Spaciousness.

In this sense-perceived world, the closest you can get to that inner dimension in the sense-perceived world is to look at the sky, because the sky is both something and nothing. The sky seems to be something, but it doesn't actually exist as something because you could never find it. Even if you went up in a rocket, you could never say, oh,

here's the sky.

Before you know it, you're beyond it, and where was the sky? So all the sky is is vast spaciousness, formlessness. So when Jesus talks about the kingdom of heaven, he talks about the dimension of spaciousness.

Kingdom means dimension in modern terminology. The dimension of spaciousness in you. Finding that is your salvation.

What's the terminology? And the Buddha says the emptiness is the essential reality of who you are, which means spaciousness. And finding that frees you from suffering.

That is how suffering is transcended. It's all the same, just misunderstood. Jesus' words were more misunderstood than the Buddha's words, but it's all the same.

And so you become a being that inhabits two worlds, the world of form, here, and the formless. You live from the formless, and the formless lives through you and begins to express itself through you, and that is the greater consciousness. It's universal consciousness that uses your brain to express itself through, uses you to express it.

So you are a focal point of consciousness in this world. The world consciousness, universal consciousness, every human, what looks like a human being, is a focalization of a universal consciousness. That's me.

And then you're gone. Consciousness coming through, and another consciousness coming through. And all over the planet, consciousness in billions of forms, like sparks of the divine, light up and die down.

The one, it's the one appearing as the many, and it's the one consciousness growing, manifesting itself more fully in this dimension. It comes from another dimension where there's no time and no development, that's okay. But in this dimension, it manifests more and more fully.

It wants to come in for some reason, and that's the destiny of the world. There's a transmutation happening, and gradually, of course, you are part of that. The entire so-called physical universe is being transmuted through consciousness, and then let's not go too far.

We don't need to step too many steps ahead, just one or two at a time. So you need to just realize that there is infinitely more to you than who you are as a person. And whatever your situation is like on a personal level, whether your life is a great success or a huge failure, and those two things, of course, narratives in your mind, they're not a reality.

You can have the narrative, I am the greatest, I am the master of the universe, or I will

be the, you'll see, I'll be the master of the universe. Whether it's a great success or a great failure, those are just narratives in your mind. But whatever it is, ultimately, it doesn't matter all that much what you have achieved or failed.

There's one true achievement, and that's how much consciousness expresses itself through you at this moment. And you could have failed at everything. You could have messed it all up.

Whatever you did, let's assume, whatever you did in life always turned out into a huge mess. You messed up the whole thing. Let's take that extreme.

There may be some of you who have that idea in their head, I messed up completely. Well, you did, so why are you here? Why are you here?

Well, I'm here because, oh, how conscious are you? If all your messing up brought you to a point of spiritual awakening, which means you're conscious at this moment, and you know yourself as consciousness, that means at this moment, in and through you, the universe has become conscious of itself, because that's who you are. You are the universe becoming conscious of itself.

Obviously, you're an essential part of the universe, and you are becoming conscious as the universe. And it's an amazing thing. So whatever happens or does not happen on a personal level may be important to the person.

And of course, it's good to do the best you can on a personal level, but ultimately, your life, your success in life or failure is determined by how much consciousness comes through you into this world. How do you look at something? What is your consciousness when you look at another human being and interact with another human being?

When you speak, how much presence is there? How much are you aligned with the present moment, being able to accept the isness of things, and yet being capable of action, but not reaction? That's what matters.

So your success or failure, if you even want to use those terms, as somebody once said, it's good to make plans and have goals, because otherwise, how would you know that you failed? Success and failure are concepts, of course, in your mind. But it is possible, of course, that every situation that you went wrong in your life, and yet you're here now.

You might even be in prison. You might be listening to this in prison. Hopefully, there are people who either at this moment or in some other now, the one now, are listening to this in prison.

You're conscious now. That determines your success as a human being. But you no longer say, I am conscious, because that's a conceptual identity again.

So you have to be aware of the ego coming in through the back door and claiming something, constructing another conceptual identity for yourself. And it has happened to some spiritual teachers who became free of ego and became a channel for presence to come through. And after years of being bombarded with projections of their disciples, especially if they lived in ashrams and never met any other human beings except their disciples, and they're being bombarded with projections of specialness, you are the greatest.

We believe that you are the greatest, because you're our teacher. And after a few years, their mind succumbs to that belief that, oh, that's actually true. I am the greatest.

I'm the greatest that ever lived and ever will live. That's me. And then you enhance your form identity.

If one day you see me walk on stage in a golden robe, then you know it's happened to me. And then my request now that I'm conscious is, please let me know. It's good to give people around you permission to let you know when they see that you have lost yourself again in some form of ego.

And when they do let you know, and they tell you your partner or friend or relative tells you, isn't that your ego talking? Or isn't that your pain body talking? Your ego?

If then you say, what are you talking about? My ego? You should look at yours.

That means they were right. It's your ego. But when you say, if they tell you that, and you say, really?

I have to look into that. And you put your attention goes within, because they may be right. And then you either say, no, it wasn't ego.

Or you realize, yeah, you're right. It was. So that means there's presence there.

Either that then somebody says, that's your ego. It can either suddenly, if they were right, lift you into presence, or you can clearly see, no, it's not. It's better not to tell the person, even if you believe that could be that person's ego, you don't have to tell them that.

So realize who you are in your essence and honor and be compassionate with who you are on the level of the person. Be in the two worlds, the world of formlessness and the world of form, being and doing. Thinking is also doing.

So you have the two dimensions and then you bring them together. That's the ultimate way to live. That means even while you think, and even while you do things, and even while you talk to people, there's always a sense of underlying presence.

So they no longer have separate moments, although initially this is vital. You no longer

have separate, this is, I'm now present and then I'm totally in my mind again. I'm present and I'm totally in my mind again.

And the two come together. You talk to somebody and you listen before you reply. You're listening to the person and you can sense the awareness in you listening.

As you sense the awareness in you, you can sense the awareness or the consciousness in the other person. And when you can sense the other person, when you can perceive the other person, not only as a physical body, not only as a psychological entity that makes up the person, but when you can sense the underlying consciousness in that person, and you can only sense that because you can sense your consciousness and ultimately it's not yours and it's not his or hers, it's consciousness. When you can sense another person as consciousness, that means you love them.

That's the deeper meaning of love. It's the recognition that the other person in essence is one with who you are. So ultimately the only personal being you ever love is yourself.

And you see yourself everywhere. That is a deeper meaning of self-love, not the egoic self-love, but the recognition of the other as yourself. And not only the other human can also look at a dog and recognize when you look into the eyes of a dog, you recognize the consciousness of the dog looking through those eyes.

And although it's lovely to the touch, you can touch the dog and it feels lovely, and the joy of the dog transmits itself to you, that wagging tail, and you feel joyful for a moment and forget about your problems for a moment. But really what you love in the dog when you look at the dog is the consciousness of the dog, because you see it's just a different expression of the consciousness that you also are. So even in the dog you meet yourself.

And that's why you can love the dog more easily in many cases than another human, because there is less in the way. There's less mental obstruction. The dog does not have a conceptual mind that judges you.

It just loves you to be there. And when the dog looks at you, there's no conceptual mind activity in the dog. Consciousness, yes.

But there's no formulation in the mind that says, I wonder, do you really love me? Are you going to feed me tonight? I don't like the way you looked at me yesterday.

No, there's not as much consciousness as in a human, but it's less obstructed. So sometimes it seems there's more than in the human. But in the dog, there's not the obstruction of the conceptual mind.

So the being, you can have access to the being of the dog more easily than you can have access to the being of a human. But when you do have access to the being of the human, the consciousness of a human, it's a beautiful realization. And that is where true

love resides and arises.

So as we finish for tonight, please enjoy for the rest of the days here, meeting yourself in many different disguises called other human beings. And when you interact with yourself in the disguise of other human beings, realize that they have the two levels to the other human being. There's a form, and there's the underlying consciousness.

Ultimately, they are one in the same way that the ripple on the surface of the ocean is one with the ocean and just seems to have some independent existence for a little while. So when you look at another human being, there's the form. That human being is a ripple on the surface of the ocean of consciousness in the same way that you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean of consciousness.

Or if you are a VIP, you are a wave on the surface of the ocean of consciousness. And realize that that ripple that you are interacting with is not only a ripple, but is also the ocean. And you are not only a ripple or a wave, you are also the ocean of consciousness.

And as that, you are meeting yourself. And then you don't need to always immediately react judgmentally to the way in which the person, the ripple, how the ripple behaves, whether you like that particular ripple or you don't like that particular ripple from the level of your ripple nature, doesn't really matter that much anymore. Because do you realize there's so much more there than the ripple.

And once you sense that, then even the ripple as in its ripple nature looks beautiful, because the entirety of the ocean ultimately expresses itself through it shines through it. And you can sense that as yourself.

[Speaker 2] (38:47 - 39:06)

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Eckhart Tolle Finding the Essential Self [1875ed09-6334-4fb7-a66c-1c6cce3f3408]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:35)

Finding the essential self. In this episode, Eckhart leads a meditation and then answers questions. He says the essential self is not defined by the personality, life circumstances, or history.

It's the transcendent dimension beyond that, which is the only place we will find lasting freedom and true happiness. We may not have awareness of our essential self consistently. We will lose it many times and then regain it.

Finding it is a gradual process of waking up to who we truly are.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 46:12)

I very much hope that you're not waiting for our meditation to start because it started already. Welcome to another live meditation. Please remember what I may have mentioned before.

We are not doing a meditation. We are not doing anything. You can't do a meditation.

Meditation is not about doing, but finding the dimension of being that which already is, always is, the underlying is-ness, so to speak. Meditation is becoming aware of the space. In this case here, the space between two sentences or two words that I speak.

Some spaces are very short. Some are longer. And during this live meditation, the spaces are more important than the words.

Perhaps I should use the singular. It's always the same space, the space. It appears to be many spaces, but it is the one inner space.

So what happens when you become aware of the space? Really, you're not aware of anything as such. The best way of putting it is to say that you are aware of being aware.

You can sense this underlying spacious awareness, or as I often call it, presence. And you can sense that as, ultimately, yourself, the essence of yourself, a beingness. You become aware that you are.

You become aware of the I am, a presence. You can't really say much about it, and you can't think about it. It appears when there's a cessation of thinking, and yet, you're not falling asleep.

You're not becoming unconscious. You're not drifting off into some dreamland. You rise above thinking.

That is the alertness that is part of being present. I sometimes refer to that as inner stillness. In the gap between two thoughts, you become aware of an inner stillness.

But the awareness and stillness are one single thing, or better, no thing. Only when we speak about it, when we use words to talk about it, as soon as you use words, you have a subject and an object in the sentence. Duality arises.

So we say, in the gap between two thoughts, you become aware of this inner stillness. And yet, that's not how it ultimately is, because there is no subject-object relationship in that awareness. The awareness and the stillness are the same thing, the same no thing.

Some mystics have used the word nothing. For example, St. John of the Cross, a Spanish medieval mystic, used the word when he was looking for God, and finally he reached the top of the mountain in one of his poems, and he found nothing, no thing. Does that not remind you of the Buddha's term, sunyata, emptiness?

A better translation would be perhaps spaciousness or formlessness. Does that not remind you also of the kingdom of heaven that Jesus talks about, which I translate, I provide a more contemporary version of that by calling it, by substituting these words, kingdom. Kingdom means realm or dimension.

The realm, dimension of heaven is the sky, the heavens, the vast spaciousness of the heavens, of the sky. That was the closest word that Jesus could find to point to that inner dimension. So the dimension of spaciousness is the kingdom of heaven.

It's in you here now. Sunyata, emptiness, spaciousness. It is no thing, but it is not nothing.

I'm not going to explain that. I believe I wrote somewhere, you are never more essentially yourself than when you are still. When you are still, that was the quote, more or less.

So when you are still, you are most essentially yourself, not the form self, the form identity, formless self, which the Buddhists call the no self. Let me remind you to be aware of the spaces during our meditation. You're not aware of the spaces between words and sentences and even the underlying space, even while I talk, which is all in you, then all you have is concepts and not even particularly interesting concepts, because I'm talking about no thing, not very memorable.

When I speak, the thought arises and immediately becomes the word. It arises spontaneously. In between, there's no thought in the gaps.

So you connect to that state of consciousness of not thinking. When you're looking at someone who is not thinking, who has not fallen below thinking, but risen above thinking, then you're not really looking at a person, but you're looking at something

deeper, sensing something deeper, the essence behind the person. And when you sense the essence behind this image, I still look like a person, in what level of form I am a person.

But when you look into my eyes, for example, the fact that I'm not thinking, that there's only an awareness, can help you to connect with that dimension within yourself. And then we're in the same state of consciousness. And then you're not looking at another person.

And I just reflect back to you who you are, essentially, beyond the historical person or personality that's conditioned by the past, of course. So there's the historical you that's related to the realm of thinking, the conditioned you with all its memories and experiences, successes and failures, the personality that has a life situation. For most of you, in part at least, the life situation is problematic because it is very rare for somebody's life situation not to be problematic, at least in some areas, health, relationships, close relationships, finances, money, career situation, work situation, living situation, your home.

And of all these, it's likely that one or two, at this time, present problems, are not going well, so it seems. And that's just how it is. There is no perfect life situation for very long.

Everything is in flux, or as the Buddha called it, the impermanence of all things. And so the perfection cannot be found in your life situation, although it does improve greatly if you connect with, become aware of, that which is deeper than the personality that has a life situation. And that is your essential beingness, your essential self, beyond the conditioned personality, beyond the life situation that reflects the conditioned personality.

When you're unaware of your essential beingness, the stillness within, the awareness, when you don't know yourself as the awareness, as the consciousness, then your life situation, with all the things that I just mentioned, health, finances, relationship, work, home, all those things that make up your life situation, when you're not aware of the transcendent dimensions in you, then the life situation is all-consuming, assumes an importance, it's all-consuming, and draws you in, you react to it, and a lot of the time causes you anxiety, stress, regret, resentment, grievances, guilt, fear, unease, frustration, the sense of never arriving where you need to be, the sense of always reaching out to some ultimately unattainable goal, living always for the next mentally projected moment in time, that's normal existence. And this normal existence is what the Buddha called dukkha, meaning suffering, can also be translated as just plain unhappiness, unsatisfactoriness, and that's why Jesus talked about salvation, what do you need to be saved from, salvation, misunderstood concepts by most Christians, you need to be saved from yourself, you need to be saved from an absurdly limited sense of identity, the historical person, the limited conditioned mind-made entity, the egoic self,

and so how are you saved from yourself, by discovering the transcendent dimension within you, the realm of pure awareness, the kingdom of heaven, so you're saved from being confined to this prison, the internal prison of yourself, of course, your historical person continues for a while, it has its place in the scheme of things, it continues to be important in a way, as I mentioned somewhere else, it continues to matter to some extent, you try to work on it, make it better, why not, your health's possible, you work on it, you do the right things, eat the right things, respect the body, or work, or acquire new skills, learn new things, create new things, find a new relationship, or work on your existing relationships, strive for more abundance in your life, there's nothing wrong with that, all those things have their place, all those things still matter, but the difference is, they no longer matter absolutely, they're relatively important, but not absolutely important, so all those things are no longer, they don't totally consume you, you don't look to any of those things for some ultimate completion or satisfaction, and then it's actually, everything goes much better, when you don't look to relationship, or a relationship, to provide you with some ultimate satisfaction, then the relationship suddenly improves greatly, because you no longer think that there's somebody there who should make you happy, or when you acquire a new skill, learn a new, something new, a new skill, that's a lovely thing too, when you don't look to it, try to achieve through the acquisition of that skill, to achieve some kind of ultimate satisfaction, or completion, or fulfillment, then actually you are better at what you do, when it's no longer serving your egoic self, that wants to complete itself through some achievement, or some goal, or recognition, and you can work on abundance, why not, it's that you're playing in the world of form, you are here, you might as well play in the world of form, not looking to form, whether it's people, or situations, or conditions, or circumstances, or things, not looking to the world of form, which is the world, because through it, you want to find yourself, or become happy, that doesn't work, the happiness, true happiness, I don't even use that word, because happiness usually is used with reference to superficial things, all the things that I mentioned are superficial, so true happiness arises, when you become aware of the transcendent dimension in yourself, then there's a peace, an aliveness, a peaceful aliveness in the background, a stillness, but that stillness is alive, and that is consciousness itself, the light of consciousness, which is not yours, it is an emanation of the one source of all life, that one source of all life that is totally transcendent, that you cannot talk about, which is sometimes referred to by a three-letter word, that ultimate source emanates, and your consciousness, which is not yours, it appears to be, but it is an emanation from the one source, and remains ultimately connected with the one source, is not separate from it, and all life around you is an emanation, all life around you, therefore, is ultimately you, is ultimately I, the identity of all things, all beings, the essence, identity, all expressions of the one consciousness, which is like the light coming from the sun, the consciousness is the light, using this analogy, the sun is the source, so it has been said, I don't remember by whom, but it's beautiful, consciousness is asleep in the stone, in the mineral realm, so-called lifeless matter, but it's not lifeless, so-called inanimate matter, but it's not inanimate,

consciousness is asleep in the stone, consciousness dreams in the plant, consciousness awakens in the animal, consciousness becomes aware of itself, potentially, in the human form, through the human form, and that is the purpose of the human form, the purpose is for consciousness to become aware of itself, and that purpose is being fulfilled here and now, and that self-awareness then needs to be there in your daily life, that's the challenge, and you won't necessarily always be able to have that awareness of who you essentially are, you may lose it many times, and then regain it, lose it, regain it, it is a gradual process of awakening to who you truly are. Welcome to a question and answer session, so one question here asks, you've shared the story before of the time when you asked for acceleration, is there a way to accelerate spiritual awakening?

What this question refers to is the story that I told many years ago when I asked to be used for the purpose of spiritual awakening, to be used more, I was already doing workshops and meditation sessions and seeing many individuals for counseling sessions, but I had a strong sense that more people needed to be reached, and so I asked, I was in an empty small village church in England, sitting there, and I asked for acceleration of the teaching getting out into the world, and a few months later it came, I did not ask though for acceleration of spiritual awakening, because that had already happened, now the question I was asking, is there a way to accelerate spiritual awakening? If you ask please, I'd like to awaken soon, that probably is not a good way of going about it, is there a way to accelerate spiritual awakening?

Yes there is, but you don't need to ask in the way that I did, which I was asking for something different, all you need to do, or rather not do, is don't give yourself time, don't look to the future for spiritual awakening, so that the main focus of your life becomes the present moment, so instead of projecting some future state that you want to achieve, completely let go of the idea of future, especially with reference to spiritual awakening, and of course I'm not talking about practical matters, making plans and so on, that's all good, making appointments, setting intentions, all that is fine, but not look to the future for some ultimate fulfillment, release or awakening, so you bring your attention into the present moment, as if past and future did not exist right now, what's left of you, if you're so present, so intensely present, that you don't think about the past, you don't think about the future, your attention is just here and now, and this is what I mean when I say don't give yourself time for spiritual awakening, don't look to time to deliver spiritual awakening, time cannot deliver spiritual awakening, so your attention is in the present moment, there is a certain frequency to that, there's a certain frequency of consciousness, which is very different from the frequency of consciousness when you are engaged in conceptualization and thinking, so don't give yourself time, that is the way to accelerate spiritual awakening, so as much as possible in your daily life, be intensely present here and now, now you may not be able to do it when you are engaged in some activity, especially activities that require conceptualization, if it's a physical activity, it's easier to stay present, but there are always moments when you can return to present,

even after you've been at the computer, writing emails, whatever, and then in between two emails, you again, you return to presence, until gradually, even while you're writing an email, there's a sense of presence in the background, now the word for presence is stillness, alert stillness, and that really accelerates spiritual awakening, it also builds up the power of presence in you, which you will need particularly when challenges come, if there's not sufficient presence power in you, so to speak, consciousness, awareness, if there's not enough awareness in you, when you get challenged by life, either in a small way, or in a big way, little things go wrong, big things go wrong, loss, disaster, or just obnoxious people, difficult situations, if there's not enough presence power in you, then you will fall into reactivity, mental, emotional reactivity, you will become unconscious, because you will become identified with your reaction, identified with the emotion, identified with the thoughts, and you're completely, in spiritual terms, you're then completely unconscious, if there's enough presence power in you, then that can operate when challenges come, and then you meet challenges in a totally different way, instead of making drama out of challenges, instead of converting challenges into suffering, you bring presence to the challenge, and then you don't react, you respond, the way I use these two words, react means, you're acting out of the conditioning of your mind, your mental, emotional conditioning, you're reacting, your mental, emotional conditioning, of course, comes from the past, and so when you react, you impose past on the present, and you react to the present, as if it were the past, but you don't know that, because when you're unconscious in that way, you cannot tell the difference, you cannot disentangle what's happening around you, whatever the challenge may be, and your reaction to the challenge, it becomes a single phenomenon, instead of being able to say, okay, this is the situation, and this is my reaction to the situation, they're two things, if you were able to do that, you'll already be aware, so you don't get drawn into the reaction, and even if the reaction still operates in you, there would be some awareness in the background, so you would not be totally identified with the reaction, but if you're really present, if there's enough presence power in you, when you get challenged, now whether the challenge is standing in the lineup at the airline counter, and it's not moving, and the flight has been cancelled, or standing in the waiting for this or that, you're trying to get through to the, somebody to talk to at the bank, and all you can get is a machine, small challenges that make a daily life, but it also applies to the bigger challenges, you go out, you want to go back to your car, the car is gone, been stolen, slightly bigger, you get home, your house is collapsed, the degree of challenge may be different, but the basic mechanism behind reactivity is the same, so when you meet a challenge, not through reactivity, but in presence, the way in which you deal with it is very different, first you're able to take truly intelligent and creative action, you do what's necessary, but not from the conditioning of your mind, but whatever it is that needs to be done, arises out of your conscious presence, and you can deal intelligently with situations, people, and so on, and the suffering diminishes and even dissolves, the suffering that otherwise would have been caused by the challenge, so spiritual awakening then can only be here and now, that means now, and even now as you are

seeing, looking at me and listening to this, it means now, are you able to stay absolutely present right here now, and what's left of you in this moment, when you don't remember your past, your victories, your successes, your failures, your personal history, and you don't think about the future, what may happen tomorrow or next year, or is this going, am I going to get this, am I going to lose that, all that has dissolved, and it's just a sense of conscious presence, what's left of you, not the personality, because the personality exists through past, the past, the memories of past, the conditioning of your past makes up the personality, so what's left of you is just a sense of conscious presence, has no particular form, and to know yourself as conscious presence is spiritual awakening, and it's here and now, so that is the acceleration of spiritual awakening.

Another question that in some ways related to the previous one, I appreciate your comments about bringing awareness to reactions and have been working on that, however, I'm still not clear about what constitutes an appropriate response in those moments, for instance, when I'm irritated or upset, rather than my automatic reaction of yelling or shutting down, what should I do instead, so what constitutes an appropriate response in those moments when you're being challenged, something goes wrong and so on, so for instance, the questioner says, when I'm irritated or upset, rather than my automatic reaction of yelling or shutting down, what should I do instead? Well, I wouldn't say it's a question of should, but when there is some awareness left in you and that's connected with what I described in my previous answer as enough presence power in you, then you will be able to know that you are reacting in a certain way and the possibility of choice begins to come in and the choice is, is this the only way to react to this situation, is this a helpful way to react to this situation, let's say there's the irritation that I feel, the anger that I feel, wanting to shout or wanting to whatever, and maybe you're already shouting, but there's some awareness in the background and that awareness which is a higher form of intelligence than the conditioned mind and that awareness looks at your reaction and somehow the question arises, is there a better way to deal with this situation or is this the only way to deal with the situation, is this an intelligent way to deal with it, does this really improve the situation and so only you can know in that moment and when there's reactivity, always it will be the case that there is another way of dealing with the situation, there is another way of facing the situation, you're no longer totally trapped in your reactivity, so you don't ask yourself how should I face the situation, how should I deal with the situation, but ask yourself is this way of dealing with it actually helpful, the reaction, what does the questioner say, yelling or shutting down whatever the reaction is, is that the most helpful thing, is that the most intelligent way of dealing with the situation, those questions can only arise out of your awareness, out of your presence, these questions come and they may not even be formulated as thoughts, the question is implied within the awareness, it might not even, does not need to be spoken, not even spoken in your mind because when there's awareness you can actually identify a reaction as unhelpful, you can immediately recognize it as contributing nothing helpful to the situation, making your own life

miserable in many cases when it's not necessary, freedom comes in and then out of the awareness a different way of dealing with the situation arises, it might not even be a decision-making process, the anger you don't need to say I must not be angry, that's not awareness, let's say if it's anger or irritation, you're able to look at the anger and realize it adds nothing useful to the situation, it just makes it more unpleasant and in many cases it's a dysfunction and you might also notice something in you loves, love in a, not true love of course, something in you wants the anger, something you likes the anger in that situation, it thrives on it, you're almost addicted to it in that moment, you want more of it, you know like you've probably encountered people they're shouting at you and after a couple of minutes they leave the room and a few seconds later they come back the door opens because they need to shout a bit more, they have had some new ideas what they can say to you and if at that moment somebody told them that this is a dysfunctional way of dealing with the situation they wouldn't want to hear that, you need to observe in yourself when it happens an almost addictive quality to the reactivity, when you are in its grip it is a form of addiction and it is an addiction, it keeps that, it's an addiction of the ego, it keeps the ego going, not only keeps it going, it inflates the ego, anger particularly does that, it's a huge ego inflation, anger is always because in miracles says anger is always an attempt to make somebody feel guilty and when you are able to do that then of course by implication you are superior of course to the personal situation that you're angry at and the ego loves that superiority that comes with anger, moral superiority, righteous anger, being offended, a very fashionable thing these days on the internet, being offended by this, being offended by that, outraged, I'm outraged, you can go on the internet and feel angry while you're posting your angry posts, oh it's so wonderful, really, and when you observe that you're actually something and you love that but at the same time you see it's not helpful to anybody, it's not helpful to you, it's not helpful to them, it just creates more drama and so when there is awareness, some awareness in the background, you can suddenly see is there another way of dealing with this or perhaps there's nothing that I need to do, perhaps it's best not to say anything in some situations but when there's awareness in you then out of the awareness a more intelligent way, a non-dysfunctional way of dealing with situations and people arises, what that is varies from situation to situation so the question then when I'm irritated or upset rather than my automatic reaction of yelling or shutting down, what should I do instead, so this I've just answered that, don't ask yourself what should I do, just ask yourself is there another way, a more intelligent way, a more sane way and invariably you will find that there indeed is a more sane way of dealing with the situation and one more related question to this, what can I do in the heat of the moment to break free from old reactive patterns, I tend to lose it so to speak before there is awareness, I'm trying to have awareness and presence before I react, any suggestions, so you can see how it's related to what we've just been saying and partially or partly I have already answered it but I will add a little bit more, so what can I do in the heat of the moment to break free from old reactive patterns, I tend to lose it before there is awareness, so the questioner gets taken over by the reaction before awareness can arise, he says I'm

trying to have awareness and presence before I react but how and again that comes back to what I mentioned earlier, you need to cultivate presence in non-challenging situations so that you can sustain presence when the challenges come and of course as you know they keep coming, if you think you will reach a point in your life when you will no longer experience life as challenging, some people think that that's possible or even desirable, then you're deceiving yourself, life is challenge, you can almost equate life with challenge, not only for humans, every life form, animals, plants, every life form has its challenges, if it didn't have its challenges, it's a challenge meaning obstacles on your path, something seemingly negative that seems to prevent you from going where you want to go, where you feel you need to go, an obstacle on your path, so if you don't realize the nature of life it may sometimes almost seem that there's some malicious deity or devil that continuously puts obstacles in your path that seems to delight in sabotaging your designs and that would be a misinterpretation of how life happens and unfolds, there's nothing personal in that, everybody in different ways gets intensely challenged by life, continuously encounters obstacles and the strange thing is the only way that you can evolve as a human being, the only way you can grow in consciousness is by encountering obstacles and then you overcome the obstacles or you transcend the obstacles and that is how the evolution of consciousness happens, so it's all those seemingly negative things that happen in your life that look like blockages potentially are doorways into awakened consciousness, so let's come back to the question, I tend to lose it before there's awareness, I'm trying to have awareness and presence before I react, usually the progression as you evolve in consciousness, as you become more conscious, usually it goes like this, after you've been engaged in some unconscious reactivity and it's now subsided and then suddenly awareness comes back and say, oh I got completely caught up in my reaction, so when the energy of it has subsided then the awareness returns, the awareness had become obscured completely, your presence had become obscured completely by the mental emotional reaction and when it subsided then the awareness comes back and oh and out of the awareness other non-helpful thoughts may arise like oh I just can't do it, why do you always lose, I always lose it, why can't I do this and then next time it happens you still react and just as the energy subsides of the reactivity you already as it begins to subside awareness already comes in there, so in the final stages of your reaction some awareness comes back in, the next thing that happens is you're engaged, you're in the middle of a reaction and in the middle of the reaction an awareness arises in you, it doesn't free you, you're still reacting but there is an awareness that knows that you're reacting in that way and then as there's even more consciousness awareness in you, they can even be there in the beginning of it just as the reaction arises, it may not yet stop it or it may but not by suppressing it but it could stop it by realizing this is very dysfunctional, this is it's not intelligent, is there a better way as I mentioned before, at this stage already freedom is there, the possibility of choosing something else and so as awareness grows in you then you may reach the point also where it is so you're so present that the old reactivity doesn't arise anymore at all but until that happens, work with it use the challenge as

part of your spiritual practice, don't beat yourself up if you lose it if you lose it again and again, build up your presence power as I said before in non-challenging situations when you're waiting somewhere and you're not particularly challenged, bring your attention completely to the present moment, be here now, you're waiting at the elevator, it's only 20 seconds, 30 seconds and you're present, I recommend by the way that whenever you have short periods of waiting, resist the temptation of getting your phone out of your pocket and looking at it and engaging with it, what for, use it instead unless there's something important you have to make a call, there's an important message but not as an habitual, an automatic thing as most people these days do, there's no moment when their mind is not engaged in something there's complete lack of spaciousness, inner spaciousness, the addictive quality of the phone the smartphone as it's called, that can be very unhelpful to the arising of presence so don't fall into this trap, this addictive pattern of filling up every little moment in your life when before smartphones existed, you might have just sat there and looked around but no, no longer these days sits anywhere and looks around, nobody go to a public place, they're all looking at, they're too engaged in this, what are they, they're not aware of their surroundings so they're not present, they are, this is an externalization of the human mind, it amplifies, the smartphone amplifies the human mind, yes it can be used for helpful things too but in many, many cases and most of the time it actually obscures the awareness so be aware of the addictive nature of it, use it when it's needed of course, I have one too virtually everybody has one and it is an externalization of course of the human mind don't become its slave, don't be addicted to it, another good thing is to idea is to keep your bedroom free of devices and you at least you have some space before you go to sleep and when you wake up but also during the day, waiting, short moments of waiting, don't fill up every moment so bring attention to these short moments whenever you're waiting for something so that you can use those moments in as growing in presence then you build up presence power and then it will be much easier to deal with the challenges when they come.

[Speaker 2] (46:14 - 46:33)

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Eckhart Tolle Forgiveness and Awakening [0e19c1dd-9cc4-49ed-8216-4ff757fe1380]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:30)

Forgiveness and awakening. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about forgiveness. He says most of us carry resentments or grievances.

Eckhart calls them internal dark spots that block consciousness from emerging and strengthen the ego. True forgiveness, he says, is not something we make happen. It arises naturally when we're connected to the deeper essence of who we are.

[Speaker 1] (0:32 - 23:17)

The ego loves grievances, but as long as you carry even one grievance, and grievance is a long-standing resentment. Resentment could be short-lived, but grievance tends to be a very long thing. It goes on and on.

At least that's how I define it. The grievance goes on and on, and you carry it in your mind. And even just one surviving grievance in you can prevent you from fully accessing presence, from actually fully awakening.

It's a dark spot in you that prevents consciousness from arising fully. So you have to be really very careful to see what they do to you and see that the addiction to a grievance is only what is addicted is your false. The personality derives the egoic personality.

The ego derives sustenance from the grievance and strength from the grievance. So if you harbor a grievance, that means that the ego itself is still operating. It is not you who is harboring the grievance.

It's the ego in you that is harboring the grievance. So if you have a surviving grievance in you towards another person, you need to know that ultimately it's not you, it's the ego. It's still operating.

So you can develop in other areas of your life, and the ego can remain in you, even can attach itself. Let's say you're awakening beautifully, but there's one corner in your mind where the ego survives because it has attached itself to a grievance. And there can be other corners too, where the ego can attach itself to anything to do with the past.

It attaches itself to a particular thing in your mind, and there it's waiting. And occasionally it can then even in other situations, the ego can still come back more easily because it's there. It's still feeding on the grievance.

So it's not starving. It's still feeding on this grievance that you harbor. So ultimately forgiveness is to realize that the dimension in you, which is the deeper half.

Remember, you're the two halves. You're the personality, the person, and you have the unconditioned, the deep I. So by being the deeper half, the deep I, nothing ever was done to that deep I.

Perhaps something was done for the deep I to be obscured completely, but the deep I in itself is beyond anything that could be done to it. Nobody can injure it. That is untouchable.

It is invulnerable. It is the foremost dimension in you. Once you can sense that in yourself, forgiveness becomes very easy because not only are you present when you sense that in yourself, but also you are connected with a dimension in which nothing ever happened to you.

Nothing ever happened at this deepest dimension. And then the forgiveness happens almost automatically because nothing ever happened to who you are in the essence of your being. And that's an amazing realization.

And it's not something that you arrive at through thinking or through some mental act of forgiveness, as if forgiveness was something that you could do. You can't really do forgiveness. The true forgiveness arises spontaneously from the essence of who you are.

And that includes forgiveness of yourself. If in the past, this is a question I'm often asked, people carry a sense of guilt around, and that is very similar to the grievance. That again is, guilt is like grievance.

It is a mental, emotional entity that you carry within you. And you need to know that, that that's what it is. And forgiveness here, forgiveness to yourself for something that you did in the past, and you now recognize as bad in whatever way, as immoral, as you recognize because now you're much more conscious than you were when you did that.

But you still may carry this deep sense of guilt. And how do you get rid of that? First, you need to observe that this lives in you as a mental, emotional energy field.

And as long as you identify with it, it becomes part of your ego. The ego is form identity. The ego would prefer to have something great to identify with, but it will readily also identify with something bad.

And then you have a conceptual identity of yourself as a person who is bad. I'm a bad person because I did that. Conceptual sense of self, conceptual reality again arises.

And that does not help anybody. It causes you to be stuck in ego and unconsciousness. So again here, guilt dissolves.

Guilt involves forgiveness of yourself. Again, it's not something you can do. It's something that arises when you go deep enough so that you realize the essence of who

you are.

And you, of course, as you know, you realize it beyond conceptualization. The essence of who you are is presence, conscious presence, alert, stillness, awareness. And you can sense the essence of who you are.

Then there's no reference anymore to anything in your mind or your emotional field that gives you an identity. You know that this is, this unconscious action happened through you because when this happened, you manifested in this form, basically your evolutionary stage. Nobody can act beyond the evolutionary stage of their consciousness.

So you acted out the unconscious state of humanity. It manifested through you. That happens continuously.

And there is ultimately no true I in it. There is no true identity in it. If you look to that for your identity, you are lost again in egoic identity.

And you're unconscious again. You recognize, perhaps you take action to do something good. You might want to either, you might talk to that person or not.

All this is secondary. You will know what is right to do if there's anything to do. But the main thing is that you go deep enough.

And when you're there and know who you are beyond form, then forgiveness arises automatically. You don't have to do it. So that's either with reference to yourself or reference to another person.

So that's extremely important. There are pockets of egoic identity. So you have to be alert so that if they exist in you, non-forgiveness in whatever form, grievance, guilt, all those things, need to be very, very conscious of that and see, find the space when nothing ever happened there.

At this deepest level, nothing was ever done to you. And that's an enormous sense of freedom. But unfortunately, it deprives the ego, unfortunately to the ego, it deprives the ego from one of its favorite identities, and that's victim.

So the ego loves to see yourself as a victim or a victor. But victim is more common. I wonder why.

Well, not so many people can say, now I have triumphed, I am the great one for a little while. And then that dissolves. But this victim identity is very strong.

And it's there when you have one element of the grievance towards another person is always that you have become, in the past, a victim of that person, one way or another. One could almost even say that if you harbor guilt, and you identify with the guilt, even

there, there is an element of victimhood, you become a victim of yourself, of your own past. A very subtle thing, this victimhood, and the ego loves it.

And it's there in a small way. Even when, whenever you complain about something, but there's no possibility of any change at this moment by voicing your complaint. So you're complaining uselessly, either in your mind or out loud, about a place that you are at, there's something wrong with it, a person, there's something wrong with him or her, they're not doing what they should be doing, or they're doing the wrong thing.

Or there's something about them that's not right. Or they failed to do, but should have done that, but did that, all kinds of things. It could be complaining about what you are doing.

You're doing it, but you don't want to be doing it. It's awful to have to do this, but you're doing it every day of your life. It's awful, but I'm enjoying it.

Just, I'm stuck in this dreadful job. There are many areas where you complain. You complain about, you can abstract things, government, politicians, or you single out a few.

That is always an element of victimhood, it's an element of, very often, moral superiority, because when you're a victim, that automatically makes you, this is an unconscious process behind it, it automatically makes you morally superior to whoever made you into a victim. Or whatever situation you're complaining about, you are pronouncing judgment, therefore you are elevating yourself, you are judging this situation as wanting, insufficient, not good enough. Therefore, one can even be morally superior to a situation.

You can complain about the state of humanity, how dreadful it is. If I were to complain about God, of course, God doesn't exist, otherwise there wouldn't be all that suffering in this world. I would do it differently.

So, very subtle things, but these all things are easy to recognize when you're present within. I just mentioned them because these are so common. Well, I said they're easy to recognize.

Sometimes they are not even that easy to recognize, and that is why I mentioned it. So, be alert, watch, be alert. Jesus says somewhere in the gospels, watch, watch, be alert, watch.

I don't think he said be alert, but watch, be watchful. So, as you go back into your normal life situation, in any situation, starts with going away from here, be aware of especially the background dimension of the deep eye. When you are going into the bus or the car or the plane, as you start thinking again about what you have to do tomorrow or next week, the continuous practice of being aware of the background awareness, aware of awareness.

It's a single thing, but it sounds like two things when you talk about it. Be aware of awareness, be aware of yourself as the awareness. That is the continuous practice, and sometimes the awareness will be perhaps when you're sitting on a bus traveling to Calgary or something like that.

So, you're sitting on the bus and you're contemplating nature, which is better than thinking about what you're going to do tomorrow. You're contemplating nature, and while you're contemplating nature, you sense this underlying presence at the same time. You're present.

Then the personality is receded. The deeper eye is perceiving through you. It is you through the form.

Then you step, let's say you fly back somewhere. Then you're at the airport checking in. If you're lucky, you get your first challenge there to practice with.

Small challenge, two-hour delay to your flight. Oh, okay, it's fine. I don't mind.

I'm spiritual. That's not the right approach, of course. The flight is canceled.

That's a slightly bigger one. Okay. That's what is, undoubtedly.

Whether you argue with it or not, that's what is. The only gain you have when you argue with what is, is the ego grows. It's a gain to the ego, not to you.

If you can stop arguing with the simple is-ness of the present moment, you're basically spiritual master. Just simple as that. The difference between you and the Zen master who looks like this great stern figure, he's no longer arguing with the is-ness of this moment.

He doesn't know more than you. You probably know more than most spiritual teachers that ever lived in the sense of data or information or so-called education. Undoubtedly, everybody here knows more than Jesus did in terms of information or data, obviously.

He didn't have reference to, he couldn't Google anything. And the Buddha, too. It's not more knowledge that makes you into a spiritually advanced or enlightened or awake being.

It's something else. It is non-resistance to the is-ness of life, which is always now. That's a huge portal to the deep eye.

People tell me sometimes, that's so difficult. That's the wrong way around. The other way it makes life so difficult.

Continuously arguing with the is-ness of this moment, that makes life into a huge burden. It's so difficult to say yes to this moment. It is.

It's a habit, a mental habit that's been there for thousands of years. It may be, yes, it may be difficult to break this habit. But once when you're there, you realize that's the only easy way to live.

The only way that produces a flow to your life is to let go of arguing with the is-ness of this moment. And also, that's the end of the ego, because it couldn't survive without the food of arguing the is-ness of what is. And the dysfunctional thinking, a lot of that is to do with arguing with what is, trying to get away from it, arguing with it.

So to welcome what is is an amazing spiritual practice. But that means no matter what form it takes, and if you cannot welcome it, you can accept it. This is what is.

You almost, we could say you welcome it. You might not necessarily say, let's say your flight is canceled. You might not necessarily say, great.

Wonderful. Because that would be, probably, you would be doing this because you want to strengthen your spiritual, your identity again. It's just, that's what is, okay?

Right. The amount of thinking you do, useless thinking, immediately diminishes. Because when you no longer argue with what is, you think much less.

In fact, in order to truly accept the is-ness of this moment, you have to let go of thinking, at least in that moment, because that's just the is-ness of it. Okay. And then the next thing arises.

And then it becomes habitual that immediately you're aligned with the is-ness. That's the enlightened state. You may remember the story.

I've told it once or twice before, or more times. The disciple who came to the master and said, I'm going away now. I want to leave you for a year because I'm not finding enlightenment with you.

So maybe I'll find it somewhere else. Can you give me some advice though? What's my spiritual practice during that year while I seek out other situations and other experiences?

The master said, yes, wherever you go, whatever situation you find yourself in, and whatever happens to you, say these words. Thanks for everything. I have no complaint whatsoever.

And that's your spiritual practice. Okay. So I can do that.

And after a year, he came back to the master and said, well, did you do your spiritual practice? He said, yes, but it didn't work. And then the master said, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. And at that moment, the disciple became enlightened. Before, of course, he was just repeating the words and suddenly he went where the words pointed to.

Wouldn't that be amazing? Whatever happens to you, you have this, not the words anymore, but you have the attitude. Thanks for everything.

Thanks for this. I have no complaint whatsoever. And then have no complaint.

It would transform your life, obviously. And I'm giving you this because as the leaving presence, because you are like the disciple, hopefully you're not like the disciple, because the disciple didn't get it. He stayed for years with the master and he didn't get it.

But it is a very powerful spiritual practice. And yes, of course, it requires presence. And it's not in the words.

The words are just the signposts to that inner state. And of course, thanks for everything implies gratitude and implies appreciation of everything. So you don't wait until something unpleasant happened so that then you apply, thanks for everything, I have no complaint whatsoever.

No, the thanks for everything and the absence of complaint is in every moment. You don't have to wait for a bad thing in order to practice alignment with the present moment. Then it probably wouldn't work.

You appreciate the present moment in all its little manifestations, the many, many things that you would habitually overlook, all the beauty around you, the aliveness around you, that you appreciate. And that is part of the thanks for everything, thanks for this. When you look at a glass, as I'm doing it again, there's a glass of water, the light shines in, and it sparkles here and there.

And there's a little bit of a rainbow effect. And it's an amazing aliveness, this glass of water, the glass sparkles and the water in the glass, and it reflects the light. And if only for five seconds, I look at this and appreciate it, instead of reducing it just to a utilitarian thing that I use in the service of something else, which would be drinking, it's a very big difference.

I appreciate the otherwise hidden thing in this life, and we are surrounded by them. So you no longer have to repeat in your mind, okay, you may want to occasionally as a signpost, thank you for this glass of water. That's okay.

But the deeper appreciation is beyond words. So let's have a moment of stillness.

[Speaker 2] (23:22 - 23:41)

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Eckhart Tolle Forgiving Our Unconsciousness [f5cd5134-4bc9-464b-ade1-3b06bf9b4918]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:53)

Forgiving our unconsciousness. In this episode, Eckhart talks briefly about what he calls the beingness behind our five senses, which is the deeper essence of who we are. Eckhart then answers a question about forgiveness.

He says, until we're strongly connected to our deeper self, all of us will act out unconscious patterns that cause suffering. Eckhart explains these scenarios usually reflect our state of consciousness and are often the result of our past experiences. However, he does believe that we all eventually wake up and ask, how could I have done that?

He says, recognizing our unconsciousness is in itself forgiveness. He urges listeners to understand that we didn't have the awareness to make a different choice at the time. And once we realize that we can make amends to those we've hurt and learn to forgive our unconsciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:55 - 25:46)

Hello, everybody. Let's come into the present moment as fully as possible. Realize that right now, your sense perceptions are working, visual, auditory, maybe some others, and realize the consciousness behind, so to speak, behind the sense perceptions, the awareness.

Without the awareness, you would not see anything or hear anything. And so in addition to being aware of the sense perceptions, see if you can be aware also of yourself behind the sense perception, which is the awareness. There's a sense of presence, cannot define it.

It's very simple. There's no past in it. It is there whether you are 20 years old or 80, doesn't matter.

There's a sense of presence, beingness, the essence of who you are that gets mixed up with sense perceptions and memories of sense perceptions, experiences. The essential sense of beingness of who you are gets entangled with sense perceptions, which all your experiences that you accumulate. And usually your identity is derived from that which has become entangled with the sense perceptions.

The sense of awareness enables the sense perceptions to be, enables all your experiences to be experienced. But your identity, when you're not awake, is completely derived from the experiences sensory, which is your life story and all that, and the ways in which the mind interprets the experiences. So the accumulation and the memory of

your experiences and the way in which the mind attaches stories to those memories of experiences, that for most people constitutes their identity.

And they feel that's something very precious there. They don't want to lose it. You can sense there's something, you are there somewhere, but you think it's in that which gives life to the sense perceptions, but you don't realize that the essence of your identity is not the experiences and sense perceptions, et cetera, the thoughts, but the consciousness itself.

So the most fundamental thing when you, as you awaken, the most fundamental shift, that's what it is, is the shift from, shift in identity from being the accumulated experience, the life story, story of your life, people call it my life, and your sense of self derived from it, that is the normal sense of identity, unsatisfactory, often very frustrating and full of hopes and fears. Time becomes very important for that identity, that sense of self, who you are, it's determined by the past on that level. And then there's a future that might be a, you think might free you from your insufficient and somehow unsatisfying sense of identity right now, because every egoic self suffers from a sense of insufficiency, a sense of lack, a sense of not being, there's something not right, there's something wrong, I don't know what it is, an underlying feeling of unease, anxiety, whatever it may be, there's a feeling there's something not right, or there's something missing, that's an essential part of every identity, every egoic identity, discontent with brief interludes of, oh, it's great, life is great, usually followed by a letdown, a disappointment, you can experience this with people, almost everybody lets you down eventually, because you had unrealistic expectations of what another human being could do for you, every situation lets you down, because you had unrealistic expectations of the capacity of any external situation to provide you with a satisfying, lasting sense of self, and then the search continues, so, and you're not quite, there's always the sense you haven't arrived yet, you're on your way, but you haven't arrived yet, and in some sense, of course, it's true, because there's still some future probably, and there are many things you could still do, but that sense of having, not having arrived, you have two basic emotions, or mind patterns, mental emotional patterns, that look towards the future for liberation from the unsatisfying sense of self, so you look to the future, it sometimes might be called hope, hope is usually regarded as a good thing, I suppose it is, better than despair, but hope is always, you're not rooted in the present, but you hope that one day, you will be okay, fulfilled, complete, a more complete version of yourself, and on some level, this is actually true, on the level of form, there are things you can still learn that you didn't know, don't know yet, you can learn many things, acquire and achieve things, all this is fine, except it is not fine, when you look to those things for an ultimate sense of self or identity, you may become very good at something, but even there, that's fine, on its own level, this is a necessary part of being a human here, but there's another level, which this does not work, and that the level of knowing yourself truly and fully, being rooted at a deep place, that is not subject to time, a place

from where ultimate satisfaction and peace emanates, and you cannot find that on the level of the person, any experience, so it's good to experience things, which includes relationships, et cetera, et cetera, it's good to experience things, but what is the source of suffering is to have unrealistic expectations, so that the experience should provide lasting fulfillment and a lasting sense of self, for that, you have to go beyond experience and find the experiencer, and the experiencer is consciousness, to give it a word, one could say, it's better not to name it, that may be true, and there are many other names we could give it, now the question is, at this very moment, there's a certain amount of experiencing happening in your consciousness, the actual experience of this, our session here, and perhaps some thoughts come and go about what you're going to have for dinner tonight, or what you will have to deal with tomorrow, or something that happened yesterday, or whatever it may be, the complex problems of your life, perhaps they're so complex that they don't even allow you to be fully present with this session, and your mind is saying, yes, but I have bigger problems than this, I really should be concerned with that, I should solve those first, then I can be engaged in spiritual awakening, but I have to solve my problems first, there's so many, of course, that's not how it works, so you allow this experience to be there, and you become aware of that space that underlies all experience, and that is presence, stillness is sometimes what we call it, stillness, now what is stillness? A cessation of the stream of thinking, stillness is not, does not depend on external noise, or absence of noise, stillness also doesn't depend on whether you are moving, or you're sitting still, as you know, the word stillness in English could refer to absence of sound, or it could refer to absence of movement, so when there's absence of sound, it's very still, or when you're not moving, or you can say to a child, sit still, don't move, don't fidget so much, sit, sitting still, absence of movement, or absence of sound, but when we use the word stillness, it refers to something else, that can be there even when there is external sound, and even when there is movement, it's an inner dimension of consciousness, the stillness, in the gap between two thoughts, for example, now, that was it, now there's nothing memorable there, you can't remember it, it's not an experience as such, because it's a background to all experience, so you become aware of the background to all experience, which is yourself, consciousness, that's a liberation, and that is a shift in identity, from being identified with a foreground, which is sensory experience, thoughts, and emotions, the foreground of your life, for most people, it's not the foreground, it's all they know, so there's sensory experience, thoughts, emotions, that's the foreground, the background is the space, now, there are many words we can use to point to it, it doesn't matter what we use, whether we call it stillness, we call it space, call it awareness, consciousness, and again, awareness, again, is used a lot these days, you say you read about awareness, growing awareness, making people aware of this, and aware of that, and aware of that, but this awareness is not the awareness of something, it's the awareness of awareness, self-awareness, a silent, but alive sense of spaciousness, for example, now, and now, discover that it's not that difficult to be aware of awareness, and then you go about your life, which is a foreground, without losing the, again, another image we use is, without losing the

vertical dimension, you cope, you're able to handle the horizontal dimension of your life, whatever you have to do here, in this world, while you're here, as a physical body, but you don't lose touch with the vertical dimension, which is a timeless dimension, then that's being rooted in the unconditioned consciousness, and that is not yours, and it doesn't really have a location, it does not have a geographical location, although I sometimes use the term your consciousness, it's not really yours, because even for the moment I say your consciousness, language has created already a duality, you and your consciousness, but there isn't you and your consciousness, you are consciousness, you don't have it, and it's not something that happens to you, but when we use language, inevitably duality arises, and you have to look beyond that, otherwise you start questioning and say, okay, my consciousness, who am I without the consciousness?

Nothing, you are consciousness, you don't have it, now what happens when you approach the end of this incarnation, and you can't remember things very clearly anymore, in some cases, you might even lose your memory, and for a little while, it can be good, for example, people suffer from conditions like Alzheimer's, and the personality seems to dissolve, you don't remember who they are anymore, they don't recognize anybody anymore, and there's a temporary, sometimes a temporary length of time period when this process happens, and I've known one or two cases, somebody used to be very unhappy all their life, and then she began to develop memory loss, for a certain time period, she became suddenly very happy, because she couldn't remember her problematic self anymore, but then she lost that also, so what happened there, is that evidence that the brain produces consciousness? There's a relationship, now most people still, and this is why there's such fear of death, because we've been conditioned by our culture to believe that all there is, is matter, our entire reality is based on matter, it goes down to the atoms, and even subatomic particles, but still, so those would be the building blocks of matter, there's a general belief that the universe is physical, it's material, and there's a widespread, of course, yes, there are religious people who still believe that there's something that survives, but many people don't have that belief anymore, because they have another belief, and that other belief is another form of religion, it's that's, there's only this, there's only that, and when this physical form, I disappear completely, I, but what I, are you talking about? What is the I that disappears completely?

Consciousness is, by many people, regarded as a, an inexplicable byproduct of brain activity, they don't know what it is, scientists have no idea what consciousness is, and they believe it's a, well, the term is an epiphenomenon, which means a byproduct, of mind activity, this is a physical organ, that somehow produces something that we don't understand, and we call it consciousness, is that the truth?

No, but more, some scientists are beginning to suspect that that is not the truth, there is a relationship between the brain and consciousness, but it's not that the brain produces consciousness, but the brain is a channel, through which consciousness filters into this

dimension, enters this dimension, when somebody loses their memory completely, as in the case of Alzheimer, consciousness is beginning to, it can no longer express itself clearly through the medium of the brain, in the same way that when your phone, your cell phone, is defective, you can no longer, or your computer, you can no longer download all the information that's in the cloud, as they call it, it's a cloud, so then the, suddenly the information is defective, it doesn't work anymore, bits and pieces still appear, but it's not, you can't download it anymore, it doesn't mean that the consciousness was never, that the cloud is not in the computer, it was always a download, that's all, and so then the instrument becomes defective, and then the instrument dies, consciousness withdraws, when people use their memories through Alzheimer, the consciousness that they are, withdraws more gradually, they die before the physical death happens, the consciousness already cannot use the brain as a channel anymore, so the fundamental spiritual practice is your attention, return your attention as much as possible to awareness, in, during the day, many times, simple things, great spiritual practice, I recommend today, windows, windows, you always have a window somewhere, so there's a window, take a few step backs from the window, so you use the totality of the window, and then you look through the window, it has a frame, and you contemplate what's there, very attentive, alert, you observe what's there, without labeling it mentally in any way, and as you do that, if a label unconsciously arises, just let it go, it's unimportant, so you're practicing perception and experience without naming it, amazing spiritual practice, the ultimate spiritual practice, you experience it through sensory perception, but you don't name it, and yet you know what it is, but not conceptually, on the other hand, also, you also know that there's a deep mystery of what you're looking at, and you know every conceptual knowledge is ultimately fairly meaningless, although you need it in this world, but when you call a tree a tree, you still don't really know what it is, you just attach the label to it, and the label prevents you from looking more deeply, and sensing the tree more deeply, so whenever there's any window you have, look out of the window for a minute or so, and simply contemplate alertly what it is that you see, but without calling it anything, and then at the same time, and so that's not all, at the same time, as you perceive, be aware of yourself as the perceiver, not the person, the historical person, nor the consciousness that is perceiving, when you don't label and name things, then you're not a person anymore, you're the consciousness, basically you have died already, this is the good death, the death of the person, and you can have this death many times in one day, when the stream of thinking stops and awareness remains, you have died as a person, and what arises where the person was, is awareness or consciousness, and then the person suddenly reincarnates again, and is back a minute later, and then perhaps you die again a little bit later, there's another minute during which the person recedes, and awareness arises, oh, another death, and then you realize the essence of who you are is not anything that you can see with your senses, you start with your senses, and then you sense something deeper that is not sensory perception, you feel it, you sense it, you are invisible, you are an invisible presence, when you die, what remains is just the physical

form, and you are gone, and then the form dissolves.

Okay, before we go to the questions, I'll just ask you, sense this invisible you, that is not the body, and is not psychological memory or anything like that, that is not a product of brain activity, and there are many accounts of survival of consciousness beyond the physical death, but I'm not too concerned with that, because I'm more concerned with realizing the consciousness here and now, and when you realize that, then the fear of physical death diminishes and disappears.

Perhaps we'll come back to some things I've just said during the answers, because in essence, one could almost say that there's only one answer to every question, and as the essence of every answer is there, so let's just see, and sometimes when you realize the essence, the question disappears. In case the question hasn't disappeared, let's see what our first question is.

[Speaker 2] (25:48 - 27:12)

Thank you, Hecate. I do have a question. I have observed that forgiveness is the only way out of the past, out of its repetition and out of karma, but I can also see something in me, that something in me believes or fears that forgiveness means forgetting or negligence, and would not allow me to prevent the repetition of the past.

I know this isn't true. What I usually observe is that the more I hang on to the past, the more it repeats itself, and the more the mistakes come back. But there is something in me that feels trapped in a loop, and does not surrender, does not forgive my own mistakes, my own relationships, my own unconscious decisions.

I guess this part of me somehow feels too responsible for bringing awareness to the world and to my relationships, which closes the door to spontaneity, to genuine enthusiasm, and to new experiences, new learnings, new mistakes. This seriousness gets in the way of natural awakening, and I guess all of this is connected to the difficulty I sometimes experience to forgive myself about the past. So in a sum up, would you reflect on that subject, forgiveness from an open heart?

[Speaker 1] (27:13 - 47:01)

Thank you, thank you. Very good question. So one could say that basically, many humans carry the burden of the past in their psyche.

They carry the past as a burden. And forgiveness, of course, can refer to forgiving yourself. We'll probably talk mainly about that, because your question was mainly about that.

In other cases, forgiveness, of course, can also refer to other people in your life, what other people have done or done to you. That's another area of forgiveness. And then you

have the area that you mentioned, where you look back on your past, and you realize certain things you did, you regret now, you see they were perhaps not conscious, perhaps you acted out of egoic desires, or emotional impulses, or whatever it may be.

And the question here, as you may remember, just before you started asking the question, I said, what I talked about in the first part of our session, may come back as part of the answer to some of the questions, or all of the questions. The most important thing is, those things from the past, when you look at those things, the consciousness is looking at things that perhaps you did in the past, is not the same consciousness that produced those things in the past. You were not at the time, you did what you did, because it was a reflection of your state of consciousness at that time.

So, humans do, even a single human being, can even within the space of a day, can experience very different levels of consciousness. Until awareness comes in very strongly, there isn't really one human being, you are many. Until there is something that comes in that transcends those many personalities, patterns in you, unconscious mental, emotional patterns, often looks like, I'm not talking about schizophrenia is when it becomes very pronounced, but every normal human being is many human beings at different times.

Sometimes they may do something very destructive, either to themselves or others, and create a lot of suffering. In a moment of deep unconsciousness, and a few hours later, they wake up and say, how could I have done that? In some cases, it's not a few hours later, in some cases, a few years later, more consciousness has arisen, and they say, how could I have done that?

So, every human being manifests different levels of consciousness. And some human beings, of course, are relatively unconscious. So, a lot of what they do is ego motivated, reactive, is the outcome, is the result of the way in which they have been conditioned in their childhood, and the conditioning, the way in which they have been conditioned to act and react and think and emotions throughout childhood, that controls the rest of their life.

And there's no awareness in some, in many people, that awareness almost never comes. In some, it comes briefly and periodically. The question is, where do you derive your sense of self from?

Who am I? Is the question. Do you derive your sense of self from those things that happened in the past, that you did in the past, or you've, in some cases, perhaps you failed to do, but should have done, or you did do them, but you should not have done them, because they were, perhaps they caused suffering for others or for yourself.

Those things, you now recognize those things as the result of unconsciousness in you, because unconsciousness does create a lot of suffering for yourself and others. It's the

human ego, the way in which the ego has been conditioned, creates the suffering. In the moment of creating the suffering, it doesn't know that that's what the human being is doing.

In that moment, there's no choice. There's not enough consciousness to have a choice. Sometimes when more consciousness arises after an event, either an hour later or 20 years later, then with that consciousness, if that situation were to arise again, then you would have a choice, and you would not act in that way.

So, if you have a, if there's more consciousness in you now than there was 10 years ago, or 20 years ago, then you would have acted differently at those times. But who was it that acted in those ways in the past? Is that your identity?

Is that who you are? Or was that a pattern in you, a mental-emotional pattern, reactive pattern, pattern of behavior that acted through you? And is it wise to derive your sense of identity from unconscious patterns that manifested through you in the past?

Now, when you do that, it leads to a lot of suffering, because then you say, I did that. That was me. And then you carry that as a burden for the rest of your life, perhaps.

And in some cases, some humans perpetrated one very bad thing. Maybe they killed somebody, an extreme case. And of course, that is quite a burden to carry when you wake up out of that unconsciousness that did that.

It's a burden to carry that. But even there, as more consciousness arises in you, then you can look back and realize that was unconsciousness operating through you. And you did not, at the time, have a choice.

The mind may tell yourself, yes, I did have a choice. No, you didn't have a choice. No human being can act beyond their level of consciousness at any given moment.

At any given moment, you cannot act that is beyond the level of consciousness that operates in you at that moment. So, in some cases, it has very, very dramatic and serious consequences when a human does one thing in the past. Sometimes very young people do it.

They might get drunk and then get in the car. They're 18 years old. They drink, they get in the car, kill somebody.

And then, depending on what country you live in, you might spend 20, 30 years in prison for a moment of unconsciousness. So, on an external level, it can have very serious consequences. But the most important thing, no matter what it is, even in the case of you've done something very bad, the most important thing is not to derive your sense of identity from past unconsciousness, but recognize unconsciousness for what it was.

But in order to do this, you need to go deeper within yourself and access the power of presence in you, now, here and now. The power of presence is what we talked about in the first part of our session. You access the power of presence in your consciousness.

And you can then experience a shift in identity from who you are is that conscious presence. The rest is ways in which you've been conditioned to act. Unconsciousness, we call that.

Unconsciousness means lack of awareness. Something operates in you that is the product of conditioning from the past. So, you recognize something that happened in the past that forced you almost to act in certain ways, and you recognize it as unconsciousness.

And to recognize that as unconsciousness is forgiveness. Forgiveness is no longer seeking an identity in the past, and especially in things that are very unpleasant. There are many unpleasant things in virtually everybody's past.

There are many unpleasant things. There are things that you did, and there are things that were done to you. In either case, to recognize that what happened in the past is a result of human unconsciousness.

You don't personalize it anymore. So, not to personalize unconsciousness for yourself and others is forgiveness. Don't make an identity out of manifestations of unconsciousness.

Don't make an identity out of that, not for yourself and not for others. So, another human being did something. Let's say parents, even parents sometimes as you grow up, you realize your parents perhaps did, or one of your parents did very wrong things.

You say, well, if I had had more conscious parents, my life would have been easier. For example, you'd say, why did they do this to me? They did this to you because they were unconscious, spiritually speaking.

They acted out their conditioning, and their parents acted out their conditioning. And sometimes the conditioning goes from generation to generation. In some families, you could go back several hundred years and find the same patterns of dysfunctional behavior, perpetuating themselves from generation to generation.

Until finally, one human being comes and transcends that and awakens out of that, is no longer forced to act out the patterns from the past. And then this human being, which is you, can look back and recognize the past for what it is, manifestations of human unconsciousness, manifestations of the present level of human unconsciousness. And you can look at the whole world collectively, look back at the 20th century, and especially the first half of the 20th century, the dreadful things that human beings did to each other.

Millions killed, you can't even count it, hundreds of millions, one country against another and within countries. How is it possible? Well, this is a manifestation of the evolution of human consciousness.

And it's a slow evolution. And it shows where humans are at collectively. And the 20th century, the first half, especially where there were many regressive periods from, as I said before, you have in one individual human being, you can have different levels of consciousness at different times.

In the collective also, you can have different consciousness at different times. And collectively, this is just a side, humans, societies, countries, any collective, sometimes experiences a regressive movement in consciousness when they become, they had such, had reached a certain level of consciousness, and then they sink back into a lower level. This is how some countries can perpetuate terrible suffering and do dreadful things to each other, as if they were in the grip of collective psychosis that happens with totalitarian regimes when they take over a country, for example, as happened in Germany, in Russia, in China, during certain periods in the 20th century.

Millions got killed. It's the country descending into deeper unconsciousness. And sometimes countries that were already relatively conscious, relatively, came sank back into deep unconsciousness, like, like a mental illness, psychosis.

And we are not free of that. It could happen again. I see science here and there in the collective that it could be happening again.

But that does not mean you have to be part of that. But I'm mentioning this, there's a lot to forgive in this, you have to forgive whole of humanity. When you look back on humanity, if you don't want to hate humanity and say, I don't want to be human, I can see what humans have done.

They're all crazy. I'd rather not be human. So you have to, you have to forgive the whole of humanity.

They've also done good things. There have been, there are moments, there is an evolution of consciousness, undoubtedly. And there are aggressive, regressive periods too.

So you forgive not only yourself, you forgive your parents, you forgive your ex-spouse, you forgive your, whatever your siblings may have done, you forgive your neighbor, you forgive the totality of humanity for its craziness. Because you recognize we are all part of the evolution of consciousness here on this planet. And you are part of that.

And you are now, you're evolving from your level of consciousness now. You look back and you see what you did, but was that you ultimately? No, it was the conditioned entity that was produced by your past that did that.

And instead of deriving your sense of who you are from the movement of unconsciousness, you derive your sense of who you are from the presence that you are now. That is a liberation. And that's true.

Forgiveness is realizing that ultimately there's nothing to forgive. There's only human unconsciousness and there's a gradual awakening in humanity. And on that past awakening, there are many times when humans regress temporarily and then they come out of it again.

And there's a gradual, a gradual awakening of consciousness. There was a line in the New Testament by St. Paul who wrote that all of creation up to the present time is, what word did he use? Is groaning in pain as if in childbirth.

It's like the pains of childbirth. He says, not only humans, but all creation is undergoing the pains of childbirth. It's a very deep statement because what is birthing is a consciousness.

And it's a painful process at first. To become more conscious is painful. To be less conscious like a tree or an animal as conscious, but life is less problematic for a dog than it is for a human.

That's why a dog is more joyful than most humans. So consciousness at first is almost a burden. And then as you rise beyond, it frees you.

But it's a burden when you are at an intermediate stage as you were until now, where you become aware of the unconsciousness, but you cannot free yourself from it because you think that's me. And then presence frees you from the past because that's what it is. It doesn't mean you don't remember the past, but you recognize it for what it is.

You can remember it, but you know now what it is. Manifestation of human unconsciousness. Don't look for yourself in it.

You are not that. You are the presence. And then as you go through life, increasingly be more rooted in the presence, then the possibility or the likelihood that you will do more unconscious things that create suffering for yourself and others diminishes and then disappears.

When you're conscious, you do not create additional suffering for yourself or others. The world changes in that way when humans no longer create suffering out of unconsciousness. And you are at that stage where the shift can happen.

You recognize the past and you look at it like a child that breaks something, breaks a valuable object because it doesn't know any better. So you will look upon this child with compassion. And you could look back on your past also with compassion.

You have to go through the evolution of consciousness. And on that path, suffering happens. Things are done to you that make you suffer.

You do things to others that make them suffer. And then you begin to transcend that. And then you realize the past has nothing to do with who you are.

And that's the transcendence. And that's where you are at now. The possibility arises.

Presence frees you from the past.

[Speaker 2] (47:03 - 47:03)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (47:04 - 47:05)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (47:05 - 47:28)

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Eckhart Tolle Forgiving the Unforgivable [36a57c9b-fe28-4f77-9b71-9821c322a0f0]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:03)

Forgiving the unforgivable. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about a variety of concerns. A man experiences relentless anxiety and says meditation doesn't relieve his symptoms.

Eckhart explains an overactive pain body is at the root of his troubles. He then shares the wisdom he gained through healing his own pain body. Another audience member asks if there are any transgressions which are unforgivable.

Eckhart explains some violations may seem beyond acceptance but our goal is not to try to forgive. He says instead forgiveness occurs naturally as we outgrow the limitations of our personality. Finally, a woman asks if it's necessary to forgive others who have wronged us in order to revolve spiritually.

Eckhart shares the trauma he experienced from his abusive father and he explains how through spiritual growth he was able to realize his father was a wounded man. Once Eckhart awakened to this fact, he says forgiveness flowed.

[Speaker 1] (1:04 - 36:46)

Just checking to see if everybody is still present. I'll do just a few questions from the streaming questions. Joseph asking, hello Eckhart, every morning I awake with extreme feelings of anxiety.

It is like a knot in my stomach area and it feels very uncomfortable. It is accompanied by fearful thoughts and emotions. I am able to observe it in my inner body.

Nevertheless, it always continues and is getting stronger. I try to be present and feel my inner body but this won't stop it. Hmm, by the time I'm getting up I feel drained of energy and I'm still anxious.

What else can I do? So there's probably a pain body in you that is almost continuously active whereas most pain bodies have periods of inactivity. You can hardly feel it or you can't feel it at all and then periods when they become active and create drama either in your mind or in your life or both.

This sometimes happens that a pain body is almost continuously active and particularly when he wakes up it seems he can feel it. Later on I assume during the day he gets distracted by other things and so the feeling of anxiety will still be there but will recede a little bit I assume. I can't ask him here, he's not here, but what to do with this extreme feeling of anxiety that comes to many people.

It comes also in the middle of the night when they wake up. I used to have that in my 20s when I woke up often and can't sleep and in this horrible universe that seems everything seems alien and almost threatening. That kind of feeling is described by the writer and philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre in a novel he wrote called *La Nausee* which is nausea which is the feeling of the nausea of existence of dread.

So for Joseph breathing I would recommend a definitely a breathing practice but it will probably have to be more structured than what we are doing here and I very rarely recommend specific practices but intuitively I sense for Joseph to take up the practice of Qigong, Chinese Qigong practice which is related to Tai Chi. Qigong in particular is to awaken the dormant energy in the body and it involves both movement and breath and it's a structured practice. Find a good teacher or you might be able to even online I don't know and it can awaken the inner body energy, the Qi as they call it.

It's a structured practice involving movement and breath. Whatever they do. The thing people, people learn these things.

It's good to learn it but originally the people who teach that who originally taught it did it intuitively just in the way I did it just now. Intuitively they go and then you hold something even manipulate energy they go they hold the energy here between the hands and of course in the movies they're in some of these Chinese movies they're the great masters then they hold this ball of energy and they can throw it at you but Qigong does not free you from the ego in fact your ability to practice Qigong could also be incorporated into the ego. It could but it is very very helpful for some people and in this case I would I would recommend that some Qigong practitioners actually develop a lot of enormous Qi which in itself is not the deepest energy Qi is halfway between the unmanifested and the manifested. Qi is also what you feel when you put your attention into the inner body it's halfway between the manifested and the unmanifested but some Qigong practitioners can actually they can light they can ignite paper with the energy that they project into their hands but Joseph doesn't need to do that.

The origin of Tai Chi I feel very strongly also which is basically presence through movement the origin of Tai Chi is I've convinced ancient masters began to move spontaneously as part of their feeling of aliveness and meditation practice they began to a spontaneous kind of dance with energy were being moved by the energy and it was nice and flowing flowing movement and they went on and the disciples were looking on and say what's he doing and then the disciples started to write down now he's lifting his left leg and now the right hand goes up and then gradually over time it became a system and that's fine but I believe it originated from spontaneous being moved spontaneously and intuitively it was a joyous dance with movement and it but you can learn it so it the it works also as you learn it as a structured practice so that's my recommendation for a person who suffers from extreme anxiety Jill from Delaware hello ask are there any past actions which are unforgivable also have you had a major past regret that you've had to

work through and how did you do it you don't have to name the specific regret oh that's good well yes some major regrets yes in the early days I didn't take out the garbage and and I don't know if I can forgive myself my self-image has been shattered by this I thought I was an enlightened master well yeah well it was a big one and there are some things one does unconsciously I don't nothing really major in my life a few things one is ashamed of yes in my youth I did some weird things just because it's a funny story I'll tell you just one little anecdote from my early years my first year in England I got a temporary job in Sussex working in an office for three months a summer job that was my first time in England and then towards the end of that period I was going to go back home at the time I was living in Spain with my dad and then there's a woman in that office who was going to go on vacation and she said why don't you stay another four weeks house it for me my house I said oh god that's great yeah I'd like to stay another four weeks house it I was 19 and yeah it's a nice house suburban house and the pantry and the fridge was full of food all kinds of food items was full she liked me maybe she was an early prepper for getting getting ready for the apocalypse but there was food cans of this and that and and everything and the freezer and then there was wine in racks wine racks everywhere now my background was very very poor my dad was a drop out at the time in Spain they had moved to Spain at that time we had nothing we didn't have enough money to buy even a fridge in a hot country no fridge no television no telephone no radio nothing no hot water occasionally we had cold water and so we went always bought the minimum we went out every day to the market looking for the cheapest vegetables and stuff to sell and brought it back had to be consumed because it would go off in the heat we couldn't store anything anywhere so and there I was never not having experienced any abundance of food in this place and in my ignorance I believed that he had bought all this for me I could not imagine that anybody would store these things as it was what a kind person to get all this and I used all these things during four weeks including the wine which obviously she bought from me of course and fortunately I had scheduled to fly home before she came back but then later she called me and she said I was so shocked when I arrived home what did you do oh oh I didn't know uh and then she said well you'll need to send me the this amount of money and then I worked hard get some part-time jobs at the time I was back in Spain for a while and I had several jobs I was doing I started work when I was 16 interpreting translation work mainly of restaurant menus and tour guide so I was already a guide at the age of 17 I was had started doing tour guides in buses guiding tourists anyway that's a long story so I worked extra hard so that I could pay back this woman so that she could restock her pantry and so on and that for a long time I felt a bit ashamed but not anymore I have let go of all this now including including the garbage so there are things in everybody's life there may be something that I have repressed Nakari remember who knows but are there some things that are unforgivable that either I suppose to yourself or to others it may appear that there are some dreadful things but the nature of forgiveness is strange forgiveness isn't really something that you can really effectively do although people try to do it forgiveness happens naturally when you reconnect with

the essence of who you are that is beyond the personality all this the unconscious stuff is perpetrated by the conditioned personality the conditioned mind that makes up the conditioned personality and so when you go deep enough and so you no longer derive your identity from the personality and whatever the personality has done you can still recognize these were this was bad you may even make up want to make up for something that the person did that you now recognize as bad as I sent this woman the money that she had lost and that was good so that's fine you may try to make up but no longer deriving your identity from it that is the main thing then when the identity is derived from the deeper place then what we conventionally call forgiveness happens by itself you don't need to do anything also this applies to when something was done to you that is bad at this deep level of presence that is always pristine and is not affected by whatever happened to the person no matter how bad it was so bad things that happened to you certain perpetrators did bad things to you then how do you forgive them let's say even you might be injured by something people did to you it's very hard as an actual conscious decision that I must forgive I don't know how deep that would go probably not that deep or that might give you a satisfying feeling of being a good person who is able to forgive but if you go deep enough you realize that the essence of who you are was never affected by that it cannot be then you can easily forgive yourself or rather it happens automatically but you still recognize the badness of it I saw an example of this quite a few years ago there was a woman in Texas in a in prison she had been sentenced to death I don't remember her name it might be 15 20 years ago I don't know she had done the most dreadful things she was under the influence of drugs and she had personally killed with a I think with a big knife two people she and her boyfriend had broken into a house and she had personally under the influence of drugs or whatever killed with a knife the most horrific murders and she even enjoyed doing it it's they found some evidence later she talked to somebody and she said she enjoyed doing it it was horrible she was on death row for several years and on death row something happened to her she went through a I believe it was through Christian teachings but something happened to her and a shift a complete shift happened and then later I saw an interview with her and I could see that she had touched the essence of her being and she knew that what she had done was terrible but there were peace just emanated from her she had broken through and it was amazing to see it seems almost impossible how can a person who did that awaken to that but it happened to her and then at that time she I think she applied she said I can do perhaps good things in prison while I'm still alive so she applied for instead of death sentence to be reduced to life sentence in prison but at that time the at least the governor of Texas he said no and she got executed but what is the amazing thing that I could see she knew that how bad that was that she had done and yet she did not carry the burden of it anymore the the essence of shining so that's a very rare case but it was amazing to see so this is something that seems totally unforgivable to yourself and yet it can happen so ultimately I believe there's nothing unforgivable but the important thing for everybody to realize is forgiveness true forgiveness happens as a natural consequence of connecting with the essence of who

you are then it just happens ah Anna from Australia is a related question where the answer will be short because we've already been talking about it Australia is probably tomorrow evening there or something like that not that it matters it's a present present moment there too is it necessary to forgive others who we feel have wronged us in order to evolve for example should Ukrainians forgive Russia or an abused child forgive the abuser or is it enough to simply acknowledge the misdeed and move on is it necessary to forgive others who we feel have wronged us in order to evolve Ukrainians Russia well entire countries that's a different matter a country consists of millions of people and I don't think every individual in a particular country necessarily carries the guilt collective guilt perpetrated by a certain section of that country but the individuals is it necessary to forgive in order to evolve yes that's that is the case if you carry any kind of grievance towards another person or group of people that would prevent you from awakening to the essence of who you are that would become a little a little barrier to about that realization so it's important to let go of grievances and so on so you go as deep as you can and then they dissolve by themselves if you can go deep enough but if you hold on to a grievance you have to be ready to let go if you hold on to it becomes part of your ego so that's the danger it's very hard to explain Jesus said when you go to temple and pray before you go to temple make sure that you forgive your brother because otherwise their prayer will not be very good I had resentment towards my father for quite a long time until I awakened because my father had I was never punished physically but that so that is a good thing but he was sometimes violent towards my mother and he was extremely prone to outbursts of extreme anger which to me as a child felt like physical assault not even anger towards me it was mostly towards my mother but it fell to the home and I could feel feel it like a physical assault of my being so it's like an unexploded bomb you live with an unexploded bomb it could explode at any moment and every continuous state of tension and anxiety horrible and then my dad or you I loved him but he had also a gigantic ego I say that I hope he's not present right now here two or three years after he passed away I was with Kim in a we had stopped in a restaurant on the way to California we were driving stopped in a restaurant for meal and I was talking about I said my dad had to had a big ego and the waiter had just before I said he had put a carafe of water on the table with two glasses as they do in restaurants at the moment I said my dad had a big ego the carafe of water burst now before I continue about that I have to add in the later stages of his life my dad became partly enlightened and was still partly carrying the burden of the heavy ego so it was a strange mixture in some areas of his life he was almost enlightened in other areas there was still enormous ego he became a hybrid creature interesting but in his earlier life he was very the ego was so strong I realized later it is called narcissistic personality disorder which is an extreme form of ego and so I had some resentment until I the awakening came and then for the first time I could meet my dad without any resentment I was able to listen to him he would not discuss anything but with anybody he was just kind of talking a loud voice to tell you how things are and you have to listen for a long long time this is how it is and this is what they are these and these politicians he were they don't know what to

do okay and I was just happy to just listen suddenly there was no resentment anymore and that was the beginning of some changes coming to my dad when I there was no longer that resistance there was an acceptance and then in some areas he began to change gradually never completely but in some areas he changed so he had some wisdom arose in him in his next lifetime he will perhaps become totally enlightened on his good side his enlightened being he accepted me always completely whatever I did was fine you drop out of university fine it's fine you do the right thing it's good my mom was different so a complete acceptance and great and he could wait they say only masters can wait they didn't become impatient he could wait for hours for something on the telephone if you couldn't reach somebody on the telephone he would pick up the phone every two minutes and dial the same number for an hour or two but not get upset at all was beginnings of enlightenment the glass is still intact that's a good sign one more question from here lee from sunnyvale california I believe I heard you mentioned several years ago that people trying to feel presence tended to fall into two categories those who felt presence while being more quiet and peaceful and those who felt presence with action or activity assuming I remembered this correctly I was wondering if you can expand on this the reason I ask is that when I heard this statement I immediately felt that I belonged in the second category while I'm not athletic I have definitely felt presence during some unusual activities such as driving on busy fast-moving freeways and even after watching particularly well-done action sequences in movies thank you well certainly some people experience presence when they're engaged in fairly dangerous activities that is a fact and whether it's mountain climbing or even surfing that's the big thing here now why and I'm absolutely sure I don't know if there are any surfers here probably when you are engaged in surfing you're not thinking about yourself you're not thinking you are really absolutely pretty you have to be absolutely present and if you lose it then you there you go one thought and you're gone surfing is wonderful I wish I had learned that it's too late now of course I probably miracles are possible but any dangerous activity that forces you into the present moment and if you if you lost presence you would probably have an accident so but engaging in it I don't recommend by the way dangerous activity so don't blame me I don't recommend dangerous activity especially not driving fast on the freeways just to see if you can be present surfing is relatively it forces you into presence but I suppose you could conceivably be injured or die but it's not quite as dangerous as climbing up the rock face or whatever people do so certain activities force you into presence some people you might have heard get addicted to what they call it adrenaline that comes but I don't don't see things from the physical perspective I very rarely mention these words but what they really mean yes adrenaline is a physical part of what happens what they feel in my terminology what they feel is a heightened sense of aliveness because while they're engaged in these activities they are free free of themselves they are free of thought they're absolutely present and that gives them this heightened they feel really alive in those moments and so what happens then they become almost addicted to that activity they have to do it again and again because it's so wonderful and again they

could learn that they do not have to if they've had experiences of presence and that's a good thing and then then they could see if they can also if they come into contact with the spiritual teaching perhaps they're able to also enter presence without hanging on a rock face and almost falling off or endangering your life by driving too fast on the freeway certainly some sports people who engage in competitive sports experience presence through that that is true the important thing is presence eventually needs to come into your daily life rather than just being confined to one particular activity but one can see with some sports people that they are they're very intensely alive when engaging that although some people are even there are we have some ego that can come in we're probably i don't know during their performance or activity or just after or before i don't know and so that's that then another aspect of that is that some people become present when things go drastically wrong in their lives they experience extreme loss loss of home loss of all possessions loss of a loved one loss of status in society you become suddenly become noble to everybody dislikes you because you send out the wrong tweet and and from one day to the next you get cancelled so your loss of identity who am i i got cancelled to some people that is actually an extreme form of loss it's surprising they get cancelled on twitter and all these other things and then their life is ruined they think and other people they lose their possessions and they commit suicide because they lost all their possessions it's the famous thing in there when there was big depression in the 30s many people in new york jumped out of the skyscrapers commit suicide because they lost all their possessions so because their identity was in that and without that there were nothing but so that can happen when you lose something it can make you totally unconscious you're already unconscious and then you're even more unconscious it strengthens the ego so the ego says there's no point in living anymore i'm going to destroy myself as a last triumph of rebellion against this world i'm going to commit suicide ah there you are i did it oh i'm going to you can't say i did it i'm going to do it but other people when they a huge loss happens and then it leaves a huge hole in their existence in their life perhaps the loss of a child is a dreadful thing it's bad enough to lose a parent but if it's the other way around the loss of a child is a huge loss it can be very very painful or you you're part of millions of people who lose you become a refugee lose everything no home and there you're on the road to to nobody knows where you've left everything behind nothing left and there's a possibility of awakening to the essence of who you are and suddenly experience that and it happens all the time but only to a small percentage of those people who do experience these things but the potential is always there when everything that the ego had identified with is removed from you you are left with nothing your identity crumbles the egoic identity cannot be sustained anymore because everything it that gave gave it sustenance has been taken away and so in the absence of ego suddenly that which had been hidden underneath the ego emerges and that is called in christian teaching the peace that passes all understanding you can't figure out why you suddenly feel so peaceful when you lost everything so that happens also and that can happen to people who've never come into contact with any spiritual teaching just then of course presence can also rise in the face of beauty when

you are alone on a mountaintop and and these are usually moments that come and go that may not may not last but they they're glimpses of presence and that's beautiful too so activities that are dangerous yes deep loss that can be a more lasting presence that arises through deep loss it could destroy your ego permanently and then you are permanently at peace even when your life goes back to normal you would still have that essence would still be alive in you and then there's another is the voluntary embracing of presence which is you all of you you've had enough suffering to have brought you here so that's good and you realize you do not need awful dreadful loss in order to enter presence because you voluntarily invite presence into your life so you don't need for life to take everything away from you but if it should do that if it did that then you would be really prepared and it would be immediately you would drop there you are i'm always present it's always in the background somewhere this presence that's great when i was diagnosed with cancer in january this year and which cancer means maybe you only have a few more months to live you don't know when they first tell you that your cancer oh maybe only a few more months to live that's the mind and immediately i dropped into very enormous just only presence there was nothing left but presence it was amazing i looked around and i was sitting in my living room for hours just there was no the person didn't reappear or only only occasionally little here's the person and gone again the person gone again and i don't know whether that had something to do with the fact that now after an operation i had it doesn't seem doesn't seem to be any more cancer in the body at least for now so that can the possibility of imminent death can of course be a wonderful deepening because it really forces you into into the present if you're ready for it you're all ready for it so if it should happen to you you'll be fine if you're not ready for it it's very painful very painful but even then it could happen that it fell off the ego cracks thank you

[Speaker 2] (36:54 - 37:14)

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Eckhart Tolle Foundation For Successful Living [c403d83f-dd57-4c95-923c-3bf9099412f8]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:29)

Foundation for Successful Living. In this episode, Eckhart reflects on what it takes to create a successful life. He says, we must live with a foot in two worlds.

We must learn to reconcile the everyday with the transcendent. He explains why we should consciously manifest our aims and aspirations while also practicing presence. Eckhart says, the most important part of living in this world is bringing those two together.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 2:12)

Welcome everybody, wherever you are in the here and now. There's the one consciousness, the one being. And all you can say is that, I am that.

There's no other anymore. It's all the I am, manifestations of the I am. So, I'm going to be quiet just for half a minute or so, and to continue to enjoy that presence that is behind each one of you that is one, the one presence.

And the amazing thing is, in conventional language, I love each one of you. I don't know you on a personal level, but it's unnecessary. What does that mean?

I recognize myself, the essence of who I am in each one of you, and that recognition is love. Quite amazing. So, let's move to the first question about manifestation, conscious manifestation.

So, let's go ahead with the first question and the first questioner.

[Speaker 3] (2:13 - 2:48)

Hello, thank you, Eckhart, for being with us. Thank you. My question is, in the spiritual world, I've often encountered the notion that, instead of asking, what do I expect from life, one needs to ask, what does life expect of me, and to rise to whatever the present moment calls for us to do.

How do you reconcile that notion with the notion of conscious manifestation, where we're inherently attracting what we maybe wish or hope to see more of into our lives, rather than accepting whatever arises?

[Speaker 1] (2:49 - 34:38)

Thank you, thank you, good question. Let's hope there's going to be a good answer. A good question deserves a good answer.

So, how to reconcile accepting what arises in the present moment, and at the same time, perhaps, holding in your mind an image of what you want to manifest in your life, or using affirmations. Now, that's the, perhaps that's the most important part of manifesting, living in this world, is to bring the two together, accepting whatever arises in the present moment, without losing the ability to, in your day-to-day life, in your personal and professional life, without losing the ability to have goals, for example, and move towards goals, or to have certain aims. When you practice manifestation techniques, it might, you might do it as set aside, a few minutes every day, maybe twice a day, maybe in the morning and in the evening.

When you focus on something that you want to manifest, the rest of the time, you live your life without continuously thinking about something that is other than what arises in the present moment. So, it's important, the very foundation for successful living, but also the very foundation for manifesting things, is to be deeply accepting of whatever the present moment brings, to face it in that state of acceptance. Acceptance, if you're not in a state of acceptance, it's a state of acceptance that takes you deeper into the vertical dimension, which is beyond ego.

The state of non-acceptance keeps you trapped in egoic limit, very limited egoic consciousness. So, when you are in opposition to the present moment, in whatever form it arises, and that's very easy to fall back into that, even for spiritual practitioners, so to speak, it's fall back into this deep seated habit of being in opposition to what arises in the present moment. So, it's vital to recognize that something that is the case now, cannot be otherwise in this moment.

This is beyond any doubt. It is because that's how it is. You cannot wish it away or say it shouldn't be, it is.

Whatever is arising now is. It's dysfunctional to argue with it or to create some kind of mental, emotional resistance to it. It does not mean that change cannot take place.

It does not mean that you cannot take action in order to manifest something that you would prefer. But the important thing is at this moment, there's no division, nor there's no antagonism between you and what you experience as your reality. That's very important.

Not to have an antagonistic relationship with whatever arises in the present moment. It's, one could give many examples. Some, you may find yourself in a place that's not so pleasant, you may be stuck somewhere that perhaps may have become a familiar experience for many people these last few months.

They are stuck at home, I suppose, many. And for some that might be nice if you have a home with a nice big garden or something like that, it's not perhaps not so bad. If you have a small apartment, can't get out, several more people are there, then it might be

more difficult to accept what is, but that is precisely the practice.

The more difficult that act of acceptance is, the deeper it will take you if you succeed in that act of non-resistance. If you succeed in not resisting in a situation that is, looks on the surface unacceptable, it can take you very quickly, very deep beyond ego. So what opens up in the state of acceptance is the vertical dimension that you are cut off from when you argue with what is mentally or emotionally even, one could say.

And then you see that in the present, if that is your starting point, the very foundation is to be in alignment with the isness of this. This is not to be confused with some kind of interpretation of what arises in the present moment. So the acceptance of the present moment does not depend, because you could interpret things in many different ways.

People usually impose some kind of interpretation on what's happening around them. And if you have a positive interpretation, you're closer to acceptance than when you have a negative interpretation of what's happening around you. Let's say you lose your home because of the current situation, you can't pay your rent or mortgage anymore.

And perhaps for a while you have to live in a tent or in your car. And there's always, of course, always ever just this moment. This moment is as it is.

So there you sit in your tent or in your car and you take this moment. Now you can interpret, if you give it a positive interpretation, you say, well, it's a challenge for me to be here and it's not so bad actually living in the car. I can manage, I can survive.

I hope it doesn't last for too long, but I can, it's okay. I shouldn't complain because other people will have it much worse than me. They don't even have a car to live in or a tent.

They may, I could be without a tent, but I have a tent. This is not bad. It's actually takes you a bit closer to acceptance, but it's not yet, it's not really the full acceptance.

It's some kind of, you have to spin a pleasant story to make you feel good. So you are still somehow dependent on what's going on in your mind for your state of deep wellbeing. But in order to become independent, not only of the, as far as your inner state of consciousness is concerned, to become independent, not only of whatever is at the present moment, your external circumstances, and external includes even what's happening in your body.

Let's say something, some disability, illness, disability, any external circumstance to become free of dependency as far as your state of consciousness, your inner state is concerned, to become free of this reactivity to external conditions so that your inner state is no longer determined by external conditions, but not only is not determined by external conditions, your inner state is also not determined by your mind, what your mind is saying, whatever your mind is. So if your mind is interpreting your external conditions in a negative way, then of course you experience emotions that reflect those

negative thoughts and it's not a pleasant state, you're stuck, you are resistant, and it's much less likely that you will be able to move on quickly from that situation because you are not connected with the power of life itself that is beyond the conditioned mind, that is the consciousness. So a positive interpretation is better than a negative one, it takes you a little closer to full acceptance, but it's not full acceptance yet, you're still dependent on what, and your mind could change its mind quickly. So for a few days, you're good with telling yourself a nice narrative about what's happening in your life, and then you get, I'm really tired of telling myself this nice narrative when I really know it isn't nice at all, so it could quickly shift, and you start to complain.

So even that is not the solution, it's not full acceptance, full acceptance is to give up, calling it good or bad, that sounds almost like being asked, asking somebody to be superhuman, isn't it human to interpret? Yes, it is, but there is another way if you want to awaken spiritually, and the universe wants you to awaken spiritually, there's something that is beyond the polarities of good and bad, but that is transcendent dimension of consciousness, and to discover that possibility and that reality in yourself is the most amazing thing that could happen to you in this lifetime or any other lifetime, to discover the transcendent dimension where your inner state through that absolute yes to what is, which is no longer a mental thing, you let go of needing to interpret this moment, and this moment becomes the foundation for your life, you still have a history, yes, of course, but you're not interpreting anymore this moment, you just accept it, and then you may see that certain things may be needed to change the external appearance of this moment, for example, let's say you're in your tent, and you realize fully that it would be helpful to get out of your tent before it gets too cold, before the summer is over, and you realize that you need to take certain steps on a practical level in order to change your external situation with which you are totally okay here and now, you're not complaining at all, in fact, there are many aspects of it that are deeply enjoyable, because when you accept the present moment, everything that you perceive, that you look on, that you hear, is there's not only an acceptance, there's also an appreciation of the fullness of life that's always around you, it's the simple act of breathing, the still presence of a tree, of a plant, the still presence even of a so-called inanimate object, everything is lovely in its beingness, there's a fullness of life around you, there's the sky, there's the sun, sunshine, water, you've entered the vertical dimension, and from that deeper state of consciousness, then action that then you need to take on the external horizontal dimension of life becomes more empowered and more inspired because it's no longer coming from some kind of negative state, either arising of some kind of angry state or some kind of fearful state, action that is motivated by fear is not pleasant, does not create pleasant experiences for yourself or other people, you will make yourself and others unhappy, but if you can be deeply accepting of the present moment and then you make, if you don't know yet what action to take, you close your eyes or you don't, it doesn't matter, and then you see what it is that you need to do in order to change the external situation because you may have a preference, you have preferences as far as

this person is concerned for living in a house that's rather than a tent in the long term, and so you can have a certain visualization of what it is or you want certain, to engage in a certain activity, a certain type of work, we'll be talking more about this, I'm sure, in the next few answers to the questions, but the very foundation is the acceptance and then it does not mean that change cannot happen in your life once you've become aligned with the isness of the present moment, it does not mean that you become incapable of action or that the motivation for taking action isn't there anymore, the motivation changes from neediness or wanting to either to protect or enhance your egoic identity through something that you acquire, feeling getting rid of the sense of lack or insufficiency that is part of egoic identity, those motivations disappear and another motivation arises and that is the motivation that the joy of manifesting something because the universe openly enjoys it too and you're a part of the universe, the universe loves manifesting life forms and all kinds of things in this world and everywhere, if you look at the millions of life forms on this planet that the universal intelligence has manifested and continues to manifest gradually becoming over millions or billions of years, greater complexity and more consciousness flows into these life forms that the universe delights in manifesting, so the universe loves manifesting form and the human manifestation, conscious manifestation is none other than an extension of what the universe is already doing and now it can do it through you.

If you look at, I saw the, I'm not a diver into the ocean, it's lovely, it's a lovely thing, people are able to dive and look at the life forms in the sea but I saw it on the screen the other day, the unbelievable life forms that you see in the ocean like creations of some incredible fantasy that nobody could even have dreamt of, the life forms that you, such incredible beauty and exquisite forms, what, there's obviously some kind of, behind the world of appearances, there is a vast intelligence that creates continuously these delights, it must delight in creating all these forms and that's, you yourself are a creation of that, you are one of these life forms that created by this underlying intelligence, which is an emanation of the source of all life, God, you're an emanation of that and then that can, when you're no longer coming from egoic separation, you can be a conscious participant in the act of creation that the universe is engaged in, the entire sense-perceived universe could be regarded as a vast act of creation that, and it's growing, the complexity is growing and that's the outward movement of the universe, the universe has this, the outward movement is the creation of form and you are a reflection of that, but there's also an inward movement, the inward, it's like an out-breath and in-breath, so when the universe creates, it creates directly, well, I don't want to go into that too much, but there is an underlying intelligence that expresses itself through life forms and there are strands or branches or in this underlying intelligence that there are creative forces that emanate from the source, we can't, we don't see them and they are responsible for the creation of various life forms, sometimes in older civilization, they call them spirits or nature spirits and other things, they are all, they are in the unseen, what Socrates said according to Plato that underlying the world of forms that we see, there are mental

formations, there's already, it's translated as ideas in the mind of God, there's a blueprint, so to speak, a pattern in the unseen and that is the creative force behind plants, animals, but don't want to go too far into this, the important thing to realize is that the universe has two movements and the human being is a microcosm of the entire universe, the human being loves to and should be engaged in the act of creation as a co-creator with the greater intelligence, only an expression of it, there's a tendency of the universe that is meant to be like that, to lose itself in the creation, so it's the, every life form is then, especially in the human, the human loses its connectedness, its awareness that it is only a temporary expression of the one and then you take everything that happens is absolutely real and that's a very frightening thing that then everything has an absolute reality, everything around you because you have lost yourself in the dream of form because ultimately what the universe is creating is this incredibly beautiful dream-like world, it's an artistic, like gigantic artistic creation, but that's the outward movement, that's the out-breath, the whole world comes into being and then there's the in-breath when the universe again becomes conscious of itself because before it had lost itself in the millions, billions of life forms, it wanted to do that, to experience this beauty and then the other movement is necessary just as you need to breathe in and breathe out, both movements are necessary, sometimes I call it the outward journey which is when you manifest things and the inward journey which is the journey into yourself, into the timeless now, the vertical dimension and that's the in-breath one could say and it is quite possible that that is the entire universe reflected in the human in and out-breath, the entire universe is probably being breathed out and breathed in, the big bang is the out-breath and it's still continuing, it is continuous creation and then at some point during the out-breath, the other factor comes in and that is the desire to breathe in again because you're approaching the end of the out-breath and you get some, and then the universe breathes in which would be the end of the world, the entire universe is returning to absolute oneness and then perhaps there's another out-breath as in similar things I said in ancient Indian philosophy, Brahman, that one is breathing out the universe and so in your own life, if you are connected with the unconditioned deeper intelligence, then it's a joy to be engaged in the act of creation because you are no longer engaged in it as a person but as an extension of the one intelligence so there's no contradiction anymore between being deeply rooted in the present moment which is a transcendent you, the transcendence, the being of you is in deeply, is in the timeless transcendent dimension of consciousness that is a being.

Then there's the human, human being, right? You are a human being. The being is the transcendent dimension of who you are.

The human is the things where you move in the horizontal dimension in time. There you take steps and there are things that when you look at the horizontal dimension, there are things that it would be good to do. You see things without losing your connectedness to the deeper dimension from there, you look and then you see things how you can

improve your so-called life on the horizontal dimension where the person lives, what you call the person.

There are things that you can do to improve your life or to bring in, to contribute some good, what some form to this world. And by doing that, improve what you call your life and to bring some good into this world is the essence of any good that you bring into this world is always you bring in more consciousness. You connect it to the consciousness, you bring in through whatever activity.

Let's see the being and the human. You are not only a human. Human is a conditioned person.

More fundamentally, you are the being. If you forget that, then the human is lost. And if the human goes through life without ever, even having a glimpse of the being that is the transcendent dimension who they are, then no life can be fulfilling.

Life will be very frustrating, even if through sheer hard work of willpower, you can achieve things, yes. Through sheer hard work and willpower, you can achieve things. They will not be deeply creative, not really bringing something really new into this world, but you could create wealth, you could create a big thing through sheer willpower, but in the process, you're making yourself and many other people unhappy.

And you're creating in Eastern times, you're creating a lot of karma. So that's not, so the conscious manifestation is not the application of willpower to make things happen. It's a very different process.

It's aligning yourself to an underlying power so that things happen without exercising your willpower. And they happen much more powerfully in that way. When one speaks to talk about it, it's quite complex.

When you actually live it, it's very simple. But when one tries to explain it in words, it becomes very seemingly complex. Also, it's worth mentioning that in a person's life, there may be periods when living in the present moment is more important than creating anything, when you may not feel called upon to manifest something other than what is for certain periods of your life.

And you're simply in alignment with what is here now. And even that is manifestation, but it's a different kind of manifestation. You are, you're still, you're manifesting your reality still, even if you have no particular aim about wanting to achieve this or to bring about that, you're still manifesting the way in which, how do you experience your life?

How do you experience your reality? How do you respond to challenges that life brings? One could also call that conscious manifestation because you manifest the reality of how you experience the things that are happening in this moment, that in itself is a creative act.

And some people have little interest, that's fine too, in creating too much. They're very much drawn to the being dimension. Realize that ultimately there's no contradiction between being and the human or being and doing.

The human is the doing, but the being is the awareness. So that's a practice that you have to experience for yourself, how it feels to be completely fine with this moment and yet realize that as a person, there are certain things that you may want to bring about or create. Your wellbeing is not dependent on the outcome.

That's vital in any manifestation practice. The non-attachment to the outcome. If you're attached to the outcome and you are excessively focused on that which you want to achieve, then the journey towards it becomes something that is of low quality because there's not much consciousness in it.

It's not a pleasant journey. If all you want is arriving, the journey's not pleasant. And once you have arrived, that's it.

Some other journey starts. So just to finish the way I experienced it, I've spent quite a long time in a state of very peaceful alignment with the present moment and just responding to things that arose in the present moment. After I spent time just drifting a little bit, but being very, very much in a state of joy, people came to me occasionally asking questions and gradually answering people's questions became my job.

Then at some point I could feel something, from an impulse from within, something wanted to come out. And there was a feeling of almost a kind of, in a, not disturbance, but something in the energy field that usually was very, very peaceful. There was something going, and at first I didn't know what it was.

And then at that point I made some affirmations. I said I wanted an acceleration of what I was meant to do. The acceleration then came in the form of me writing the power of now.

So just to summarize, you don't need to get away, you go more deeply into the present moment. If you want to change your external situation, on a personal level, there are things to be done, not continuously, but there are time periods, definitely when there are things to be done. And you can see more clearly what it is, because then it's connected to the unconditioned intelligence, and then it can operate from it, rather than just the limited person doing things in order to satisfy its illusory needs, to satisfy its illusory needs and wants.

[Speaker 2] (34:39 - 34:59)

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Eckhart Tolle Freedom Comes from Awareness [1b077bf7-0377-4866-82a0-871fd71faf95]

[Speaker 5] (0:00 - 0:46)

Freedom comes from awareness. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from an audience in Hawaii. A man asks if we actually have free will.

Eckhart explains we won't experience free will while living on the level of ego because we're conditioned by the past. He believes until we transcend our past, we are at the mercy of our unconscious patterns. A woman who's a therapist and works with trauma survivors asks how to deal with her resentment at God for the abuse her clients suffer.

She questions how can God allow such awful things to happen? Eckhart says this view of God is actually a misconception. He goes on to explain that humans are in the process of awakening and suffering is part of our evolution.

[Speaker 1] (0:48 - 1:18)

Let's see if there are any questions. Hopefully not a question like, what is the meaning of the universe? Or what did you have for breakfast?

Or are you in telepathic contact with Ashtar, commander of the galactic fleet? I'm not allowed to choose anybody here, but...

[Speaker 4] (1:19 - 2:23)

Hello, Eckhart. Hello. Thank you to you and Cam and your whole team for this experience.

Something that's been really helpful for me, first as a concept when I was in college, took a philosophy course, was the idea that there's no free will. At the deepest sense, meaning we're not ultimately responsible for our actions in the sense that everything is cause and effect in this universe. It's all connected.

I didn't choose my brain. And ultimately, I don't choose the thoughts that arise because I am who I am in every moment based on the universal impulse and my ingredients as a human being. And then over the last couple of years, I've experienced that through meditation, the arising of thoughts.

And now I feel like it's a self-evident truth. Right. So I've googled Eckhart Tolle free will.

I've looked for it. I've tried to find your thoughts on it. So I'm wondering what your ideas are on free will.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:24 - 9:48)

Thank you very much. Yes, wonderful question. I'm surprised there's nothing on Google about Eckhart and free will, but maybe I haven't said anything about it.

So here we go. As you know, it's an eternal, ancient philosophical question, and there's never been a definitive answer that everybody would agree with in that sense. So, okay, let's start on one level, and then we go on to the next level.

On the level of egoic unconsciousness, where you are a conditioned entity, your mental, emotional makeup is totally conditioned by the past, and you are completely identified with the conditioning of your mind. In that state that, spiritually speaking, is the unconscious state, it is obvious that in that state, there is no freedom at all, because you are forced to act out the unconscious conditioning of your mind, with which you are completely identified. So most people would probably agree, if you understand, that on that level, there is no possibility of freedom.

Your actions are determined by your conditioned mind, you are forced to act as you do, because there's no choice, because choice would imply some awareness. So on that level, there's certainly no freedom. Then, awareness comes in, the human being begins to awaken.

Then it appears, I'm not saying it is the case, it appears that then freedom begins to be a possibility, because you can choose to step out of the conditioning of your mind. You can recognize a conditioned thought, and you are no longer compelled to act it out, because there is an awareness there. You can choose a certain course of action, not from the conditioning of your mind, but from the presence.

So you can act, and you have much more freedom, that before you could not have. Freedom comes with awareness. So it's then, relative to the unconscious state, there is now freedom to act.

But, if you look more deeply, even there, even there on that level, you are connected with the totality of consciousness, you're only an expression of the totality of consciousness. You are not really a separate entity. Was it Alan Watts who said, you are in the same way that the wave is something that the ocean is doing, you are something that the whole universe is doing, in the same way.

So the wave is something the ocean is doing, you are something that the universe is doing. So although it appears from a certain, relative to a previous state of unconscious, there is freedom, and relative to that, there is freedom. But then if you look more deeply into that, you realize that even there, one cannot say that you are choosing this, you are an expression of consciousness, and consciousness, one could say, is choosing, and you think you're doing it.

Sometimes people ask me, can you choose to be present? And from one perspective, you can choose to be present. From another perspective, one could say that presence chooses you, it chooses to become present through you, depends how you look at it.

So in ultimate terms, or in relative terms, there is freedom relative to the unconscious state, when you become unconscious. But even there, it's only relative to the unconscious state. Even there, there is not absolute freedom, because you do not exist as an independent entity, you're part of the web of interconnectedness, that is the whole universe.

So in that sense, there is no freedom of choice of the individual, because ultimately, there is no individual. Thank you so much, I appreciate it. Thank you.

Just want to add one more thing to that. Because you mentioned, everybody's doing their best, and so on. And I agreed that nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness.

A question that may arise, though, is responsibility and punishment. Because if the criminal or whoever the perpetrator is not responsible, because they are totally in the grip of their conditioning, does that mean then that the perpetrator is not responsible for what they do? And it does seem to be the case, a very unconscious person, in that sense, is not responsible for what they do.

Now, does that mean we must not punish this person because he couldn't help it? Now, that's a difficult point. There is a destiny for human beings, human beings are meant to move out of the unconscious state.

And if they are not moving out of the unconscious state, they create suffering, and they will have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, which eventually awakens them. So when humans suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, eventually leads to suffering. And then there is a possibility of awakening.

So although they may not be conscious for what they do, it doesn't mean that karmic retribution on that level does not operate. Punishment is necessary, and sometimes it could be at the hands of the law or the judicial system. First of all, other humans need to be protected from them, so they need to be put away.

And although they are not, they may not be responsible, but they will have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness. And by suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness, there is a possibility of awakening. I've had contact with quite a few people who are imprisoned, and they have written to me, and they have experienced an awakening in prison.

They suffered the consequences of their unconsciousness, and that led to an awakening.

[Speaker 3] (9:59 - 10:29)

Aloha. So my question is about, okay, clairvoyance, psychic mediums, people that have like the ability to contact and have these spirits from this other dimension come in, near-death experiences. If you, if we are all able to access this unlimited realm of consciousness, have you ever been able to have that experience?

[Speaker 1] (10:30 - 10:35)

To be aware of spirit presences, you mean perhaps?

[Speaker 3] (10:37 - 11:18)

Yeah, and like for one example I have is a friend that I know, she has this uncanny ability, she was helping the police find one of her friends' husband who had mysteriously disappeared, and he was in the attic. She kept saying he's up in the attic. The cops went up there, he wasn't there.

Six months later, there was like this dripping. Yeah, it was him. He was up there.

He was dead. And she just knew. How would she know that?

She's in Florida, and they were in like Connecticut. So this knowing of things like this nature, like ghosts, spirits, reincarnated people that pass on, they communicate from that realm. What is your take on that?

[Speaker 1] (11:18 - 12:49)

Thank you, thank you. When I was young, a long time ago, I had some interest in that, and I experimented a little bit with that, and I had a little bit of experience with presences. But when I went through my awakening, I lost interest in that.

My focus was not on that, although I have come into contact with quite a few people who, over the years, who channel spirits and spirit presences. And I've spoken to and looked at what is being channeled. The important question is, these presences are also just manifestations of the one consciousness, obviously.

So whatever you contact, and even if you contact extraterrestrials, they will be manifestation of the one consciousness. So ultimately, there's nothing alien in this world. So my message to you then is simply, don't seek it out, but when it does appear, look at it, use your discernment to see whether there's genuine wisdom there.

But primarily, look to yourself, allow consciousness to use you, and find the wisdom that is already in you, so that it can come forth. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (12:59 - 12:59)

Hello.

[Speaker 1] (12:59 - 13:00)

Hello.

[Speaker 2] (13:00 - 15:07)

My question for today, I'd like to phrase it using a metaphor that you used. You mentioned the story of a man who had just had dinner, and had walked around asking if there was a chef. And I loved that metaphor.

I wrote it down. So I have some questions for the chef. Okay.

So I've been a mental health therapist for almost 10 years. I've specialized working specifically with survivors of sexual trauma, survivors of very severe and complex trauma. In my clinical career, I've worked with women, men, children who've been raped by fathers, mothers, siblings, multiple times.

I've also worked with different individuals who have been permanently mutilated by the violence, the physical violence done onto them. So that's me as a professional in the healing. And also in my personal life, my grandmother, she was murdered by her husband, shot nine times in front of all of her children to see.

And my mother became an alcoholic at age seven due to the trauma. And so surprisingly, I'm a very charming, calm person. I love what I do.

I love healing people. I love helping people. So sometimes though, I feel a little bit hopeless for them at times because of all of the pain and suffering they've gone through.

And I get very upset sometimes. I think if there is a chef that's making the dinner that we're eating, well, why did that person get like a horrible plate? And I have a little bit of resentment, if I'm honest, as a person.

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (15:08 - 27:26)

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Of course, what you're saying seems to be justified. The question is justified, seemingly. And if you feel a little bit of resentment towards the chef, that's also justified.

And of course, traditionally, this is used as an argument by many people to prove that actually there is no chef. People who say, if there were a God, then how would he possibly allow this amount of suffering to happen? And people say, if I were a God, I would not allow this to happen, obviously.

And therefore, I'm morally superior to any God. If there is a God, obviously, my morals are much higher than this God's morals, which probably means there is no God. Or if there is a God, it's a malevolent being, they say.

There was the, in early Christian times and pre-Christian times, there was a sect, a religious sect called the Gnostics, G-N-O, Gnostics, Gnostics, you don't pronounce the G, the Gnostics. They were interested in two things, direct knowledge of the divine through inner realization, but they also had a strange belief. And they had the belief that the entire world was created by a malevolent, inferior God, not the real God.

And they had ample opportunity to prove, because they pointed all the dreadful things that were happening in the world, look at the children suffering, look at this. So they came to the conclusion that this world was a product, were created by a malevolent God, and they completely rejected this world. And that, I believe, was not a wise conclusion, although there's a lot to be said for the Gnostics otherwise.

So the argument then goes, if there were a God, he could not possibly allow these things to happen, therefore it proves that we live in a random universe, where things just happen randomly to people. That would be one possible conclusion. The other possible conclusion would be what the Gnostics said, and related to the Gnostics conclusion would be to say there is also a devil in this world, the antagonist of God, and that this devil is creating all this suffering, and the devil is, this is a traditional Christian, the devil is the antagonist of God, and is making humans suffer and doing all this.

So you have all these possible interpretations or conclusions, none of which I believe are actually correct. The starting point is the assumption, what I would say is the erroneous starting point is the assumption that there is a God that is a controlling figure, that controls events from somewhere, and makes things happen, or allows things to happen that he could prevent. So he is omnipotent, so either he uses his omnipotence to torture people, or he doesn't use his omnipotence and just let things go.

Either case, not a very desirable God. So the traditional argument actually for the non-existence of God is this, all the suffering in the world, that's the traditional. But the departure of this is, in my view, a misconception of what God is.

To see God as a power figure, that controlling entity, I would suggest that is a wrong way of understanding what God actually means. As an alternative suggestion, I would say that we live in an awakening universe, and what awakens within us, slowly, is the consciousness which is divine. God consciousness slowly awakens in us.

Closer to what God is relative to humans, is Jesus on the cross. Jesus on the cross is an image of human suffering. Even if you're not a Christian, you can probably understand that Jesus could be regarded as an archetypal human.

Jesus embodies the suffering humanity, represents every suffering human. That is a, gets us a little bit closer to the reality of God, and think there is one power figure somewhere who is not doing what he should be doing. So God has incarnated into the human, and the human is in the process of awakening, and the suffering of humanity is part of the birth pangs of the awakening consciousness.

Every suffering human is living the suffering of Christ on the cross also. Every human is Jesus on the cross, the suffering human entity. And the suffering is the, what is, so one could say then, that almost, that God is suffering in every human, in that sense, when God is not yet fully expressed in this world.

God himself is suffering in every human, and human being, in this dimension, as it slowly, slowly comes more fully into this dimension. And this is a process, a birth process. There's actually a line in the Bible that speaks of by St. Paul, that the entire world is going through the pains of birth. The entire world is groaning as if in childbirth. That's what St. Paul says in one of his letters. The suffering is the gradual birthing of the divine in this world.

So in every human, one could say there is Jesus suffering. There is not a controlling entity as such, because God does not exist in space or time somewhere and looks upon this world. The consciousness that is the essence of who you are is the emanation of God.

And in this dimension, there is a gradual awakening out of unconsciousness. And the awakening process can be very painful for many humans until they realize their true essence. And that is the way out of the suffering that is, you described, that many humans have been through.

There is the possibility for the suffering to lead to a deeper realization of that in every human that's beyond suffering. There's a deep essence in every human that actually cannot be touched by suffering, but that may be heavily obscured by layers of intense suffering. If you can awaken that deep essence that is in every human, then that would be the redemption from suffering.

Christianity, of course, is the central image of Christianity is an image of suffering. That makes more sense than to say there is some omnipotent God who could prevent it. And traditionally, by the way, Buddha also talks about the central teaching of the Buddha is suffering.

He speaks of the ever-present human suffering, many degrees of suffering. I teach suffering and the end of suffering, said the Buddha. The central image of Christianity is Jesus on the cross, the suffering human.

They say in Christianity that you have to believe in Jesus to be saved. That never made

much sense to me. What would make sense to me, and perhaps the belief is a misinterpretation.

What would make sense to me is to say, if you identify with Jesus, if you can identify with his, if your suffering is all the same as Jesus suffering, if you identify with Jesus, that can lead to a redemption because Jesus becomes the archetype of suffering. And if you can feel that you are suffering for and with Jesus, then that takes it into a transpersonal realm. And you can come to an acceptance of what has happened, a deep acceptance of what has happened.

And that acceptance then can free you from the burden of the emotional and mental memory of the suffering, and something else can emerge from within you. So these are complex things, but the main thing is that I do not see, I don't, it is advisable to see God as a controlling figure that is not doing what he should be doing. That is the main thing.

So suffering is part of the human condition, some much more acutely than others, that is true. But every human being has their share of suffering. Sooner or later, it will come to everyone.

And that is only one incarnation, the suffering human. As I see it, the human will then reemerge again in a different form, and will most likely, if not in this lifetime, will in the next lifetime be able to come much more quickly to an awakening. I know it from my own, if I had not suffered in my childhood, it wasn't as extreme as what you describe.

But to live in a very dysfunctional household, where there's constant conflict, and screaming and shouting for a little sensitive child, is horrible. And so relative to the suffering that you describe, it perhaps is not that much, but to me it was a lot of suffering. And retrospectively, I know that that has been ultimately a necessary part of my eventual awakening.

So that's how it is. And then we can come to an acceptance of the suffering, and ultimately a transcendence of the suffering. That's all.

One could talk about it for much longer, but it's just steering you in a direction that I think is more helpful than thinking of a God that's not doing what he should be doing. Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (27:31 - 27:51)

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Eckhart Tolle Glimpses Of Awareness [bafdf907-2159-411c-9f3c-b3715c08be85]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:40)

Glimpses of awareness. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about our identification with the ego and our thoughts. He says the light of consciousness is relentlessly gobbled up by the mind and turned into thinking.

He believes practicing presence is the only immunity against our thoughts. As we begin to awaken, we have what he calls glimpses of awareness. We lose them and then gain them back.

Eckhart says we don't have to wait for those glimpses to arise spontaneously. He explains we need to invite them into our lives so that awakened consciousness becomes an integral part of who we are.

[Speaker 4] (0:41 - 0:55)

How do I keep my mind clear? I have glimpses of what I believe is awareness. Then I find having glimpses again, which means I lose it regularly.

How do we stay more in the present moment?

[Speaker 1] (0:56 - 21:23)

Thank you. Thank you. So what tends to happen is that the glimpses of awareness that arise spontaneously as a human goes through the awakening process tend to become longer.

So it's just a few things and then suddenly you have longer periods of awareness or presence. And that's wonderful. The good news, of course, is that you have these glimpses of awareness, which means the awakening process is already happening.

So be happy with that and be grateful when a glimpse of awareness arises spontaneously in your life in certain situations. It doesn't matter where or how, but also know that you don't have to just wait for these glimpses to arise spontaneously. It's important to realize that you can actually invite awareness or presence into your life.

So you don't always have to wait for it to happen spontaneously. For example, you could be very busy with something and you notice that you become irritated or your mind is very cluttered and you realize that and you say, okay, I choose to be present right now. Doesn't have to be long.

I choose presence right now. And how do you choose presence? You have to somehow extract, so to speak, or to retrieve your consciousness from the stream of thinking,

because when your mind is very cluttered, which is a normal state for most humans, when your mind is very cluttered, thought activity is absorbing all your consciousness.

Your consciousness is continuously transformed into thoughts, into form. There's no spaciousness left. Spaciousness is formless consciousness, unconditioned consciousness.

So the light of consciousness is gobbled up by your mind, which is then continuously transforming consciousness into thinking. So the mind absorbs all of all consciousness. And for many humans, that's their life, basically.

And they are identified with this mind that the consciousness has become thought. So when you say, okay, my mind is cluttered, I'm becoming anxious, or whatever it may be, I choose presence. Still, the question arises, how do you retrieve consciousness from being completely absorbed by the thought activity?

You had to get your consciousness out of the stream of thinking, pull it out of the stream of thinking, which is not easy at first. If you just say, I want to be present now, then you will find you can't, because the mind just carries on. But I want to be present, but I can't be present.

And then the mind will probably tell you, there's no point in even trying, which of course is another thought, which is not necessarily true. But the mind will tell you, oh, I can't possibly be present now. What presence?

I've got other problems than presence. When I've solved my problems, then I'll be present. That's what the mind tends to say.

And so the question is, how do I get the consciousness out of the mind so that it's not completely absorbed continuously by mind activity? And that's the simple choice. You need some anchor, so to speak, to direct consciousness towards that, that sustains consciousness that's not in the mind.

And the good anchor for that is, for example, the inner body, to feel the inner body. So instead of thinking then, in order to feel the inner body, you need to take attention away from thought activity. You cannot feel the inner body and still be thinking about your problems.

You have to take attention away and put attention into the body. So your attention goes into your hands. For example, it's a good place to start usually.

And you can feel the aliveness in your hands. Very subtle at first, but there it is. And then your attention could move to your feet at the same time as you still feel the aliveness in your hands.

You could feel the aliveness in your feet simultaneously. And then you connect the rest

of the body. You may not be able to feel all parts of the body as clearly as your hands, but it's fine.

You begin to feel that your body is alive internally. And what you're feeling actually is already beyond the physical body. You're already feeling an energy field that's beyond the physical.

And then that can become a great anchor for staying present. It doesn't matter for how long, two minutes, three minutes, five minutes, even one minute is quite good. Feeling the inner body then takes attention away from useless thinking.

And closely associated with the feeling of inner body is awareness of breath, awareness of your breathing. They are somehow connected. You can even bring them together so that you have awareness of the breath as it moves in and out of the body.

And awareness of the inner body as a totality, a total energy field. So you're aware of the breathing and the energy in the inner body at the same time. It's a single thing.

You're breathing and make sure you feel your breath going into the abdomen, that you feel it in there. That can be a great help. There's an energy field there that is helpful when you feel the inner body.

So you're breathing into the, without forcing anything, just normal breathing. And you follow the breath with your attention. And then you feel the breath moving into the abdomen.

It doesn't actually, the air doesn't actually move into the abdomen, but energy does as you feel, if you follow the breath. And then you can very quickly come to a point where you feel very much alive and quite peaceful. Whereas three minutes before, you were anxious and burdened with negative thoughts and a lot of mental clutter.

Then you have shifted your attention into the inner body and the breathing, and you feel suddenly intensely alive. And it's beautiful. This is a moment also, it's not just presence.

Yes, it's presence, but presence is also self-transcendence. You've transcended the little personal me, and you're connecting with a deeper energy field, which is consciousness. It's a portal into the unconditioned consciousness.

It's a portal into that. So the inner body is a great anchor for presence. It's just a choice.

I'm choosing to be present. If you don't have much time, even just taking one or two conscious breaths, many times during the day can be a wonderful, very, very helpful mini meditation, so to speak. Just one conscious breath, which takes about, I don't know, 20 seconds.

Let's just do, one conscious breath goes like this, in and out. One more time, in and out.

Attention on your breath.

One or two conscious breaths. Not difficult. Three might be even better, but even one is already a gain in consciousness, because it's arising of a little bit of spaciousness.

To be aware of your breath, your attention needs to be there. It cannot be absorbed by thinking. This is what the secret of the Buddha.

The Buddha recommended breath awareness as the most important, the most powerful meditation, just breath awareness. Anapanasati yoga is the term. It's awareness of the ingoing and outgoing breath.

And the Buddha didn't say, stop thinking. That's difficult for most people. It's not impossible to go there directly.

But he said, be aware of your breath. And then of course, people realized when they're aware of their breath, they're not thinking. You can either think, or you can be aware of your breathing, but not both.

So a very clever way of stopping people's minds was to say, be aware of your breathing. Oh, so you're inviting moments of presence or awareness into your life. And so you need something like inner body and or breath to take your attention away from your consciousness, away from mind activity.

One other thing that I often recommend when you choose awareness is to simply choose to be present with your sense perceptions. So that you awaken to your sense perceptions, which then become more acute. You could either, you can focus on one sense perception, like visual or auditory, or even tactile, or even taste.

But the predominant sense perceptions are for most humans are the visual and the auditory. So you can focus on sense perception, be very conscious. Let's say there's certain noises that you can hear outside.

If they're natural, they're more helpful than manmade noises, but other noises can also work. So you notice a noise and you continue to be very alert and just continue listening. One could say you listen.

Oh, and when you really listen, you're not thinking. You have to give your complete attention to the listening. That's another way of stepping out of the clutter of your mind and inviting awareness or presence into your life.

You have to, when you really listen, there needs to be an alertness behind. And that alertness is consciousness itself, the attention behind the listening, the alertness behind the listening. Same thing with a visual.

You can look at either one particular object or a flower or a tree or a leaf or whatever it

may be, or you can take in the totality of a landscape. If you're somewhere and there's a landscape and you take in the totality, that's another way of, and you perceive in that state of alert attention, pure perception without labeling it. And if a label should arise in your mind, you let it go immediately.

If thoughts come and interpret what you're seeing or what you're hearing, you let it go. Another way is very helpful when you listen, instead of listening, it's particularly helpful when you have a repetitive noise, for example, bird song, for example, or some other maybe animal noise or some, or maybe just noise of the rustling of leaves in the wind or something that's all, you listen to the noise and then you listen to the silent spaces in between the noises. That's a very powerful thing.

If you listen to the silent spaces in between the noise, certain types of music are very conducive to that. I recommend the Japanese bamboo flute, which is called shakuhachi. Shakuhachi is a simple bamboo with low holes in it.

And the great masters of the shakuhachi flute play extremely meditative music. And when you listen to it, the secret is to pay, one could say, almost to pay more attention to the silent spaces between the sounds than to the sounds. And that's a very powerful thing.

So listening to a noise is great, it's helpful already, but if you're able to listen to a silence, that is the most wonderful meditation. Now, what does it mean to listen to a silence? Let's say you're in a silent room and there's no noise whatsoever.

This could happen at night perhaps when you're surrounded by silence and you listen. What do you listen to? When I say listen to the silence, what does that mean?

If there's nothing to listen to, does it even have any meaning when I say, listen to the silence? Well, you are listening, but there's nothing there. This can also be helpful when, if you have a, I don't, unfortunately, I don't have a bell here.

When you have a bell that it rings or a gong that goes, you sound the gong, it goes, or whatever, and then the sound gradually subsides, less, and you listen very carefully. And then the moment comes when the sound is gone, but you continue to listen. What are you listening to?

Nothing, and that's the secret, because when there's nothing there to listen to, what arises is the consciousness without an object, pure consciousness. There's no object in the listening anymore. So it's not, I have, I sometimes use the expression object consciousness and space consciousness.

Object consciousness is to be conscious of something. You're conscious of something that you perceive with your senses, or you're conscious of a thought, or you're conscious of an emotion. That's all object consciousness, conscious of something.

And again, for most people, that's all they know, but space consciousness is to be conscious of consciousness itself, to be conscious that you're conscious, to be aware that you're aware, awareness of awareness, conscious of being conscious. That is space consciousness. So when you listen to the silence, immediately the mind is obviously completely still, and there's nothing there, and that is the arising of space consciousness, which is unconditioned consciousness, stillness.

If you haven't read, there's a little book that many people, advanced practitioners of presence find helpful. A little book I wrote, *Stillness Speaks*, and that is a book for meditative reading. You just read one page or half a page, and then just become still, and it just takes you into presence.

It doesn't have much to feed your mind, just little mini meditations to take you into presence. *Stillness Speaks*, of course, it doesn't say anything. So inviting, again, inviting awareness.

When it happens spontaneously, it's wonderful, but it's not enough. Now, when you've had a taste of presence awareness, then you're able to also invite it into your life, and then that speeds up the awakening process. Don't beat yourself up when you lose it, that's fine, because the moment you regain it, it's a gain in consciousness.

Don't fall into the trap of believing your egoic mind when it judges you for having lost it, because the moment that you lost it, you have it again. Because if you're really lost, you don't know you're lost. The people who are really lost have no idea that they are lost.

But if you know that you're lost, there's a knowing there that's not part of the state of being lost. It's the same way of being, let's say, somebody's crazy or insane. If you know that you're insane, you're not completely insane, because there's a knowing there.

So people who are really insane, they're so absorbed in their condition, they don't know it. And of course, they believe they're not insane at all. So that knowing is the awakened part of you that knows, suddenly knows that you've been trapped in mental clutter for the past two hours.

And suddenly, you know, that's the arising of knowing. So it's a wonderful thing. There's no need to condemn yourself for not having been present.

Because when you notice that you're present, you're there. Or at least the possibility of choosing presence is there. It's possible that you notice that you're not present for two seconds, and then immediately you fall back into being absorbed by the thinking mind.

But the noticing of being present brings in the element of choice. The element of choice is to say, I choose presence now for the next two minutes, or whatever it may be, I choose presence. The element of choice is absent when you are totally at the mercy of your mind.

There is no choice. Choice implies awareness. And then you can choose to be present.

That's how it works. So I hope that answers your question. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (21:24 - 21:44)

Hello. Hi, Eckhart. Thank you for taking my question.

And my question is basically, is the energy body also associated with sexual energy? And I'm also wondering if then sexual energy, is it also part of the spiritual energy? Or is it another ego identification?

[Speaker 1] (21:45 - 36:30)

Right. Thank you. Thank you.

Ultimately, there's only one energy, there's only one energy, the energy manifests in different vibrational frequencies. So one could say to the ultimate truth is, there's only one consciousness, that is the everything that arises in this world is a manifestation of the one underlying consciousness that emanates from the source of all life. And if God means anything, that's what God is.

God is that which the unnameable, unknowable source of all life that is beyond space and time, from which consciousness emanates, just as light emanates from the sun. So the emanation, the consciousness that you are, is an emanation of source. You are an emanation of God, so to speak, every human.

And when you notice that in yourself, then you become conscious of your connectedness with source. And that is the purpose of human life, to realize that connectedness with source. And that which emanates, the consciousness manifests through human beings in different ways.

It can manifest at different vibrational frequencies, as physical energy at certain frequency, sexual energy, another frequency, emotional energy, mind energy, thought energy, all manifestations of the same different frequency, in the same way that in the external world, where you have objects, one could say that when you have inanimate objects like stones and minerals, because they say that before there were any plants on the planet, or let alone animals, there was just stones, minerals.

And a mineral, a stone is also consciousness at a very low vibrational frequencies, just so low you can't it has a, the stone has a billions of the consciousness that you have, one billions. It is, one could say the material world is frozen consciousness, to use an analogy from water. Frozen consciousness is the mineral realm that is a low vibrational frequency, and that, and a stone of course has a very long lifespan, it goes on for, can go on for a million years and longer.

Then consciousness in plant life suddenly arises, and that is a higher vibrational frequency of consciousness beginning to happen on the planet. First tiny life forms or in the ocean they arise, tiny life forms arise. So there's an ancient saying, I can't remember where it comes from, it says consciousness is asleep in the mineral, consciousness is dreaming in the plant, in the flower, in the tree, in vegetable life, consciousness is dreaming there.

And then we have another vibrational frequency of consciousness, and there's not a clear dividing line between the realms, because there are some life forms where you can't say, is that, is that, does it belong to the vegetative realm, or is it animal realm? We don't know, it's in between, but then the animal realm again is a different vibrational frequency of consciousness. And there we could say consciousness begins to awaken in the animal.

So it's, it's asleep in the stone, it's dreaming in plants, it begins to awaken, but it's still in part dreaming in the animal, but the first glimpses of awakening of consciousness, and then there comes humans, they are called also out of the animal realm have come the human realm, and the human is potentially the realm where consciousness awakens to itself, that is the destiny of the human realm, and that would be the high frequency of consciousness.

When you feel you have physical, you yourself embody many different frequencies of consciousness, you embody the physical, you embody the, the sexual, which is connected to the physical, but it's also connected to the emotional, and it's also connected to the mental in humans. The, the sexual is, again, is connected to ego in many cases in human beings. So whatever you identify with becomes part of your ego.

If you identify with your physical energy, it becomes part of your egoic self. If you identify with your sexual energy, that becomes part of your egoic self, and can become very problematic for humans, because the moment you identify with something, if you identify with sexual energy, sexual energy becomes part of your, the whole structure of your ego, which is very problematic, and that immediately sex becomes a big problem for you. And so the, you identify with it.

Many humans have a problem with their body, because they identify with body, and there's something wrong with it, it's not good enough. Or if it is good enough, in some cases, if you're lucky, your body is better looking than most other people's body, and then that becomes a big problem, because then most of your ego is identified with physical appearance, which leads to great suffering later in life, because your physical appearance is no longer satisfying after a while, and then we become very unhappy. So whatever you identify with becomes problematic.

If you can allow it to be there without ego, demanding ego satisfaction from something, then it's fine, it's relatively unproblematic, no matter where you look, that it will apply.

But yes, whatever you identify with becomes part of your ego. It can even happen when you, as you become more spiritually aware, and again, we have a higher frequency of consciousness, let's say stillness arises more often, you become aware more often, and you realize that many humans are still very, very unconscious, which is a fact, but then again, the trap is that you can, you identify with the arising awareness, and you say that's part of who you, you are superior to other humans, because you're more present. That's the, in other words, the ego can come back through the, back in through the back door, as I call it, the ego comes in through the back door and claims some kind of achievement, because you're more present than other humans, and says, I did that, and then that will obscure the arising presence again.

The ego will claim some kind of achievement, I did that, so ego identification can still happen at the higher vibrational frequencies, so you have to be very careful with spiritual ego also, so it can come in at many, many levels. So all we need to then realize is not to derive our sense of self from any kind of form, whether it's a physical form, it's a physical body, whether it's an emotional form or mental form, whatever it may be, not to identify with it, because identify means, if you identify with something, something gives you your sense of self. You derive your sense of who you are from that which you identify with, and it's always ultimately an illusion.

You can, let's just say, to some extent, yes, you will have a little bit of identification with things that's perhaps inevitable. You identify a little bit with your body perhaps, a little bit with this, a little bit with that, but it's never very much, because there's something much more vital than you, than anything in form, which is the consciousness that you are, that is timeless, but you can't compare it to somebody else's consciousness, my consciousness is better than yours, because there's only one consciousness, and every human is a manifestation of the one consciousness, except they may not know it, but they are also a manifestation of the one consciousness, a ray of this one consciousness, even if they don't know it. This is a wonderful thing when you go beyond ego, because ego always moves in the opposites of inferiority and superiority.

When your identity is ego-based, you will always either feel inferior to some people and superior to others, and the ego continuously fears inferiority and wants to counteract inferiority, but it's seeking superiority. So, there's this comparative thing that operates continuously in the egoic sense of self, you compare yourself to others, and you need to be, you're afraid of being inferior, and often you find that you are inferior, and that feels very bad, and then the ego tries to compensate with something else, by, for example, by diminishing somebody else's achievements, because if somebody else's achievement makes you feel inferior, all the ego can do is diminish verbally their achievements in order to make itself feel better, or you have somebody's body is better than yours, and then you can make comments about how obsessed these people is their body, so it's such a primitive way of living, and again, it's a judgment, and it's satisfying to the ego, but it doesn't really help you in any way, except get more trapped in ego. Ego is a

constant source of amusing, when there's awareness, ego becomes amusing, how it, what it does, how it tries to continuously defend itself and strengthen itself, so many examples one could give.

So, whatever you identify with, it means you've identified with an illusion, there's a saying in this little, the book, A Course in Miracles, which is an interesting book, not for everybody, but for some people, it's good, it says, because one of the big things for ego is defensiveness, the ego becomes very defensive, it's always afraid of being diminished, and so, a quote from A Course in Miracles is, whenever you become defensive about anything, know that you have identified yourself with an illusion, whenever you become defensive about anything, know that you have identified yourself with an illusion, because you, of course, you only become defensive about something that has some kind of form that you identify with, that is not who you are, ever, so defensiveness is a good way of also noticing in oneself, if it's still there in you from time to time, become aware of it, whatever you become aware, whenever you become aware of any manifestation of ego in you, it's a wonderful thing, you don't have to beat yourself up and say, oh, I still have this ego, no, to be aware of ego is already, means you already have one foot out of ego, when you're aware of your ego, you're no longer totally in the grip of your ego, only people who are totally in the grip of your ego, have zero awareness of their ego, they are the ego, so you're already half free, when you recognize your ego and you can observe it, sometimes you can only observe it retrospectively, perhaps it just played out its act for several hours and then you get home and say, oh, you go back and retrospectively come on, that was my ego, that's fine, at least now you know, whether you are in the middle of it or retrospectively, if you're aware of ego, you're not totally in the grip of it anymore and that's the good news, so, thank you, thank you.

Perhaps a moment of stillness, stillness is not something that, or meditation, it's not something that you do by the way, it's not, now we're doing stillness, it's just something that you notice, it's already here, it's already here, nothing to achieve, just what is, perhaps you become aware of your breathing, or perhaps your mind just simply stops for a while, thank you, thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 2] (36:32 - 36:51)

I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts, if you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast, join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle, thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Glimpsing What Is Sacred [8c7d1189-037d-48c0-983b-0458a93f6e9b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:49)

Glimpsing what is sacred. In this podcast, Eckhart says it's vitally important that we become familiar with the mystical aspect of our lives. However, he explains, it is not something we can easily define, nor can we truly understand sacredness until we catch a glimpse of it.

For that to happen, Eckhart says, we must learn to stop the mind with its incessant thinking and labeling so we can become present. Eckhart reveals that on a deeper level, presence is actually the presence of God, not the traditional idea of God, but a vast intelligence that permeates the entire universe. For many, he says, thinking and objectifying others as well as ourselves is a barrier to this direct experience.

He explains, the concept is beautifully illustrated by the Greek myth of Narcissus.

[Speaker 1] (0:52 - 47:53)

My life is a narrative. And for many people, because they identify with a narrative, it is a heavy burden. It's full of regrets, grievances, anxiety, and the burden of past and future.

You may have heard in ancient Greece, there's a mythological tale of a young man. There's very deep wisdom in mythology, hidden in mythology. So there's a Greek myth of Narcissus.

He looked into this pool of water and he realized that was him. And according to the tale, he fell in love with himself. I am so beautiful.

Suddenly, he wasn't himself anymore. A second self arose, which was an image self. This mythological tale describes the beginning of the human ego.

An entity arises that is an image, a mind-made image of who you are. Instead of being who you are, you begin to have a relationship with yourself. There is a split, a duality has come in.

So then you have me and myself. And now, of course, this mental image of me has grown and grown and grown. So humans now live with this image of who or what they are, which builds up from early childhood.

So the world telling you who you are, you're this, that, you identify with all. Identify means you derive your sense of self from this, that, or the other. Possessions begins with a toy that a child calls my toy, mine, it's mine, it's me.

And the toy becomes later, other toys come, possessions. Later, the toy becomes your

BMW or whatever toy you look for, for your sense of self. BMW may not be enough because too many people have it.

Maybe a Ferrari will actually complete me. And because Ferrari is very loud, the engine is very, very noisy, everybody's going to look at me. And that the ego feels good.

It feels enhanced. Or it could be that after you achieve the Ferrari, you suddenly come to a talk by Eckhart and you realize that was your ego. And then you say, okay, I'm getting rid of that.

From now on, I'm only using a bicycle. And then you get your bicycle and then you see somebody else, this Lamborghini pulling up beside you. And you feel, look at that, that uninvolved human there.

I am obviously infinitely superior now. You can exchange one ego for another ego. The second one is the spiritual ego, can be just as strong as the non-spiritual, the materialistic ego.

So possessions, attainment, abilities, even children already say, I can jump up this wall. You can't do that, can you? Look, I can do it, you can't.

Ah, the ego feels better. And the other ego feels diminished. Oh, I can't.

So the egoic self, then we now have devices that can amplify the egoic self. The phone, I have it somewhere. Over many hundreds and thousands of years, people have already projected this image of who they are, had a relationship with that image, who they are.

Often a love-hate relationship. Some people hate themselves. I don't like my body.

I don't like who I am. I don't like this. What an awful way to live.

I hate myself. It's much better to love yourself. So in New Age teachings, you learn to let go of this dysfunctional relationship with yourself, and then this is a good thing.

It's much better to love yourself than to hate yourself. But you have to achieve that transition. It's not easy if the hating yourself has been deeply ingrained.

You may have to put little stickers on your bathroom mirror. I love myself. Oh, yes.

And everywhere. You are lovable. Oh, thank you.

Thank you. Yes. And again, this is fine.

It's a transitional stage. It's not the final stage. Sometimes in New Age things, it's the final stage.

It's a lovely transitional stage. But really, it's the stage of awakening is that you begin to

let go of having a relationship with yourself so that you can just be yourself. And you have to be in the present moment in order to be yourself.

So a relationship with yourself that eventually is transcended so that you can simply be in the present moment. And let's go deeper now so that in the present moment, which is a portal into the awakened state in this present moment, let's see who or what are you in the present moment without reference to any thought, without reference to any thought about who you are. That's an interesting pointer.

In other words, what does it feel like to be yourself without remembering your past or thinking about the future just in this moment? You don't need to remember your email address or anything. It's not necessary now or what you ate yesterday.

Without reference to past and future, do you disappear or what is left of you without the narrative that usually do you describe as my life? Without that memory of that, you need to revive continuously. Without that, what does it feel like to be you?

And I cannot answer that. I can only give it to you as a pointer and slow down a little bit as I talk so that you can perhaps inquire, investigate internally what it feels like. What is the most essential thing about your identity?

Are you still there when you don't think about your life like now? Are you still there and what is that? I'm not going to answer it and I don't expect a conceptual answer.

That's me. There was a spiritual teacher in India whose favorite meditation was asking his disciples to ask themselves, who am I? You can also ask yourself, what am I?

Who or what? What am I? What am I?

But don't answer it verbally, but feel or sense what it means to be alive or to be you. What am I? There's a gap in the stream of thinking.

Then what is there when there's a gap in the stream of thinking like now? And in that gap, there's a stillness. Yes?

There's also a sense of there's something there, but it's hard to describe. There's a sense of presence of beingness. And in that sense of presence of beingness, you know that you are.

You can say, I am. You know that without adding any qualifiers to it, without adding anything to the I am, it's a pure sense of being, which is I am. It's very peaceful.

You need an alertness to sustain it just for a little bit. Without the alertness, you will immediately fall back into the stream of thinking. But it's not, you don't use willpower to stop your thinking mind.

That doesn't really work. So you don't hold your breath in order to stop thinking. It might work for a little while, but then you think even more.

It's like a boiling kettle. Hold the lid on a boiling kettle. Just alertness.

And so Jesus said, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. In some translations, it's translated as stay alert. What I say to you, I say to all, stay alert.

That alertness is consciousness without thought. It seems at first just to be an absence. Okay.

Stillness, one could say is the absence of noise in a stillness in absence. It might seem at first as a kind of nothingness. And yet, if you stay with it for a little bit, just a few more seconds, stay alert.

Then you can sense it's not just the absence of something. It's also the presence of something, but not so much the presence of something, but the sense of presence itself, not of something. And so that is dimension of consciousness.

That is the fourth dimension of consciousness, awareness, or presence. And you encounter that in between two thoughts, or, for example, if you find it hard to stop thinking, don't use your willpower, use a little device, use a little bit of help. For example, become aware that you're breathing.

You become aware of, you're aware of the inflowing and outflowing breath. And your attention moves with the breath into the body and out of the body. And again, your attention is there.

And again, your attention follows the breath into the body, stop for a second, and out of the body. You might, it's helpful if you can breathe as deep as the abdomen, although the air doesn't actually reach it, but your attention reaches it. Now you may realize that when you become aware of your breath, which is a very ancient meditation method, when you become aware of your breath, you cannot be thinking at the same time.

That's why the Buddha recommended this meditation, which is called Anapanasati, which is the awareness of your breath stops your mind, the thinking mind automatically. The moment you start thinking, you lose awareness of your breath. So the Buddha said, his main teaching, I would say, is be aware of your breathing.

He didn't say, stop thinking, because that seems too difficult. But awareness of your breath is possible. And automatically, thinking subsides, what remains is a sense of alert presence, that is the awakened consciousness.

And that is inseparable from what I call the vertical dimension of life. It is the presence in the now. There's no time in this sense of beingness, stillness, alertness.

There is no time. And yet, that is essentially who or what you are, that gets usually mixed up with content, a bit like diluted. So this is the consciousness that is in its pure form.

When you start thinking, it's still consciousness, but it takes on a form, a thought form. When you perceive things, it's consciousness perceiving. The perception is a form in your mind.

Consciousness has taken on a form, takes on many forms continuously. And there is a bundle of thought forms in your mind that make up the main part of your sense of identity. And that is the, when you identify with that, and you don't know yourself more deeply in the vertical dimension, then that's the ego.

But when you know yourself more deeply in the vertical dimension of the present moment, then all that is, is that which makes up your personality. Of course, it's still there. Your story, the narrative of you, unchanged, it's still there.

The difference, however, is you no longer look to it for your ultimate sense of self. You don't derive your true and ultimate identity from the narrative of your life that you tell yourself in your mind. Of course, it's still there.

But you don't look to it for your, for liberation or fulfillment, or some future self. You don't even look to that for liberation or fulfillment, because all that is the horizontal dimension of life. That is time, what time operates.

And for millions of humans still, that's all they ever know. All they ever identify with is the personality conditioned by the past, problematic, problem-making, continuously, often very dysfunctional, coloring everything that you see and perceive. It's like through this veil of conditioning, you perceive the world and judge it through the veil of your mental conditioning.

You don't see anything clearly. So this is the the awakening into that Turiya, the fourth state of consciousness, the awakened state, that all, all the ancient teachings already pointed to as a possibility. And it's here now, and it's more important now.

It's not just something for very few humans to realize, but something that becomes available to more and more humans, especially now that we are being confronted collectively with various manifestations of adversity. And it's not the end yet, fortunately. It's not the end yet.

There's more to come. So this gives you this dimension, the awakened dimension. This is where the resilience you find for living in troubled times.

This is where you can, you are rooted in this ultimately deep and unshakable rooted consciousness of being. You realize who or what you are beyond the personality. It's not,

they're not ultimately two.

The analogy I often use is the ocean and the ripple on the surface of the ocean. You are a ripple on the surface of the ocean as a personality, surrounded by other ripples on this horizontal dimension. Some ripples you like, many others you don't like.

Some ripples are very unpleasant, a few others are great, you like them. And yet you're only a ripple, and it's uneasy, and it's never quite enough, and others are bigger ripples and waves occasionally. Who is that guy?

It's a wave. And life becomes unsatisfying. And at some point you meet another ripple who says, have you not realized who or what you are beyond your ripple existence?

And you say, no, no, I haven't. Okay, then can you sense, if you stop thinking for a moment, can you sense the depths of you? Can you sense that there's more to you than this surface appearance?

And the ripple goes, no, no, okay. And finally the attention goes deeper, the vertical dimension opens up, and the ripple goes, oh. And then of course the ripple won't know what to say, doesn't know what it is, but it senses something.

It senses that it's connectedness to something vast, infinite. It's the ocean. And it's not only senses it connectedness, it senses it's oneness with that.

That is self-transcendence of the ripple. And in this analogy, of course, you are the ripple. And this is the essence of all spirituality is to sense that in yourself, in the vertical dimension of yourself, to sense it as yourself.

And the moment we talk about it, it sounds as if it were something that you perceive, this sense, but it's only because we use language and then every sentence has a subject and an object. So you could say, I am aware of myself. Yes, it's true, but ultimately that's not how it is because the moment you have said that, you've created a duality, I, myself.

But when you sense the essence of who you are, there's no duality. The awareness of yourself is the awareness. So it's not being aware of something, but being aware of awareness itself, so to speak.

You can, you sense your own consciousness as consciousness. You know you are. That's an amazing thing.

It's all so simple that it's impossible to realize, to know that you are, not as a particular this or that. It's pure beingness. You know that you are, and you can sense that you are.

That is such a liberation and such a wonderful, ah. And then you realize there is a depth to who you are that far transcends who you are as a personality. And that is, in some spiritual traditions, that is called liberation.

And you can see why it liberates you from yourself. Jesus also used the term salvation. You can use salvation, you can use liberation.

So once you have a glimpse, it's your mission to invite that dimension into your life more and more. Not just doing meditation. Meditation is good if you have a meditation practice, if you meditate rightly.

And many people don't meditate rightly. The mistake that can easily creep into meditation is you meditate in order to achieve a particular goal. Or you have a future self of an awakened master, and you want to achieve that.

And therefore, you have the idea that you are doing a meditation in order to get somewhere. Very hard to get rid of this mind pattern because everywhere else it operates. You always do something in order to achieve something.

And in order to achieve something through your doing, you need time. For everything, you need time. Even make a cup of tea, you need time.

And this doing idea can easily come into the idea of meditating. So you're doing it in order to get somewhere. So you bring future time into your meditation unconsciously without knowing it.

And whereas meditation, true meditation, is not a doing, but it's the realization of being. And there's no time in being. Simple realization that you are.

Some techniques are fine. Eventually, every technique you have to let go. Like a raft.

Buddhism has the analogy or story of a raft that you use to cross a river. You use a raft to cross a river. When you've crossed the river, you don't take up the raft and carry it around with you.

So the raft is a technique or the teaching that can take you there, perhaps. But once you're there, you realize you don't need it. So whatever technique you use in meditation, eventually it is to be transcended.

Or you can transcend it right now without any technique. This is why I don't call this a meditation, because if I... Again, I love meditation, but there's another possibility, and that is any given moment to invite this awareness into your life, this dimension to see there is a possibility of awakening, simply realizing that you are in this moment.

Awareness of awareness. The realization of being. Then this deepens.

Again, this is time to talk about something timeless. And that becomes your identity. The being.

Not the personality or any achievement or whatever it may be in your past or future.

That's fine. You handle your life consciously.

It will actually improve when you are rooted in the unconditioned consciousness, because that's what it is. Then if you are rooted in the vertical dimension, things begin to actually also improve in the horizontal dimension, because that consciousness flows into your life. Not that it ever becomes totally free of challenges.

The challenges continue. But the challenges will then only take you deeper instead of making you more unconscious, which is what they often do for many humans. Self-realization.

You can use that expression. That's who or what you are beyond the personality. And then that is what Jesus calls when there's a parable about him.

He tells a parable about a man who builds a house, and the house is built on sand. And when the storms come and the floods come, the house is swept away. And then there's another man who, before building a house, he digs deep until he reaches the rock, which is deep.

And so he reaches the front after he digs deep and finds the foundation. And then he builds the house on the rock, and the floods come, and the rains come, and the storms come, and the house is not swept away. It stands.

This is an analogy about states of consciousness. The state of deep connectedness with being, the vertical dimension, and the state of being trapped only on the horizontal dimension, when life becomes actually suffering, to use the term of the Buddha. Frustrating, suffering, and then you can resent it all, and so on.

Now your mission is to invite this into your life throughout the day. Don't miss an opportunity. Yes, you still go about your normal activities, but allow yourself to become aware of the vertical dimension as much as possible.

It seems at first there's a current in you that doesn't want that. There isn't the egoic self that will tell you that this is not the time to be present. I've got so much on my plate, I can't be present now.

Don't talk to me about this. Look what I'm dealing with here. And you want me to be spiritual?

I'll be spiritual when I've solved all that, and then I'll find a nice place, a retreat center in Bali, and then I can finally... Of course, life does not stop challenging you, so don't wait. Have your life interspersed with that brief moments, initially brief, brief moments of spaciousness.

Brief moments of spaciousness. One conscious breath is already something. Let's say

you are on your computer.

Okay, one conscious breath. You look away from the screen. If you can, look away at the sky or a plant, anything natural, or close your eyes.

But if you close your eyes, then your screen will still be there. You'll still see the computer screen, awful. One conscious breath, a little bit of spaciousness has opened up.

And during that time period, which if you measure in time, it would be like maybe 10 seconds, whatever, but that is a little bit of spacious consciousness you have suddenly experienced. And you might even want to take a second conscious breath. Follow the breath with your attention.

And maybe even a third, although your mind says, I don't have time for this, but it's only one minute. So don't believe every thought that comes in and says, I have to deal with this first. I have to do this first.

That's another parable in the Gospels where you're invited to a wedding feast, people get invited to a wedding and everybody says, let me do this first. First, I need to sell my cattle. No, I need to do this first.

Let me do this first. There's always something. Don't believe your mind when it says, not now.

Come to it now. There's nobody who does not have one minute to be aware of their breath. Unless it's an emergency, you have to get to the hospital now.

Okay. Get into your car. Every time I recommend you close the door and stay just a moment of spaciousness.

I suggest half a minute to one minute, but don't measure it. Just feel it. Okay, I'm going to do one minute now.

And then you're just internally already trying to get to the end of it. You have to be, be there. Anytime you're waiting for something, be present.

If you cannot just be present, this ability may arise a little bit later when you can just decide, so to speak, not the right word, to just be free of thinking, but just be aware. So that comes a little bit later. Just the ability to just have that space. Somebody asked me some years ago, what's your greatest achievement in life?

And I said, well, my greatest achievement is I don't think when I don't have to think or don't want to think. I don't need to think. That's my greatest achievement.

It's not really an achievement, is it? It wouldn't get me a job. I'm applying for a job in my,

what are you going to see the resume?

Can be free of thinking. So it's not, it's not an achievement. Again, it would be a misperception to call it an achievement because that discovery, this realization, that dimension of consciousness has already always been there.

In that sense, it's not an achievement. I have made it. No, you didn't do anything.

You just became aware of being, which is not a doing. It sounds like a doing when you talk about it. You become aware of being, not an achievement because being is the essence of who you are.

And to know the essence of who you are is not an achievement. And so, wow. But until you're able to do that, it's not a doing.

We just talk about it that way. Use the breath. There are other entry points also into this present moment, which is present moment awareness.

Another entry point is through the feeling of inner body. I call it inner body awareness. That can be also a portal into a presence.

And that is very simply sensing the aliveness that is within your body. This is often easily connected to breath awareness because when you breathe deeply into the body, you can sense down into the abdomen and you can sense there's an energy that begins, you begin to realize there's an energy there. It's not what you sense.

It's the animating presence, one could say, in the body, not the physical body. And that's inseparable. It's a manifestation of consciousness, the consciousness that keeps the body alive, that inhabits the body, the animating presence, the inhabiting presence.

And you can sense it. And you can sense the inner body. From there, every cell of the body is alive.

Many humans are never present in the body. So inner body awareness is another portal into presence. You can either start with breathing into the abdomen, as deep as the abdomen, and then feel the energy spreading from the abdomen into the rest of the body.

It's always been there. But now you sense it. And then you get a global sense of aliveness throughout the inner body.

And that becomes your portal into presence. And it becomes an anchor for presence, too. And after a while, perhaps the body image disappears and there's just presence remains.

So these are closely connected, the breath awareness and inner body awareness.

They're all connected. If you have one, the others automatically come in also.

Another entry point highly, highly to be recommended is sense perceptions. When you come into the present moment, the first thing you may become aware of is the world that surrounds you. In other words, you become more aware of your sense perceptions, visual, auditory, and alertness arises.

So the alertness is there behind the sense perception. You're more aware of any sounds you hear, whatever you see. You look around, you listen.

Perhaps other senses are involved, too. If you're out in nature, perhaps you can feel the air, a breeze on your skin, or the warmth of the sunlight on your skin. Perhaps there's a scent, especially out in nature, whatever you can smell.

So sensory awareness can also be an important entry point, but it only works if you let go of interpreting what you perceive. And that's not that difficult because interpreting is a habit, a deeply ingrained mental habit. Whenever you look at something immediately, you have to call it something.

And it's not necessary. You can actually more deeply perceive things more clearly, more deeply, at a deeper level, sense the aliveness that's in everything, if you don't interpret, label, mentally, compulsively. So here now, as I talk about it, practice here now, you see the totality of this room.

Perhaps a word may arise, beautiful, but you don't need to interpret it. Just take it in. Just be the awareness for the sense perception, instead of labeling it.

Be the awareness. So you become like a little child that looks at the world for the first time. That's perhaps why Jesus said you have to become as little children, otherwise you cannot enter the kingdom.

Because a little child hasn't got the conceptual knowledge, the mental concepts yet. And you need an alertness to sustain it for a little while. It doesn't have to be long.

It's a beautiful spiritual practice, easier in nature than in the city. Because in the city, everything is made by the human mind. Cars, buildings, and so on.

Although you might have a bit of sky, or a tree here and there, that's good. But it stimulates the mind much more, city landscape. Once the presence, the power, so to speak, has grown in you, then you can be in the middle of a city and also be in that state of pure awareness.

But first of all, in nature it's easier, quite a bit easier. You go out into nature. Sky is beautiful.

I love sky, the changing sky. I love weather, all kinds of weather. And to actually really

perceive the weather, the changing weather, doesn't matter what it is.

Soon you will have opportunity living in this city to experience a lot of wet weather. And so instead of when you open up the curtain and it's, let's say it's the middle of December, or it's already gone on to January or February, and it opens one more time, and then look at the sky and the mind might say, oh no, not another rainy day. You've labeled, why not open the curtains and just look with now no judgment, no interpretation.

It's a spiritual practice in itself. And then you perceive more deeply and you know things non-conceptually. If you look at a flower or a tree, choose, occasionally choose one tree, and I hope this doesn't sound too kind of new agey, but it's beautiful.

You look at a tree and give it attention. Just give it some attention. The movements, the quivering leaves, and there's a slight breeze.

It's alive. There's an aliveness there that is hiding behind the surface appearance of tree. Even the tree has a sense of beingness.

You can sense its being more deeply than you could ever sense it if you were labeling it mentally. Well, there is a time for labeling things too when you communicate and so on. It's useful.

You need to have both. The conceptual knowledge is helpful and necessary in this world, but if you're confined on the level of concepts, then you are trapped there. You're trapped in the horizontal dimension.

You're continuously conceptualizing. The deeper connectedness with life is missing. So it creates a continuous sense of separation.

So you need both. I emphasize this non-conceptual knowing that is part of being present. And I recommend that when you experience new things, there are always two ways of experiencing.

Perhaps if you started traveling again, let's say you go to some unknown place and there's a beautiful building. Let's say you go into a temple or a cathedral, ancient cathedral somewhere, and how do you experience it? You experience it through learning about it, which is one way.

There's nothing wrong with it. You can hire a guide that is recording that takes you through the cathedral and explains everything fine. Or you can walk around with your phone and look for photo opportunities for this, this, this, or yourself there and there.

It's me there and that's me there and there's another me there. Or you can also experience it by just entering this magnificent, let's say it's a magnificent building or

temple or cathedral. You can enter and you go, wow, wow, wow.

That's a nice word. Wow. And then you walk around, take in the entire energy field of it and the beauty of the various things that you see.

And you sense the totality of this room and then you come out of it. And conceptually, you've known nothing, but yet you have experienced it very deeply. That's another way of being there.

And if you can, after that, you go through one more time and learn about it conceptually. And if you have even more time on the third day, you go in and then you will have learned about the history of this place, et cetera, et cetera. And also if you have the ability to experience it beyond concepts and you can be in both worlds at the same time, where you know things, but in between the knowing, there are all these spaces of pure awareness.

So you can interpret things and know things about it, but not confined to that. You can also experience it more deeply. You need, it's vitally to have these two dimensions in your life.

Otherwise, I emphasize, of course, the non-conceptual because the entire world is lost in the conceptual. The entire world is lost in conceptual identities, conceptualizing everything, manufacturing identities for other people, judging concepts, not being able to relate deeply beyond the conceptual personalities. All that is a huge limitation in our lives to be just trapped on that level.

We need both, of course. So you can look at a flower. It's unbelievable, but there's so much there and that goes beyond what you see.

There's something, and again, it also goes beyond concept. When you call a tree, whatever the tree is, it's an oak tree, usually then you have the illusion that you really, now you know what it is. It's an oak tree.

Okay, now let's go on to the next thing. What tree is that? Oh, that's that.

That's a Douglas fir. Okay, Douglas fir. Okay, what's the next thing?

So you never, it gives you the illusion that you know what it is when you have attached a label to it, but there's a possibility of relating to it at a deeper level. And then we find a completely different relationship to nature. We relate nature at a much deeper level than just the conceptual, and that needs to be awakened.

It's part of the awakened consciousness to realize that connectedness with nature and the sacredness of nature. The sacredness, and sacredness is not something you would hear very often these days, and sacredness is not something that one can easily define.

The conceptual mind asks, what do you mean by sacredness?

You cannot know what sacredness means unless you have at least a glimpse of sacredness. And you can have a glimpse of sacredness when your mind stops and you become present. And even here, when you become present of this spaciousness in this room, you become present of not only what's in this room, but you become aware of the space of this room.

And so the sense of presence is not only within, it's also without. There's a presence here that the mind cannot even know of it, it can't interpret it. Yes, it's a little bit mystical, but it is vitally important to have access to that dimension in your life.

Vitally important. And this is, I don't usually, I don't use that word very much, because there's so many misconceptions around the word God. But in a deeper sense, you could say that presence presence is the presence of God.

Not the traditional authority figure in the sky, but something that pervades a vast intelligence that pervades the entire universe. And that is also the essence of who you are. The consciousness of you, I call that the emanation of the light of God.

That is the consciousness that you are. And so when you know yourself as consciousness, then that is in theistic terms, is the beginning of God realization. Not that you are God as this little thing, but you can, you can feel your connectedness to something vast and that you are actually carried by it.

And you're only temporarily a ripple on the surface of existence, but in essence, you are the ocean. And that is a liberating realization that who you are in your essence. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (48:00 - 48:20)

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Eckhart Tolle Growing Up and Waking Up [a9fcfcb6-6872-4cce-b660-334df20c0a9c]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:30)

Growing up and waking up. In this episode, Eckhart talks to a live audience about the path to awakening. He says there are two stages to a person's life, waking up and growing up.

Many start to awaken only to later discover large parts of their personality lag behind. They haven't really grown up. To reach maturity, Eckhart says spiritual practice must encompass all of who we are and become part of our daily routine.

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 34:55)

We may be talking a little bit more about the relationship between your form identity and your essence identity. It's a very interesting subject. One could write a book or two about it.

I don't know who is going to write it. Maybe one of you. To be aware, whether you are contemplating nature or whatever it is, that's a state of contemplation.

Be the awareness rather than the person that labels things mentally. And then there's the deep I suddenly arises in that state of contemplation, which could involve looking or listening or combination of all the senses. And then also any time you are doing something, walking from here to there, handling something, use it to practice just stepping out of thought and just be there as thoughtless awareness as you walk from A to B.

Don't make it too long. Don't say, well, I will be in thoughtless awareness until I reach the end of the lake, the other end of the lake. You might fail probably, or you may succeed, in which case you'll be totally enlightened.

Just a short from here to the door, not walking with the heaviness of the personality, not walking, making every step a means to an end. Every step is an end in itself. That's presence.

Presence in action and presence in non-action in contemplation. It's important to practice presence in action. Otherwise, the only time you can be spiritual is when you are sitting quietly somewhere and you're not being disturbed by anything or anybody.

As somebody said to me on a retreat, I can be very spiritual when I'm alone in my room, but the moment I step out, I lose it. So it's great if you can be in a protected environment like here. It's a wonderful thing.

But even here, begin to practice bringing presence also into doing. And the doing you do here is probably more simple than the doing you do at work or at home. It becomes more complex.

The doing here is relatively simple. You're either walking from A to B, or you are getting your food or going up to your room and sorting out your things, getting undressed, getting dressed, brushing your teeth. It's relatively easy still to bring, but it's important.

So really one could say you begin to experience the merging of being and doing so that they don't exist as two separate things in your life. And so that not every time you start being active, you're gone. You're just totally in your mind, in the reactive mode, and so on.

And so you don't want to have two compartments in your life. The spiritual, between 7.30 and eight o'clock every morning, I'm spiritual. And then I deal with real life, what really matters.

There's a friend of mine who lost all her investments through some scheme in New York. When she was telling her friend about it on the phone, but she was very upset, your life savings are gone. Of course, one thing, of course, she's justified in being up.

Wouldn't you be upset if your life savings were gone? Yes. And her friend said, well, just be present with what is.

But she said, this is not the time to be spiritual. So this is a good training ground here for merging being and doing. Start with simple things.

Also, when you talk to people here, having a conversation, important that there's some awareness of being remains in the background, even while you speak, which means there is a certain spaciousness. And it doesn't necessarily mean that you have to talk very slowly because now you are so spiritual that you don't talk fast anymore. And I hope everybody notices that I'm very spiritual.

You can talk normally, but it is possible that if you are a very fast talker, naturally, it is possible that it may by itself slow down a little bit. If in your normal, until you awakened, began to awaken spiritually, that you may slow down a little. You don't have to do it by being aware that you're being dragged along by every thought that arises, by being aware that immediately the awareness already changes things.

You don't have to do it. So the words I sometimes use as pointers is to ask yourself, not necessarily in words, is there some spaciousness while I'm talking, while I'm dealing with this situation, with this problem, discussing something, is there some spaciousness or am I totally in every thought that comes? The loss of spaciousness in any relationship means that you probably won't have to wait for long until the next conflict arises in the relationship.

When there's complete loss of spaciousness presence in the relationship, then just wait a few minutes or an hour or tomorrow, and you'll experience some friction because there's only form. There's no awareness of the transcendent dimension. So here you practice awareness of the transcendent dimension, which is your essence.

So walking from A to B, and then again, a little stretch, any simple action. So the, there's your form identity and the emerging essence identity, as we call it. Now, what happens?

What is the relationship between your form identity and your essence identity? Now, as you know, when you completely identify with your form identity, the physical body, and even more importantly, the psychological form of you, the invisible you that consists of thought and emotion, the mental, emotional, invisible mental, emotional entity that is who you are on a certain level. When you're completely identified with every arising thought and every arising emotion and every arising reaction, that's ego.

The complete identification with that is ego. But when there's no longer a complete identification, there's still form identity. You may experience thoughts arising without knowing why they suddenly arise.

And yet, if there's even a slight awareness in the background that these are thoughts, you're not totally invested with your sense of self in every thought that arises. And if a thought that tells you something unpleasant about yourself or your life, certain judgment about my life, isn't it all so pointless now it has come to this? Why do I have to deal with this again and again?

There's no end to it. What's the point of it all? Why is it always me that has to do that stuff?

And then these thoughts perhaps have arisen in you for many years periodically and regularly. And suddenly you notice that these thoughts are arising that are telling you that you're not getting anywhere in your life, that most of your search and your activities have been futile. What have I got to show for it?

Absolutely nothing have I got to show whatsoever. Okay. And suddenly there's an awareness of these thoughts and you might notice that these are thoughts that are not new.

And so you're not totally invested in the thoughts. That means those thoughts that have certain judgments about your life, gradually they lose the capacity to make you unhappy because you don't completely believe in them anymore. They're recognized as thought patterns, conditioned mind.

After a while, they even subside. You have them less frequently. So it's no longer ego.

Now, as the presence arises, usually it does not very easily necessarily become

integrated into your form identity. When I went through a transition externally, very little changed. And mine was unusual because it came drastically and very, it was drastic and very sudden, but it didn't immediately change anything much externally.

I was still engaged in the academic world for three more years after that and didn't fully realize that that wasn't right for me anymore. It took time. I didn't know anymore than I did before.

There was just peace in the background. And occasionally, the pull towards unhappiness came a few times, like a pull on your sleeve in the form of a thought, come this way, follow me, says the unhappy thought. That says something about you and your life.

And I noticed it, I didn't follow it, but I could have followed it. And then I would have been lost again in mind identification and perhaps after a while come out again. Now, a question that is very interesting and complex, the answer is complex.

And I'm often asked this question, do you need to develop what people call a healthy ego? I was often asked that. Do I need to develop a full, healthy, functioning ego before I can transcend the ego?

Well, no ego is completely healthy because every ego has certain elements of dysfunction and they may be certain corners in your life. But it is true that as far as your form identity is concerned, there is a development as you grow older. And to some extent, whether or not you can integrate the arising presence with your form identity, to some extent has something to do with where you are at as this form identity in your life cycle.

There was a spiritual teacher in the early 20th century, Gurdjieff, who said, I don't totally agree with him, but there's some truth there. He said that unless you're already fully established in the physical realm, so you have a weaningful work and you have built up your life and you have taken responsibility for your family and you have all built up all that. He said, then you can embark on spiritual work.

Don't even attempt to embark on spiritual work unless you have first achieved maturity in the physical realm. There's some truth in that, but you cannot, there are so many exceptions. You cannot really have one general rule that applies to everybody.

But yes, let's say you are man or woman in the early 20s. Let's say that you are still, you're exploring life. You are kind of finding yourself, as you put it, when you talk to yourself and others.

Let's say that you have already explored various avenues, none of which you found satisfying. You went to college, but after two years, it was getting a bit boring. Then you left and tried something else.

And you had a few jobs, but they didn't work out that well either. You had some interesting sexual encounters, but no relationship lasted for more than three weeks because you were totally immature emotionally. And I stuck at the level of an eight year old.

And one day you walk across the street and you've been smoking some weed. And so they're not paying attention. You get hit by a car and then you find yourself in hospital with a serious condition.

And when you wake up, something happened. That shock brought about an opening in your form identity. And you can suddenly feel something, some great power in you.

And then you, finally you come out of hospital and you realize that in certain situations involving other people, you speak spiritual truth. It just comes. You suddenly find yourself entering that state and you talk and you don't know what's happening.

And then at other times, you're just a normal, the normal person that you were before. And then you read a few books and then you talk a bit more and suddenly you become a spiritual teacher. But your form identity basically is still the same as it was before, except the crack has appeared in it.

And through that crack, the transcendent dimension from time to time emerges. But you're still emotionally as immature as you were before. And still other aspects of your personality are still the same, needing recognition and waiting for all kinds of things.

Now, if you waited a bit, a few more, a few years, it's possible that gradually the, the crack would widen and perhaps affect areas of your form identity and thereby gradually transform them. So the integration would take years. But if you become a spiritual teacher too soon, then all those aspects of your ego and your form identity will suddenly realize that they are in the vicinity of an enormous power.

And then the various sub-personalities, as one could call them, these are various areas in your consciousness that from time to time emerge and take over. Everybody who is not awakened is to some extent under the control of emerging sub-personalities, which is just a word. These are patterns in your psyche that from time to time in certain situations take you over.

And then you become this particular person in that particular situation. So the, the ego is still there. And then I'm mentioning this because it could happen to you.

You could feel drawn to somebody who speaks the truth and it's a wonderful thing. It's a transformational thing to be, and you feel changes are happening in you. You become a disciple of somebody and you may not realize that this person has not grown up.

The philosopher Ken Wilber has two interesting words, terms that he uses. He says,

there's two things in a person's life, growing up and waking up. So it happens occasionally that you begin to wake up, but huge aspects of your personality haven't grown up yet.

And then you have to be very careful when you go to teachers like that. And they're not even necessarily young. They could all be in their mid thirties.

They could be 40, who knows, but it's more likely when they're young, just the same. If you look at the history of the Roman emperors, the craziest ones were the ones who were really very young. They couldn't deal with all that.

Their ego got totally insane. So if you go to a spiritual teacher, you feel, you attach yourself to a spiritual teacher, and then there are a few warning signs you need to look out for that tell you that there are aspects of this teacher that have not grown up yet. And so you get the truth, then after a while gets mixed up, the spiritual truth, which undoubtedly is there, gets mixed up with egoic needs.

The undeveloped form identity has many needs. So it begins with something very common, sexual relations that the teacher begins to have with various disciples. And not that he or she says to anybody who comes, you should know that I have sexual relations with many of my disciples.

So if you're okay with that, then come. That would be fine, but that's not usually the case. Usually the teacher will show, and that is a sub personality that has been there.

It still exists. And the sub personality's job is to find a sexual partner. So it gets active, needs to get laid is the expression.

And so the, of course, this, it identifies with a spiritual power. And so this happened many times. So usually they tell you are very special, and I will give you tantric initiation after which you will be totally enlightened.

So if you get a message from me, this is my room number. And by tomorrow morning, you will be totally enlightened. Then you know that something has gone wrong.

And it's time to leave me. I can guarantee, I may not be able to guarantee everything, but I can guarantee that that won't happen. So, but this is very common.

This is only one sign of an immature vehicle, expressing spiritual truth, especially in teaching situations. The next sign is that the claims the teacher makes about who he or she is become more and more outlandish and exaggerated and weird, just plain weird. And another sign is that he or she begins to denigrate other teachers, except those that are dead.

Of course, every teaching has certain limitations and that's natural, but I actually

welcome every spiritual teaching and spiritual teacher. And most of my encounters with other spiritual teachers have been good and wonderful, except two. And of course, I'm not mentioning any names.

In any case, one has already passed away, but even then, I'm not going to mention the name. So that's another thing to look out for. And another thing to look out for is the teacher attempts to somehow bind you to him or her, to prevent you from, if the impulse should come to you to leave me, then there's something that keeps you here.

For example, transfer all your possessions to me, then that'll keep you here. Or as has been the case recently in the newspapers, I could brand you with a mark on your skin with my initials that you are mine. That's just been in the news very recently, a teacher did it.

So now this is, can be quite dangerous because there are people who get drawn to this for a good reason, because there is, amongst all that egoic stuff, for a while at least, he or she is in teaching situations able to express spiritual truth that has some transformational value. For some, for a while, it could happen, or it's perhaps likely to happen that eventually, even in teaching situations, they become contaminated with egoic untruths. And it's so confusing for spiritual seekers to disentangle the truth that person speaks and the untruth is brought in by the ego.

And some people have become so disenchanted and they condemn them all because they believe that everything that they experienced with this teacher was false. But that is not necessarily and probably not the case. So you need to disentangle that there was some spiritual truth there, but it's, it is advisable that you do not stay with this channel of spiritual truth.

And if it could be a very good sign, a very good sign that you now need to find your own disclosure to the source that is within you. If you are very disappointed by your spiritual teacher and because the vehicle turns out to be immature, then that may be a good sign that you, this is really the time, use that suffering and allow it to take you to a deep place so that you find the source within you, the transcendent dimension that's within you. You no longer look outside.

So if the vehicle then has the form identity that you are, has quite a bit to do with whether you are able to anchor the awakened state here in this dimension. So to anchor the awakened state in this dimension, your form identity has a role to play. And it is helpful if you have developed a relatively mature form identity.

It doesn't necessarily mean that you need to be old, but you've done certain things here. You've already, you maybe have achieved certain successes. You have, you've graduated or you've had a job and it worked.

And then of course you discover, began to discover more and more elements of dissatisfaction with whatever you were doing. And that was the beginning of your spiritual path. Very interesting in connection with this form and essence.

There is in India and various other places in the Middle East, in Pakistan and in Iran and in the Sufi tradition, particularly there's a phenomenon of people, men, more men, occasionally women too. There are people walking around the streets and the countryside who seem insane. They are disoriented, but there's something about them that others, if they have certain spiritual discernment, recognize.

So although they appear insane and they might walk around, they may not say much or anything and they walk. And there's a word in Sufism, the word to describe them is must, which is spelled M-A-S-T. Must means intoxicated.

And the full term is must Allah, which means God intoxicated. That is recognized as a state. It is people whose form identity was so undeveloped that when, for some reason, the influx came of the emerging essence, the form could not deal with it.

It's like plugging a toy engine into a high voltage outlet. That's not going to work very well. But there is something in these humans that others have recognized as there's more, there's not, they're not crazy in the normal sense of the word.

So there are thousands of them. So they are called God intoxicated, as that is the term of these musts. There was a sage in India in the first part, early part of the 20th century, whose name was Mia Baba, not to be confused with Sai Baba or any of the other numerous Babas.

Mia Baba was the silent sage who for 40 years was in silence, did not speak, but he had a particular interest in the God intoxicated ones. And he said the difference between them and ordinary madness is their minds are slow, have slowed down much slower than a normal mind and in how he saw it. And he said, at the real craziness is when the mind speeds up, it is much faster than the normal.

Now the God intoxicated ones are experiencing a slowing down of the mind to such an extent that they cannot cope with the world anymore. They cannot function in this world anymore. This is a good example of how when the vehicle is totally unsuitable for some reason, and we don't know how these people, at what stage of their life, the influx of consciousness came into them, but they were definitely not ready for it.

And so that is an extreme example of relationship between form and essence not working. So Mia Baba spent years of his life helping these people and some of them became recognized as like saints and this would probably never have happened in the West. And it is also true that there are people in mental homes in the West who are of that kind, who have experienced this influx and the vehicle was totally unprepared and

totally immature and it kind of blew all the fuses.

That is a very interesting subject. For you then the important thing is none of this is likely to happen to you. And if it is, if the call to teach comes, just wait a little, just don't be, don't rush into it.

Give it a little bit of time and let it develop very organically. And so that there's a deepening and so that the awakened state becomes more integrated with your form identity. Another thing that people do, they immediately write a book about it.

There's nothing wrong with writing a book, it's great. But just give it a little bit of time, let it mature. You had a great awakening experience and then you took, even you talk about it and then you write about it and it gets dispersed.

It's not contained anymore. So it's better for a while not to talk about your spiritual awakening, just to live it, not to talk about it. Let be what you, you begin to embody it so that you can embody it.

The big question is where you are at spiritually is not what spiritual experience you can have in the, in one limited area of your life, but how integrated the awakened consciousness is in your daily life. So if you want a reflection of where you are at spiritually, it's not even your ability to talk well about it. It's more, how do you deal with everyday challenges and situations and difficult people and so on.

That is, reflects back to you where you are at in your spiritual awakening and to what extent essence identity and form identity have become integrated. It's through your daily life and your relationships that they become integrated. So it's not enough to have a beautiful, it's a wonderful thing to have a beautiful experience of awakening here.

That's stage one. That's great. And the next challenge is to bring it into your, into your daily life.

[Speaker 2] (34:56 - 35:16)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Growing in Consciousness [e92fe77d-1541-4f14-93ca-34acaaf80829]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:39)

Growing in consciousness. In this episode, Eckhart talks about expanding our consciousness. He says that we outgrow the limited perception we have of ourselves.

A person with a personality and a product of our past. We need to get in touch with what Eckhart calls the deep eye or the transcendent self. He says we're more than our personalities and more than our bodies.

Eckhart shares what we perceive with our senses is only a tiny fraction of what's actually here. He believes what is essential in us is invisible to the eye and not something we perceive with our senses.

[Speaker 1] (0:41 - 33:50)

Welcome everybody to this moment. It's always the present moment. New challenges are waiting to be overcome or transcended so that we grow in consciousness.

Growing in consciousness is a way, one way of putting it. It's a way of perceiving what's going on from our perspective of time. The temporal perspective where most of the time we live.

But when we say growing in consciousness or becoming more conscious, it seems to imply process of time that gradually you become more conscious. And from the point of view of where we are in this dimension, that certainly seems to be the case. But another way of looking at it is that a deeper dimension of consciousness is manifesting itself, is emanating through you more and more fully.

But that dimension is timeless. The present moment is timeless. It's always now.

So there's a little paradox here. It seems to take time for us to fully inhabit or to fully connect with the transcendent dimension within ourselves, which is the timeless. So we just have to live with this paradox.

The moment we talk about spiritual things, paradox almost inevitably arises. This is why at the beginning of the famous Chinese Tao Te Ching, one of the greatest spiritual books, the first sentence is, the Tao that you can speak of is not the true Tao. We can't really talk of that transcendent mystery.

The moment we talk about it, it gets distorted and becomes paradoxical. And yet we do. But we need to know that what all words can do is point to something that is beyond words.

So the answer is not in the words. The words are not the truth. They can point to it, but they are not it.

So when words are used, the tendency of the mind is to believe in certain words that are uttered. But that's not how it works, because if you believe just in the words, then it's mistaking the signpost for that to which the signpost points. Or another way of putting it, mistaking the map for the actual territory.

So we need to be tolerant with words and use them as pointers, no more than that. Some pointers work better for certain people and other pointers work for other people. This is why I often use different kinds of pointers.

You can choose one, the one that you respond to. The one that takes you beyond the pointer is the one that works for you. What emerges, as you may have heard me say it before, there are two of you here.

So to speak, again, it's just words. It's not the absolute truth. It's a pointer.

There are two of you here. There's you as a person and you as the transcendent consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness. You are both, let's say, the person is the ripple on the surface of the ocean and the transcendent consciousness is the ocean.

You are the ripple, undoubtedly. You have a form. Some ripples are bigger than others, but none of the ripples last for very long.

And yes, you as a person, you have a form identity, physical and psychological form, personality, body. And yet you are here to enable the deeper dimension of consciousness. Deeper or higher, you have a choice of pointers, deeper dimension, higher dimension, whatever works best for you.

It's just words. We're here for this deeper dimension, what I call the deep eye to emerge into this dimension because the deep eye does not originate in this dimension. And you are essentially the deep eye, which is consciousness, and you are temporarily a person and a personality.

The greatest limitation for a human being is to be exclusively trapped throughout a lifetime, to be exclusively trapped in a personality with all its conditionings, with all its reactive patterns, the condition by the past. You are a product as a personality. You are a product of your past, both your personal past, your environmental past, the cultural past, whatever culture you are born into, it goes back hundreds of years, thousands of years.

You are a product as a person. You are a product of that. If you had been born 500 years ago, you would be a different person.

You would have different beliefs, very different, just a different form of conditioning. And that's fine. That's how it is in this dimension.

We are all here as persons and personalities, conditioned entities with all kinds of quirks and idiosyncrasies and characteristics, some good, some troublesome, many, in fact, if you only know yourself as a person or personality, then you are in trouble. Trouble is an essential part of being limited to being a person without any glimpse of anything transcendent within yourself. And then you are trapped in that.

And when you watch movies almost all the time, that's all you ever see, people who are trapped in their limited little selves and react to things from there and create a lot of trouble for themselves and others. Another word for trouble could be suffering. When you only know yourself as a personality, then this is what the Buddha described as then you, everything you, every situation you encounter, sooner or later ends up in dukkha, meaning suffering, can also be translated as unsatisfactoriness, misery, or simple, plain unhappiness.

Even if you had some glimpses of the transcendent dimension, that already is a great help. Let's see, this is where salvation lies, to use a Christian term. Liberation would be another term you could use, such as Hindu or Buddhist.

Awakening, another term. They all mean the same thing. They are pointers pointing to the same thing.

And just to have glimpses of the deeper I, the deep I in you, rather than the surface I. The surface I is the person. The deep I is the consciousness in the same way that the ripple or the wave is the person.

The ocean is the consciousness. And you are essentially the ocean and temporarily the person. So how do you know yourself as the deep I?

The moment of cessation of the stream of thinking. Not the cessation of the stream of thinking that happens when you fall asleep, but the cessation of the stream of thinking when you remain very alert. In fact, become more alert.

Perhaps just a few seconds, you look at a cloud that just appeared in the sky. And for two or three seconds, it's so striking that it stops your mind for two or three seconds while you look at the cloud. And there's an inner response.

Oh, something within response. It doesn't have to be a cloud. It could be a tree, an animal, a flower.

And you look and, oh. Then the mind comes back with interpretations. But while you looked and there was an inner response and you felt somehow, one could also connect it with it for a moment, and something responded.

And later then when the mind comes in, it will interpret it in some way. This is what the mind does, the thinking mind. And it will call it something.

It might say, beautiful. That's a beautiful cloud. Or it might say, how pretty.

Not the most profound statement the mind could make, but let it be. How pretty. Or it might say, if you're knowledgeable about the history of art, the mind might compare it to some painting it has seen.

Oh, look at that Turner sky. Oh, Turner, British landscape and sky painter. Yes, yes, yes.

And so you interpret, that's fine. But what you forget is the significance of the first moment of perception and the still space that was there for two or three seconds in the first moment of perception. That's overlooked.

If you can become conscious of, in the first moment of perceiving something, natural things work very well for that. The first moment of perception doesn't have to be visual. It can also be auditory.

You listen, there's a bird song. You listen somewhere there's bird song and your attention goes there. And for a few seconds, there's a pure listening.

And then the mind says something about it. But the significant thing is the first moment when there is the pure listening, because it's not just the listening, because without the consciousness behind the listening, there would be no listening. The auditory organ of perception would mean nothing without a consciousness behind it.

So the listening becomes possible because there is a listener. There is a listening consciousness that makes the perception possible. And that consciousness is still in the first few moments of perception quite often.

With some humans, their mind is so active that that first moment is so short, it's impossible to even catch it because they immediately comment on everything they perceive. If you find that in your life gradually, when you look at something, you perceive something, you listen to something, there's not an immediate jump into interpretation or labeling. That is a wonderful sign.

It is a sign that you are deepening. It is a sign that the deep eye is beginning to emerge more. There is a depth to who you are when you are not immediately, always immediately judging, interpreting, and labeling everything.

That is a sign of progress in your life. That is the arising of, one could call it, inner space. Inner space arise.

A certain spaciousness arises where before there was only clutter, the clutter of your mind, and the identification with the clutter of your mind, which created the person. So

that was there before. Now, the deepening happens when you realize there's a bit more spaciousness coming into your life.

And one of the things, as I just pointed out, is through perceiving something and not compulsively needing to immediately classify, label, judge it, or to have some kind of position, personal position towards it. I like it. I don't like it.

Whatever. So you let it be for a moment. You let it be.

You become aware of a depth dimension within yourself, the deep eye. And the deep eye is consciousness. And then you may find that you notice it more often when it happens.

Because before, people sometimes have the experience of depth, but they don't realize it. They attribute it to something else. They have the experience of depth when they look at something wonderful, beautiful, for example, and it's so overwhelmingly beautiful, like a sunset or some bird song can be just wonderful or something miraculous.

Yet you look at a hummingbird hovering and you look at it, you're just, oh. And afterwards, when you talk about it, it felt good. You talk about it.

That moment when I climbed, or when I climbed that mountain last year, two years ago, and it took five hours to reach the top. And when I reached the top, there was suddenly this vast space of the sky where the sun was beginning to set and it was the most beautiful moment of my life. And I'll always remember that.

I wish I could get that back. I have to go back to that mountain too. But you don't realize that the essence of that experience, you want to call it that, in that moment it was, it had a time span.

So in that sense, it was an experience. But the essence of that was that the beauty of two things stopped your mind. The ascent of the mountain required so much focus and attention that you didn't have much time to think about your personal problems.

So already as you were beginning to climb the mountain, it gave you moments of, fairly prolonged moments of self-transcendence because your attention had to be there. There's always a risk and danger involved when you climb a mountain. So your attention had to be fully in the present moment.

So the self, the mind made self, could not absorb most of your attention and think about whatever it thinks about. The attention had to be in the present moment because there was an element of danger. That was the first thing that started to free you from yourself.

Self-transcendence is a transcendence of the mind that creates the self. So already, and then you reach the top of the mountain, it's just one example. And you saw this vast landscape and it stopped your mind.

It was so overwhelming that it stopped your mind. And because it stopped your mind, you had this experience of depth, of self-transcendence. And that was so good.

But many people, unless they perhaps had some contact with spiritual teaching, they may not even realize that that is why that was such a deep experience. The deep experience was there because the activity of climbing a mountain and then finally seeing the incredible beauty stopped your mind. It stopped your mind and something else emerged that cannot be defined in any way.

The deep eye, a conscious presence emerged through which this was being perceived. So it wasn't, people confuse the thing that stopped the mind with that which enabled them to be momentarily in that awakened state that was the self-transcendent state. So glimpses of that are the beginning of the awakening.

So the personality no longer has this overwhelming importance that consumes you completely with its problems and its shortcomings and it regrets and its anxieties and it all kinds of things that create the problem of your life, all the things you'd have to think about, the uncertainties of the future, the regrets of the past, what people doubts about who you really are, are you good enough or not really good enough or you're so good that nobody's better than you or whatever narrative you have that provides the source of your identity and whatever narrative the mind comes up with, it's never satisfying for very long even if you think you're the greatest that ever lived, soon life will show you that you're not the greatest that ever lived. So the deep eye begins to emerge in many people's life when the person is being challenged.

So I just gave you some lovely scenarios where the deep eye could emerge, but more frequently than that, the deep eye emerges when life becomes very uncomfortable for the personality. So that happens easily. So it happens on a small scale.

It tends to happen very frequently. Things go wrong here and there, no matter how much positive thinking you do, which is a good thing, but things will go wrong here and there, not according to expectation. Things break down and then you lose something and then people act in weird ways.

They shouldn't behave like that, but they do. People are troublesome. You are a burden to yourself.

People become burdens. Your life situation is so problematic. Oh, there's just no end to it.

And then comes the collective problems. If your personal problems weren't enough, suddenly some kind of pandemic arises, a collective problem that, oh my God, didn't I have enough with my personal problems? And now comes this.

I can't take any more of this. Anxiety arises. Am I going to die?

Am I going to die? Yes. We don't know when, but certainly yes, of course you're going to die.

The person doesn't last very long. And then fear, the fear arises and becomes very uncomfortable to continue to be there only as a person. And so that's a good thing.

If life gets difficult for you, for the person, can't take any more. That's another good point to reach. And then suddenly you discover the possibility of living in the present moment more than in past and future, which is the opening into the transcendent dimension is the present moment, if you only give attention to it.

When past and future, especially future for many people, become so fearful or heavy, then the way out is to give more attention to the present moment now. And in order for this to happen, your level of attention needs to rise. There's only this moment.

Are you aware of this moment right now? Yes. That is the portal into transcendence.

This also applied to, in the example I gave of climbing the mountain and standing on top of the mountains, you were present. The ascent forced you to be present because of the danger. And then you were present because the beauty was so overwhelming for a moment.

So present moment can come into your life in various ways. It comes through suffering. You're forced into the present moment, but sometimes it can come through a moment of overwhelming beauty too.

It comes a moment when you look into the eyes of a baby for a few seconds, you can sense the consciousness that is behind those eyes. And you can, ah, or the eyes of a dog. You can look in the eyes of a dog and you can sense the consciousness that is there.

And the consciousness is not part of this dimension. So the portal is always present moments. Life will have to force you into it for many people.

And once you realize that that is where the shift in consciousness happens, then you can voluntarily quite often choose to be present, to have more attention in the present moment than in past and future. You still know enough about past and future. It's fine.

Of course, you know where you're going, but the step you're taking now is the most important step. Everything else is secondary. Still may have some importance, but it's not of primary importance.

So becoming present, that's the simplest thing, becoming present. What happens when you become present? You become present of sense perception.

You become present that you're breathing. You know you're breathing and you're not,

you don't need to label anything mentally. You just notice things.

You notice sense perceptions. You notice your breath. You notice the aliveness within your body, inner body awareness.

You notice in the present moment, you notice what is there. External things, you notice them. And internal things, you notice them.

Emotion may be there. You notice that there's some anxiety living in you. You notice there's the anxiety.

You notice it. You become the space for it. You become the space for everything, for all perceptions.

You notice it. And then you begin to realize who or what you essentially are. When you notice everything that is, you are the space for it.

You become aware in addition to what you are noticing. And you're not, when you notice, by the way, you don't reject anything. When you notice this, you accept what is.

In this moment, you're not rejecting anything. That's vital. Otherwise you're not present.

You just, you notice it. This is what is. You can't argue with it.

Well, you can, if you want to be unhappy, you argue with what is. That strengthens the personality, the fiction of who you are. But essentially this is what is.

And it's only the present moment, not some complicated life situation that you want to get out of. That's fine. And this is not what is.

What is, is what you're experiencing at this moment. Your experience of this moment. Inner, outer.

This is what is. So you notice it and you allow it to be. And by noticing it and allowing it to be, you become aware of something else that is not in addition to what is already there, but something that is the prerequisite for everything that you notice.

And that is, you become aware of yourself as the one that notices everything. The field of presence that you are. Not the person anymore.

That's a deep eye now. You're now the deep eye. You are the field of presence that notices everything.

So we become aware of two dimensions. That which you notice externally or internally, and that which makes all noticing possible, which is the consciousness that you are, which is one could say the canvas on which your entire life is painted. That changes quite often, but it's, you become aware of the canvas.

Everything else that is painted on the canvas is what you notice. That's fundamentally changes everything. The way in which you experience your life becomes much easier and more pleasant because you experience it from the dimension of self-transcendence of the unconditioned consciousness.

The person still emerges from time to time. The person comes back and says, what did I see? This is what I think about the, this is the pandemic.

It's all nonsense. It's all whatever the person says is fine. But gradually you're no longer completely taken over by that entity.

What do you think you are? The personality, the person. And that gets worse as the older you get, unless some transcendence comes into your life.

Old age is another opportunity for transcendence. When old age comes, the body gets weaker. Life giving you another, maybe the last opportunity in this lifetime to become present.

If you haven't been able to, if you've been living in egoic resistance for your entire life. Finally, when you're 80, things begin to fail in your body. There's an opportunity for surrender and presence, and then the flowering can still happen.

The personality recedes, consciousness emerges. So that's why I said there's two of you here. There is the transcendent being that you are, and there is the person.

So the awakening is to awaken to that dimension of the transcendent being, which happens every time there's a cessation of the stream of thinking, no matter how short, and there's a realization of that which remains when the stream of thinking subsides. And that which remains, you cannot name. You can only be it.

That's why another word for it is the being that you are. The personality is a human, and the transcendent dimension who you are is the being. Most people on the planet are still just humans.

They haven't realized yet that they are human beings because the being dimension is the awakening to who you essentially are. And that's the destiny of humanity, and of every human being is to realize the being part of being human. The human part alone is just very frustrating.

Just, you'll never find any satisfaction there that lasts for long. So how do you judge whether your life is successful or not? Well, don't allow the world to tell you whether your life has been a success or not, because the world doesn't know of what really matters.

It doesn't know that. So is your life a success or a failure? There's only this, your consciousness now.

Are you able to be here as a human being? That is the purpose of your life, is that realization. Then your life, you have succeeded.

Life has succeeded. The human, one could almost say, is the seed for the being. So when you have a seed that goes into the soil, eventually the seed breaks open and something emerges out of the seed, a plant, and opens up.

In the same way, the person gradually undergoes a process of erosion. It gets eroded by the suffering of life. And at some point, a state of surrender is reached when the suffering begins to be transcended because nothing is resisted anymore.

That is the process of realization. So in a nutshell, before we go on to the questions, and can there any left, we are here as humans and we are here to realize the being dimension so that we become human beings. We already are human beings, but if you don't know the being dimension, it's virtually as if you didn't, as if it weren't there.

It's like a beggar. I think I wrote about that somewhere. It's like a beggar who has sitting on a box filled with gold, but he's begging because he doesn't know what's in the box.

So do you call him rich or poor? Do you say he is very poor? Well, I'm using that analogy because the being dimension is not something that the person achieves.

That would be ego. If you think I have to achieve the being dimension. No, you have to recede.

You have to become somewhat, one could say transparent to the being dimension. So the person weakens so that the being can shine through more fully. So the person does not achieve realization at all.

So awakening, enlightenment, realization is never an achievement. Nobody achieves it. You have to get the self out of the way.

So there's nobody who could say, I have achieved enlightenment. No, nothing. All you can do is realize something that's already there.

That is already the essence of who you are. Let's see if there are any questions left.

[Speaker 3] (33:51 - 34:30)

Hello, Eckhart. Here's my question. So if awareness is engaged by rising above our thoughts and becoming more aware of sensory perceptions in the moment, like the sights, the sounds, feeling our feet on the floor, our breathing.

So where does our awareness or beingness go when the body dies and there's no channel for awareness through our physical senses? So what will be aware, what will be aware of how our consciousness perceive beingness when there's no sensory

perceptions of the body any longer to be through? It's hard to put into words.

[Speaker 1] (34:31 - 46:15)

Good question. Very good question. Thank you.

Perhaps the first thing to realize fully is that what you see in this world, what the senses can perceive in this world is a surface phenomenon. It is a tiny fraction of what's actually there. It's a tiny fraction of what's actually there.

So if we start with a simple thing, I mentioned just earlier a dog, or if you prefer cats, you substitute a cat. A dog is a more simple being than a human. So let's, I'll give this example of a dog.

Here's a dog, and the dog has a body, fur, and so on. When you look into the eyes of a dog and the dog responds to you, you already connect with something that is invisible because you don't connect with the fur or what's underneath the fur is bones and blood and tissue on the physical level. That's all there is to the dog.

There's the fur that covers it up. It's the same. The human's the same.

There's the skin, and beyond the skin, there's bones, blood, like the body is like whatever, 70% water. There's bones, blood, tissue. That's all there is.

So on the physical level, when you look into the eyes of the dog, the dog is not actually there as the physical being. This is not what you notice when you look into the eyes of the dog and something within you responds to the being of the dog. This being of the dog is invisible.

The same as your being is invisible. You cannot find the dog by cutting open the dog and looking at the organs of the dog. The dog is not there.

As I said in the little book, *The Little Prince*, I think it was written a long time ago, one of the quotes from that book is, what is essential is invisible to the eye. This eye, which means any sensory perception, anything that you can receive with your senses. What is essential is invisible to the eye, which means it cannot be perceived with the senses.

So that which you respond to and what responds to you is already not part of this dimension. The dog as the consciousness of the dog, you cannot find the dog in this material dimension. So what you love in the dog, although it may be pleasant to touch the dog, the soft fur and so on, but what you respond to and love is invisible.

Essentially, you love the consciousness of the dog, not the material. The physical appearance is very much secondary. So whatever we perceive here is a surface phenomenon and that applies to you also, of course.

Now, who you are as a... First, you are a physical body. The physical body has a certain lifespan, fairly short.

And then you have thoughts and emotions that make up the person, but already that dimension is beyond the physical. Nobody knows ultimately, no scientist has yet figured out what a thought actually is. There are certain correlations with thinking and structures in the brain, but nobody knows what a thought is, where it lives.

You cannot find a thought. You have millions of memories and thoughts, but no scientist could ever find any of them by dissecting your brain or emotions. Although the physical body can respond when there's an emotion or even a sensory perception.

If you imagine biting into a lemon, the body responds and saliva will accumulate in your mouth because the body thinks what the mind creates is already reality. There's another story to talk about there. The body cannot differentiate between what your mind is creating or whether there's actual reality or your mind is just creating it.

A lot of anxiety arises there, but let's put that aside. It's not our focus here now. So all your memories, where do they actually live?

Now, traditionally, we think they are somehow accumulated in the neurons, the atoms, molecules of your body, but how and why, we do not know. Nobody knows. Where's the memory?

I could say to you, do you remember your grandmother? And suddenly, immediately, the memory comes back to you. Do you remember the house where you lived when you were eight years old?

Or do you remember? And immediately you can go back and say, yes, do you remember even, but what did the door feel like when you opened it? Do you remember it?

And then there was a cupboard. Do you remember opening that cupboard? Yeah.

Where did this memory live all that time? Where was that? Are there certain molecules in your brain that represent the memory of your grandmother or the memory of touching something when you were eight years old?

We don't know. Because these things already, even on the level of the personality, they do not exist in the material realm. They already exist.

Thoughts and emotions already exist in a dimension that transcends physical reality. So thoughts and emotions are already part of the non-physical. In other words, a dimension beyond the physical.

So when you go into yourself, into thoughts and emotions, you are still there as a non-physical representation of you. When the body dissolves, this accumulation of thought

and emotion that you call you does not immediately disappear. When the body dissolves, this accumulation that you call you is still there, but there's a physical presence.

There's still a form identity there, but now this form identity is no longer physical form. It's thought form and emotional form. So there's a thought body and an emotional body that still persists with all its accumulated, all its accumulated conditioning, all the desires that are still there because they do not live in the physical realm.

All the desires and a lot of the conditioning is still there. And even there are many, many accounts of people whose brain activity stopped and the heart stopped. It's called near-death experiences.

And the many, many credible reports of people who were able to observe their own body in hospital or wherever it may be. But what eyes did they have? The question.

So there is an equivalent of the physical body in a more ethereal realm, not part of this dimension, where these organs are still there. So these organs are only a surface appearance in the physical dimension of a deeper thing because you also have a non-physical body. And this non-physical body, that when you go deeper into it, then you begin to reach what Carl Jung called the collective unconscious of humanity, which is also, you are part of that also.

So when you go beyond the personal thought and emotional body, you begin to go into the humanities collective conscious body. You're also part of that. And when you go even deeper, then you're beginning to go gradually, you begin to go towards the unconditioned consciousness, which is the pure light of consciousness.

The purpose of life is still the awakening. That's no matter where you are. So one more thing to do with your question is of course, questioning the consciousness, the greatest mystery of life, is the question that scientists ask, is consciousness produced by the physical brain?

And mainstream science mostly still says, yes, it is. But if you ask mainstream science, well, what is consciousness? They don't know.

They say it must be produced by the physical brain because there is only matter. They say there is nothing beyond matter. Materialism, that's what true materialism is.

True materialism doesn't mean to want to accumulate as many material goods as possible. True materialism is to believe that there's nothing beyond that which we can detect with our senses. That's all there is.

And there are even scientists who say, well, consciousness is some kind of delusion because they don't know what it is. So the great mystery is consciousness, is mainstream science says consciousness is a by-product of what happens in the brain,

the physical brain. But that is a misperception.

And at some point, perhaps we will realize, science will realize that that is not the case, that consciousness is prior to all that. Consciousness pervades the entire universe. And consciousness is something that the physical brain can channel so that consciousness assumes a particular form when it is channeled through the physical brain.

Then this world arises, what we perceive as a world. And there are many worlds. This is not the only world.

There's entire astral dimension and so on. These are very interesting things I could talk about, but it would be not, it's fascinating, but not helpful for awakening. So I hope that answers at least to some extent your question.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (46:16 - 46:36)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Healing Fear Through Difficult Times [7ff12f9b-34ff-4a98-9d41-ad2e017904c2]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:52)

Transforming our fear through difficult times. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about how to deal with our fears, especially when confronted with a crisis. He says intelligent action cannot occur when we're gripped by anxiety and negative thinking, which can be incredibly destructive.

What's needed is wisdom. Looking at the totality of the situation, not just one aspect of the problem. Eckhart says we must free ourselves from the negative thinking that accompanies fear and align ourselves with what he calls the vertical dimension, the place where we are one with all that is.

He also urges us to pay attention to the most important thing in any situation, our state of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:54 - 50:15)

Effective and intelligent action does not arise out of fear. And no matter, this requires not only action that you take in your personal life, but also action that we need to take on a collective level. If the action that we take arises out of fear, it's unlikely that it will be effective because what is missing then is wisdom.

Wisdom that takes into account the totality of a situation, not just focuses on one aspect of a problem and tries to solve it there, disregarding how it affects other things. So what's happening collectively to us is then potentially a great awakener for many humans. And practice whenever the fearful thinking arises, realize that it is not helpful, it's destructive, and realize that the primary factor in your life is connected with the vertical dimension.

In other words, the primary factor is your state of consciousness in any situation, any problematic situation, any challenging situation. How do you respond to it? The primary factor and your primary attention needs to be on your inner energy field, your state of consciousness.

If that is not right, if that is negative egoically, ego means complete identification with mind, if the ego is there, the ego may have good intentions. It may look good at the beginning of an egoic thing that the ego says, this is what we need to do. But if you disregard your underlying consciousness, then you will find that the famous proverb applies, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

So there have been many people in the world their good intentions have led to disaster because they disregarded their own consciousness. They just had an idea in their head,

let's create a society that is a society where humans are equal, they're no longer exploited, let's get rid of the dreadful things of private property, and that all sounds so wonderful, so that's all great, it's called communism, let's try it out. And they tried it out, it just, it looked so great intention, I suppose, well there might not have been totally pure, there might have been a resentment also and other things with it, but there were good intentions there.

They just forgot about the human ego, the unconsciousness in every human being, including the people who wanted to bring about the revolution. And then it led to millions dead, killed, how I don't want to go into it now, don't need to, but you can read history books. Now it could work if there's a change in human consciousness then naturally the world that humans manifest will be very different, but there cannot be a true change outside without the inner change.

If you try to implement an outer change without an inner change, then you will lead again create a new set of problems, could be worse than the original ones. So I highly recommend that in the morning and at night that you go to sleep at night sensing the inner body, not reading the news on your phone and then go to sleep, not watching television and then go to sleep. It's better if there's no device at all in your bedroom, but if you can't help it, if you think it needs to be there, that's fine, but go to sleep from the inner body.

When you wake up, first thing, feel the inner body for five minutes, ten minutes. Don't read on your phone. You'll know soon enough what's happening in the world.

In the middle of the night you wake up, inner body, especially if you're tortured by your mind. How come I feel so much like a separate person? You say we are one being, but why do I feel like a separate entity, a me?

Why is this feeling so deep in me? On one level you are a separate person. There is a form identity.

You are this particular form and the amazing thing is there's not a single human being on the planet or ever has been who is exactly like you. Of course there may be people who very much resemble you, but it's unlikely that your mother or father would ever be fooled by somebody says he or she is you, but would immediately recognize you out of billions of humans and that's just the outer appearance and even your life story, the story of your life on the level form is very unique. There are many similarities, yes, with others and depends of course how individualized you are.

If you lived in a tribal consciousness then there would be far more similarities. If you lived in a more individualized consciousness then enormous differences between humans. So your form identity as a form identity, which is your body, your mental makeup, the psychology of you, the personality, the aspects that make up your

personality, the elements of who you are as a person, which as they're all mental-emotional formations that are in you, you identify with them, they are you.

This is your psychological form of you and again nobody is quite the same as you. You're unique and that's all to do with your form identity. Every human is different and yet, yes, there are many similarities especially in the way in which their mind functions.

The content of people's minds differs but the basic functioning of the egoic mind is the same. In other words, you derive your sense of identity from certain images and narratives in your mind accompanied by emotions. This is a conditioning of your mind.

That's the same for everybody. So the basic mechanism behind the ego is the same. The content of the ego varies.

Depends what culture you grow up in, what life experiences you've had, especially in childhood and so on. But that's all your form identity. And the ego, by the way, if you don't know what it is, ego is complete identification with the conditioned mind.

That's the ego. When you're no longer identified with the conditioned mind, there is still a conditioned mind but there's an awareness behind it, which means you're relatively free of ego, although not perhaps for quite a while. Periodically you will get drawn back into complete identification.

The ego is back and you're out again and you're back again and you're out again. I know people who've been on the spiritual path for many years and I can often observe that there's almost two humans are there in one. One is the conditioned ego personality that sometimes operates totally and at other times there is a more awakened consciousness there that speaks through them and acts through them.

And you never know who is going to be there at any given moment. And very interesting to see, at first people who meet you, if you are such a person, somebody who meets you, one state, somebody may meet you at a time when you're egoically possessed, the ego has taken possession of you again and you're in a reactive mode and a fearful mode or you want to control, you want something from somebody, whatever the ego wants to add to itself and somebody meets you there and you have a certain impression of who you are and then may not realize that the next day you may be suddenly very conscious. But that person then would already have formed an idea of who you are and might not even realize that the next day you're very conscious because that person will already have formed certain judgments about you, understandably so, because you're a jerk in that state, will have formed certain judgments about you and then of course these judgments are stuck in the person's mind, their own egoic mind and even if you behave differently you might not even see it anymore because they've already formed an opinion or judgment about who you are. The mistake is when you see a human being you think there's a single entity then. I'm not just talking about humans manifest,

humans are actually on the spiritual path, who are in the process of awakening or in whom the awakening process is happening, they can still be drawn back into egoic state of consciousness, especially when certain challenges happen.

As I said, collective or personal, they can be drawn back into fearful mode, reactive mode, until the challenges of life, whether they are personal or of a collective kind, the big collective ones, until the challenges of life, instead of drawing you back into egoic state of consciousness, reactive and so on, the challenges can also have the opposite effect and this is why they are so helpful, they can awaken you and so many of you are at this point where you could go either way, you could be drawn back through, at the moment, big collective challenges, you could be drawn back into a reactive, fearful, egoically possessed state of consciousness, especially if you listen to the news and the media too much and then you get drawn in, or the challenge is the great awakener and we are here, right here and now, in order to make sure that the challenges have this awakening function in you and in as many humans as possible and then, this doesn't mean that action is not important, action, of course we need to take action, it's important, but it's not the primary factor, action is always the secondary factor, primary factor is your state of consciousness that determines what kind of action you take, whether it's intelligent or stupid, it determines what the energy is that flows into the action that you take, so why we are here then is to use this precious time and I call it precious although normally, conventionally, the times we are living in would be called threatening, fearful, bad times, upheavals, disaster, and there may be more to come and it's a great opportunity within the totality of human evolution from a higher perspective, all these things are necessary developments, if it's happening it's necessary, there is an inevitability about whatever form the present moment takes, whatever form this moment takes, right here now, is to do with the whole history of the universe has brought about this moment, the form it takes, so it couldn't be otherwise, but that doesn't mean that it has to stay the same, is as it is, and that's an interesting thing, that acceptance doesn't mean you are stuck in it, you're more likely to be stuck in it if you resist what is, famous saying, what you resist persists, so you're more likely to be stuck with this on a personal level or collective level, if you resist inner resistance, but if you can accept that this is what is, and then you can say, okay, fine, and where do I go from here, but you might need to take some action, but once you've said fine to the isness of this, you're more intelligent, because you're no longer reactive, you cannot say okay to what is, no matter what the appearance of it is, the okay to what is, to be friendly with the present moment, no matter what form it takes, enables you to have some access to the vertical dimension, the depth in you, which means also access the unconditioned intelligence, so it's the moment you are no longer resistant to the present moment, you become truly intelligent and capable of intelligent action.

There are people who are in conventional terms called intelligent, they might have a PhD or two, but live in continuous reactivity, denial, and they're against what is, and the

action is not ultimately intelligent. I call it intelligence in the service of madness. If you build an atom bomb, or you build chemical weapons, or you build something that is extremely destructive to the environment just for profit, of course, yes, it requires intelligence to build these things, it requires great intelligence to build an atom bomb, or chemical weapon, or some huge thing that uses nature and destroys it, but it's not true intelligence, it's egoic cleverness.

The real intelligence, which is inseparable from wisdom, a rare word these days, you won't hear much about wisdom, and you can't get a PhD in wisdom, so that arises from that deeper level, where the wisdom and intelligence are a single thing. Here's a question. Do we need all this suffering and adversity that the planet is currently facing to bring forth a new Earth that you wrote about?

Apparently, yes, otherwise it wouldn't be happening. Well, that was a short answer. Oh, I just realized that I haven't fully answered the previous question, which was, how come I feel so much like a separate person?

You say we are one being, but why do I feel like a separate entity, a me? Why is this feeling so deep in me? So I already gave one half of the answer, and then I got sidetracked, so the one half of the answer was, yes, you are a separate being.

As a form identity, you are a separate being, and that's how it's meant to be, and it's fine. The only problem arises, or the suffering arises, if this separate being is the only way in which you know yourself. You only know yourself as this separate being, then, yes, then you are in a state of delusion, ultimately, because you don't know the most vital fact about yourself, and I don't talk about conceptual knowing.

So there's nothing wrong with being that's a separate being, as long as you have this body and so on, you are a separate being. But is that all? If you only know yourself as a separate being, then your life is frustrating, and you suffer a lot, because you ignore an entire dimension of your existence, and that is the vertical dimension.

And in the vertical dimension, you are connected, one with all that is, not only with every other human, you're connected with a source of all life that sometimes is called God, and you need to know that. How do you know that? It begins with a simple thing.

Here and now, this moment, stop thinking, just a moment of no thought, like now, doesn't matter how long, 5 seconds, 10 seconds, no thought, stillness. And in that brief moment of stillness, strange thing is, from the point of view of the horizontal you, you no longer know who you are in that moment of stillness, where there's only still presence, you don't know who you are. On the horizontal dimension, you know very well who you are, you can talk about it endlessly, can think about it endlessly.

But on the vertical dimension, the moment you enter it, in the moment of no thought,

you no longer know who you are. And that not knowing, in conceptual terms, activates a deeper knowing that's non-conceptual. So in that moment, you know who you are, but you can't talk about it, because you know that you are that presence.

But it's not differentiated, and you can't remember it. So there's a deep knowing there, in that unknowing, there is a deep knowing. You have to have the courage to go into that unknowing and be rooted in that unknowing, and then the other dimension of you can operate much more effectively, fruitfully, harmoniously, compassionately, in this world.

The horizontal, the personality of you, can only become transformed if you realize the other dimension. I sometimes call this vertical the transcendent dimension of consciousness. So you need both as a human being here, your destiny, your fate, your purpose, your mission, is to live in both worlds at the same time.

There, where you don't know yourself, but you do know, but no longer conceptually, and the horizontal. It expresses itself more and more in the horizontal dimension of life. It expresses itself more and more here.

It transforms what's here. And that's the secret of life for humans at the present time. And to realize that is why we're here.

I hear a question, why do I choose to react when I know better, in quotation marks? Is being exhausted an excuse for making a shameful choice? Do I actually want to react and be bad?

That's interesting. People who are in the process of awakening often experience periods when they are very unawakened again. They revert back into reactivity and ego consciousness.

And then they are back in a more awakened state. And when they get into a more awakened state, they look back on something that perhaps they did the other day, or yesterday, or this morning, and say, how could I have been so, why was I suddenly so, whatever, I don't know what the questioner refers to, why was I so reactive to that person? Why was I so angry?

Why did I do that? How could I have done that? Then it happens repeatedly, and he's asking, why do I choose to react when I know better?

Now, the answer, of course, is you don't choose to react. And you know better only afterwards. So in the moment, you have no choice, because you are run by the conditioned mind, the mental-emotional field with its conditioned patterns.

And to be run by the conditioned mind means to be trapped in ego. So it's the ego in you that does it. You have no choice.

The choice only comes in when you're aware. So the choice would be there if you've noticed, let's say, in a conversation or an interaction with somebody, and you can suddenly feel the impulse to react and to say something, or whatever it is. And at that moment, if you could know it for what it is, an awareness is there.

And at that moment, you could choose either to say what you wanted to say, what the impulse wanted you to say, or you can let it go, not suppress it. Let it go, because you realize it as, to use a Buddhist term, unskillful. Buddhists like the term unskillful living.

Basically, that means, I call it unconscious, and Buddhists call it unskillful, unskillful action. And so you recognize it as unskillful, and you just let it go. But until that happens, when the awareness is there, yes, the impulse is about to take you over.

What tends to happen is the awareness comes in afterwards, but the time interval between having to act something out and realizing that this is what you did, the time interval gets shorter. So at first, you may act something out, and two days later, you think, oh. And then you act something out, and one day later, you act something out, and an hour later, you say, oh, the awareness comes.

And then you act something out, and a minute after you did it, you know it, oh, you did it again. Sometimes, of course, you find people apologize to others. They say, I'm so sorry I said that.

At that time, they were not sorry, because something else was in them that did it, almost another subpersonality, and the ego was there, did it. And most egos have different subpersonalities. They're all aspects of the ego.

So you have one subpersonality that, in certain circumstances, acts like a little child, oh. And then another one, when it gets triggered by something like money, suddenly gets extremely angry and fearful. Oh, you took that money away from me.

So you have a multiplicity of people inside you, and others who meet you happen to just meet one of them at that particular time. And you never know which one is going to come up any given day or in any given circumstance. I had close observation with people when I lived for a little while in a commune in England many years ago with a shared house with a bit of land.

And I could so clearly observe with many people living there how many of them were different people on different days, completely different. And I was often sitting at breakfast downstairs, and I could hear steps coming down. I wonder who is coming down now.

It could be the same human being, but a different incarnation of that same person. A very cheerful person. What a wonderful morning.

Great, isn't it? Great to be alive. We should be grateful to God for being here in this wonderful...

And the next day, God talked to me. Leave me alone. Don't want to know.

Same person. But in all cases, unconscious, taken over by certain patterns. Now, when there's awareness, then the different sub-personalities, which are aspects of the ego, are kind of more contained.

So you don't lose yourself in one or the other. They are more contained, and gradually they dissipate. So you're no longer many different people.

And then as you grow more conscious, you find yourself, you're basically the same, same, same in every circumstance. And you don't act out roles anymore, which is, you're the same whether you meet the Pope or the Dalai Lama, or you meet a person sweeping the street. It's exactly the same, because you don't have a mental image of who you're meeting, and you don't operate through mental images anymore.

You're meeting a human being. You're meeting the being. It's the same.

So when it happens, you don't have a choice, so you don't choose. The questioner asked, why do I choose to react? You don't choose.

It happens to you. Now, the next part of the question is, is being exhausted an excuse for making a shameful choice? It is true that when people who are beginning to awaken often find that when they have low energy, their consciousness is also low.

So they are tired, or they had a long day and exhausted, and then they just can't be present anymore. They don't have the energy to be present. Don't talk to me about presence.

I don't want to know just what is all that rubbish, presence. They're exhausted. A time comes when they begin to realize that, and then even when they're exhausted, they can still know that they're exhausted without it making them unconscious.

And the last part of the question is, do I actually want to react and be bad? No, you don't want to react and be bad, but the ego wants to react. And being bad is not bad either for the ego.

Trouble is good. To have an argument with somebody is great. To try to prove somebody's wrong is great.

The ego loves that. It needs to be right. It needs an enemy somewhere.

Please give me an enemy. Because if I don't have an enemy, I don't know who I am anymore. I define myself through the other.

And so I need to emphasize the otherness of the other, because otherwise I don't know who I am anymore. Individual people do it. Entire countries do it.

So they point to another country as those are the bad guys over there. The mainstream media, they participate. They habitually create an image of another country as bad.

And it's ego. It's collective ego. They don't know what they do.

So the question is not, do I actually want to react and be bad? No, you're not even there when it happens. It's happening to you or inside you, and you can't know anything about it.

You're asleep at that moment. Spiritually speaking, you're asleep. In other words, unconscious at that moment.

The moment you become conscious again, you look back and say, oh, I did it again. Well, you didn't. It happened to you.

But you have to suffer the consequences. Now some people, when this happens, there are people who are very unconscious and have violent tendency, very unconscious. They can even perpetrate acts of violence in moments of deep unconsciousness when they overcome.

They may not even be really aware at any time, but they can function normally for some of the time. In other words, I call that normal unconsciousness. You still can function, be a part of society.

Yes, in conflict with others, yes, but nevertheless, in normal unconsciousness, you can be part of society and function like millions of others, normal unconsciousness. And then periodically, from normal unconsciousness, they go down to deep unconsciousness. And such deep unconsciousness, they can perpetrate acts of violence.

Sometimes it happens through alcohol. Many crimes are committed because people get completely drunk, and then they get a gun, and then they shoot somebody. Just an argument is enough, and something dreadful happens.

So one could say, is this person who is now going to prison for the rest of his life, is he responsible? If he was completely unconscious when he did that, it just happened to him, and he did it, is he responsible? Now, if he's not responsible, as I seem to imply, because it's unconscious, then naturally, you would have to say, well, then he shouldn't go to prison, should he?

Well, then the reason you should give why he should go to prison is to protect others, because it probably will happen again. That's one reason why he should go to prison. And I would agree with that.

There's another reason, and that is, even though people may not be responsible for their unconsciousness, they still have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness. And this is how evolution happens. Many humans, they don't necessarily go to prison.

There are other consequences for unconsciousness. So even if you're not responsible, because it is the destiny of humans to become more conscious, to grow in consciousness. And for very unconscious humans, the way they become more conscious is to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness.

And by suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness, they become more conscious. In other words, some people become more conscious after 20 or 30 years in prison, or just a few years, and suddenly, suddenly the personality subsides and something else arises, and they go, wow. And they can't, who did that?

So it's a little paradoxical, but this is how evolution happens. For very unconscious humans, they perpetrate, they do bad things. Sometimes the consequence is their own premature death, because if you kill a few people, one day somebody kills you, or they get maimed, or whatever it is, you suffer the consequences of your unconsciousness.

And through that extreme suffering, there's an opportunity of awakening. So quite a few very unconscious humans awaken in that way. So you could say the ego, their very unconscious ego, ultimately becomes an instrument for their awakening, which is the ego's own death.

My final answer to the question then is, it may be that there's certain situations that you go into in your daily life that you know are more likely to trigger your unconscious reactivity, in other words, make you unconscious. It could be a person that you go visit, and this person always makes you unconscious, and that could be somebody you work with, or it could be somebody you've known for a very long time in your family, whoever it may be, maybe your parents. Whenever you visit your parents, the same script is being played out.

Your mother or father accuses you of not being good enough, or whatever they do, and you react, and you storm out, and you shout, oh, this is one of many possible scenarios. Or you, before having contact with your ex-spouse, for some reason you still need to be in contact to know that you're going to be triggered, and then instead of just going into the situation, use it as a spiritual practice to see if you can stay present while you talk to them. But you have to really feel your entire body when you talk to your ex-wife or ex-husband, and you have to go, okay, don't tell them I'm just practicing being present, that doesn't work.

Just be present as much as you can, so that's opportunity. And that's, of course, people with whom you share a lot of history are often like that. You need to, they trigger you.

And so before you interact with them, know, okay, I'll stay present now. And then you go into this high degree of alertness when you talk to them, so that you're not forced to act out the same script again, the same reactivity again, and again, and again. So as Ram Dass said, famous advice, if you're so enlightened, go and spend two weeks with your parents.

If you think you're so enlightened, go visit your parents for two weeks. Ah, well, that will give you good feedback where you're at. And it is often the case that other humans give you feedback as to your state of consciousness, because it's easy to fool yourself when you're alone in the room, or out in nature, and you say, oh, I'm completely enlightened now.

Nothing is bothering me. Wonderful. And then the next thing happens.

You meet somebody. What? How dare you say that?

How dare you? There's an interesting division. That's another challenge in our present age right now.

Not as acute a challenge as the pandemic, but there's a division between people, not only in the United States, but in many other Western countries, but perhaps, maybe stronger in the United States, but it's definitely also there in other Western countries, a division between, it's hard to put a name to it, maybe traditionally it was called left-wing and right-wing, but they seem to be, the polarities become more pronounced, as if they can't meet anymore, they can't have a conversation anymore.

And here's a question about what advice do you have when someone finds themselves in conversations with family members, friends, or co-workers, and it is obvious there are strong differences of opinion on a particular topic, such as health care, guns, same-sex marriage, immigration policies, homelessness, and politics. Yes. Well, what advice do you have when somebody finds themselves in conversations like that?

The way the question is asked, I don't see a problem. I know what the problem is. Strong differences of opinion.

Well, that wouldn't be a problem, would it? But there's more to it than that. It's not just strong differences of opinion, because that would be fine.

You have a different opinion than I. Okay. But that's not how it is.

What the questioner means, of course, is that people are identified with their opinion. What is an opinion? It's a thought form in your head.

And you've probably adopted that taken from somewhere outside, from watching the internet, mainstream media, or some alternative source. You took in some opinion about

any of these topics, and it becomes your opinion. What's an opinion?

It's a thought form. Now, an unconscious person, lack of awareness, awareness being at the deeper dimension of consciousness or higher dimension of consciousness, an unconscious person derives their sense of self from thought, plus emotions. Thoughts give them their sense.

So if you derive your identity from a thought, then you need to be right. Your opinion is regarded as the truth. You derive your sense of self from your opinion.

Therefore, if anybody questions it or contradicts, this person is actually perceived as attacking you, not as somebody who has a different opinion. The unconscious perception is that this person is attacking you. And then you react as if you had been almost physically attacked.

And this is how a discussion about these topics becomes very toxic. And it's not only when you're physically together, it operates in an exaggerated form when people only communicate online. And they communicate with people they haven't never even met.

All they have of the person is a statement that this person posted. And they react as if this person were the devil and their mortal enemy. They know nothing about this person.

And then they post something to insult that person, say what a dreadful human being you are. And once you've posted this thing, your ego feels a little bit bigger. But then of course comes a reply of that person.

And then you have to react to that. And then other people post things in reply to that. And then you find yourself in the middle of this.

Some people are behind you. Others are behind this other guy. And you can sit there for hours.

And the ego loves it. Completely crazy. It's one of the insanities of our civilization.

And there are many is that kind of interaction, complete identification with conceptual ideas and mistaking who a person is reducing another human being to a mental concept. Completely insane. And this is a new technology has enabled the human ego to proliferate and grow in that way.

And the people who participate in that don't even know that it's insane. And that's making them more and more unconscious. So the polarity has become more pronounced in viewpoints and opinions.

So you have basically, that can be kind of divided into left and right. Where is that going? Well, how is it going to end?

We don't know. Is there going to be some actual civil conflict? Is it going to end peacefully?

It depends how human consciousness, human consciousness will grow. It either grows through violent conflict, or it grows in a more peaceful way. In every age, the ego, the collective ego, manifests in different forms, but they differ from time period to time period.

In the 20th century, you had the collective ego manifesting in certain ways, for example, leading to the insanities of the First World War, and the Second World War, First World War, everybody was eager to fight in every country. They would say, Yeah, we're having another war. Great.

If you were there, you'd have been have to be very conscious to see the insanity of it all. Because it's not easy, you need to be pretty awakened to recognize the insanity in your own cultural environment, retrospectively, you can see it more easily, or they were crazy. Or you can go back to the Middle Ages, and many of the beliefs and what they did, and they burned people and they put the most absurd ideas.

Yes, there were some enlightened people, too. But the general culture was pretty crazy. And you can see how can they make it easy to see how crazy the human collective ego can be.

But how crazy is it? No, you could be part of it. Some of your opinions could be part of the insanity of the collective ego, and you wouldn't even know it.

I'm not going to tell you what it might be, because it's for you to become aware enough to find out for yourself. But yes, this age has a growing craziness about it, too. It's always what applies to the individual, what applies to the collective.

It's easier to see the unconsciousness in others than it is to recognize the unconsciousness in yourself. Just as it is easier to see the collective unconsciousness in a certain culture in past ages, or somewhere totally different on the planet, easier to see that than to see the craziness in your present, your own culture, where you are living. You need more awareness to see it.

I do not attack verbally any crazy beliefs that I see around in the popular culture because it's pointless. It would be like saying when somebody comes to me, if I were a psychologist or psychiatrist, and somebody comes and says, I am, well, let's say, what's a common delusion? I am a reincarnation of Napoleon, but nobody believes me.

I would not question and say, no, you're not. That's a delusion. I would just listen.

There's no point in, because if I question the delusion, he'll just run away or attack me. So I just listen. Okay, that's interesting.

And then perhaps by acting as the presence for his belief system, perhaps I can bring more presence to him just by being the presence there for him. And then perhaps he will have enough awareness to recognize his own delusion. And then I wouldn't have had, instead of me trying to convince him that he is deluded, I'm just there as the presence.

And I do the same. I don't comment on contemporary culture very much, except in general terms, because it's not helpful. It's my job to help people awaken.

As they awaken, they become aware of their thought processes, and they will also become aware of certain thought processes that are completely deluded, that they have taken on from somewhere, probably the internet. So I still need to complete my answer to this question. What advice do you have when you find yourself in conversations with people and so on, completely different opinions?

Well, what is your state of consciousness when you're engaged in these conversations with friends or family members and you disagree? That's the question to ask yourself. What is your state?

Do you experience certain emotions? How do you interact with them when you have a discussion about this or that? Are you completely identified with your opinion?

Do you become defensive or aggressive when you talk? Then you are part of the unconsciousness. And for the unconsciousness to operate, it needs at least two.

It needs two sides. If you don't offer any opposition to their viewpoints, then the conversation would quickly come to an end. Is it possible to have a conversation with completely different viewpoints about these topics without involvement of the ego?

Yes, it is possible. You do not have to give up your opinions. You can have your opinions on whatever these subjects you mentioned or others, but what you have to give up as you awaken, you do give up, is your identification with your opinions.

In other words, deriving your sense of identity, your sense of who you are from your mental positions. That's a delusion. And as long as you do that, you're engaged in a very unpleasant discussion where you're actually not defending the truth.

You're defending your fictitious sense of self. And the more you defend your fictitious sense of self, the more unconscious you become, up to the point of physical violence sometimes. That's it.

So it's up to you. It's not so much what others do. It's up to you to see, are you able to express your opinion even almost forcefully?

This is what I believe, but you are not in it. It's just that your opinion is there. It is.

Because, so where are you? You are behind that much deeper. You're the presence.

It's nothing to do with thought. So you derive your identity from the deeper place, your essence identity, and then you can play with ideas and discuss them. Now the question is, can the other person also do that, or are they completely identified?

Well, maybe they're still completely identified with their opinions, in which case it would be a very strange experiment to have a discussion with one participant not identified with their opinion, the other participant completely identified with their opinion. It would be interesting to see where that goes, or whether the conversation will quickly come to an end. There certainly would, that person who is identified, would they perhaps suddenly run away, because it's so weird to be, to have somebody who has no ego involvement in the discussion.

And that's for you to practice. Are you identified with your mental positions, or are you able to explain your mental positions without the self involved in them, your egoic self? Interesting experiment, so next time be very conscious when you have these discussions.

Now when you're discussing online, on the internet, it's a different matter. You're not really meeting a human being there. Do you dehumanize people by responding as if these people, who have different opinions, were the devil or your personal enemies?

So you have to be very conscious how do you interact with people if you do online, people that you've never even met. So be very, very much aware of your inner state while you don't post anything, or give it some time. That's perhaps a good recommendation.

Before you write something, but don't post it. Give it at least half an hour, one hour, or even better, have a good night's sleep. In the morning, look at it again, and then see, do I want to post this or not?

In many cases, you may want to say, okay, I don't need this. So the time interval perhaps is a helpful thing.

[Speaker 2] (50:17 - 50:36)

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Eckhart Tolle Healing Our Obsession with Doing [38be18ad-9a9d-41a7-b597-b42f3b2c94df]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:45)

Healing our obsession with doing. In this episode Eckhart talks further about how critical it is that we balance being with doing. He says without it we will not reach the deeper dimension of consciousness that is our legacy.

He explains that when we're so obsessed with doing and achieving we can't appreciate whatever it is here in the present moment, much less attain enlightenment. He states that the world is already overrun with doing and the result is chaos and that the solution to many of our problems, both individual and collective, start with seeking stillness. He reveals that we are never more ourselves than when we are still.

[Speaker 1] (0:48 - 39:11)

This must be what is called the limelight. I don't know what it has to do with lime. There must be some reason in the etymology of the limelight.

This may be a question and answer session. I say maybe because you never know. As the ancient Middle Eastern proverb says, the camel driver has his plans and the camel has its own plans.

Perhaps we can start with a few, before we go on to questions, a few additional remarks about the important subject of being and doing and finding a balance. And before finding a balance, being able to enter to access the being dimension. That's already a good start.

And then at first, what tends to happen, but also not invariably, is you enter the being dimension or access it when you're in a place that is conducive to the stillness or the serenity or here, a protected space, or perhaps at home in your room or here in your room, out in nature. And at first, the being dimension is associated with a conscious cessation of doing. That's how you first realize it.

It's when you're not doing anything and you can just be, consciously be, which implies a, no matter how brief, since a cessation of the primary doing, which is the thinking doing. Without a brief cessation in the stream of thinking, it's hard to find the being dimension. But later on, as you become consciously rooted in the being dimension, thinking and being can come together.

They are not irreconcilable. Irreconcilable. And in fact, that is one of your tasks is to, when you do think, not to be totally identified with a stream of thinking.

In other words, there's some attention in the background. There's an awareness, a field

of, or a space of awareness in the background, even while you're engaged in thinking. As it is now, as I'm speaking, of course, the mind is operating, but I can sense, and perhaps you can, in the background, behind the words, beyond the words, in between the words, there's that space of stillness, beingness, whatever you want to call it.

And if you can sense it, it's in you. Because only being can be aware of being, not the mind. If you believe being emanates from me, I suppose it does, but the recognition of being can only happen through accessing that dimension within yourself.

Only being can recognize being, not the mind. The mind, however, may come in when you, let's say you recognize the being dimension that emanates from this thing, that's the body or whatever it is. It emanates, and you sense it.

The moment you sense it, it's in you also, consciously. Now it's possible that the mind may come in and misinterpret what's going on, and the mind may confuse the form of the spiritual teacher, or whoever it happens to be, the form identity with the being dimension, and then suddenly the teacher is regarded as a supernatural being, or a kind of godlike figure, or some great guru, or whatever, because you confuse that which transcends the form, for which the form is only an opening, you confuse that with the form, and then you make that person through whom being shines, you make that person very special. This can happen easily.

It's a misinterpretation, but at least you recognized being, but what you overlooked is, because not everybody will recognize it in the being dimension in a human being, if it shines through strongly, not everybody will recognize. Some people say, what's this all about? Why are these people all listening to this guy for two hours?

He's not special, he doesn't even jump up and down the stage. He's just boring, isn't he? He's boring.

So that's a danger. That is also a danger as far as the spiritual teacher is concerned, because there may be remnants of ego left in him or her. And if the teacher is bombarded with continuous projections of specialness, he or she may begin to believe, in other words, the ego comes back through the back door and regains ascendancy, and the ego comes back, and then the teacher begins to think, to feel a specialness in the person, the form.

And then it has happened many times, the teacher makes statements such as, I'm certainly the greatest teacher alive on the planet at the present moment. Or it may go so far as to say, I'm the greatest that has ever lived. All the others were precursors.

I have arrived. There is something incredibly special coming through, but it is nobody's possession. It's nobody's achievement.

It does not belong to the form dimension. But the form dimension can be an opening,

just like a window. In a way, one could say, this body and this mind is the window frame.

What you see is the window frame. But what the most important thing about the window is the light that comes through the window, that's the opening. And this may also happen to you as presence arises, if it's not happened already, for many of you probably has happened already, you come into contact with people who are helped by your presence.

Even if you don't feel that you know what to do, because it doesn't work like that. And they are drawn to you, they're helped by your presence. There's a kind of transmission, it can awaken the presence in the other, that dimension, the being dimension in the other.

And then you can find, they may then become attached to you, because they feel so good in your presence. And they can't let go. And again, the danger already arises then that you feel, I, I have done this.

There's a, one could call that healing in a deeper sense, not just physical healing, but the true healing is the reconnection with the being dimension, that's the true healing. And there's a phrase in this book called the cause and miracles, which is, the healer does not heal, he lets healing be. He does not heal, he lets healing be.

So when you are with people who are seeking help, then you don't need to go into your mind and say, how can I help this person? And the person is talking to you, and you already think, perhaps I could say that, I can say that. It doesn't work like that.

You're just present. At some point, you may say something from, comes from a deeper place, or you may not even say anything, and there's just an answer may suddenly appear in the other person, and suddenly, oh, and you never said or did anything, you just sat there. So at first, the being dimension, you find it as separate from external activity or thinking.

That's a good beginning. And then gradually, you learn that it is not irreconcilable with external activities. It's a presence through movement is a good practice, because you do not need to sit still to find stillness, which is another word for it, which people believe initially.

Stillness also has kind of two meanings in English. On the one hand, stillness means the absence of noise. But another meaning of stillness is the absence of movement.

And you say, sit still. It's the absence of movement. He stood still, he sat.

So it's stillness points in English to the absence of either noise or movement. So when we talk about stillness, you might think you have to, you can't move in order to be, to consciously sense the being dimension, you clearly mustn't move. And then you learn

you can actually move.

And in fact, it can be helpful. You begin with that. And then you can perform certain tasks, and still being that connectedness with being instead of completely losing yourself in the activity.

You can have goals to pursue, which is in the realm of doing. It's good to have goals, although there may be periods in your life when you don't need any goals. Certainly, if you reach a certain age, it becomes increasingly pointless to pursue goals, at least at the latest by the age of 95.

You don't need to pursue any more goals unless for some reason you have to. But even before then, there may be time periods in your life when the pursuit of goals is not necessary. And you can become more deeply immersed, just be engaged in ordinary everyday activity without having pursuing any particular big goal, big or small, working towards something.

But on the whole, it's good to have goals. But again, goals belong to the realm of doing. And that's fine.

The problem arises if the goal absorbs so much of your attention, the meaning, the desired outcome, the place you want to arrive at, whatever that may be, passing an exam, achieving a certain position, acquiring mastery in some activity, whatever it may be. If the desired outcome occupies a place in your mind that's overwhelming or you desperately need to arrive at that place, then in the meantime, all the things that you do, the steps you take, the activities you undertake in order to arrive at your goal, are then simply a means to an end. And they are not enjoyable because you desperately want to have arrived already, to have attained that already.

So some ambitious people are like that. They are, what's the expression, consumed by ambition. This is almost literally true.

And in the meantime, they're very unhappy while they're working so hard or whatever they do to achieve their goal. And not only are they unhappy and full of anger very often and irritation when things don't go the way they want them to go, when little obstacles arise, as they always do, often in the form of people. So often they get angry.

So the entire journey is a place of unhappiness and stress and turmoil and often toxic emotions. And not only do they make themselves unhappy, whoever's around them is also unhappy. The entire company, if it's a big business, the entire company is unhappy basically and stressed.

And so although there is a saying that in order to achieve anything in life, you need to learn to, what's the expression, it's to delay gratification. There is some truth to that, some truth. You can have a young person, one young person studies to go to college and

studies in the evenings and only goes out occasionally.

Then their next door neighbor can't be bothered, wants immediate gratification and starts drinking and indulging in not only intoxicating beverages, but also substances and whatever hangs out in clubs. And what's the point in doing anything? And a few years later, the one who delayed gratification achieved something.

And so that seems to be true. The danger is with that recipe of delayed gratification is it becomes a mindset in you that you cannot get rid of after a few years of practicing delayed gratification. You never arrive at gratification except very briefly.

And then you have to delay again because you have another goal that consumes you. That's the danger. And all that means that it's not balanced.

The life is not balanced by the being dimension. You're so obsessed with doing and arriving and achieving that you cannot appreciate whatever is here at the present moment. It's like you're on a hike and you want to go to the top of the mountain or whatever it is.

You're determined to do it in six hours. I'm doing to do it. I'm timing myself and I'm going to do it.

On the way, you see the most beautiful flowers and the sky and incredible marvels of nature. You don't see any of that because you desperately want to arrive. This is your task.

And finally you make it. But what was the journey like? It wasn't that great because you didn't see all the beauty around you.

As the expression goes, you couldn't stop and smell the flowers. Because if you could stop for a moment, there's the being dimension, is present moment. It's inseparable from the present moment, from acknowledging the present moment.

That's the portal or the entry point into the being dimension is the present moment. If you miss that, you might have certain successes as what the world called success. You might have certain successes in life, but fairly pointless because the whole journey was a journey of unhappiness.

And even when you arrive, you're still a stressed out being. I'm not necessarily saying everybody is successful. There may be some humans who are able to balance being.

In fact, there are, I've met a few who are very successful in the world. Nevertheless, I'm not lost in the activity, still being able to appreciate the present moment. And then what about the delayed gratification then?

How does that work? Well, is it possible to change your attitude and instead of saying,

okay, I have to delay gratification, are you able perhaps to enjoy whatever activity you engage in? Let's say you're learning to play an instrument and you want to get good at it.

And other people are playing around and you are practicing. Are you able perhaps to experience gratification even with a practice before you arrive at mastery, even at the very beginning? So it is possible to move.

Many, many tasks can be performed in such a way that you don't need to delay gratification. Your attitude towards the task can change so that the task itself becomes satisfying already in itself. And then you don't need to delay gratification because the gratification can already be here in the present moment.

Many things can be actually enjoyed, although the world may tell you you're doing this in order to arrive. It's only a means to an end. And when that becomes a mindset, then your entire life becomes a means to an end.

Where's the end? You never arrive. So you are transforming, converting, reducing the present moment to a means to an end.

The one thing that only, the only thing that ever is real, you're saying, well, that's just, I'm just trying to get there. This is just a stepping stone. That's the unconscious pattern.

I'm trying to get there. Here is never good enough. Why is it not good enough?

Because the true goodness derives from that inner place, the recognition of being. That's the source of all joy or happiness. Joy might be a better word.

Happiness is kind of more superficial. Happy. I'm so happy.

Things are going great for me. I'm happy. So everything is going great.

Until the next day. Something went wrong. I'm not happy anymore.

And the strange thing is you can experience the superficial emotions of happiness and unhappiness while you're connected to the deeper dimension of being. So when somebody close to you dies, weeping can happen. So you, one cannot say, I'm still happy.

My, my mother has died. My father's died. My child has died.

I'm, I'm still happy though. I'm happy. No, you can't be.

How can you be happy? But you may be weeping, but deep inside you're at peace, even while on the surface, there is a movement of sadness, which one would call unhappiness. And then something good happens and say, Oh, great.

It's fine. But it's not. It doesn't make you ecstatic when something good happens to you.

You've won the lottery. That's the thing people think of that when something good happens. Oh, by the way, as you probably know this, you've been written books about it.

But many, many people, the majority of people who make big lottery wins, their life deteriorates over a period of five, five to 10 years, they become more unhappy than they were before. But that's another matter. So something good happens.

And again, if you're totally dependent on external conditions for your happiness, then if something good happens, like lottery win, you go, you're incredibly, incredibly, you're on a huge high. You can sometimes see people, people to suddenly achieve something and to go, wow. That's a high, and it won't last very long.

But if you're connected with being you still go, oh, that's great. But it's no longer. There's no longer this unbalanced reaction.

I remember Oprah was telling the story about me that I forgotten about it. But she told it several times. And she called me if she wanted to tell me about the new us had been selected for a book club.

She called me, I have selected your book. I said, Oh, that's good. That's wonderful.

Great. And she thought, well, that's strange. That's not how normally people react.

And then she said, and also I want to do with you a six week, six or eight seminar every week, we're going to do it together on the webinar, on the book, one chapter per week. And I said, Oh, have you done this before? He said, No, I haven't this first time.

Oh, that's great. Yes, I'll do it. And she found that so strange that later she talked about, he said, when I called Eckhart, he just said, Okay.

I was happy. And then perhaps a couple of years later, I haven't heard from her in two years. She's forgotten about me.

So, and this applies to even a simple thing, I gave the example of going on a hike, or walk, or whatever, again, to bring in the appreciation of the present moment, even while you're pursuing a goal, so that the activity, the action is of a high quality, that's an interesting way of putting it. You perform an action consciously in the present moment, not because you want to get to some other moment, you give your fullest attention to whatever action you're taking at this moment, whether you're on a hike, it's the step you're taking now, and you're looking around, there's beauty everywhere. So you give your fullest attention to the action you're taking.

That's high quality action. Consciousness flows into what you do in the present moment. And the strange thing is, you are more likely to succeed in your endeavors.

If that is the underlying state of consciousness, you're more likely to succeed when you no longer desperately need to succeed. And so you begin to bring together the being dimension and the doing dimension in activities, honor the present moment. It's more important than the next moment or the yes, you want to get to your goal, but whatever is now is of primary importance.

That's a shift in consciousness. Whatever your activity or you're doing is now is of primary importance. The getting there is of secondary importance.

You need it, it's good, but it's of secondary importance. There's a story of a Zen master who was watching an archery competition where they have big bows and arrows. And there was a famous master of archery, and he wasn't doing very well.

He was not hitting the target. And the master was watching, the disciple asked, why isn't he doing well today? And the master said something like, his desire to win deprives him of power.

His desire to be the best deprives him of it. In other words, he is not totally present. He is focusing on the outcome, not totally present in the doing.

And so the doing is of a lower quality. And the wonderful thing is not every endeavor that you undertake is going to succeed. That's just the nature of things.

You may have great plans, maybe you never arrive. It's possible. Go to Los Angeles, where in every good restaurant, all the waiters and waitresses are actors.

But for the time being, they are out of a job, but they are wanting to arrive. Obviously, a few do, and many do not. Does that mean a failed life?

Not at all. Something else will arise that may be infinitely better than acting. But in the meantime, how do you perform the activity that you're engaged in now?

Do you honor the present moment? What would you like? Yes, okay.

An omelet, right? Okay. And then you bring it and you put the plate down on the table consciously.

It's very different from somebody who's just a waiter, just puts it, there it is. Here you are. Okay.

Put it down consciously. It doesn't have to be slower than normal, just consciously. And then you honor the other person.

Is there anything else I can get you? Is there any? Oh, right.

And so you're enjoying even that instead of mentally saying, this is what has come to

now. I'm working as a waiter and I was meant to be a great star. And perhaps life will move in a totally different direction.

But the starting point is the performance of the action now, which if it's done consciously, much more likely to lead to the next thing, whatever that may be. It may be totally different from acting. The point may come when you are happy that you never became a great star in Hollywood, because we might see that a lot of that is actually extremely fake.

It doesn't necessarily mean that everybody in there is fake, but well, many are. Yeah. Not all.

And then the next thing to reconcile the doing and being, this is advanced practice. While you're engaged in speaking and thinking, not to lose yourself in the stream of the mind, the mental stream, especially discussing something. You have opinions that may be important to you.

Do you derive your identity from your opinions? Or are you just holding opinions and your identity comes from a deeper place? That's the question.

If your identity comes from a deeper place, then you can remain, your awareness remains in the deeper place. So the awareness is the deeper place. So you're engaged in speaking and thinking.

Let's say you need to solve, there's a problem to be solved. This is constructive thinking. What can I do in order to get to where I want to go?

What can I do about this problem? I can do this, this or that. Well, that's not it.

And then there you learn to step out of thinking periodically and become alert and still. And when you resume thinking, often an insight suddenly arises, a thought that you hadn't had before comes from a deeper place. And not only that, sometimes if you access that deeper place, so your thinking can be interspersed with spaces.

And even while you talk, you say what you had to say, and then you come to an end. And you step back into awareness while you listen to the other person. And you're not preparing the next thing you're going to say.

You just, you're present and you listen, stepping back into presence. So that you're not dragged along in this mind stream. Often when people have discussions and you can observe how there's just no end, they're being dragged along this stream.

So it's a bit like this awareness in the background, which is the being dimension, while things happen in the foreground, that is the secret to living a fulfilled life, no matter what form that takes externally. And so one could compare this to, one can use the analogy

of, let's say your life is a painting. And all the situations and the things that you do and that happen to you, let's say it's a moving painting.

Well, most paintings are not static. But in this analogy, you have a painting, it's moving, it's your life, all the stuff that happens to people and situations and so on. But the painting is painted on a canvas.

Without the canvas, there could be no painting. So let's take this analogy a little bit further, where it becomes a little bit absurd. Let's say the painting wants to become conscious of itself.

And it realizes that suddenly, the very foundation for it all is the canvas. The painting becomes aware of the canvas and not only of the things that happen on the canvas. So what is the canvas in this analogy?

That is the space, space consciousness, as I sometimes call it, being consciousness. And the rest is the foreground, the entire life is foreground, which is object consciousness, space consciousness, optic consciousness, being, doing, being, becoming, because on that level of doing, you're also engaged in becoming. You're doing and you develop as a human being, you become more knowledgeable, you become more experienced, you become stronger, you become whatever you become, there's a development, there's a growth, that's fine, that's wonderful.

And of course, at some point, there's a downside to the becoming, the becoming is no longer a positive thing, because you're becoming old. After all the achievements, if there are achievements, you suddenly realize, I have become many wonderful things and now I'm becoming old. So don't get too much drawn into the stream of becoming, although it's a good thing, it's part of being human, you have to be engaged in the stream of becoming.

But if that's all there is, it will not end well. It cannot. Then the point comes when things that you have acquired, you have to let go, that's the older you get, and you lose abilities, bodily functions, and so on.

So you have the two sides of becoming, there's nothing wrong with becoming. And if you have a correct attitude towards becoming, because there's more to your consciousness than the stream of becoming, then even the negative side of becoming, is not going to be terrible anymore. Because the growing old process, you observe it, and it doesn't matter at all, it's fine.

I'm speaking from experience. And there's a place inside you that doesn't feel old at all. The consciousness is timeless and it's only when you accidentally look in the mirror and you say, who is that?

That's, who is that old man? But imagine how hard it is to grow old when you have been

identified with a body, for example, derived your sense of self-worth from looking good or being strong. How dreadful that is, what the suffering, the psychological suffering, far more than physical suffering that comes when certain bodily functions are not functioning anymore.

So the psychological suffering is terrible. And even achievements, at some point, you have to let go, or it's taken away from you. So, my intention was to deliver a few additional remarks to...

The camel had its own plans.

[Speaker 2] (39:15 - 39:35)

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Eckhart Tolle Healing Trauma Through Presence **[dd1596ad-12ec-4ae6-a956-edc9ba5f85bb]**

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:49)

Healing trauma through presence. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about healing from childhood trauma. He says it is important to acknowledge the trauma and to work through it, but not to get stuck in it.

He believes that while we may feel like a victim, it is not ultimately who we are. Eckhart shares stories about his own childhood trauma. He explains that his father had intense anger issues and abandoned Eckhart and his mother when he was just 11 years old.

As an adult, Eckhart later realized that his father had been traumatized by his own childhood. He says dysfunctional family patterns are handed down generation after generation, and he says healing happens when we break the cycle and that by practicing presence, we realize we're more than all the painful things we have experienced.

[Speaker 4] (0:52 - 1:07)

I think this is something many people will relate to. The person writes in, how can I overcome childhood traumas related to my parents and earliest experiences that I can clearly see are affecting my life today?

[Speaker 1] (1:08 - 20:53)

Right. Trauma would be some significant form of suffering that happened to you as a child, which is not uncommon. The question is, how does this trauma manifest in your present life and in the present moment?

How does it diminish your enjoyment of life, your experience of the present moment? How does it bring about perhaps even dysfunctional behavior in you? And then you can, if you look at it closely, you can see it exists in you as probably an emotion, an emotional field that I call it the pain body.

It gets triggered. It may not always be on the surface, but in certain situations, particularly, it gets triggered. And when it takes you almost, one could say it takes you over partially or completely.

So the trauma exists in you as an emotion. And it also exists in you as a thought or a stream of thinking as a narrative in your mind. Because these are certain things that happened.

You remember these things, and you have a particular way of explaining them to yourself. And trauma, in most of these cases, means that some other human being,

whether it's parents or caregivers, or other or siblings or other humans, inflicted suffering on you that left these emotional, mental emotional wounds in you. So the only way you can overcome is by intensifying your presence, so that when the trauma becomes reactivated in you, and you experience it as an emotion or as a certain stream of thinking in your head, you're aware that this is what it is.

You know where it comes from, and you can feel it. And as you become more present, the first thing that you are able to overcome will be your narrative, the narrative in your mind that's connected with certain traumatic events. The emotion is there.

For the time being, all you can do is accept it when it comes, but recognize it for what it is. The question is whether the emotion still has a strong link with your thought processes. In other words, you think about these things that happened, and people that were involved in what happened.

And this often, when you think about these things that happened in the past that were done to you, be very much aware of what kind of narrative you have in your mind, and whether the narrative in your mind, whether you are a character in this narrative in your mind, and whether you, like in a, we call it a narrative, so it's a kind of, let's say it's like a story, are aware of whether you are a character that is a victim of these events, of these people.

And that is actually a hidden way for the ego to thrive in you, is by creating, by using certain painful life experiences, especially from childhood, can even be after childhood, using them so that you form a victim identity around these events. So you, there are the perpetrators, and you are the victim. I'm not denying that bad things and terrible things happen to people, and terrible things perhaps happen to you.

The question is whether by reviving continuously these past events in your mind, you are creating, or ask yourself, am I creating an identity for myself that is mind made, a conceptual identity in which I am the victim? And that is a very seductive thing. The ego, as you may remember or know, the ego looks for superiority in whatever way it can.

It needs to be superior to somebody or others to enhance its sense of self, its fictitious sense of self. It's a mind made, it's a conceptual sense of self. And if you cannot be the great one who achieves great successes, or has more things than others, can do more things than others, looks better than others, is stronger than others, these are ego identities too, conceptual identities.

But many people don't have anything, they don't have much more than others, they are not better looking than others, they don't know more than others, can't do more than others, so where does the ego go if you don't have anything? So in the case of trauma, but not only in the case of past trauma, even in many other cases, the ego seeks itself, it seeks to continuously replenish itself by building up a victim identity for yourself. I'm not

denying that bad things happen to you, but are you creating, this is a very, very thing you need to be very much aware of, are you creating an identity, which is ultimately a fictitious identity, it's a conceptual identity, which is a narrative-based identity, are you creating a victim identity for yourself out of these events?

If you are, then that's the ego, and once you have established that, it's not easy to get out of it. I don't know whether that's the case with you, the questioner, you may have already gone beyond victim identity and just experienced the trauma as emotion that comes up periodically, or certain kinds of reactivity in certain situations that are based on the traumatic events. So you have to see for yourself whether it's primarily emotional, whether the trauma survives in you as the pain body or such as emotional suffering, or whether the trauma also abides in you through continuously dwelling on narratives in your mind, in which your victim identity is continuously strengthened by reviving the narratives in your mind.

You think about these events, you maybe even talk about them, think about them again, and you have to, these perpetrators then, you're also constructing an identity for them. Why do humans inflict suffering on others? And of course it is to do with the evolutionary stage of human development, because humans have inflicted an unbelievable amount of suffering on their fellow humans in people's personal lives, and collectively even more.

You go to a history book and see how many millions upon millions of humans have been, even in the 20th century, have been killed by other humans, not just in warfare between nations, even within nations. Governments killed their own people, millions of them. So it's an unbelievable amount, and this is to do with the unconsciousness in humanity.

They are, as Jesus is supposed to have said on the cross, forgive them for they know not what they do. Now what does that mean? It means that they know not what they do means they are completely unconscious.

They are in the mercy of the egoic sense of self. They are unconscious. Forgive them means recognize that they manifest this unconscious evolutionary stage of human development, but don't make an identity out of it for these people.

Don't say this is who they are. So neither this is not who they are, whoever has inflicted suffering on you, and the victim is not who you are. So that you get out of conceptual identities that are built around certain traumatic events, coming back to your question.

So we often, by the way, you also need to do that collectively, because it's very seductive to create a collective victim identity, so when you belong to a group, or you think mentally, you say, in this group, bad things have been done to this group, and of course, yes, humans have inflicted, certain groups of humans have inflicted suffering on other groups of humans, and we're not denying that it's to do with human unconsciousness.

But the fallacy is if we build up an identity around that, that is a conceptual identity in the mind, which is ego, that keeps you trapped in, ultimately, the state of unconsciousness yourself. So you recognize the perpetrators did what they did, because there was not enough consciousness there to do otherwise. Coming back to just a little example from my life, my father was drawn to when my parents were still married, and I was a child between the age of one and 11.

They were living together with me. My father was at intense anger in him. Later, I realized why, but we don't need to go into that.

It's to do with certain dramatic events in his childhood. So he could be triggered by a word, or somebody said something, and there was always stress when he was there, because it was like an unexploded bomb that you had living with you, could go off at any moment into intense anger. And later, I realized, how could I blame him for that?

He was at the mercy of that conditioning in himself. It was created by his own suffering. And the people who inflicted that suffering on him, they did it because they had their own traumatic events in their childhood.

It can go back generation and generations. So the unconsciousness is passed on in certain ways to children and their descendants, and so on. And so it was never his identity.

It was never who he was. He couldn't help it. He was at the mercy of that conditioning.

And so once you recognize that, then you no longer construct an identity for these perpetrators. You see what they did. Forgiveness means you recognize that it happened as a result of human unconsciousness.

It doesn't necessarily mean that you may want to even spend time with them. Forgiveness doesn't mean that, necessarily. And you may want to continue not to have contact with them anymore.

That's possible too, but there's no longer an internal narrative around it that strengthens your own sense of identity. So getting rid of the victim identity is very important as an important step in overcoming the remnants of past trauma. So you recognize it.

Then you see the narrative in your mind, it's simply you rephrase the narrative as you were the victim of human unconsciousness. As we all are, to a greater or lesser degree, you were the victim of human unconsciousness, but it was part of the evolutionary process of humanity. But the strange thing is, humans do not evolve except through suffering, challenges.

That you ask this question, the questioner, and you are here asking this question because of what happened to you. So you are awakening spiritually, because you need

to overcome the trauma. If there was no trauma that you needed to overcome, you wouldn't be here.

You would be, I don't know, you would be sitting somewhere drinking a beer and watching television. There's what else to do. So these things are very helpful.

Be grateful that that's there. Be careful with the narrative in your mind so that the mental processes no longer create a perpetrator identity or a victim identity. And so then that becomes, once you're no longer at the mercy of the thought processes, then all you're left with is emotion that comes up from time to time.

And the emotion no longer controls your thinking. That's the important step in overcoming trauma, pain body. If the emotion, you're no longer doing the emotional thinking that's connected to that past event.

So when the pain body arises, you're able to observe it directly, to be aware of it directly. It no longer rises up into your mind and reactivates the narrative in your mind about what they did to me, what they or he or she did to me, the dreadful, or maybe it was God, what God did to me, or how unfairly life treated me, all that. But when the emotion rises up into your mind, it reactivates this old narrative.

And that, as you become more present, the emotion will remain for a while. But the link between the emotion and your thought processes gets severed. And that's the most important step, because if you do not sever or cut the link between the emotion and your thought processes, if that doesn't happen, then there's a vicious circle, because your thought processes that continuously revive the traumatic event, feed the emotion periodically, which is the pain body.

The thought processes feed the emotion, then the emotion rises back into your mind and feeds your thinking. And that is a vicious circle in which some humans are trapped until they die. And so cutting the link between your thought processes and the emotion is vital, because it can only happen through presence.

So that your thought processes and your thinking then no longer produces suffering. Your thinking is no longer ego-based. Of course, you remember the event, but it no longer has an ego around it.

And what you're left with then is the emotion that will come up from time to time, and may still from time to create certain reactions, but if you say not enough presence yet. And as presence grows, through the practice of awareness in everyday life, not just when you're being challenged, but in everyday life, practice as much as possible to be present. We've spoken about that, be present whenever you can.

And as presence grows in you, the pain body begins to become transmuted. Whether it becomes totally transmuted in your lifetime, we don't know. But ultimately, it doesn't

matter, because you're no longer at the mercy of it.

It is no longer your identity. Your identity is no longer determined by the traumatic event. And that's an enormous liberation.

Because if your essential identity, if you believe that that identity is, to a large extent, created by the traumatic event, then you're trapped in ego, and you're trapped in unconsciousness, and you're trapped in resentment, and you're trapped in suffering. So that's so important. So the, your identity is, is no longer derived from thought processes.

Your identity comes from a deeper place, the place of presence, you are the presence. And that's, that's liberation, you're not, your identity is no longer determined by what is derived from the trauma. And that is how gradually the trauma diminishes.

As long as you're identified, as long as it determines who you feel or think you are, you cannot become free. It could go on for, if you live for hundreds of years, go on for hundreds of years, and you probably pass on that particular conditioning even to others. So this is the, I've just explained the, the process, it's, it's terribly important.

And the time will come if it is not already now, where you become grateful for the trauma, because it, it forced you into awakening. And that is the, that's the grace that's hiding behind every seemingly negative event. It's always there.

[Speaker 3] (20:55 - 21:04)

Good evening, Eckhart. First of all, namaste and thank you for the profound change you and Kim have brought to my life.

[Speaker 1] (21:05 - 21:05)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (21:06 - 22:03)

My question is related to the inner body meditation. So I've been practicing it regularly in these past few weeks. And you've mentioned before that the success criterion is the sense of joy.

During this meditation practices, I think I've experienced moments of emptiness in the best sense of the work, like, you know, moments where I feel at deep peace where, you know, there are no emotions or thoughts whatsoever. But there's no joy either. I mean, it's like pure emptiness.

So I'm just wondering if there's any other success criterion other than the sense of joy? Or is this just another different type of joy you are referring to? In other words, am I doing this correctly?

That's my question.

[Speaker 1] (22:03 - 29:15)

Yeah, well, that's a good question. Yeah. It's probably best not to look for joy, but just to be to be present.

But if possible, intensify your the sensing of presence a bit more so that the presence to be present is both active and a passive thing. The passive thing is because when you totally accept, for example, when you totally accept this moment as it is, the portal into presence opens up to complete because you're completely okay with this moment as it is. So complete acceptance of this moment is the portal into presence, one of the portals into presence, complete acceptance of what is this moment.

And that's one could say is the passive, or one could almost say the yin aspect of presence. It's that the same like the images of Mary, this female, except the hands are stretched out, it receives whatever is there, it allows whatever is there, or kwan yin, or whatever it may be, that's presence. There's another, the other aspect of presence is active, and it's more yang.

And there's an intensity behind it, the two kind of come together. So when you accept this moment as it is, you might think, accepting kind of as, oh, I accept this. But there's also there needs to be at the same time, an intensity of presence.

And with that intensity, you sense more acutely what presence is. There's no stress behind it. But there's a, there's a high degree of alertness behind.

But in that alertness, you're not really looking for anything, not even for joy. Because you're looking for something, then there's very reason why you can't find it. So the, there's an intensity of presence, and all you feel is that intensity of presence.

And it's sometimes compared to the sword of presence, the sword, the sword of presence cuts through time. And then in the presence, you don't look for joy. Because if the more aware you become of the presence, and that's already a wrong way of putting it, because we're using language, we're creating subject and object.

When I say you become aware of presence, it's not really the case. Because you and presence are the same, you essentially are presence. So you become aware of yourself, but you still have a subject and object.

There's a self-awareness that self and that is, you become more deeply aware of yourself, there's a self-awareness in you. And then you reach a point where that self-awareness is very, very alive. You may not call it joy.

You may have certain ideas associated with joy that don't actually fit here. But there's an

intense feeling of aliveness. And this is the light, you are the light of the world, Jesus said, you are the light of the world.

But you have to know that it's not enough to say, okay, I believe you. That's not it. He said it because he wanted you to know it directly.

And when you know this, this light, that is the essence of who you are, which is awareness, we could call that joy, but that may not even be the right word for it. There is an intense aliveness, it's lovely, it's wonderful to be, to know yourself at this deepest level. It's so alive.

Maybe forget about the word joy because it might have associations that don't fit here. It could be, some people call it, there's some spiritual teachers who use the term happiness. I don't really use happiness to describe it because happiness belongs to the world of gain and loss.

When you get happy, oh, I'm so happy. It's not that kind of thing. But because the words are limited, sometimes certain spiritual teachers say your true nature is happiness, some teachers have said, some Indian teachers, some others.

Your true nature is happiness. Again, I know exactly what they mean and they're right, but it can be misleading because what is usually called happiness is something very superficial compared to what we are talking about here. So let's forget about joy and just sense the intense aliveness that is the essence of who you are.

That's enough. Whatever you want to call it is fine. You don't need to call it anything.

That would probably be best. In order to take you there, the words, as you know, the words I use are pointers. They're just signposts.

Some pointers work better than other pointers for certain people. And that is why I use a variety of pointers. Because some work for one person, but not for another person.

So I use other pointers because they might work better for other people. So joy is not a pointer that works for you. Forget about it.

Intense aliveness. Just that's all. And then it deepens.

And whatever it becomes, then who knows, maybe some, you'll find some other word if you wanted to talk about it, to describe it. So that's really what it is. But don't, don't look for any experience or anything like that.

Because the thing that the, when you're, what you're looking for is where you're looking from. What you're looking for is where that's, I believe St. Francis even said that. What you're looking for is where you're looking from.

So if you're looking for joy, then eventually you have to forget about joy and just be aware of the, what does it mean I'm looking for? It's an intensity of consciousness. So it's like having a flashlight and the flashlight is looking for itself.

Where am I? And at some point the flashlight becomes aware, oh, I'm actually what I was looking for. I am the light.

I was looking for the light there. That's how it is. It's very hard to talk about these things.

Thank you. I really appreciate it.

[Speaker 4] (29:16 - 29:37)

Eckhart, I'm going to sneak one final question in here to end our session this evening. Why is consciousness interested in becoming conscious of itself? What's the problem with remaining unconscious of itself?

What does consciousness gain by becoming conscious of itself?

[Speaker 1] (29:37 - 32:20)

No, because you and the universe are not two separate things. You are an essential part of the universe. When you ask these big questions, it's often more helpful to rephrase the question.

And we are more likely to find the answer within yourself. If you rephrase the question, and then it's no longer abstract. So your first question is, why is consciousness interested in becoming conscious of yourself?

Rephrase the question and ask yourself, why am I interested in becoming conscious? Why am I interested in becoming conscious? And I'm sure there's a reason why you are here.

There's a reason why you asked that question. And when you look into why am I interested in becoming conscious, you will find an answer why you want to become more conscious. And the next question is, what is the problem with consciousness remaining unconscious of itself?

Rephrase the question. What is the problem with me remaining unconscious? Ask yourself the question, what's wrong with me if I just remain unconscious?

You will find a very good answer why you don't want to remain unconscious. For one, you don't want to suffer anymore. You don't want to inhabit a nightmare anymore.

And there are many other answers that will come to you if you ask, why? What is the problem with me remaining unconscious? You will know all very well what the problem is

with you remaining unconscious.

What does gain by becoming conscious of itself? What do I gain by awakening? What do I gain becoming more conscious?

And again, this question you can answer for yourself. But then at the same time, you will have found the answer to this bigger question that you asked about universal consciousness itself. So with this, because you are a microcosm of the totality of the whole, and all the important things that you need to know, through intensifying self observation, the answers are all in you.

And I've just shown you how easily you can actually find them. And then the questions are no longer abstract, because the way you ask them, they're abstract. You can think about it, no, this is very concrete.

This all concerns you, because you are consciousness, wanting to awaken, and your life will show you why. And there's the answer.

[Speaker 2] (32:21 - 32:42)

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Eckhart Tolle Inner Peace [ff563ac7-e1c9-434e-a436-ad6c012cef69]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

Inner peace. In this podcast, Eckhart elaborates on the path toward inner peace. He shares how we can align ourselves with what he calls the is-ness of the present moment and unburden ourselves from unnecessary thinking.

Eckhart says we are here primarily to awaken to who we are beyond our three-dimensional form. That is the only way to lead a truly satisfying life and to reach what Eckhart describes as timeless consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 46:29)

The good news is, according to the weather forecast, the sun is going to come out shortly before sunset. And the other good news is it doesn't really matter what the weather is like out there. Being independent of external conditions, not reactive to external conditions, accepting of external conditions because they already are the is-ness of things here and now, that's the quickest way to inner peace, is to align yourself with the is-ness of what is, even if you think it requires some action to do something about it.

But in the meantime, it is. Then you can do something. Not about the weather, probably.

You can try through focused power of consciousness. Not impossible, but unnecessary. And that's also a quick way to not being burdened by unnecessary thinking to align yourself with the is-ness.

And then there isn't that much to think about unless it's a constructive thing. The problem needs to be solved, a so-called problem. We are primarily here to deepen our realization of who we are beyond form.

Both the Buddha and Jesus talked about an inner dimension that is formless, that you need to realize in order to become free of complete dependency on the forms that your life takes. The Buddha talked about what's traditionally translated as emptiness, as the essential condition, the essential you. Better translation would have been, now we have got emptiness in all the scriptures that's been translated, but spaciousness or formlessness would have been a better translation.

Jesus talks about the sky that's within you. That's another word for heaven. The kingdom of the sky translated into more modern terminology, the dimension of spaciousness.

The kingdom of heaven is the old translation. This is hard to relate to nowadays, kingdom of heaven. If he had been speaking today, he would have said the dimension of

spaciousness.

Because when you look up at the sky, you see spaciousness, especially when it's not cloudy. The clouds kind of represent the thoughts in your consciousness. And the sky is the vast expanse without which there wouldn't be any room for the clouds.

There couldn't be any clouds. So the empty sky is spacious. Now, an interesting thing about the sky is, although we have a word for it, it doesn't actually exist in the world of forms, because if you ever traveled upwards and wanted to encounter the sky, you would never find it because there's no such thing as the sky, really.

So you can't say, oh, here's the sky. I'm touching it now. Or you can't even say I'm in the sky.

Where? It's just a way of perceiving the spaciousness. We call it sky.

And the color blue appears because of the juxtaposition of the sunlight and the blackness of space behind it in some strange way. But the main thing is there isn't a thing that's the sky. So very cleverly, Jesus used that because he was trying to point to something that is very hard to point to using concepts and words.

So he chose the most suitable pointer in the language, in words, that he could find. And the most suitable one that he could find to point to this inner dimension that is in every human being, but ignored and unknown to most humans. So to point to it, he chose sky because he realized just like that inner dimension of spaciousness, you can never actually pinpoint it and say, I've got it.

I have got it. There would already be a duality of it, the spaciousness, and I. But the spaciousness is the essence of I.

There's no duality there. You can never say, here it is. And this is another thing that he actually said.

Some things that you read in the New Testament, I can feel very strongly, he actually almost literally said that. Then there are other things that were distorted when they just started writing it down. And then there are other things that he never said, but somebody said it might be a good idea if he had said that.

So the kingdom of heaven, you can never say in a free translation, he said, oh, it's over there. Or, oh, it's over there. Look, here it is.

You can never say that because it is within you. In the same way, consciousness, which is what we are talking about, consciousness is the formless consciousness. That's the essence of who you are.

It cannot become an object of knowledge like everything else can, where you have, you

are the perceiving or the acting subject. I see the chair. I realize consciousness.

You can't really say that because consciousness is the primordial subject of all experience. It cannot be an object in your experience. That's an interesting thing.

So in the form identified consciousness, you become an object to yourself. In ego, you have a relationship with yourself. And when you realize the essence of who you are, you realize yourself as consciousness, which is not an object.

It's the I, the most fundamental subject of all experience. So let's, an example. Some people say I'm looking for myself.

I'm looking for my real self. I'm looking for something more real than what I know about myself. There must be a deeper dimension and I'm looking for it.

Other people might say they're looking for God or for realization of God, looking for something. And when you become aware of that in you, that's looking without having found any answer, without having found anything, and you're still looking for that thing, God, your true self. Where is it?

I haven't found it. And then the mind stops. And then you realize all the consciousness behind the looking is what you were looking for.

But the consciousness became thought. And then you believe that there's something external to look for. So this is very hard to put into words.

But when the mind stops, what's left is just the spaciousness of consciousness. And that is the substratum, to use a geological term, of everything, of all experience. And that is the most liberating thing.

The only truly liberating thing is to realize, in essence, you are formless consciousness. And then the seeking stops. You no longer need to look for your true self or God, because you realize that is the essence.

You might say, do you then realize that you are God? I wouldn't put it like that. It's a little bit like you realize that you are, let's use an analogy, you are a ray of sunlight.

And as this ray of sunlight, you've always been looking out here. So you are the little ray of sunlight, thinking you're an independent entity with other rays of sunlight, everywhere around you, and they're all looking for things. And then the ray of sunlight that considers itself to be an independent entity, autonomous, having certain relationships with other rays of sunlight, and even with itself, to me, becomes still for a moment, and then realizes there is a depth to who I am that goes all the way back to the sun.

But they can only realize that when you stop thinking. Then you become aware, the ray of sunlight, you become aware of your own depth. There's no end to you.

There isn't this finite little thing. As the minds, the thinking mind stops, there is a suddenly a depth. And in that you realize that you are not a disconnected fragment that has been thrown into this universe by some malignant deity that enjoys your suffering.

No, but that you are an essential part of the universe. You haven't been thrown into the universe. You have come out of the universe.

And so in this analogy, you have come out of the sun. And as the mind stops, and then you can actually sense how far you go back, but there's no distance. You are actually never, never separate from the sun.

The ray of sunlight realizes suddenly that it is still actually part of the sun. Nor we can say where the sun actually finishes. It doesn't have a boundary.

So the light that reaches us from the sun, one could say, is still part of the sun. We are all within this vast energy field of the sun. This is an analogy.

Sun is the closest you can get in the sense perceived universe to the source of all life, because in the sense perceived universe here, the sun is the source of all life. The very heat in your body comes actually from the sun. All the energy we use is stored up energy from the sun.

One day we will find a way of using sun energy in a much more intelligent way than fossil fuels and so on, but that's another matter. The ray of sunlight realizes that it's still connected to this vastness, to the source. And that's the self-realization of the ray of sunlight, that it was never separate and could not even exist as a separate entity.

It's totally impossible. And then the ray of sunlight actually becomes a much more peaceful and relaxed being while it's still there. I'm talking about you, of course, because you've realized without any needing to convince yourself of anything or take up some new belief.

No, through actual direct realization, you realize your connectedness with something very deep. So you're not just a little person. You're also the kingdom of heaven, or as the Buddha called it, spaciousness, sunyata.

So there's two of you, and this is not an ultimate truth. Ultimately there's only one, but temporarily it sometimes helps to have a certain perspective on things. There's two of you, that which expresses itself in form, the physical body and all the stuff that's in your mind and in your emotional field, that all that makes up the person, that has a limited lifespan.

Even if there's a continuation of that after the body dissolves, it has a limited lifespan because no form is permanent. So all forms are continuously changing. I would be dreadful if you survived as this personality that you are now.

I mean, who would want to be the same personality for centuries and millennia? There's an evolution of consciousness. So the body is short-lived, that which is beyond the body may continue for a while as it continues on its journey of self-realization.

But you are that which is the form identity, and more essentially you are that essence identity, the two. And all the great spiritual teachings, all they do is point to the possibility for you to realize that there's more to you than meets the eye, to use an expression. What meets the eye is first when you see another human being, or you look in the mirror, or you look down yourself, what meets the eye is first the physical body.

Then what meets the eye, metaphorically speaking, when you meet another human being is their personality, how they act, what they say, how they behave. That's already unseen, but it manifests in the scene, so it meets the eye. That's all the form of the person and your own form.

And all spiritual teachings really come down to somebody trying to show you that there is another dimension to who you are, and whether they call it the kingdom of heaven that's within you, or the emptiness that's the essence of who you are. Or in other teachings, the true self. In India, they talk about the true self or the self, it's sometimes called.

And then people who haven't had any, not even a glimpse of a realization, they may be religious scholars, they say that Hinduism, the Hindu talk of a true self or the great self, and the Buddhist teachings of no self is totally opposite. They don't realize that they're talking about the same thing from a different perspective. When Buddha talks about the unreality of the self, he's talking about the unreality of your form identity, the dreamlike nature of your form identity.

And in order to get you to realize your essence identity, he talked about inner spaciousness. And what is meditation all about that he taught is to help you stop the mind, not as an active thing, but as a relinquishing. And then there's the spaciousness.

And then you know who you are without having added any concept in your mind to who you are. When we think of knowing who you are, we think you must know more about you, but that's not that knowing. If you want to know more about you, then you'd have to perhaps go to psychoanalysis, and then you can delve deeply into your form identity.

Many things will come up, but eventually you'd have to go deeper beyond that in order to be free of complete identification with form. So let me just remind you that the essential practice is to relinquish thinking, not by falling below thinking, but by rising above thinking. Some of you are already advanced enough presence, there's enough presence power in you that you can actually by choice say there's nothing to think about and I won't think for a while now.

And then you can even do things in that state of complete inner alert stillness, prepare a cup of tea. And every moment happens against a background of alert stillness. Walk from point A to point B, and every step happens against this background of alert stillness.

Look around you, whatever it may be, in a room or outside, perceive everything with your senses. And all the sense perceptions happen against this background of alert stillness without any mental commentary. And you know what you're looking at without imposing any mental label on it.

When you look at a tree, you don't impose the label tree on it, but you know that you're looking at a manifestation of life. The moment you put a label on it, we, of course, we need labels on a certain level, but we also need not to be trapped in the labels that we have given things. We need to be able to use the mental labels when they are needed, but to be entirely trapped in the mental labels that we've given to everything, that's a dreadful limitation.

Everything is absolutely mysterious. Everything is miraculous and mysterious. And when you put a label on it, a mental label, you think you know what it is, but you don't.

It's just a mental label. So to really get to the inner realization of a tree, for example, you have to let go of the labels. And then you can sense there's more to the tree than when you utter the word tree than you think you know.

But there's a depth to that. It's an alive being also. And I'm using just tree as an example.

So to be able to, this is the practice, inviting presence, thoughtless awareness into your life as much as possible and see how much more enjoyable things become, how you notice things around you that before were meaningless. You didn't ever look at them. You notice beauty in many places that would be called ordinary, not just beauty in things that are absolutely stand out, but beauty in seemingly unremarkable things and aliveness in seemingly inanimate things.

And that comes when you perceive the world against this background of alert inner stillness. In those times, the personality recedes. Occasionally, certain thoughts may come, and then they go away again, and then the spaciousness is back.

So you will be amazed how, as you become more familiar with that state of alert stillness, how that changes how you experience life. So you no longer experience life only as that old person that you've been stuck with since you were born. You honor that because that's your form identity.

And that person can also improve. It can learn things. It can improve in many ways.

It can play in the world of form. But then the wonderful thing is the formless self or no self and who you are as a person do not remain separate. There isn't that there are times when you are completely in the formless, still and alert.

And then there are other times when you're involved in thinking, there's a possibility of bringing the two together. And that happens kind of naturally after a while, as you invite the alert stillness into your life more often, then you'll notice that even when you think, you continue to be aware of the tiniest gaps in between your thoughts, like now, and then I speak again, and then there's another little gap. And in that you're aware of the gaps between thoughts, and you're aware, so to speak, also of a background to all thinking, that's the alert stillness is still there.

And then you could engage in a discussion with someone without losing yourself in this dream of thinking, of mind, and without identifying with any mental position, which is seeking your identity to reinforce, to strengthen your identity by defending your mental position about something. You don't need it anymore because you realize no mental position is your true identity. You can still have mental positions, but without the self in them.

So there's no longer a sense of me or self in your mental, you can, why not keep your opinions, everybody has certain perspective on things, you have a certain perspective on whatever, politics, philosophy, spirituality, that's fine. You're not looking for an identity anymore in being right about something. It's still put forward your viewpoint because you are in touch with a more essential identity, and that's the stillness behind your thinking and in between the thoughts.

So you can sense an alertness even while you speak in the background and in between. So the two dimensions come together. And so the way in which you use your mind changes.

In fact, you're now able to use your mind, you as a consciousness, the mind is connected, linking into that deeper dimension of no thought, which is primordial intelligence. It's where all creative insight comes from. And then your mind becomes a much more helpful tool, and it can create, it can manifest things.

But what it manifests comes from the consciousness, rather than a little person that thinks, I need to manifest this or that in order to be happy. And of course, once you have manifested it, you're happy for a little while, and then you're unhappy again, needing something else to manifest. And now I need this.

Okay, I've got the house now. Now I need the relationship. And then I need that.

And then I need to be recognized by people. There's no end to it. And the more you have achieved on the level of form, the more you realize that that's not it.

So the two dimensions of you, here we are primarily concerned with the formless dimension, because that's what spirituality is about. There are many other things where you can go to workshops to learn how to improve your form identity, how to strengthen that. You can do it.

Yeah, yeah. That's fine too. That has its place also.

You could go to that kind of workshop, as long as you are in touch with something deeper, you can try it. So there is a place for manifesting on the level of form, because the universe is manifesting continuously on the level of form. So if we realize that we can manifest things on the level of form, that's a wonderful realization through the power of thinking.

The question is, do you know yourself only as form? Or do you know yourself also as the formless? If you know yourself also as the formless consciousness, then actually what happens is the formless consciousness inspires you to manifest certain things, not the ego anymore.

The ego says, I need this to be happy. And then I need that to be happy. And then I need to get rid of that to be happy.

But that primordial intelligence, if you are in touch with that as your essence, that can inspire you, your mind, to manifest what it wants to manifest, because the universe delights in manifestation. As you can see, when you look at the life forms on this planet alone, in the sea, I don't know how many, maybe a million different life forms in the sea alone and on land and in the seen and the unseen, the universe must delight in creation and exploring. And every life form is an expression of the one consciousness exploring the universe that it created in different ways.

A fly that's flying around here is another expression of the one consciousness and really is another universe. The fly doesn't experience the universe that we experience. It's in the same place, but it experienced something different as the one consciousness, all these temporary forms.

And that's the Leela, the divine play of forms, what in India is called the Leela, the divine play. And we can participate in that divine play, become co-creators. And that is part of our destiny, that a point will come when human consciousness will be able to manifest forms very easily.

So there is the creation of the universe. I call it the outgoing movement of the universe into manifestation. And then there is the ingoing movement of the universe.

The universe also wants to know itself, its own essence. And it does that through you and through me. How do I know all this?

I know this because I have observed the two movements within myself. I am a microcosm of the macrocosm. You can discover all the secrets of the universe by looking into yourself.

So I can find within myself, sometimes the desire to create and to manifest. And then there comes a seemingly contradictory desire to return to the source, to become still. You don't need anything anymore.

You just are totally, totally at peace in that beautiful stillness. That's your return. The universe realizes itself as the underlying formless consciousness.

When you realize the underlying formless consciousness, that is the essence of who you are, it's not really you realizing it because you are only the universe appearing temporarily as this particular person, but it's only a temporary appearance. So when you realize your own essence as consciousness, that's the universe is realizing its own essence as consciousness because you are the universe, an essential part of the universe. So there is no personal realization, really.

There's universal realization. It's a miraculous thing. So the universe wants seemingly contradictory things.

There's a cycle. It seems perhaps scientists have had some glimpse of the truth when they say the universe expands and then at some point it starts to contract again. And then at some point it disappears into the nothingness out of which it all came.

It's like the heartbeat or the in-breath and the out-breath. The universe goes into multiplicity, creation, billions and billions, count trillions of life forms. There's a cycle for humans too, when they go out and then comes the cycle of returning home to the source.

But if you hadn't gone out, you wouldn't realize your own source. So they depend on each other, creation and the outgoing movement and the return movement. And you can find that in your own life.

It may well be that we are drawn to the return movement of self-realization as consciousness because the universe is beginning to go in that direction after billions of years of creation. And then comes a period, and this would be a miraculous period on this planet, on many other planets, when humans as expressions of the one consciousness are in connection with a source while they are engaged in creation rather than, as it happens until very recently, losing yourself in your creations, losing yourself in the mind, losing touch with the source of who you are, and losing yourself in stuff out there, your mind primarily, and thinking everything else is out, all the answers are out there, and this is who you're fighting out there against this and that. And this is a dream, the dream of consciousness, the dream of the universe.

And the universe wanted to experience, in order to really experience the dream, you need to believe that it's absolutely real. So it needs to go out there and lose itself in every life form. Then to some extent, the humans mostly see themselves as totally separate against all the others.

It's part of the dream. And then the dream gradually comes to an end, and then the awakening begins. And in the middle of the dream, you start to realize something, oh, the source, and you become still, and then awareness arises.

And that spiritual awakening for the human being, and it's a spiritual awakening of the universe. Your spiritual awakening is the spiritual awakening of the universe. And then the awareness comes, and then you begin to live with awareness rather than losing yourself in every mind form, in every perception, in every drama.

Lucid living, it's a bit like we all know about lucid dreaming, which happens when in the middle of a dream at night, you suddenly know, oh, this is a dream. This is quite an interesting realization. But here we have, as the awareness arises, which we call spiritual awakening, you can have lucid living, which means you're still participate in this ultimate dream of form, the dream of life.

And yet you're aware of your own essence as the timeless space without which there couldn't be any dream. It's the very condition for any dream even to exist. That's lucid living when you're not drawn totally anymore into all the creations of your mind, you're able to play with it.

And that would bring when more humans are able to live in that way, then we can engage in joyful creation of things, not the neediness. Joyful creation, enjoy the beauty and multiplicity of the universe and of our own creations without self-seeking, which is of the ego. So we no longer create in the service of the ego, but as expressions of the one consciousness delighting in conscious creation.

And that's already part of the return journey. I'm saying this just to point to the fact that the change in consciousness that's happening in you is a universal movement. It's not just a personal thing.

It would not happen if it were not part of a larger movement, universal movement of awakening. So there are probably countless life forms awakening elsewhere in our galaxy and many other galaxies. And some probably started to awaken a long time ago who would now look at us as, oh, these poor little things, they're only just beginning.

That's okay. Now, not each one of you, not every one of you is able to yet step into no thought without some kind of help. Meditation is designed to help you with that.

But as you probably know, the main thing I recommend is to have some attention in the inner energy field of your body. And that keeps thought at bay in a gentle, non-violent

way, not willpower. It involves no willpower.

So it involves just a decision that right now you would prefer to be alert and still and not be thinking. And that decision you could arrive at because you've realized that, let's say for the past hour, you've been engaged in futile, useless thinking that all it did was make you unhappy. And suddenly the awareness is there again that had been temporarily lost.

And you say, what's all this futile thinking about? It's just making me unhappy. It has no point whatsoever.

And then a decision comes to not to think because you realize there is another dimension in you that is deeper than thinking. So you, okay, I'd rather be there than up there in the mind. And how can I get there?

Because the mind will have its momentum. Your presence power, so to speak, is already quite developed. You may find it very hard to stop the momentum once it started, to stop the momentum of thinking.

There's an enormous pull, a gravitational pull behind it. And for some, if presence power is not yet that developed, you can say, I need to stop thinking, but I can't because it goes on and on. And I can't stop it.

It's like a river. You can't get out of this raging river. It drags you along, especially when you're stuck in a train of negative thinking or fearful thinking or angry thinking.

You don't even want to get out because you're so identified with a stream of thinking that your sense of self is in it. And you don't want to lose that sense of self. It's a fictitious sense of self, but it's a sense of self.

And so you don't want to stop your train of angry thinking. You want more angry thinking. And if possible, you're looking for more feedback from others to reinforce your angry thinking.

I need another argument. And after you've walked back out of the room, after a one-hour argument, you walk back into the room because you haven't had enough. You need to talk to that person again.

Oh, one more thing I want to tell you. And even when that person is no longer there, you're still thinking, and then you need to pick up the phone and tell your friends about it. And then you repeat the whole argument that you just had and how right you are and how wrong the other person was.

And then when you hang up the phone, it still goes on in your head. And at that moment, to tell somebody you need to stop thinking would be futile. The person doesn't even want to stop thinking because that person is the thinking.

Total identification with thought. So there needs to be a realization. Some awareness needs to be there.

It's totally pointless to talk to anybody about stopping thinking without having at least some access to awareness, maybe not in the moment of enormously empowered thinking, empowered not in a good way, but the awareness needs to bear that what's going on inside me right now. And then at some point, you might be able to realize what's happening to you. It's happening to you.

You didn't actually do it. It just happened to you because you're being possessed by your mind. And then at some point, you realize that there is a choice, perhaps not when you're in the middle of it.

At some point, a very strong mind stream subsides. You might get tired of it. And then it goes and then finally go, oops.

Oh, and then do I choose to carry on? Does it make me feel happy? No, it doesn't.

I thought it did because I felt so good to be angry about that, but it's not, doesn't make you feel, the body doesn't really feel, if you asked your body, it would tell you this feels horrible. But of course, if you're not in touch with your body, you're only up here, you don't even know that. And then at some moment, the choice comes in.

At other moments, the choice may come much more quickly because it's just the usual stream of futile, in the middle of the night, you wake up, the usual stream of futile thinking. And then awareness comes in, there's a choice. And then a decision comes.

And that decision is just no willpower. It's just a decision. I'd rather be still than not be thinking.

And once you know that, then you can take your attention into the inner energy field of the body. That's your choice. Instead of giving more attention to your thinking, you just take your attention into the inner energy field of the body.

And suddenly you feel the aliveness that pervades the entire body. So you have taken consciousness away from the mind and put it in here. And you can't think that much anymore.

You can't feel the body and be engaged in a lot of thinking. And if you really fully experience the aliveness in the inner body, the mind stops. And so that becomes an anchor for awareness, an anchor for presence.

Even if you cannot feel the entire body, it would be enough to just go into your hands with your attention. Just take consciousness into your hands and feel the aliveness in your hands. That alone can take attention away from useless thinking.

And can you continue to feel? Because that is part of experiencing the present moment, which actually feels quite good. It feels good to be alive.

That's an amazing realization. So inner body, or even just a part of the body, the totality of the body is best if you can. It's not that difficult.

You start with one part, hands, and can I feel my feet also? Yeah, I can feel hands and feet. Can I feel my legs?

Yeah, a little bit less. And then the totality of, oh, okay, I got it. You might also notice that you're breathing then, which is the other way.

It can be combined with body awareness, but breathing is the other way of taking attention away from the mind. The most ancient meditation method is breath awareness, because breath awareness takes attention away from thinking, but keeps you alert. And breath happens all the time.

And breath is virtually formless. So it's easier to get in touch with a formless consciousness by placing attention on the formless breath. Other meditation objects are clearly defined in form.

You can have an object that you focus on. You can have a mental object that you focus on. You can have a mantra that you focus on.

Those can work too, but they are more clearly defined in form. Where's the breath? You can't say it is.

It's semi-formless or formless. So to place attention on that, which can also automatically bring you in touch with the body, the in-breath. It's so beautiful to have attention on your breath and the out-breath.

And immediately your mind becomes still. So you can either be thinking or can have your attention on your breathing, but you can't have both. The moment you think, you're not aware of your breath anymore.

And that also really applies to the inner body. To have full attention in the inner body, you can't be thinking. So those two things, which are really closely linked, breath awareness, you can make it into a meditation.

So you can sit in meditation and then you can observe the ingoing and outgoing breaths. You can also observe the gaps between the ingoing and outgoing breaths. You breathe out, brief gap of nothingness.

And then you start breathing in again, a brief gap of neither in nor out. And the cycle continues. I read somewhere that the Buddha said, if you're aware of your breath for one hour, I don't know if they even had hours at the time, but if you're aware of your breath

for one hour, you'll be completely enlightened.

But if you lose it, you have to start from the beginning again. Just one thought coming in, okay, start all over. Okay, I can see one or two of you saying, I'm going to do that.

Let's take a moment of stillness. A few more minutes of stillness. If you are still thinking, remember, put your attention on your breath, or the inner body or both.

[Speaker 2] (46:34 - 46:54)

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Eckhart Tolle Inner Spaciousness [b0ace2a7-63c6-4138-b296-ad8f013feae4]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:31)

Inner spaciousness. In this episode, Eckhart talks to a live audience about bringing meditation practice, or what Eckhart calls presence, into our everyday lives. However, he cautions against making meditation one more chore on our to-do list.

He says, so often there is the underlying assumption that we must become good at meditation or succeed at it. That in itself can actually become a hindrance. The idea is not to do meditation, but to be.

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 47:54)

Many of you probably have a meditation practice. As you know, I don't usually talk about formal meditation, but it's wonderful if people have a formal meditation and practice it. This is more about bringing the so-called meditative state into your normal life.

Presence. Meditation is an attempt to become present. Sometimes it works and sometimes it remains an attempt for years.

And you can become a good meditator by sitting for an hour every day and all you're still doing is attempting to become present. Meditation can be helpful. It can also become an obstacle to being present.

Because almost inevitably, when you meditate, you have this underlying assumption that you are doing something. You're doing a meditation. And in that doing the meditation, you're trying to get somewhere.

For example, trying to become still. And so trying to become still is having projection of a future place that you want to get to. And there's an underlying sense that you are doing something.

You could even put it in your schedule. You can say such a time you're meeting someone meeting, committee meeting at 11, meditation at 12. And so there's just another doing.

Whereas the true meditation involves no doing, but simply the essence of it is the realization of being. So you can relinquish all doing when you have a meditation technique, which may be helpful, but if it's not used rightly, it becomes part of your doing. And then it can actually stop you from the realization of being which is already here.

Now, nothing needs to be added to you to realize that you are now to realize your own being. So often when you meditate, the underlying assumption is that something needs

to be added need to become good at it, you need to succeed at it. And that in itself becomes a hindrance.

So in Zen, very often, they don't give you any technique, they just go now sit here and you won't get up again for three hours. So and then you say, Well, what do I do? Just sit in Zen when you when they use the word sit, they usually mean meditate.

So when you arrive in a Zen monastery, they greet you and they might say, How long have you been sitting? Oh, I've been sitting for 15 years. And then when you sit in Zen, there may be other similar traditions, it's not comfortable, because it gets very painful for the body unless you're extremely flexible, which I'm not.

And most people are not. So if you sit for two or three or four hours or all night facing a wall, they love doing that. And then they open the windows, although it's freezing cold.

So they create very unpleasant conditions for your meditation. And not only that, the instructor or master may walk around and hit you when he sees that you're dropping or falling. And you suddenly feel with a little cane on your back.

And then you have to thank him. But they don't give you a technique as such as just watch, you might say what your breath but really even that often they just say, just watch what arises thoughts and emotions will arise. And the longer you sit, the more powerfully thoughts and emotions will arise and the thoughts and emotions will say, get me out of here.

How could I have been so mad to come here? And then you start thinking about what excuse could I give? I could pretend to be really sick suddenly.

So in other words, they create conditions that are designed one could say almost to produce suffering without actually injuring yourself. They don't go that far, but they are conditions designed to produce an enormous amount of suffering. And so you sit there facing your own suffering and an enormous amount of resistance.

And then if it works for you, at some point, you come to the realization that the unpleasant conditions, which include pain in the body, various parts of the body, your back, your legs, you're feeling cold and you're shivering. Maybe you hadn't had a satisfying meal in a long time. So there's some hunger, not extreme, but there's hunger, there's pain, there's cold, and there's nothing to look at, just a wall.

And so at some point you realize that the suffering is not produced by the conditions, which cannot be described as pleasant, but are as they are. But the real suffering is the resistance to the conditions, which happens on the level of thinking plus emotions that reflect the thoughts. So you become aware of yourself as the resisting entity and realize when you come to a point where you can't stand being there anymore, then either you leave or you break through to surrender and you suddenly let go of any thought about it,

and then the emotion subsides too.

When you're no longer telling your body that this is terrible, then eventually the emotion that reflects the thought that this is a terrible place to be, then the emotion also subsides. And then all that's left is the conditions of that moment, which are pain in the body, pain in the neck or wherever else, and cold, some hunger, and there you are. And then it's possible to break through to a deeper level where suddenly, despite the conditions of that moment, you feel peace because your mind has stopped commenting in any way.

Your mind is not even trying. If your mind is saying, this is really good for you, you should be liking this, that doesn't really work. So your mind is not trying to go to the opposite from where it was first, where it said, this is awful.

Your mind simply surrenders completely. And so it doesn't say anything anymore. And this is to repeat something that can happen to a human being naturally by being faced with the challenges of life, which can pile up.

And your life situation, as I call it, which means all the circumstances of your life can become so unpleasant and painful that you can't stand the suffering anymore. And that is a wonderful point to reach, not being able to stand the suffering anymore, because at that point, you may realize not just conceptually, but deep to every fiber of your being, that the suffering comes from the resistance. The resistance happens on the level of the mind.

And so it happens to people naturally that when faced with unpleasant life situations, they suddenly can't stand it anymore. And something in them surrenders, which means the mind subsides. And without the mind creating thinking, all that's left is really the present moment.

And that's the awakening into the present moment, which is more likely to come when things are not going well than when everything is totally fine. So you may be at a point, most of you, where you don't need the suffering anymore to be pushed into surrender, because that's what life is trying to do. It gives you all these challenges, and eventually you have to surrender.

But there is another way, and perhaps you're here because you've already had enough suffering. You can voluntarily choose it even without having to be pushed into surrender through suffering. So you can choose to relinquish thought, for example, which otherwise a human being would always do.

And even then, only a minority would only do facing extreme conditions in their life. And here, some humans have reached the level of consciousness where they no longer need to be faced with extreme conditions. Although if you were, and if you are here because

at some point in your life you were faced with extreme conditions, then obviously that's a wonderful thing, because that brought you here.

And now here you realize, for the further evolution of your consciousness and the emergence of presence through you, you don't need more suffering because you now voluntarily are able, and this is the evolutionary leap forward for humanity, when a human being can do that, can relinquish thought by choice and simply say, I'll be present now. And you can let go of resistance if you still notice resistance arising in certain conditions of your life. You can very quickly notice it.

Anytime you get upset about anything, that is actually quite helpful. Don't fall into the trap of thinking, why am I getting upset? I should be spiritual enough not to get upset about these things.

Why have I been going to all these classes and workshops? You know, the voice in the head, you can talk to yourself, but why do you still do that? And then the other you says, well, I'm trying, I've been trying.

And then the other one says, well, you're not trying hard enough. And then at some point you realize it's the voice in the head that this time has split itself in two, as I believe in one therapy, it's called the top dog and the underdog. And so you have a discussion with yourself.

One says, you, and the other one, yeah, I couldn't help it. But of course, it's all the, it's the voice in the head. And even having that inner dialogue with yourself is a form of suffering.

It's an inner conflict, and it's simply produced by the voice in the head, which sometimes seems to be two voices in the head, sometimes even three. And sometimes, of course, as you well know, sometimes the voice in the head is your mother's voice. Eat your vegetables.

But that would be relatively harmless, but it says many other things probably. But whatever voice it is, it's the voice. So you recognize when you get upset, you recognize the mechanism behind it.

It was resistance, mind, mental, emotional resistance to the present moment, you lost presence. And at that moment, when you notice upset, any kind of upset, that can be a little alarm bell and says, oh, you lost the present moment, you lost presence. And at that moment, you can have presence, it's here already.

So becoming upset is can be very helpful, if you know how to use it. If you don't know how to use it, then the upset is something that is unconscious and operates in you and makes you unconscious. But if you know how to use it, it's very helpful, can always bring you back into the present moment and acceptance of the present moment.

And it's amazing what things people get upset about. Many very unimportant things can create upset, you might have noticed. But at the moment of being upset, you don't know that these are unimportant.

They seem to be overwhelmingly important. The tiniest things can become overwhelmingly important. So what you are growing into is in any situation that you encounter, not to be exclusively focused on the situation, but to have some focus, some awareness at a deeper level.

And you might, as you know, when I say awareness at that deeper level, you are not aware of anything. On the outer level of your life, you're aware of whatever goes on. Usually in normal usage, when you use the word aware, you say aware of what?

You can't use the word aware without saying aware of what you sometimes read in newspapers and so on. Increasing awareness, but it's usually followed by about certain issues, increasing awareness about the environment, increasing awareness about climate change, increasing awareness about what we need to do in education. And all this is wonderful.

You're increasing awareness about all these things. So in all the various situations of your life, at any given moment, your awareness is aware of whatever goes on around you. Then that is not enough.

Awareness of what's going around you, you need to be aware of at a deeper level of the awareness itself. You need to be aware that you are aware, right at this moment, for example, you're aware of my voice, you're aware of this room, you're aware of whatever sense perceptions you can now register in your consciousness. But at the same time, this wonderful thing is possible.

That is you can be aware of awareness. In other words, you realize you are conscious that you are conscious. This is the one fact in your life that is beyond any doubt, because it is so obviously the case.

Right now, you are conscious. And even that may be a distortion that happens through language, because there is no real you apart from that consciousness. So if I express it verbally, and if I say you are conscious, or if I say I am conscious, which is language operates like that.

But even that is a slight distortion, because that implies that I and conscious are two things. But the essence of who I am, apart from consciousness, there is no me, there is no I, there would be nothing. Consciousness is who I am.

So it would be more accurate to say, I am consciousness, that is who you are. And to realize you are consciousness is at the same time a realization of this vast realm of inner stillness, because that consciousness is the unconditioned consciousness that is just vast

spaciousness and great depths. I am consciousness.

After you say it, how do you know that you are conscious or you are consciousness? It's so obvious, you cannot possibly doubt it. This is the one fact about your life that you cannot doubt, because all the rest may be a dream.

There's no way of proving that us sitting in this room here now is a dream that you are having. There's no way of disproving that this is not a dream. And many philosophers have looked at ordinary human existence and described it as dream, dreamlike.

In many ways, it is a kind of dream, because what does a dream do? It appears, and then suddenly it's gone. And the situation too, it appears, and then next week it'll be gone.

And then you might wake up one morning and say, retreat, asiloma. Was that a dream or did that happen? So this may be a dream, but even if it is a dream, it still applies that you are conscious in that dream.

Right now, if you were not conscious, there would be no dream. Nobody could have a dream. The dream could not appear.

So it becomes irrelevant whether this is so-called reality or so-called dream. The actual reality is that you are conscious, whether it's a dream or reality. Consciousness is still required even for a dream to exist.

It needs to exist in the light of a consciousness. So you could well say, and this is getting closer to the truth, that everything that happens in the world, in your life or in the world at large, is the dream that the one consciousness is having, including yourself, including your person. That vast consciousness is infinite.

It can have dreams, dream that includes an infinite number of scenarios and entities and beings and life forms, all coming together and in this web of interconnectedness and appearing as the vast dream that appears as the entire universe and what happens in it. Consciousness dreaming and consciousness dreams so that all these things in the dream, which are part of the one consciousness, seem to have an independent existence. They don't realize that they are part of the dream of the one consciousness until they wake up.

And they wake up in the dream. And in the dream, the one consciousness wakes up after a few million years of dreaming, or billion years, and the one consciousness wakes up in the dream and says, I know who I am now. I am consciousness.

And then you look around and it's quite a nice dream. It's quite interesting. So when you realize that you are consciousness, the universe realizes itself through you.

After a few billion years of dreaming and creating this incredible multiplicity of life forms

and the universe, which is dream-like, consciousness wakes up and becomes aware of itself. You could say God becomes aware of itself in this dimension. Words can only give you an approximation.

I cannot explain the universe in words. I mean, it would be absurd to even try. So whatever I say is like, it's a bit like this, or it's a bit like that's not it.

The words could not express it. I mean, I've said it before. When you speak, it's just a few sounds produced by the vocal cords, plus air pressure produced by the tongue.

So the rest, the rest is a five vowels. A, I, E, O, U, R, O, E, O. So you put these together a little bit of air pressure and a few sounds produced by the vocal cords, and you are trying to explain the meaning of the universe.

But you can give a hint, that's all an approximation. Or the same thing, of course, on paper, just a few symbols, scribbles, print, printed page on a computer screen. No, of course you cannot encapsulate the secret of the universe, but one can get a sense of what it is.

And then there is a deeper knowing that cannot really be expressed in through language or words or any other symbol. And so the reason why I am pointing to it with words now, and when you are ready to hear this, and you are ready to experience, to realize that within yourself, this awakening of consciousness, and in that there is a deep, you kind of know what is at the heart of the universe. But could you explain it?

No. You can give a few hints. If you are poetically inclined, you might write a poem about it.

Or if you are musically inclined, you might write a musical piece that points to it. It's not it, it points to it. All these things can only point to it.

Or you're an artist, or you may dance and point to it through your dance. But when you become aware of yourself as consciousness, you realize what lies at the heart of the universe, because the heart, meaning the innermost dimension of yourself, the core, the heart, is when you find that within yourself, that is the heart of the universe, because you are a microcosm of the entire universe. So to explore the secret of the universe, you will not find it, although I love science fiction, and I love spaceships, but you won't find the secret of the universe by traveling out there to explore the last, what is it, space, the last frontier.

Yes. Of course, the last frontier is the inner space, but the outer space is very interesting, but you won't find the heart of the universe out there. So that doesn't mean never go there.

That's, that's one dimension of human existence, is the outward dimension. But the

secret of the universe, you can only find that within yourself. What is it that lies at the, what is the essence behind it all?

The essence behind it all is that one thing that is not mentioned when you read books about cosmology, you read books by famous scientists trying to figure out the mystery of the universe and the galaxies and the black holes, and you can read these books and often you find the greatest mystery of the universe, they never mention once. You can have these books and read the entire book without the word consciousness ever appearing once in the whole entire book. It's about figuring out the secret of the universe and the greatest mystery of the universe, far greater than any number of galaxies, the greatest mystery of the universe and the greatest miracle is that the universe is conscious.

And to ignore that and try to figure out what the secret of the universe is, you ignore the most obvious thing that's right, not just in front of your nose, but behind your nose. And you try to figure out what the great mystery is of the universe. Well, you forget the most important factor, which is yourself, your innermost being, because you're looking so much out there, trying to figure it all out.

And you overlook the fact that the secret, you already carry it within you, the secret of the universe. It's easy to overlook the consciousness that you are, because sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions are so noisy and clamor for your attention. You need to think about this thing.

Oh, look at me, look at, this is so important, this situation, look what he just did. Are you going to do something about it? Yes, I need to do something about it.

And then another thought, an emotion comes in. Everything demands your attention all the time. Thoughts demand your attention.

Other people demand your attention. The incoming email demands your attention. Another Facebook posting demands your attention.

A text message is coming in demanding your attention. And then there's the traffic to cope with. And then you're running late already.

So it's so easy to overlook because the gravitational pull, both of the external world and the world of thought and emotion is so enormous that it's not surprising that people lose themselves totally in the world of form. And then they start believing that the solution to everything must be found in the world of form. They just need to look harder.

And then you get that restless person who is never at ease anywhere because they're trying to figure something out. They're really trying to figure out how to get to a place where they can be at peace. So they need to get this done first.

Let me first do this. And then the next thing, you have to deal with this now. And the only thing I have to achieve this and I'll be okay, I think.

Never get there because then something else demands your attention. And when you deal with this, you just sort it on one situation. Another one collapses behind you.

Describing ordinary existence. And not surprising that people overlook this very gentle but incredibly powerful thing that is at the core of who you are. Because your attention gets continuously, you get hypnotized by everything.

You get hypnotized by every situation, by every thought that comes in, by every emotion. And so you're always identified with this and that and reactive to this or that. And of course then you get, people get very exhausted with life.

They get tired of life. Can't take it anymore. So this overlooking is important because when you realize that there is something vital that you tend to, until recently, you have always overlooked.

And what is that? You overlook the very thing that makes it possible for the world that you experience to exist. The very thing or no thing that makes it possible for you to think, to experience anything.

And that's consciousness. So the moment you become aware of consciousness and that has always been there, but you always overlooked it, another way of putting it is become aware of your own presence. You become aware of yourself, not as a historical person, a person with a history, but become aware of yourself at a deeper level.

Become aware of yourself as a conscious presence. And that had always been there, but it was continuously overlooked because other things seem to be so important. And even for humans who are awakening into this now, they still experience being hypnotized and completely distracted easily by other things.

Even if you're already awakening, you can still find that a relatively unimportant situation can draw you in completely. And again, you forgot who you are, because that's what it is. When you get upset about anything, you have forgotten who you are, essentially.

So self-remembering, I would say, be aware of your own presence and practice that. First, the easiest practice is when you're in nature or perceiving anything around nature. So you become aware of the perceiving presence and letting go of labeling, unless you need the label to explain something to somebody.

But otherwise, you walk around, you watch the ocean, you watch trees, the sand here, the sky, even if it's gray, let go of the thought, oh no, not another June gloom day. Let go of the thought and just be the presence behind your sense perceptions. That's the

easiest practice.

It's also, you can practice with an animal, a dog or a cat also to just be present. This is why people love being with dogs and cats, because they don't stimulate your complicating thinking mind. They are simple creatures.

They are conscious, but pre-thought, they don't have an opinion about you. He just responds to the present moment. And humans are much more difficult to stay present with, you might have noticed.

The natural world is easier to be present with. And as you perceive, and you might even do things in the natural world, you may do gardening, you may be walking, you may whatever, and you can still be there as a presence more than a person. There may be a bit of a person too, because occasionally you have thoughts, you may not be able to remain, nor do you need to in thoughtless awareness for long stretches of time, but predominantly be there at the presence.

And then the person occasionally will come in, of course, a thought might say, I wonder what's for dinner tonight, or it might say, oh, that's a nice tree, I wonder what that's called, but it's not really that important right now what that's called, and then you let go of that thought. And so there's more experiencing without thought, than through thought. The two fundamental ways of experiencing the world, through thought and conceptual knowledge, and without thought and conceptual knowledge.

Which is awareness or presence. Most humans don't know that. Why don't they teach that at school, that there are two fundamental ways of experiencing things.

One is through thought and so on. And one is through simple looking, listening, hearing, being present with. Shouldn't that be even more important than being able to count from one to 100, or to be able to write, or read.

The most fundamental thing, the possibility that there is another consciousness in you that's possible, rather than just the thinking and the, but at school they, all they stimulate, unless it's a, it's an alternative school, all they stimulate is from a very early age, or the conceptual mind only, and the continuous doing through the conceptual mind, never being, doing, doing, thinking, thinking, adding more and more concepts. And the best students are the ones who are the quickest thinkers, not those who are the most profound thinkers, because to be a profound thinker means there are moments of stillness.

Otherwise, you're not a profound thinker if you're always thinking. If you're always thinking, you're a superficial thinker. Profound thinking doesn't really exist.

All it means is, you have spaces of no thought, and if you have spaces of no thought, then your thinking becomes more inspired. It is inspired by this, the depths of

awareness. And so, but at school, these children who are slower because they go deeper, they're encouraged to let go of that, and think more, accumulate knowledge.

Albert Einstein, until up to the age of five, he was so slow, because he was naturally, there were spaces in him, he wouldn't give fast answers, because you could ask a simple question, and he would just, hmm. And in the meantime, all the other children all went, I know, I know. But the question probably had, there was a much more profound answer possible, but he needed to go within for that.

All this is not recognized, it hasn't been for a long time, but we are getting back, we are now rediscovering something, whether the people in the past had glimpses of knowledge of the importance of stillness and awareness. For example, the importance that ancient tribal societies give to the elders, because the elders represent the deeper dimension of life. And again, there was a reason why the elders were important.

The elders represented the dimension of stillness. Now what, what function do elders have in our society? None, because they are just put away into homes, and then they sit there and watch television, unfortunately.

So there's another huge area where new structures need to be created. If some of you may want to do that, I would encourage you. Old age is a wonderful opportunity for surrender, deepening, becoming aware of yourself as presence, but it's better not to wait until you're old, because it may be too late, because many old people don't realize who they are just because they get old, they get just more entrenched in their patterns.

So instead of becoming like this, and the ageless consciousness shining through, they become cranky. They've been in resistance even before they got old, but now that they're old, they're even more in resistance. I don't want that.

That's a pity. Miss the opportunity of old age. Become aware of yourself as presence.

You're reaching the heart of the universe. Whether or not you can say anything about it doesn't matter. Consciousness, the greatest mystery of the universe, and you embody it.

What could be a greater mystery than the fact that the universe is conscious? So now let's see if we can enjoy the presence that you are, the stillness. We'll just go on for a little while, see what it feels like.

And I may occasionally say a few words while we meditate, which may be helpful to some of you just to wake you up in case you drift. The challenge in meditation is that you are drifting below thought. Of course, when you drift far enough below thought, you fall asleep.

But real meditation, of course, is being alert and awake. So alert and so awake that thoughts just don't come in anymore. But the real meditation is choiceless awareness.

So sometimes you need this first, and then when the mind has stopped, then you go like that. Then so you're not focused on any one thing in particular anymore. It's just expansive awareness.

You can even look around in that state. I can look around this room without a single thought in my head, and so can you, probably some of you. You look around this room without a single thought in your head and be aware simultaneously of your surroundings and your own presence as consciousness.

Another way of putting it, you can be aware of the stillness underneath your sense perceptions. That's consciousness. You can meditate with your eyes closed.

Most people do it with their eyes closed. You can also occasionally open your eyes and still remain in that state of presence. So that one important step for meditators is to realize they don't need to keep their eyes closed to be present.

Because if you associate being present with your eyes closed, the moment you open your eyes, you're not present again. Initially, it can be helpful to have your eyes closed. If you cannot keep thoughts at bay simply by choosing not to think as we sit here, you will need to put your attention on something, and I suggest feeling the aliveness in the inner body, or be aware of your breathing flowing in the air, flowing in and out of the body.

Or even simultaneously, be aware of the aliveness in your body and be aware of the fact that you're breathing. So it's just that awareness that can help you to be still, to be free of thinking. When you hear the bell once, it's not the end of the meditation.

I just ring it to remind you to be present. If you're drifting off into thinking, put your attention back into the body. Now open your eyes and continue your meditation with your eyes open.

So just being present with your sense perceptions. Some people tell me that sometimes I have to demonstrate the arising of the inner space without thinking. I sometimes go like that.

So in between the left hand and the right hand, there's a space of no thinking. So normally in the unconscious thinking state, there's no space, just one thought after another. And then you become alert enough to create a space between thoughts.

People have told me that they actually find it helpful occasionally in daily life when nobody's looking to hold your hands like that, because that's an outer representation of an inner state. And it can be helpful to have the outer representation as an anchor, at least as you practice the thoughtless state, to have that as an anchor for thoughtless. So it's good that this talk is boring.

That leaves more room for the awareness of space. Music, when it has a spiritual dimension, also has spaces in it, or an underlying spaciousness. Some visual art also has spaciousness in it.

And when you look at it, you may find there isn't much there. For example, certain Asian paintings, a little tree in a corner, a little distant mountain, a tiny human standing somewhere, and 85% of the painting is empty space. It might be the sky or just empty space.

And you look at it, and if you really look at it, you become aware that the essence of the painting is not what's there to be seen, but the essence is what's not there, space. And so looking at that can be a realization of your own spaciousness. It's so liberating to realize the essence of yourself as stillness, space.

You are so much more than the little me, more than your personal history, successes and failures, the successes that turned into failures, the failures that turned into successes. One little practice I would recommend, take five minutes or so. You can practice here, of course, but at home, everybody has five minutes.

Don't believe your mind when it tells you you don't have five minutes. And the practice is sit somewhere outside or indoors for five minutes and practice perception without interference of thinking, which means you just look around wherever you are. You may look at occasionally your gaze rests upon one thing for a little while, and then you look on.

Then you take in the totality of whatever surrounds you. And as you do, you're aware simultaneously of what you are seeing, but without calling it anything. And you're aware of the stillness that is your essence.

That's the background to the visual sense perceptions, like a canvas. And so this is a blank canvas, and whatever you see is the painting on the canvas that appears and disappears, appears and disappears. But the canvas is the spacious stillness.

It's a beautiful way of perceiving the world. And another practice similar to this, particularly good when you're outside, but also indoors, sit for five minutes again, and be very alert. Pay attention to whatever you are hearing.

Alert listening. The slightest sounds. No sound is better or worse than another.

Just every sound is received. Beautiful bird song. A motorbike driving past.

But you are again the canvas for the sound this time, and it's all just registered. And you have no preference. Any sound is fine.

And you're aware of yourself as the presence, the listening presence, the alertness that

makes the hearing possible. And again, as much as possible, no mental labeling. The subtlest sounds are the best that way, because they require your greatest alertness to some distant sound.

So if you sit in a very still place, in nature perhaps, see how far you can hear. So sitting, and sitting without leaning back is better. There's a natural alertness that comes as you sit upright.

And then you go first to visual practice. You may do that. Some other time you do five minutes auditory presence practice.

So it's good.

[Speaker 2] (47:59 - 48:21)

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Eckhart Tolle Intelligence Greater Than the Mind [7a0cbc1f-efb6-4941-9bc7-02d96ef06e76]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:39)

Intelligence greater than the mind. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience in Greece. He kicks off the session discussing the spiritual wisdom of ancient Greek philosophers.

He says among the most renowned was Socrates, who humbly said, I am the only one who knows that he knows nothing. Eckhart believes Socrates was saying he was comfortable with the state of not knowing and the pure awareness connected to deep insight. Eckhart explains why he believes we all have access to this vast intelligence, which is greater than the mind.

He says, we find it when we practice presence.

[Speaker 1] (0:41 - 30:45)

One of the things you become comfortable with or learn here, perhaps, is a transcending a mind pattern that could be described as always waiting for the next thing. Most people are not aware of it because it's always there. And something that's always there, you're not really aware of.

When I'm not speaking right now, when this pauses, I'm not asking myself what I'm going to say next. It would be stressful. Would be even more stressful if before a session, I was thinking, what am I going to talk about?

In other words, I don't know what I'm going to talk about. Since nothing is planned, we have to see what the present moment comes up with, what comes out of it. I don't know if you've seen, I haven't yet spoken much about the Greek, the ancient Greek philosophers, fascinating.

I may or may not talk about them at some point. There's a book, it's called Lost Masters, and it's written by Linda Johnson. And the foreword is by Eckhart Tolle.

And it's about the hitherto neglected spiritual dimension in the teachings of the ancient Greek philosophers. Wonderful read. Although you shouldn't read too much while you're here.

But if you have to read, that's not a bad book to read. And so it starts with probably the pre-Socratics who lived around 500 BC at the time of the Buddha. People such as Heraclitus and Parmenides and Pythagoras.

Fantastic. Pythagoras, amazing philosopher. That was the beginning.

And then there's a span of about 750 years of Greek philosophy. And it ends in approximately the year 250 AD. In the year 250, so 750 years later approximately, the last philosopher is Plotinus, which in other languages may be called Plotino, Plotino, et cetera, et cetera.

Plotinus, a very profound philosopher. Amazing insights into spirituality. Not an easy read though.

So, and this is the book that I wrote the foreword. One thing that I mentioned in the foreword was a comment on a very famous statement by Socrates. And Socrates, when he was asked, why do people call you the wisest of all men?

Or maybe it's not. It could have been, why does the Oracle at Delphi call you the wisest of all men? And then people started to call him the wisest of all men.

Why do they call you that? And of course his famous answer was, because I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing. And this answer has not really been understood, as I see it, in its depths.

It's usually interpreted as feigned modesty. He's saying he knows nothing, but he knows very well that he knows a lot. He's just pretending that he has no ego, but it wasn't like that.

And I mentioned it in the foreword, knowing that he knows nothing. This is reported by Plato because Socrates never wrote anything. So everything we know about Socrates was written by his disciple, Plato.

And then when I saw that for the first time, I realized the actual meaning of it, which Plato didn't recognize because he was not quite as profound as Socrates, although he had great insights too. Socrates was comfortable with a state of not knowing. He did not teach from accumulated knowledge.

And that's a very vital thing. I mentioned that in the foreword and talked about it. And the author, Linda Johnson, then told me, oh, amazing.

I never thought of that. And it's not easy to recognize. Now, what does that mean?

As you probably know, Socrates taught through dialogues with people. So people come to him with a question, and then he asks them another question, and then they answer, and then he asks another question. And gradually, the dialogue develops.

And as the dialogue develops, gradually, his insights become deeper, and he shows that the questioner is actually misperceiving many things. He has certain assumptions which are not true, and gradually this emerges. And it is clear to me that the power, the creative power that came through him came because he was comfortable with the state

of not knowing, which means it is the state of pure awareness, cessation of thinking.

And that, from the point of view of the conceptual mind, looks like a state of complete ignorance. Because obviously, the conceptual mind says, when you're not thinking, you don't know anything. So, and in a way, it is.

But by entering that state, you begin to have access to a deeper source of knowledge or knowing that is within you, an intelligence that is greater than the intelligence of the mind, and greater than anything that could be measured in IQ tests. So if you can access the state of not knowing, it's become comfortable with not knowing, then your mind becomes more creative because the creative impulse comes from this, the depths of the awareness, the deep eye, as I sometimes call it, as opposed to the surface eye, the personality, with its accumulated knowledge and its conditioning. And so Socrates was able to just sit there and be in spacious awareness, which is not knowing and knowing that he's not knowing, which is different, again, from a fool who might sit there and not know a thing, but he doesn't know that he doesn't know anything.

And this is why often a wise person has been mistaken for a fool, because they both are in that state, but a very different state of not knowing. One is below thought, the other one is above thought. You do not need to continuously find a position, a mental position towards what's going on around you at every given moment.

So if you can be as much as possible in that state of clarity, in which there is no movement of thought, but just an aware presence, then you become a very powerful creative force in any situation. It could be a meeting, it would be a committee meeting, it could be all kinds of things where people are discussing something, need to arrive at some kind of conclusion or decision. And if you can be there and embody this clarity of presence, where you're not continuously engaged in immediately formulating conceptualizations, but to have that space of just, you take in what's there, you listen.

To be able to listen to another human being, extremely important, but how do you really listen to another? You cannot listen when you yourself are already preparing the next thing that you're going to say. You're not really listening, you're not giving attention.

This is particularly important, not only in a work situation, it's particularly important with your children, for example, to be able to give them attention, which really is more than listening to what somebody is saying. It is listening in this attention, you sense beyond the personality of this person and beyond whatever this person is saying. So there's a sensing of the essence of this person also, but you can only do it because you're aware of your own essence.

And then you develop the ability to step back from thinking periodically, or perhaps frequently, and then speak or think, then step back from thinking. So your consciousness, your ordinary consciousness is no longer a continuous stream of thinking.

It is thinking that is interspersed with spaciousness.

And that's not that difficult to practice. But of course, yes, it is true that the momentum behind thinking is enormous. It has a pull, a gravitational pull, and especially if your entire sense of identity is bound up with thinking, the narrative of yourself, and you need to keep it alive.

So it's a lovely practice. You can do it first in non-challenging situations, simple conversation, really give attention to somebody. And this attention, which we call listening, is more than just auditory perception.

It is an energy field of presence. And that changes the nature of the interaction with the other human. You're no longer just interacting on the human level.

In addition to the human level, where you talk, whatever it is you're talking about, there's the being level, the presence. Then you have the two dimensions. And humans, most humans, maybe not all, if they're totally immersed in their mind, they may not notice anything.

But many humans will notice something about you, but they may not be able, probably won't be able to interpret what it is. Or they can feel perhaps that it is, they like to be around you or in your presence because they feel kind of recognized in their being, acknowledged, particularly important with children. Since most people these days are completely mind absorbed, most children suffer from a lack of acknowledgement of their being.

The attention that is given to children by most parents is purely mental and emotional. So mentally, emotionally, they do whatever they can, but most of the interaction, and if you look into normal family environment, most of the interaction is to do with getting something done or stopping to do something. Do that, don't do that.

Have you done that? What's the next thing that we're going to do? There's always this momentum to, and what are you doing now?

What's this one? Okay, there's never a stopping and acknowledging the other person's being, the child's being. So many children have a sense of something missing.

They don't know what it is. It's an obscure underlying sense of unease. And that sense of unease, I'm talking about parents who are not present at all with their children, which unfortunately is still the majority of parents these days.

There is a sense, an underlying sense of unease. And that surfaces then often when a child, especially when they reach puberty, become teenagers, many teenagers are very unhappy. And even many children these days are not happy.

They are unhappy. The prescription medications that are given to children to affect their mental, emotional state is just amazing. So children are restless, uneasy.

It doesn't help that they're involved a lot with these devices, takes them out of themselves. But you as a parent, your main task, in addition to the practical things that you need to do to look after the child, have you brushed your teeth? Yeah, that's an important question.

But it's more important to give the child attention. And then you can start with listening. What did you do today?

How are you feeling? And then listen. But listening is more than listening.

There's an outflow. It's an energy field that arises and that can touch the other human being at the deepest level. And then gradually the other can become aware of that dimension, the child in this case, can become aware of that dimension within themselves a little bit, because they are being acknowledged in the depths of their being.

Their being is being acknowledged. You're not just operating on the human level, although the human is of course necessary, perfectly fine. But it's not enough.

In any relationship or any interaction, the purely human level is not enough for a satisfying relationship. If the spaciousness, which is one way of putting it, if the spaciousness is not there in the relationship, the spaciousness is missing. If there's no space in the relationship, the relationship frequently manifests conflict and friction and dissatisfaction and frustration.

Because on the human level, every human being that you spend time with or live with will exhibit certain characteristics or idiosyncrasies that you find annoying and upsetting after a while. No matter who you meet and live with, you will find that, oh dear, now he's doing that again. Why can't he do that?

Why is she always saying, don't get it, what's that weird way of, why is he eating like that? And so it's, sometimes you come to an arrangement and find you somehow manage to live together, but there's not, there's not the, the spaciousness isn't there. You have to do it.

It has to start with you. And even if the other is not spacious at all, maybe doesn't get it, sometimes it, the other, it jumps across and the other one also gets it, but it, maybe you're the only one in the relationship who is able to be spacious and the other one might be totally unspacious with a very cluttered mind. And there you are.

And he or she is, what to do then? This is a very, a question that is frequently asked. Of course, I never tell people what to do.

They have to realize for themselves what to do. And as the, again, let's just come back briefly to the state of not, of not knowing includes in that moment, not knowing who or what you are, having no, obviously when you come, there's a moment of cessation of thinking and just aware presence. In that moment, you have no opinion about yourself.

How could you? Because an opinion is a thought. You have no opinion about who you are.

That's a very liberating thing. If you can begin to live like that and see how unimportant the opinions are that you hold about yourself or others, it's an enormous liberation. And it's an enormous freedom to have no, it sounds a little, as if, sounds a little weird to some people at first.

How can you have no opinion? Do I have an opinion about myself? Let's see.

There's a human level. There's the human level, of course, is there. And there's the transcendent dimension that comes through the human dimension and kind of, yes, that's an interesting question.

What happens to the human dimension? I'll come back to myself in a second, if you're interested. What happens to the human dimension as the unconditioned consciousness emerges more fully in you?

How does it affect the conditioned entity of yourself, the egoic self? How does it, how does it affect, does it completely change it into something absolutely wonderful? Or does it totally remain the same as it's always been?

Well, either of these statements are not correct. It does not transform the human into some perfect human being. There's no such thing.

And even if you started living with the Buddha, you would get annoyed about certain things after a while and realize that the Buddha also has certain characteristics as a human that are limited in one way, because as a human, you must have certain limitations. You can't be everything. You're good at this, but bad at that.

However, a change does happen to the conditioned entity. You are no longer in the grip of your conditioning so that it determines what you do in this world. It determines what you think and how you act and react in this world.

You are no longer at the mercy of your conditioning. That is true. Certain aspects of your conditioning remain.

They are still there. But you do not confuse them with who you are. So you're not identified.

And the very dysfunctional ways of conditioning, those that create suffering for yourself

and others, gradually they erode. Other forms of conditioning may remain, including things where people would say, you are awakened. How can you still do that?

Because your ideas about how an awakened human behaves may not be correct. There was an Indian man, a very great spiritual teacher, who before he awakened was a chain smoker, and after he awakened was still a chain smoker. And somebody recorded his talks and did a very good editing job.

And out of that emerged one of the great spiritual books in the world. It's called, I Am That, by the Indian spiritual teacher Nisargadatta Maharaj. You can forget the Maharaj, which is a title, which means the great king.

Nisargadatta, Nisargadatta, not easy to remember. But I Am That, you can remember that. And that's a wonderful read that takes you into a presence.

Every chapter takes you into a presence. One of my favorite books. Anyway, he was a chain smoker before awakening and continued to be a chain smoker after.

He just, it didn't matter to him anymore. And finally died of throat cancer. He didn't mind.

Certain idiosyncrasies remain, but those that make your life and other people's lives difficult and unpleasant tend to get eroded and dissolve. And you are no longer in the grip of your conditioning. So you can respond to situations and to people from the depths of awareness as a deep eye, rather than the conditioning of your mind.

You're not at the mercy of your conditioning anymore. And you're not identified with it. People sometimes say, don't you always, don't you need an ego to function in this world?

Surely you need an ego. How can you be egoless in this world and function? This is the way of semantics, the way I use the word ego.

When I use ego, what it means is complete identification with your form identity, the body and the mind. So that's ego. Then you don't, you don't, you are the, as I use the analogy that I used before, you are the actor who has learned his script, his role, the script so well that he is acting it out, no longer knowing anything else except the script that dominates and his mind and mental, emotional field.

So that's, that the ego is complete identification, complete lack of awareness. So identification with the, the, the mental, emotional entity. And then, however, form identity remains.

So you, you remain a, a human with its idiosyncrasies, some of which don't go away and others do. So the, I still haven't answered the question, do I have an opinion about who I am? I have to look into it carefully because I need to give a truthful answer.

Well, I, I don't have a conceptual identity and because that would be a burden and it would become an obstacle. So I'm described perhaps as a spiritual teacher and I am a spiritual teacher right at this moment when I'm kind of teaching. The question is, am I still a spiritual teacher when I walk away from here towards my room or when I'm back home or when I'm buying, going to a supermarket to buy something?

Do I carry the identity with me as the great spiritual teacher is now going to the supermarket? I don't. I, I'm let go of that identity.

So I don't, there's no, unfortunately, there's no sense of deep, yes, it is satisfying to know that the teaching is reaching so many people, but I don't get that sense that I'm doing it. I am changing people's lives because what, what does that mean? I am, who is this I?

If this I means the deep I, the consciousness, then that is true. But the deep I is the, is, is your deep I too. It is the universal, this is a deep I of the universe.

And so the, the human is the vehicle for the expression of that. And that's fine. I like that.

I like to be a vehicle for the expression of the deep I. And in a sense, a lot of the time, especially in the teaching situation, I am the deep I talking. And then the, and again, this, you may find the same.

There may, you may notice certain variations on a daily basis. Sometimes there's a bit more of your personality operating. You are the, the super, the surface I.

And then there's the deep I. There's, there might be, you might experience degrees, certain degrees of intensity.

[Speaker 2] (30:46 - 31:06)

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Eckhart Tolle Invincible Summer [34a309c8-837e-4286-ae5c-aefe85d04024]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:54)

Invincible Summer. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to a live audience in Hawaii. He ponders the paradise surrounding them, the sun, the palm trees, and the sea, and then quotes famous French philosopher Albert Camus, who said, In the midst of winter, I found there was within me an invincible summer.

Eckhart explains that Camus is referring to the spiritual dimension, or what he calls the alive inner peace at the core of our being. Eckhart says it's inevitable that life's hardships will pull us off center, and dark thoughts about the past or the future will divide us from the light of consciousness. He explains that if we learn to push past the darkness, returning to our inner refuge again and again, it will become a practice.

And Eckhart believes this is what having a spiritual life is all about.

[Speaker 1] (1:02 - 28:16)

I'm almost six minutes late. Unforgivable. The reason is, the internet seems to be down for the live streaming, and we were waiting for the internet to come back up.

It still isn't up. And of course, I was getting more and more stressed. So I said I would just begin with a silence.

Well, we do that anyway, quite often. So we'll be in stillness for a minute, or two, or three. And that's a good thing.

And then they will let us know if the internet is working or not. If it doesn't work, we will spend the rest of the session in total silence. Some people have this vision when they think of what they want to achieve in life.

They want to live in Hawaii and spend the rest of their life sitting under a palm tree, sipping a cocktail. And then they've made it. I made it.

Worked hard for 45 years. And finally, I made it. And now what?

Some of you live in the Northern Hemisphere, so you are moving back into winter. Those who live in the Southern Hemisphere or around here, well, in South America, Australia, your summer is beginning. That's fine.

But many of you, it's the winter. Ooh. There's a quote by a famous French writer, Albert Camus, who said in one of his writings, "In the depths of winter, I discovered deep within myself an invincible summer." This quote can only be appreciated by people. It's not appreciated by people who live in an internal summer anyway. But of course, summer

and winter are used metaphorically here. In the depths of winter, which means unpleasant circumstances, things not working well, whatever it may be, challenges, difficulties.

In the depths of winter, I discovered deep within myself an invincible summer. So he's obviously, he speaks from, he obviously spoke from his own experience, a realization of this dimension that our gathering is all about and the spiritual life is all about. It's a discovery of that dimension within yourself.

One could call it a kind of inner peace, but an alive peace, not a dead peace. A very alive peace. And you return to it in case you lose it, as it's likely that from time to time the world will cause you to lose it.

And then you return to it again and again until it becomes second nature to you, and it's always in the background of your being. It's always there, if only faintly in the background. You return to it by coming back into using the portal of the present moment and that the portal into that vertical dimension, which is where the peace is, opens up in the present moment.

So that is truly to be regarded as a portal. Then you have past and future, which otherwise dominate your attention, move away for a while, and all that is just this. Past recedes, future recedes, because they only exist in the mind as thought.

When you move out of thought, there's also no past and future, they recede. And then you have the vibrancy and aliveness of this moment. And then you have a few means of using this portal into the present moment.

And just reminding you, because you will need that as you go away from here, you have sensory perceptions. Sometimes the first thing you become aware of heightened sensory perceptions as your attention moves into the present moment, because in the present moment you are somewhere and there's things to be perceived. And the next is awareness of your breath.

And they don't have to be separate. They kind of merge into one. As you enter the present moment, first step is usually, oh, you kind of, you wake up into the present moment.

One could almost say, if before you were immersed in thinking, it's like a dark veil, because you think you're in a dark place. Thinking about the next thing that you need to arrive at the next point somewhere. When is the internet going to be up again?

What can we do about it? What if it doesn't come up again? What do we do then?

Oh my God, these people are going to complain everywhere. What are you going to do? We should have arranged this earlier.

I don't know what, how we could have done it. Oh. Completely lost in thought.

It's not, it's fairly common, extremely common for people to be lost in dimension. And then, oh, oh, I forgot that I'm here. The present moment is usually not that bad at all.

That's a surprising realization. The mind says, but it's going to be bad tomorrow morning. I go, yeah.

And then tomorrow morning comes and it's the present moment. And maybe what the mind projected isn't happening at all. Or it is happening, like, you live somewhere in Europe and the electricity gets cut off.

Could be happening this winter, apparently. Oh my God. Well, you have to put on two or more sweaters.

Is it that bad? Or get, go back into bed. It's just what it is.

Without the building on top of it, an unhappy entity that's complaining and feeling sorry for itself, or feels hostile towards something. So there may be some unpleasantness on a physical level in certain occasions, but not the superstructure of a suffering self. So in that sense, suffering goes.

And then even unpleasantness in the body is no longer really suffering. The real suffering is the psychological suffering of this entity, the self. Without that, things are relatively simple and you can deal with them in the present moment.

There's always enough power, more than enough to deal with it in the present moment, which is come to an alignment, see if anything can be done. If it can be done, then the wisdom operates through you and you take wise action, as Buddhists call it, skillful action. Wise conscious action, I sometimes call it.

You do the right thing, not reactive thing. Let's do this here. But you have to consider all the repercussions because you haven't gone still for even a moment to consider the totality of the situation.

And so you enter the present moment with your attention, through breath awareness, and then that moves into inner body awareness and that becomes part of, of being present. And then you can be present within and without. You're still conscious of your surroundings and you sense the presence that pervades the entire body.

And let's see. And there you find the invincible summer. The motivation for finding the invincible summer within you is greater if your surroundings, if you find yourself in the winter, as far as your surroundings are concerned, I'm using this metaphorically now.

If we were using it literally, then if you lived in a Y, you would be not motivated to find the invincible summer within yourself because you already have it without. But it's not to

be, it's not to be seen literally. So winter points to difficult circumstances externally.

So the motivation for awakening into that dimension is greater as you face difficulties in life. Well, that's for some people, that is a revelation because they think when they face difficulty, something has gone wrong. And of course the mind calls it that something has gone wrong, but life is full of them.

And no matter how much positive thinking you do, which is highly advisable, it's wonderful, it can work very well. And still life will challenge you with difficulties. But they don't need to turn into suffering.

In fact, they become the motivating force for going deeper. And this is why the ancient Romans, they already recognized this truth. They were, they had the Stoics, Stoic philosophy, beautifully set out in a book that I highly recommend that was written 2000 years ago by the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius.

The book is called *Meditations*. It's not about meditation, but it's called *Meditations*. Little pieces of contemplation about living consciously, basically.

So the Stoics, through the Stoics, the Romans discovered this truth, and there's a famous Latin saying which goes, *per aspera ad astra*, which translates as, through adversity to the stars. We only grow through adversity. And then the presence deepens, or if you are not present yet, it brings about the beginning of the awakening.

Now, one of the tasks that is waiting for you is the integration, of course, of this state of consciousness, of presence, with your active life. And that is also a challenge. For many people, the motivation for generating energy and doing things is very often a sense of discontent, of fear, anxiety.

I remember when I was a student, I was unhappy, but I worked very hard. And my motivating force was I had to prove to the world that I could do it, that I was worth it. And there was a fear of not being good enough.

So propelled by fear and a sense of unworthiness, that became the motivating force for working hard in a continuous state of stress. And I remember one person, another student said, he observed me and said, you should take up meditation. He had taken up meditation, and I said, no, I'm not going to do any work anymore if I do that.

I don't want this inner peace, I'm not, I'm going to be lazy. And a few weeks later, this same student came in and said, he was holding a flower, and he said, I'm leaving the university now. I'm joining an ashram.

Great. And I thought, you see, he couldn't make it. That was a time when quite a few people started to kind of drop out.

And they were attracted by various spiritual organizations, group, big organizations that attracted people like Osho. I forgot the names now. There was another young guru that attracted lots of people and several others.

We even had one lecturer who came back after a summer vacation, who had actually gone to India and announced, my name is now Ananda something, something, or adopted an Indian name. It was all great. There was a spiritual awakening, a small scale spiritual awakening happening.

But at that time, not to me yet, I had to suffer a bit more. And I never joined an organization. That's not another good nor bad thing, but it wasn't necessary, it seems.

For some people, it's helpful. For others, not. So the integration, what is the motivating force for taking action?

If you no longer have a sense of lack and insufficiency, which is normal in the egoic consciousness, what is it that motivates you to act upon the world, to create something new, if it is not to satisfy your ego, to make your ego feel bigger, more powerful, better. And the ego in its comparative state always wants to be better than the other. So the main thing is the point of departure or the foundation for doing is no longer a sense of lack or insufficiency, because whatever doing arises out of that state of consciousness, which is the egoic state, is going to also contribute to your stress and unhappiness.

And in the meantime, you make many others also unhappy. Anybody around you becomes stressed and is unhappy. But as you become more aligned with the deeper consciousness, the realization may come to you of either embarking on some new endeavor or enterprise or undertaking or activity.

Or it could be that it just transforms the way in which you conduct your present activities that you are already engaged in. So it sometimes takes you out completely out of your normal life and brings something totally new, which could happen if you work in a very dysfunctional environment, a company where it's totally dominated by ego, a continuous conflict between people and struggle for getting ahead and stress. And if you are in that environment, embody presence, then it is likely that either they will, as the expression goes, they will let you go quite soon, because energetically you don't fit in anymore in that environment, or you wake up one morning and say, that's it.

No matter what, I cannot be part of this craziness anymore. Or it could be that in your whatever activity you are doing at this moment, whatever you engaged in at the present time, you continue to do it with an added dimension of presence. The same job, but the way in which you do it is different.

Most importantly, you are practicing what is described in the ancient scripture of the Bhagavad Gita as karma yoga. Your work needs to be karma yoga. Yoga means spiritual

practice.

Karma means action. So you make action into your spiritual practice, which means you give your fullest attention to the performance of your action in the moment. This is how you reconcile becoming present, which at first you experience when you're sitting still and the environment is conducive to it.

First that, and then you bring it into action. So the most important thing is to learn for you now, whatever action you perform, obviously it has a purpose. The purpose of the action, even if you're an artist, then it's relatively easy.

The purpose is to do a painting or a sculpture or whatever. Then the purpose is you want to create a work of art. Then it's relatively easy if you're engaged in work that is creative by its very nature, then it is easier to stay in the present moment.

But not all types of work are like that. So you may be working on a computer, or you may be working on connecting with people through the internet or whatever people do these days, or a service job in a service industry, or a big boss of a big company. I'm so happy I've never been the boss of a big company, but if it's your destiny, I'm a bad boss and a bad employee.

I don't like to tell people what to do, and I don't like to be told what to do. So completely dysfunctional for our civilization. So you bring awareness into whatever action you want.

Very often the action will be communicating with people. And you bring, so the purpose of your interaction, every interaction has a purpose. We want to arrive at a solution for this problem or whatever, or we want to expand our company or we want whatever.

Every interaction has a purpose. The purpose, by its very nature, is in the future. Purpose is always, not always, but we'll get there in a second.

The purpose is usually in the future. So it is easy to become so distracted by the future purpose that the quality of your action in the present, which is the only place where you can act, the quality of it is diminished because of an excessive focus on the desired outcome. So the qualitative difference in karma yoga is honoring, appreciating the moment of action, giving your fullest attention to it.

And that is a complete reversal of how people usually act. And that makes every action into something that's actually enjoyable, which before it was just a task that you had to perform, you didn't really want it, to be doing it. And then it becomes the present, the doing in the present moment becomes enjoyable.

Then if you, the energy that arises out of that, after a while it takes over and some, a deeper intelligence flows into what you do. And then you get also inspiration of what can be done better. And we're talking at the moment about performing what you're already

doing and making it conscious.

And if it is something entirely new, perhaps you will not continue where you are at the present time. Something entirely new may arise. Quite a few of you, some of you are already spiritual teachers in your own way, perhaps through some other modality, you're already working with people and disseminating consciousness.

Some of you are becoming spiritual teachers. And ultimately, every one of you in the wider sense is going to be, or already is a spiritual teacher, because when you embody the new consciousness, the presence, you cannot not teach. Just by embodying presence, you teach presence.

The satisfaction is then derived from the doing and not from the arriving. There's still some, you're still, you're happy when you conclude something, it worked, it's fine, it's great. But the journey was enjoyable and you're continuously on a journey.

It's the important thing is so that stress does not arise anymore in your life. The journey, the present moment is, becomes enjoyable. The whole problem of achieving through postponing satisfaction, you don't need to do that anymore.

The satisfaction is shifts from being derived from the desired outcome to being derived from the action that's being performed in this moment. The desired outcome is fine if it works. And if it doesn't work, because it doesn't always work, the journey was enjoyable.

[Speaker 2] (28:17 - 28:37)

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Eckhart Tolle It Is Always Now [b283a139-20cd-4c6f-b802-b50830dd4b65]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:55)

It is always now. In this episode, Eckhart talks with an audience in Brisbane, Australia. He explains the reason for their gathering is to accelerate their awakening.

He says everything we experience occurs in the now, and it will never not be now. He says most people don't realize this because their attention is elsewhere, absorbed by the past or future. He explains we believe we are a product of our history, childhood and family background, yet we are more than that.

Eckhart says the difficulties we encounter then can be the catalyst to awaken now. He says had he not gone through painful childhood and years of unconsciousness, he would never have grown spiritually. He explains the paradox this way.

His suffering pushed him to a new level of consciousness. He says we are living through crises now because challenges propel us toward evolution.

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 36:38)

Ah, it's checking if everybody is present. There may be one or two who are not completely present, but that's okay. By the end of this evening, they either will be or they will have left in disgust, because nothing the speaker said made any sense.

But most of you, almost all of you are awakening or awakened beings. For most humans, it's a process. Awakening is a process that they go through.

And most of you are here because you are going through this process. Of awakening, although you may not have used this particular term, you may not call it awakening, or you may not even know exactly what I mean when I say awakening. It is the arising of a certain dimension of consciousness that is deeper than or higher, whatever term you want to use, than the ordinary state of consciousness, which I sometimes call the egoic state.

And humanity has arrived at this point where the transition from the usual state of consciousness, which I call unconsciousness, to consciousness, this transition has become absolutely necessary, because we are living in very challenging times. And the strange thing is that it's only in very challenging times that humans actually evolve. You might know that it applies both on a collective level and a personal level.

You may know that from your personal life. If you had not gone through certain challenges in your life, difficulties, emotional, mental, physical pain, challenges come in many forms, and great loss. If you had not gone through that, you would not be here.

I know I wouldn't be here if I had not gone through very difficult years of unconsciousness. And so the purpose of our gathering here is to, one could say, to accelerate or deepen this awakening in you. So let's see why we are here.

And it's not just a gathering that works on an intellectual or conceptual level, although I am talking, I haven't prepared anything. I hope you don't mind. I lost my script many years ago, never found it again.

And there's not just the normal dimension in a gathering like this. You listen to the speaker and you agree or disagree, or you find it interesting or not interesting or entertaining. You learn, perhaps you learn new things, or maybe you don't.

That's one level. That's a normal conventional level at which gatherings like this operate when there is a talk. I am giving a talk.

Okay. But there's another dimension to this talk, and it's hard to describe. It's a dimension of presence.

And the reason why this dimension is there is because the words kind of arise out of presence. So they're not prepared, they arise out of presence. Although I must admit, on the one hand, basically, for the past 40 years, I've been speaking about the same things.

But the strange thing is, although I've been speaking about the same things, it's, somewhat different each time it takes on a somewhat different form. Sometimes it corresponds to the energy field of the audience. And each time, this is really weird, to me, it feels completely new and fresh.

Although, if you're only listening to this on a conceptual level, if you do not have access to that dimension of presence within yourself, and then listen from there, there may be one or two, as I mentioned, who don't have that yet. But then you might say, hasn't he said that before? I overheard years ago, I just remembered, after the talk, I went to the bathroom.

I was in a stall, and some of the other people were in the bathroom commenting about the talk I had just given. They didn't know I was there. Won't happen tonight, don't worry.

And I heard them saying, has he said anything new? No, not really. It's all in his books.

It wasn't really anything new. Okay, that was a sign they didn't, they understood it conceptually, perhaps, but it was old. They did not have access to the deeper dimension that is actually there.

Even if you read a book that was written from a state of presence, like those books, but there are other spiritual books that are similar. When you pick up a book like that, you

might have read it three, four, five times, and then a few months pass, or a year passes, and you pick it up again. And the strange thing is, it's fresh and new again.

Because it activates that dimension of presence in you. The words point to that dimension of presence. So they're not words that you need to believe in.

I believe that there's only the present moment, because I read it in a book. But to realize at a deeper level what that means, that this is all there ever is, this present now, the entire life, is only ever now, has never not been now, will never not be now. To realize that at a deeper level is something very different from just listening from the conceptual mind.

Okay, right. Well, he said that before. He said there's only the now three years ago and 20 years ago.

Does that mean that there isn't only the now, because he talked about it 20 years ago? Okay, that's the human mind, the conceptual mind. So you pick up a spiritual book that has this power, one could say.

I don't know how it gets into the book, into the words, but it's there somehow. And immediately, it helps you go a bit deeper again into a presence that perhaps you were losing yourself in your mind again. You pick up a book, read a couple of pages, you're no longer reading this book that you might have read four or five times already.

But then when you reread, you're no longer, you don't read it for additional knowledge, you read it for another reason, in order to become more present. It helps you suddenly, wow. It even happened to me, there were, I don't know, last year or whenever, for some reason, I picked up *The Power of Now*, and I hadn't looked at it for at least 10 years.

And I read a page, I said, wow, this is so good. But I didn't have that strange feeling that we might imagine, or I wrote that. I don't know where this came from, but it's good.

It has this power. It's not of the person. And so this is the dimension of presence that is here that is more important, one could say, than the conceptual level.

And as the evening progresses, we will go more deeply into this dimension. And by saying that, I am aware that there's already a little paradox here, because I'm saying, as the evening progresses, we are going to go more deeply into the present moment. Aren't we already there?

Of course, you cannot escape the present moment. It's always present. But very few people, unless they are going through the awakening process, not many humans are actually truly conscious of the present moment.

Most humans' attention is almost completely absorbed by past and future. They live

almost exclusively through memory and anticipation. So they're pulled this way and that way.

The tendency is, if you're young, you're pulled more towards living for the future. There's nothing wrong with it. Of course, making plans and having a goal, that's all fine.

But being so focused and obsessed by the goal, for example, that you want to achieve, or whether it's a small-scale goal, which is like, I wish it were already this evening, or I wish it were this weekend, or a long-term goal, you're working towards something, examine, you're a young person doing exams or whatever, or you're learning some skill, I wish I was already, and you're projecting yourself continuously.

So there's a deep mental habit that everybody inherits, that is to be obsessed by the next moment, to always regard the next moment as, when I put it like this, I'm making something conscious that before was unconscious, and that is always regarding the next moment as somehow more desirable than this one. This is an unconscious way of being in this world. This is what I call the unawakened state.

Unconsciously, they don't verbalize that in their minds. They don't say, I always think that the next moment is more important than that one, but that's the reality of their mental state, is that they're always wanting to get away from this moment. They're always, what's the next thing?

Some better moment in the future. But as you get older and older and older, the so-called future shrinks. And then you tend to go more into the past.

Oh, I remember, that was, was that 50 years ago? That one, and many things suddenly, and then there are all kinds of emotions associated with memories from the past. Sometimes it's nostalgia, or regret, or feeling of guilt, or of kind of grievance, or resentment, or something didn't go right.

And people, sometimes people think their entire life was one big failure. I didn't make it. Make what?

And so this is, we're talking about time, how time absorbs your attention continuously, so you miss the timeless now. The only place where life actually is experienced, the only place where life can unfold, it is not given much attention. There's more attention in either future or past than the present.

Yes, of course, you have some attention in the present. You don't, you know where you're going. You don't bump into furniture.

You're not 100% absent, but only 95%. And with the remaining 5%, you're doing okay. You still know where to go, but you're not really here.

You're elsewhere. We call that being lost in time, one could say. Not time, of course, it's something you cannot escape on this dimension of existence.

The surface dimension, I call it, where things happen. Everything happens in time. Everything that you do requires time.

Every doing implies that there's time. Time is the space for the doing, even the slightest doing. Making a cup of tea requires time.

Learning to play an instrument, learning another language, experiencing this or that, going from A to B, all this requires time. And so you live in this stream of time, and this stream of time is regarded as extremely valuable because you need more time to be fully yourself. That's an unconscious assumption.

I need more time. And time, as you look, most humans look to time, the next moment, or the one after that, or the one after that. They always look to time for greater, some greater good.

Not this good. This isn't good enough. It's never good enough.

Or if it is, it's briefly good enough. Yes, okay, you have a great meal, feels so good to be eating, sensory pleasure, that passes very quickly, and then you have to pay, probably have to pay a price for it later. Or you can engage in sexuality, and then again, yes, okay, for a little while you're in the moment, and the mind comes back in.

And that's where the problems start. Immediately, as soon as the mind comes back in, you go, oh. And then again, you start looking to the next moment.

Okay, this wasn't really it. I thought it was, but it turned out not to be. So many times you think this is it, but then it turns out it's not it.

And often you think this is the person that's going to make me happy, and then it turns out it was the very person that makes you unhappy. A few of you may recognize what I just said. And so you look again to time for, okay, I'm still hoping to meet the one that's going to do it, to make me happy, until finally you say, maybe that one doesn't exist.

Or the mind forms some other weird conclusion, like all men are horrible, or all women are horrible. They're all like that. There's no point in even trying.

Okay, then you have some other stuff in your mind. Okay, then you live that out, and then you look to something else. I'm done with all that, but I'm now looking for something else.

And it's always the next, and the next. And so there's hope that things will get better. Of course, sometimes they do get better, until they get worse again.

That's the world of opposites. And then you have this hope that time will help you achieve this, or find this, or be more complete, to arrive, to make it in this world, whatever that means, which is a narrative in your mind that tells you I made it. And if other people agree with it, then it's real reality.

And if other people don't agree with it, then you have some narrative in your mind that other people don't agree with. That's when you grow older, time that gave you hope, something to always look forward to the next thing, or hoping for the next thing. But then gradually, you notice that time is no longer your friend.

And gradually, time is becoming your enemy, because you suddenly realize that time actually is your mortal enemy, because it's going to kill you. Oh, my God. This thing that I've always thought that was the most important thing, it's actually going to kill me.

And I've been running towards that all my life. And so, again, nobody can deny that time is necessary in this dimension of existence, which I call the horizontal dimension. There's past, there's future, and then there's a present somewhere that often is not hardly noticed.

So nobody could deny that we need time. Sometimes people look at me and say, you wear a watch? I thought you always lived in the now.

And then I say, well, I don't like to arrive late for things. Okay. And they think, oh, no, he's not enlightened at all.

He's still... It would have been wonderful if we could, perhaps if we could meet here without time and say, one day, we will accidentally all meet in here. And we'll all come together.

The universe will arrange it. So that we all come together here, because time doesn't exist. Okay.

It's not going to happen. Or it would take a long time. Maybe 10 billion years.

So we cannot deny that time is here and it's everywhere. Anything we do requires time. But another important realization is that if you look more deeply at the phenomenon of time, yes, for practical purposes, you need it.

Whatever you do requires time. But the strange thing is, time, which is past and future, nobody ever experiences the past or future. Let's look at future, for example, which is so important to many people, most people.

Has anybody ever experienced the future? No, I don't think so. You can look and google it and ask, has any explorer ever discovered the future?

Well, they say, well, maybe time traveling. Maybe there might have been people who

time travel, or maybe the time travelers from the future will come here. Maybe Eckhart is a time traveler.

Who knows? And then the time travelers, there is ultimately no time. Because when you reach the future, it's the present moment.

Nothing can be experienced or happen, nothing can happen, except in the now. So ultimately, and some philosophers have realized that, not necessarily spiritual philosophers, even philosophers that were able to think very deeply, they realized that time is actually ultimately a construct of the human mind. And ultimately, time is inseparable from thought.

It's produced by thought, but it is a necessary thing here in this dimension. But in itself, it does not exist. So there were famous philosophers who came to that conclusion or realization.

And if you realize now on a purely experiential level, that your entire life is always this moment. It is experienced as now, always. It was never not now.

And yet, humans live as if some mentally projected future now were more important. So of course we need the future, we need to be able to operate on this level of time, so that things work on this horizontal level of existence. But which really is connected with, inseparable from, being able to use our minds.

Because this is where past and future arise. It's all, think about the past, your past, it is. Does it exist?

No, it only exists because now you remember it. You remember it now. And when it happened, it was now.

So it's always now, no matter where you go. So that is undeniable, there's no getting away from time on this horizontal level of existence where we live. And also your entire sense of identity, for most people, your identity is derived from time, your past.

The past is an accumulation of things in your minds. You're born into a certain situation in your life. And that is the beginning of, well, let's not talk about past lifetimes because just one lifetime is difficult enough.

Otherwise it gets just too much. You are born into a certain situation already. Family background, certain surrounding culture, your parents, what kind of people they are.

So you begin to be conditioned by those influences. You become this entity that consists of things that have happened to you, that you have accumulated mentally, things that you experienced as a child, that has a lot to do with people's identity. So you become a person, a person.

After a few years, years pass and more things are accumulated that you identify with, that becomes your narrative, your memory, and you call it my life. So that comes from the past. And that life of yours, what you call my life, is you.

That's where people, what people derive their sense of identity from. That's me. Me is all the things that have happened to me, that I have done, that other people have done to me.

And there are also things in your past that you're not conscious of. There are reactive patterns in you that you may not be conscious of. And these reactive patterns force you to react in certain situations in a predetermined way, stuff that you absorbed when you were young, and you don't know it because you're still unconscious.

Not you, of course, I'm just talking about normal human beings, not you. And so basically humans act out a script that has been given to them, like an actor on stage. The actor has a script and he or she is acting out the lines, speaks the lines.

Now imagine for the sake of this analogy, that the actor doesn't know that he or she is acting out a script. So the actor is on stage, talking, has his, what he calls my opinions, but not realizing that the opinions are the script that he learned. And so he very forcefully expresses his or her opinions, for example, this is what I believe, this is how it is, that's exactly, I can tell you, this is how the world is, whatever he says, not knowing that all that stuff is a script.

It's a conditioned mind talking. So the actor is lost in his script. And every day he performs the same, basically the same thing.

And even when he encounters new situations, he applies the old script to the new situations. Cannot relate to anything or anybody without this script, which becomes like a veil, the conditioned veil through which he or she perceives so-called reality. And that is the person.

Every person is a script, basically. Every person is a mental, emotional entity created by the past. So it's the living, the person, one could say, is the living past in you.

So if that is the script, the question arises, who or what or where are you when you're acting out the script? Where are you? Who are you without the script?

Oh, well, where are you? The answer would be, you are asleep, so to speak. And this is the term we use in spiritual discourse, the term is unconscious.

A person who is unconscious in conventional terms, he's completely out of it. That's unconscious in conventional terms. Now, spiritually speaking, unconscious is something else.

Spiritually speaking is, you are unconscious when you are completely the script. You are the script. You identified with all the beliefs, the reactive patterns, the conditioned emotions that make up your personality or your person.

You're completely identified with that. It is you, and that is the unconscious state. So unconsciousness in spiritual terms could be then defined as complete identification with the mental emotional conditioning within you, the mind and the emotions that accompany the mind.

Complete identification with that, the script is the person, the unawakened person, the unconscious person. And there are still millions of humans on the planet who basically live like that. They act out, and very often the particular script that a person acts out is inherited from their parents, and their parents inherited the script from their parents, and their parents inherited the script from, and it goes up and get many generations.

Often you have the same dysfunction in families from one generation to another. Dysfunction meaning particularly dysfunctional patterns within that script, because some scripts are far worse than others. That's another thing of course.

Every human is born, absorbs the script, but every human is born into a certain situation that then becomes translated into the script, and some have very bad scripts, and some have somewhat better scripts. Some look like really good, that's a good one. And then you have another one is what a horrible, horrible situation to be born into.

What do you do with that? And then you're forced to act that out, and then you're well, maybe at 20 years old you already end up in prison, and then you're in prison. But suffering arises through acting out the script.

If it's an unpleasant script, a bad one, then you act it out and life becomes suffering. You create suffering for yourself and others, particularly if the script is a difficult one. So you are forced to act it out, and you suffer, and you make others suffer.

Whether or not to what degree you make others suffer may vary, maybe it's just emotional suffering, maybe just every person you marry becomes unhappy because they married you. Not unheard of. Just remember your ex, in some cases.

And so the strange thing is then you have more, somewhat more pleasant types of conditioning or scripts, and they're okay, relatively okay. The fly landed on my hand, wanted to listen to the talk. Even the fly wants to awaken, but has a long way to go, or to fly.

Now, because the difficult scripts create more suffering, it is also true that if you have a difficult script, then the motivation to awaken becomes stronger. So it's often the case that part of the script, by the way, is what I call the pain body, which is the emotional accumulation in you from your childhood, past lifetimes, let's leave them alone. The

emotional accumulations in you from your childhood, emotional pain that has accumulated within you, that just becomes a part of the script.

And so you are then forced to act out the emotion periodically, as you might remember from the books, you're forced to act out this emotional thing, the pain body, which becomes part of your ego. It's the emotional part of the ego. So if life gets very difficult for you, let's say you end up in prison, it's an extreme, extremely bad script, if let's say you actually do something bad, then there is a possibility because you are there now suffering the consequences of your unconsciousness.

And that is why I often receive correspondence from people in prison, when we have donated countless books, thousands of books to prisons all over the United States and other countries, Power of Now, New Earth, to the prison libraries, and then people read and I get correspondence from prisoners saying, this has changed my life. And some say, I'm still in prison, but I feel free. There's been an awakening, an awakening, they suddenly realized that all of their actions were created by their conditioning and something else suddenly or gradually emerged, because the pain was so much it forced this awakening to happen.

[Speaker 2] (36:40 - 36:59)

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Eckhart Tolle It Takes No Time To Be Who You Are [0123baef-3223-4cb0-b8eb-42d72a534554]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

It takes no time to be who you are. In this podcast, Eckhart reminds us that the world is not here to make us happy, it's here to make us conscious. He says if we don't embrace that, then we will be irritated or even outraged when life pushes us to deal with difficulties.

This, he explains, is a pitfall of the ego. He says we don't have to work hard to awaken, rather we can let our awareness shine through us. He says it takes no time to be who you are, whether we are 18 or 80.

He believes we do not need time to realize our true essence.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 45:55)

Identification with thought, identification with mind. Now freedom arises first when you cannot stand the suffering anymore that comes when you're identified with ego, with the mind. You've had the unhappiness, it's always there when the ego operates.

The sense of not enough, that's always there either on the surface or just underneath the surface. Something is lacking in my life. I've never, I haven't arrived yet.

I haven't started living yet. Where's the next thing that's going to make me happy? Are you going to do it?

Yes, you are. Let's sign a contract right now. Make me happy, demanding that the people shouldn't make you happy, situation shouldn't make you happy, but they never do it because the world isn't here to make you happy.

Is it here to make you unhappy? No, it's here to make you conscious. But if you don't know that the world is here to make you conscious, then you become unhappy and then the world makes you unhappy all the time because you don't know how the world that is not the world isn't here to make you happy, to make you conscious.

And once you're conscious, then there is a kind of happiness there, but I wouldn't even call it happiness anymore. There's a deeper sense of rootedness in something vast, in something that transcends the person and yet is not separate from the person. And this is where I want to go now.

We've spoken about all the things that stop you from realizing that, and those things need to be recognized. It's already part of the awakening to recognize the things that keep you in an unawakened state. You need to recognize those things.

But then from there you can actually see, well, once you need to have the readiness, and the readiness is there because you're here, how do I go into the depth dimension where I, when I say I, I no longer refer to the narrative in my mind, me and my story and my life. Just before I go there, just mention one more thing about your life. My life is something, is a narrative in many people's head that causes an enormous amount of suffering.

You can't imagine how many people's lives are made miserable by a very unhappy story in their head that they identify with and call it my life. People just driven to suicide by an unhappy narrative that tells them how awful my life is. And they never realize they are trapped in a delusion of thought.

If they were able to step out, and again, the question arises, where is your life? Oh, let me think. This is all my past, my dreadful past, my probably dreadful future, that's my life.

All the things have gone wrong, all the things that I missed, all the things that people have done to me, all the things that the universe has done to me, all that is my, all just been just awful. Nobody has suffered more than me. Nobody.

And people don't realize how much unhappiness is derived from what they're telling themselves in the head. Now these people need to come out of that if they want to be free. Do you want to suffer more?

No. Okay, are you ready to step out of the narrative in your mind that says my life and realize that you don't have a life? That the whole thing that you call my life is certain thoughts that float around in your head and you identify with them.

You don't have a life. You are life. And to realize that you are life, which is a temporary expression of the one life, the one consciousness that pervades the entire universe, you are a temporary expression of that one life.

You don't have a life. And if you don't have a life, you can't lose your life. People say, he lost his life.

She lost her life. How does that work? There's he and there's his life.

Who is he and who is the life that he lost? There's a duality there that doesn't exist. You can't lose your life because you are life.

You don't have a life. They are just memories and thoughts in your head. Yes.

But the life that you are can only be realized in the present moment. And in the present moment, the first realization comes to you when you realize that there can be gaps between thoughts. When you realize that apart from thinking, there is another dimension

of consciousness in you that is not disconnected from thinking, but deeper than thinking.

We could say higher too, higher than thinking. And what is that? That is awareness or presence.

And you realize this dimension of consciousness in you right now, when you become conscious. I'm slowing down, as you might have noticed. When you become conscious that there are not only words here being spoken, but there are also gaps between the words.

And you become aware that there are these gaps between words or between one sentence and another. And when you become conscious of that gap, which we could also call a moment of stillness, you might notice that every time you are conscious of this little gap, when there's no word, in that moment you are aware, but you're not thinking. And you haven't disappeared.

In that space of awareness, the essence of who you are is there fully. And yet, it's almost, it's like nothing. And yet it's not nothing.

Undoubtedly, there is a presence that is deeper than thought, out of which thought arises. And to sense in yourself this presence that has no characteristics as such, it's pure, conscious presence. To sense that is to get in touch with the essence of who you are.

And that essence, if we had to attach a word to it, to describe it, we would probably call it consciousness. You are that consciousness, out of which thoughts come. In the same way, I sense or experience thoughts as movements on the surface, like waves and ripples on the surface of a vast ocean.

Now, if you only live on the surface, then all that you have is waves and ripples, which are thoughts. Only this dimension for you. And you can't stop thinking.

And you look for some kind of answer to who you are on that level only. Maybe if I join with this ripple, I'll feel better. Or I need to accumulate power over all these other ripples, then I'll be someone.

Or I need to own more ripples than others. But always never being able to go beyond that. So the cessation of thinking, which is not falling below thinking, which is not a regressive step to where the animals still dwell, because the animal has not yet arrived at conceptual thinking.

Consciousness, yes, but not conceptualization, not thought. The animal, are we regressing when I say, when I present to you the possibility of discovering within yourself the possibility of stepping out of thought. But I'm not saying this is a regressive step towards the animal or the vegetable realm.

The dog is more peaceful and joyous than most humans, except neurotic dogs that have lived for too long with humans. The dog is more joyous, non-judgmental, and alive than most of the people who own these dogs, because the dog does not have a burden of a conceptual self. It does not have the burden of an ego, except some neurotic dogs or cats have already beginning of little egos.

Yes, we'll put that aside. So the dog looks at you and does not judge you because it doesn't have concepts, but it's conscious. Why do people love dogs and cats?

Why do they go, because when you look into the eyes of a dog, you realize for a moment, you connect with a dog and you can sense the beingness or the consciousness of the dog looking through the eyes back at you. And this consciousness of the dog, although it's not the same as the human conscious, is also one aspect of the universal consciousness temporarily taking on the form of dog. This consciousness looks at you and for a moment you feel free to not think, and you might not even know that.

When you look into the eyes of the dog for three or four seconds, you're not thinking when you feel joy arising. Three or four seconds. And it makes you feel good.

The cessation of thought makes you feel good because then you can sense your beingness, your deeper presence, your beingness. And this is why people connect with animals. They give them moments of sanity.

And or you go to even further in the evolutionary, on the evolutionary scale, go even further back to the tree. The tree is even more peaceful than the dog, more connected with the source than the dog. The source being out of which consciousness emanates as light emanates from the sun.

Consciousness emanates from the source of all life, which is unspeakable, which can't, I don't even want to call it anything. You can't say anything about it. This is how, see, this is the universe is an emanation of the one.

And what it emanates is consciousness that exists in many different forms, like sunlight coming from the sun. You are a ray of the universal consciousness emanating from God, we could say, but not the God that usually people think of as God. And yes, these are all wonderful.

They are pre-thought, they exist, the tree and the animal exists prior to thought. We cannot return, it is not our destiny to return to a pre-conceptual level. It is our destiny to transcend thinking, which means having the ability to think without being trapped in thinking and arising above thinking, not falling below thinking.

This is why we're here. When you awaken spiritually, the ability to be above thought is then growing in you. You rise above thinking, you transcend thinking, but when you transcend thinking, that implies at the same time you transcend the person that you are,

because the person that you are consists of thought and emotion and physical form.

You transcend everything when you rise above thinking. Transcendence is the key word in all spiritual traditions. It all talks about the possibility of transcendence.

The Buddha calls it freedom from suffering. Jesus called it salvation. Other terms are liberation, awakening, and so on.

They all pointed already, the ancient traditions, to this possibility of transcendence. And so, rising above thought, not falling below thought, there's a longing in humans to become free of the burden of thought that is self-serving thought, a lot of it being destructive and useless. And this accounts for the enormous amount of drugs that humans consume.

Many of them, or most of them, whether it's from alcohol to many, many other drugs, they have the ability to temporarily free you to some extent from the thinker or the thinking. But usually the price you pay is you fall below thought, but it can be liberating for a little while. If you're totally and miserably unhappy, then if you have three whiskeys, you will feel a little bit better.

And if you have four, five, or six, you may begin to feel worse and then fall off the chair. So it's not the way to go. But I can see why people are longing to go there.

And then all the prescription drugs, and ultimately the prescription drugs, free me from the torture of my own mind. Free me from the torture of my mind. And yet there is a spiritual exit available to everybody.

That is why we're here now. You don't need to work hard or struggle to realize this level of consciousness that transcends thought. It's already in you.

And the one way of putting it is to say that it is already in you, but you have been overlooking it all the time. Because the mind and sensory perceptions are so overwhelming, the mind even more than sensory perception, that you have overlooked that occasionally you experience brief moments when you're simply aware, but not thinking. Brief moments, and during those moments, you briefly transcend who you are as a person.

And then you become consciousness. You realize, well, you may not realize it, but that's what is happening. So it could happen when you're engaged in a dangerous activity that forces you so much into the present moment that you don't have time to think anymore.

In fact, any thought would be a hindrance and might even be dangerous. When you're engaged in climbing a mountain or car racing, I can guarantee that when you're climbing the north wall of the Eiger Mountain in Switzerland, not that many of you will be doing it, I can guarantee you that when you're hanging on that wall, you're not going to be

thinking about your problems. And your entire historical identity will not be there.

You will be forced into complete and utter presence where there's only the present moment. And the same would apply if you're go car racing. Let me think about my problems.

What am I going to have for dinner tonight? Any thought would interfere and you would probably be dead within a few seconds. So you are forced into the present moment by some dangerous activity.

That's what, I'm even surfing, surfing. I haven't done it, but I know, I'm sure the person is surfing these huge waves. It's incredible activity.

Maybe in my next lifetime. If you're surfing these incredible waves, you're totally free of the personality. You're just a conscious perceiving presence.

Amazing. Or it could be overwhelming beauty in nature could also free you momentarily from thought activity. Just to see something overwhelmingly beautiful, the ocean, a mountain landscape, vastness of mountains, a forest, a vast forest, and you see, you hear the wind and the trees, and for a moment you're really listening.

Wow. And you go, often wow is the only remaining thought, if you can even say it's a thought. And you may not even know, you just remember perhaps later, that was such an incredible moment.

But you may not even know that during that moment, you were not thinking there was only awareness and the sense perception happened against the background of the awareness. It was not filtered anymore through conceptualization. It was not filtered anymore through thought.

So you were momentarily free of yourself. And this again comes back to Buddhism. One of the great insights of the Buddha was, he said, the self, I put in brackets, the self that you think you are, is an illusion.

It says the self is an illusion. And that is, of course, the egoic self that we are talking about, a false sense of identity. And so you go into nature, there's a vast sunset, there's a vast sky, and you look around.

And maybe for, maybe even for a minute, there's no thought, only aware presence. So you are, there's a shift in consciousness that can happen. It can also happen just for a few seconds.

When you relate to something that exists prior to thought, you might look at a flower and for a few seconds, you recognize the beauty in the flower and say, oh, and then of course, immediately the mind comes in and says something about it. But the longer the

gap between a sense perception and the interpretation of a sense perception, the deeper you are as a human being. The longer the gap between the sense perception and the interpretation or conceptualization of it, so if you have, you are a very deep human being, deep meaning, awareness arising.

So the more you can look upon the world and not immediately come up with interpretations, even look around a city, a street, sitting in a cafe, or here, and you look. One of my favorite activities is sitting somewhere or standing somewhere and just perceiving. And no thought, no interpretation.

Now, from the point of view of the mind, the mind says, you no longer know what's going on, you become ignorant. But it's not, there is a deeper knowing there. This is very important.

There are two kinds of knowing something, two kinds of knowing. One is through conceptualization and one is direct knowing through awareness. We need both.

But I emphasize the awareness knowing, because the other has taken over the world and we've lost balance completely. We are at the mercy of conceptual knowing, but we have totally neglected the deeper knowing through awareness. Let me give you one or two examples.

Let's say I go somewhere, I go into a forest, or I go into a medieval cathedral, and how do I experience this forest, or how do I experience this medieval cathedral? I can experience it, I can, let's say I'm a tourist, I arrive at Chartres or somewhere in France and see this incredible thing, and at the entrance they give me, they say, would you like to hire a little thing that you can carry, put on your belt, and you put the earphones in, it tells you, it gives you a guided tour of the cathedral, it explains everything to you beautifully, it only costs 20 euros, so it surely is worth it, isn't it? Yes, it probably is. And that is one way of experiencing, you will learn a lot about this cathedral by going around giving concepts and explanations, but if that's the only way in which you experience the cathedral, you have missed something very vital, and that is experiencing the cathedral through your awareness and not concepts in your mind.

And if you do that, then you say, no thank you, I don't need the guide, and you just step in. Now if you stepped in with the recording, immediately the voice would start talking in your ears when you step in, but now you're stepping in without that, and suddenly you just look. If you have that thing in your ears, you never say, wow, it doesn't give you that space.

And then you walk, and you will notice there's very little thinking, you're just perceiving, perceiving through awareness, and then after half an hour or whatever, an hour you come out again, and you have experienced that cathedral not through concepts, but through awareness. Now ideally, if I had a choice, I would always choose the awareness

rather than the knowledge, than the conceptual knowledge, but ideally, there's a balance in your life, and ideally you go, you're there for three days, the first day you just experience through awareness, you come back the next day and you have the little thing, and on the third day, you go through, and you have both in balance, you know things conceptually, and then you let go of concepts, and then you, oh, that was by, this is such and such, represents such and such, and then you're not trapped in it anymore, and you let go. Then you have balance between conceptual knowledge and deeper knowing.

Now the same applies to yourself. Now, here we have the two different kinds of knowing. You can know yourself conceptually, which you do, for example, when you visit a psychoanalyst, the psychoanalyst will analyze your past, and he will talk about it, and you'll be encouraged to explore more and more of the things that happened, and it can go on for years.

It's very interesting. That can be helpful, because often it shows you where you are trapped, it shows you what the obstacles are, can be helpful, but knowing yourself in the deeper sense is the other kind, which is knowing yourself as the aware presence, in which there's no conceptualization, because that is the essence of who you are. And then you exist in the two dimensions.

You exist as a person, physical body, psychological form, physical form, psychological form. You have a history as a person, and you have a future, and as a person, you live in time on that speeding train, and undoubtedly, as a person, you are already being consumed by the fire of time, and the speeding train is speeding up more and more. And then you also, you are there as the deeper, the essence of who you are is awareness or consciousness, which is not yours.

You are manifestation of it. It manifests through you. It is the ray that emanates from the source, and that's why you are incredibly deep.

When you realize your own consciousness, which is not your own, I just say it, then you realize how deep you are. I believe Ralph Waldo Emerson had some, I'm not good at quoting, but he had something, the essence of who you are is like a wick, like a candle, the wick of a candle that deeply goes into being. You're rooted in this beingness that far transcends the person that connects you to the totality of all life, and that is known in the non-conceptual knowing of yourself, and the non-conceptual knowing of yourself is presence, awareness, the ability to rise above thinking, not continuously, but then you can use thinking, and actually, the presence or the awareness can operate through you and actually use your mind in wonderful ways so that you can co-create with the universe. You can create things, but that's not the most important thing.

The most important thing is realizing it first. You realize that, and then you can, you're no longer trapped in your conditioned mind, but the mind can still operate, still does. You exist as a person, and you realize who you are beyond the person.

That's the end of the ego. The end of ego doesn't mean it's the end of you as a form identity. You can still operate as a normal, so-called normal human being, but not really normal anymore because normal is insane, but you don't have to become weird when you realize who you are.

You just become very natural, and you still give conventional answers. People say, when people say, oh, when were you born? You give your birthday and your year.

You don't necessarily say, I was never born. I am nobody. Who are you?

The ego can still, you have to still, even when you realize that the awareness that you are, the ego can come in still and claim something. I'm more present than you. Nobody has less ego than me.

I hope they don't put this statement of mine on a little, very short YouTube clip. Now, invite into your life that aware presence in daily life, and especially when you're getting unhappy in whatever form, that's always a signal. Unhappiness, I'm using this generic term again, in whatever form, and remember, even a slight irritation is unhappiness.

Anger is unhappiness, although the ego loves it. The body suffers when you are actually angry. Any of those things, okay, it means, okay, it's arising.

The easiest way of looking at it is, say, I must have lost the present moment. And when you realize that you've lost the present moment, because the present moment is presence, when you become aware of the present moment, your problems dissolve. Not that you deny your ability to cope with problems, so-called problems, which are challenges, increases when you no longer make these challenges into a problematic sense of self.

Always coming back to the present moment. Return to the present moment, because that's all there ever is. We talked about time.

Time seems to be the fire that consumes us all, but on the other hand, this is very paradoxical, and I just want to leave it on a, explain it on a practical level, not on a philosophical level, and not on a scientific level. Don't want to talk about Albert Einstein's theory of relativity of time, but even more practical. The weird thing is, time seems to be consuming your life, and yet you never actually experience time, except as thought in your head.

Is this statement true? You have to see in your own life. Is it true when I say you never actually experience time, except as a thought in your head?

Because all your past lives as thought. All your future, which are projections from the past, live as thought. If you remove thought, and you're just aware there's no time anymore.

There's only the present moment ever. And now, although you're being consumed by time, the physical vehicle, the strange thing is, it's always the present moment. And people have this burden of past, but it's thought.

And if you step into the present moment, you immediately step out of thought into awareness. And that can become a, you can make that into a habit, especially when thought causes you suffering or unhappiness. And most of suffering or unhappiness is caused by thought.

When thought causes you suffering or unhappiness, say, okay, just hang on. Do I want to suffer? Do I want to be unhappy?

You can do it in a simple thing. Let's say you have an argument with your partner, and you need to be right. And suddenly you realize what you're engaged in being right.

And you realize it's meaningless whether you or he or she is right. And then you just, you let go. But not in, be aware of ego, not in the sense that, okay, I'm so conscious, I'm letting go now of this.

You can carry on without me. You let go of defending your mental position. You let go of identifying with your mental position.

Just, okay, yeah, maybe, okay, it's fine. Yeah. And of course, immediately, the whole thing collapses.

Without an opposition. So you can observe how unhappiness arises, and then ask, do I want to be? How can I not be?

And then you step out, you step into the present. Now, the present moment, it's a slightly arbitrary division, but let's say three levels to the present moment. The first thing you notice when you come into the present moment, which is all there ever is, oh, I forgot to mention it.

Your entire life is always now. Although time seems to consume your life, and yet, it's always now. You never experience time, you only experience what arises in the present moment.

You can only think about time, but you cannot experience time. This is why I compared to, I don't know, I wrote that somewhere. Time is like a criminal who leaves a lot of evidence behind, but you never catch the criminal.

The evidence is an apple that you leave on a windowsill for three weeks. Oh, the criminal was here, look at the apple now. It was so fresh three weeks ago.

The evidence is the mirror into which you look at one point in your life and realize something has changed. It's either in the mirror or you, we don't know. There's the

evidence of time, but that's the evidence left by the criminal, but you never catch him or her because there's only the present moment.

So the present moment takes you out of time, and the present moment is when you step out of thought because time is thought. Wonderfully effective on the practical level, but useless in knowing who you are and going deeper. So you step into the present moment, and the first thing you notice is this level of sense perceptions.

You're more acutely aware of sense perceptions. They're always the first thing you notice in the present moment, and that in itself can be liberating. Oh, oh, you just look, and you're aware.

Background awareness, looking. The next is you might become conscious of the aliveness that pervades your body. I call it, as you might know from the books, the inner body, to feel every cell in the body is alive.

So when you're really present, it's not a head phenomenon, it's an entire body phenomenon, but not the visible body, the invisible, that which animates the body, and you'll be conscious of the body as an alive energy field. Every cell is present. That's the next level of the present moment.

And then the deepest level of the present moment is that stillness in which you realize the essence of it all is consciousness. You realize yourself as consciousness right now. One way of putting it is to say you become conscious that you are conscious.

You're aware that you're aware. There's a knowing there, but it's totally non-conceptual, except when I talk about it, but the words are only signposts. You're aware of the fact that you are aware.

There is an awareness. There is a presence. Otherwise, you wouldn't perceive anything.

There is an awareness. There is a presence. Otherwise, thinking couldn't happen.

And even if everything is a dream, which is possibility that people have looked at philosophers over centuries, maybe all of life is a dream. Maybe it is. The fact remains there must be a consciousness in which the dream appears.

And so whether or not it is a dream becomes irrelevant. The fact remains there is a consciousness in which all this appears. I am that.

I, I, I, I am that. That is knowing who you are. And that is the identity that is not only your true identity.

It is actually the identity of the universe, because you are not separate from the totality. You are an aspect of the totality and the universe is in the process of becoming conscious. The universe is in the process of awakening and you are the awakening

universe.

And temporarily you appear as a person, a brief appearance on the stage of the universe disguised as a person. Like a little flash of consciousness. This is one life, one human life.

Goes out, comes in, out, in. So you don't have to make an effort to awaken. Really, it's more a question of allowing awakening to happen through you.

Inviting it, yes. Practice sensory perception without conceptualization as much as possible. It's wonderful.

But when you perceive something visually or hearing, listening, whatever other sense is, see if you can be at the same time aware of yourself. Not your historical self, not your personality, but be aware of yourself as the aware presence without which you wouldn't be able to perceive anything. There would be no perception of anything.

Would there even be a universe without? Don't think so. Yes, I'm perceiving this so-called table.

Consciousness is perceiving. What would there be left if there were no perceiving consciousness? Would there be a table?

Would there be just a few atoms floating around in vast space? Yes. We don't need to pursue that because it's practical teaching.

Practical, very practical. As much as possible, step out of thought. And the more you practice that, the more you connect with the essence.

And the more you connect with the essence, the more fruitful your thinking becomes. You actually encounter insights and intuitions and realizations that before you didn't have. Fresh thoughts, new thoughts.

And you can create new thought, but it's no longer the ego. It's the one consciousness that suddenly says, oh, I'll do that. This is what I'll do.

But this lesson, this vital lesson applies whether you are at the beginning of your life and you're 18 years old or whether you're 98 years old. It applies equally to everyone. In order to realize who you are, ultimately, you don't need time.

And that's why in the Course in Miracles, it says, it has taken time to misguide you so completely, but it takes no time at all to be who you are. It has taken time to misguide you so completely, but it takes no time to be who you are. And that is a lesson for tonight and for your entire so-called life.

That is, you don't need time to realize who you are in your essence. Except for that, time is the obstacle. So there is a way of that speeding train and there is a way to escape

from the fire, but not on this dimension, but in the dimension of depth.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (46:01 - 46:21)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Know Thyself : Remembering Who We Are [100faba8-8c06-40e5-8c01-e78a3b67a274]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

Know thyself, remembering who we are. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience. He quotes ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras, who said, know thyself.

Eckhart says, unfortunately, our whole educational system is geared toward only one kind of knowledge, the intellectual. But there is another aspect based on wisdom and intuition. It's that kind of inner knowing, he says, we must embrace.

Not as a replacement, but as a much needed addition.

[Speaker 1] (0:34 - 35:30)

Now, just a little reminder. In the usual state of consciousness, you're always conscious of something. And when you're present, you're conscious, except in deep meditation, you're conscious of something, but you're also conscious of yourself as consciousness.

The early 20th century spiritual teacher, Gurdjieff, called that self-remembrance. It may not be the best term to describe it, but that's what he came up with. And it could be misunderstood, as if you had to remember yourself as the historical person, but that's not what it means.

There's no memory involved. Although we could say you remember to be aware of yourself, but what is yourself? If you're not the historical person in essence, you are the consciousness, the space for it all.

And as you sit here and listen and look, you're of course conscious of your sense perceptions, but the possibility is there of being conscious also at the same time of an underlying presence or stillness. And that is the essence of you, which has nothing to do with your history. It is being conscious of consciousness.

That's the subject, the eternal subject. The moment you make yourself into an object, then you begin to remember your historical person, and then you begin to have a relationship with yourself. But in presence, you are yourself.

Big difference between having a relationship with yourself, usually problematic. So you not only have a problematic relationship with your partner and colleagues and family members and in-laws. That's not enough.

In the unawakened state, you also have a problematic relationship with yourself. My God. There's a movie about a man who gets stranded on a desert island.

There's a plane crash. He survives it. Then he finds himself on a beach and he's there for

don't know how long, a year, two years, three years, survives on fishes he can catch and coconuts.

The plane that crashed was a FedEx plane. So it had all kinds of parcels that also got washed ashore and he opens them and in one parcel, he finds a beach ball that somebody must have sent to somebody. And because he has no companionship, he paints the face, eyes, nose, and mouth on the beach ball and begins talking to the beach ball.

And after a while, he begins to have arguments with it. And he's deeply offended because all the emotions that the ego experiences in relationships, he's having with the beach ball. Tom Hanks, I think is the actor in the movie.

So the patterns need to operate still. If you can't find a person, then you have a beach ball. And of course yourself too.

And that really is the meaning of knowing yourself, the deeper and the deeper sense. The ancient dictum from ancient Greece, going back two and a half thousand years, know thyself. But there are two kinds of knowing.

Our civilization basically only knows of one kind of knowing. Everything, the whole educational system, everything is geared towards increasing and focusing on exclusively that kind of knowing, which is knowing through conceptual thought. And so the majority of humans on the planet don't realize the possibility of another kind of knowing, not to replace conceptual knowledge and not even to be there in addition to conceptual knowledge, but to be there as something that underlies and is much vaster than conceptual knowledge where you can go when you choose not to be involved in conceptual knowledge, you go to that vaster place that transcends conceptual knowledge and is deeper.

It's a space, a deep space of knowing. And so the deeper meaning of the ancient dictum of going probably back to the first, one of the first philosophers in ancient Greece, Pythagoras, know thyself, can be understood on two levels. One level is to know things about yourself.

That can be helpful too, because that means you know how you function. You begin to learn about things about yourself that perhaps you didn't know because they were automatic. Sometimes in therapy, it can be helpful to get to know yourself on a conceptual level about the person that you are, hidden motivations, things that you do, but you don't know why you do, things you compulsively do.

And you might understand certain things about you on a conceptual level. But the deeper meaning is not to know yourself through concepts, but to know yourself without any concepts directly. One could call it unitive knowing rather than knowledge, knowing

that creates separation.

Now, there's even a distinction in some languages of different kinds of knowing, not in English or German, but it's there in Spanish and in don't know much French, but I think it's there also in French that they have two words for to know. For example, if you say I know in Spanish, you have a choice, *conozco* or *se*. So the verb *conocer* is one type of knowing and *saber* is another type of knowing.

And it's the same in French, I believe *connaître* and *savoir*, something like that. For example, I know you, you would use *conocer*, *te conozco*, I know you. But if you said, I know who you are, you would use the other one because that's a concept.

Se quien eres, I know who you are. Knowing who you are is a concept. But if you say, I know you, there's something deeper there.

There's sometimes there's a wisdom, certain wisdom embedded in language, but that does not mean unfortunately that all native Spanish or French speakers are familiar with the deeper type of knowing. So you can know a very old illustration or example to explain it. I believe it comes from India.

You could use anything, but they use honey. So you can know honey by examining the structure of honey and where it comes from and how it's produced by the bees and the molecular structure and the chemical composition. And you can write several PhDs about honey and you can know everything there is to know.

Well, perhaps that's even impossible because there's always more to know, but you can know a lot about honey. So there you are, a doctor of honey after you have successfully defended your thesis. And one day somebody asks, have you actually ever tasted honey?

No, that's not part of my PhD. If you taste honey, you would know nothing about it necessarily, but there's a different knowing there that is more immediate, direct, nothing to do with concepts. But you know honey on a level that is deeper in a way than this person who only knows honey through concepts.

And now we can apply that first to yourself and also, of course, we can apply it to other people. How do you know somebody else? But you have to start with yourself.

So in addition to knowing yourself as this historical person, which really is knowing about yourself, you know all kinds of things about yourself and you can talk about it for a long time. You can write your autobiography and perhaps some people will be interested in it or not. Everybody has their own autobiography in their head and it consists of things that you can talk about.

So an autobiography consists of stories. This is what happened to me or this is what I

did. Let me tell you the story.

And this is what I experienced, that's what I suffered. But do I know myself at a deeper level? Am I able to let go, to relinquish?

When I choose to, to relinquish all conceptual knowledge about myself, all narratives and stories and not live through the narratives and stories, although I'm able to remember them when I need to, but am I able to know a deeper essence that enables the narratives to exist, to be? You need to be conscious to have a narrative, a story. You need to be conscious to perceive things with your senses.

You need to be conscious to have an emotion. All these arise. They are objects that arise in, let's temporarily call it your consciousness, but it's not yours.

They are all objects that arise in consciousness. So your life consists on the, except on the deepest level, your life, what I call your life situation is the term I choose to use, consists of the arising of objects in the space of consciousness or the light of consciousness. Perception, it's an object that arises in consciousness.

There it is, and then it disappears and then another perception replaces it. A thought arises, a stream of thoughts arise. They can take over your consciousness almost completely.

They gobble up, they suck up. Thoughts can be so overpowering if you're in the absence of awareness. A stream of thoughts can take your whole consciousness and manufacture thoughts out of it.

And so you're completely unaware of yourself as consciousness. You're just completely identified with a thought. It takes up all your consciousness and makes it into thought and emotions.

Continuously manufacturing more thoughts. Cook, I need more. And you can see it when people talk to each other sometimes, how they are taken over by a stream of thought and confuse it with who they are.

And then they have to defend that stream of thought, whatever that stream of thought is saying, whatever position it's, whatever perspective it has. People become mortal enemies because your stream of thought does not agree with my stream of thought. And groups do it because there are collectives that are dominated by certain commonly held, jointly held beliefs.

There are some collectives that are held together by belief systems, ideologies, and everybody takes it on board. And then there are other collective of conflicting ideologies and they become your mortal enemy. And really all this happens because you don't know who you are.

You only know yourself as an object in consciousness. So the deepest meaning of knowing yourself is knowing yourself beyond concepts, not through concepts, not knowing yourself as an object in consciousness, but as the eternal subject, which is consciousness itself. And so the mind subsides and a sense of still, alert presence remains.

I am, and now you don't need to add anything to it. You just know that you are. The being is of you.

And if that can be sustained in the background, so to speak, then you could have a discussion with somebody and you can put forward your point of view, which are thoughts, without making that person into an enemy because he or she holds opposite or conflicting points of view. And you can have a conversation. And while you're having a conversation, you remain spacious inside.

But you can still clearly state your point of view without having a self-identification with your point of view. This is how I see it. But you don't derive your sense of identity from that mental position.

You don't have to give up all mental positions. You just recognize them as thoughts. This is how I see reality.

This is how I see that. But there's always something else in the background, something deeper. And then it is more likely that the awareness of that which is deeper, which is awareness itself, may enable you to think in a different way so that you not just take on board what the collective that you happen to be born into tends to think.

You don't adopt if you're born into a certain political system or whatever it may be. You don't necessarily adopt all their beliefs and make it part of your sense of identity. But you're able to.

And even our civilization, perhaps our Western civilization, is not dominated by any one particular ideology, as, for example, communist Russia was or China was. It still is to some extent. It's getting mixed up with other things.

But even here, if you may not realize that how many of the thoughts that you think are your thoughts, you have absorbed through a screen, either the TV screen or the iPad screen or the Samsung screen or some people still read newspapers, and you have absorbed certain viewpoints that most of the media tend to agree on with certain relation to your country or a group of countries in relation to other countries.

And you just absorb that, and that becomes your viewpoint. And you may not realize that perhaps it's quite a distorted way of looking. There may be other ways of looking.

But people think these are my thoughts. They're not your thoughts, and it's not just with

reference to the media, but with everything. These are thoughts that you absorb from the collective.

But if you are aware, if this awareness is in the background, it is more likely that you are able to think creatively, that you can look through certain forms of almost hypnosis that if you live in a collective, you are hypnotized into that, you become part of that particular way of looking at the world. And you can see things more clearly and have creative thoughts. You can actually think better when you're able to step out of thinking.

And then when you think, don't lose yourself completely in the thinking. Then you can see more clearly. And another strange thing that happens when you can sense the essence of who you are, it's not just all of the Buddha called it, well, as it's commonly translated, emptiness is not, I don't think that's a good translation of certain terms he used like sunyata, spaciousness, I would prefer.

Some call it nothingness, but there's more to it than that. When you can sense the essence of yourself as consciousness, there's a power in there. There's a vast power in there, which has nothing to do with egoic power.

Power over somebody is really the only thing that can free you of fear. Because fear means all the little me, and you feel threatened and fearful of what's going to happen to me and all these other me's around me, the others. But to be free of fear, if you can sense that deep within you, there is a silent power.

And perhaps that is the deeper and original meaning of the term faith. Faith is to sense that power, it's not an intellectual thing. Belief, I would say, is an intellectual thing, because the term belief as a noun means you believe in the veracity of certain things that are being told.

It could be a story, you believe in this particular narrative, that's a belief. Faith is something, the way I interpret the word or use the word, is something deeper that is not connected with concepts. Faith is a deep trust.

That's perhaps a better translation, a better pointer. A deep trust in life, which you cannot arrive at through telling yourself certain things. I really should be trusting because the universe is going to look after you.

I just need to believe. You're still stuck in your head and you're saying, I just need to believe that the universe is going to look after me. The universe is going to look after me.

Okay, well, maybe that is a bridge or maybe that is a signpost that can take you to the actual realization of what you're saying. But it's also possible that it remains a signpost and you never get to where the signpost points to. I'm trying to have this trust in the universe, but I still wake up in the middle of the night in a state of panic.

I don't know why. I keep telling myself that I need to trust the universe. Now, even it's on my bathroom mirror and a piece of paper written, stuck.

God loves you. Is it a thought that you believe in that does not free you from fear? Or if it's a signpost and then it takes you to a deeper place where you realize your connectedness with the source, ultimately your connectedness with the source of all life, that there's not a separation, that you're not an autonomous entity thrown out of the universe or fallen from the sky.

So to sense your connectedness with the source is the realization that God loves you, but you don't need the words anymore. There's just a trust and there's no duality anymore because you're an extension of the one, an emanation of the one. So faith really is trust, but the trust is not something you can think yourself into.

Ultimately, you need to let go of all these concepts, although when you later talk about it, you may take them up again. But for the experience of it, you let go of concepts and you can sense in the space between two thoughts, in the space of awareness, you can sense the stillness, the presence, and you can sense it as a silent power, silent. That's the Tao, it's Chinese, a silent power.

And that silent power is inseparable from who you are. It's you and much infinitely vaster than you, both at the same time. It's almost as if a ray of sunlight that arrives here suddenly realizes its source.

A ray of sunlight suddenly realizes its own source, where it comes from. And it also realizes that it can never be totally separate from its source because the ray of sunlight somehow is still connected to the sun, which in this analogy, that's the source. So the ray of sunlight then could say, my fear has disappeared because I realized that I'm connected to something much vaster and this vastness is sustaining me.

It could say that. It could also say, and some rays have done that, I am the sun. Ecstatic.

Translated in this analogy, there have been mystics in various traditions who said, I am God. It's not advisable to say that. People don't like it.

So that power is something that you can then have in the sense in the background. It's not just a passive thing always in the background. It emanates intelligence, so to speak.

It can use your mind and it can inspire. This is the dimension of creativity, which is prior to form, but it's where form arises out of the formless. So all the great creations that humanity has been able to achieve over the centuries and millennia, anything truly creative comes because the human being who created that had some connection with the silent power within, perhaps only in the act of creation, perhaps not in their private life, but in the act of creation, there was suddenly that connectedness.

And many, many great composers and artists, and even some of the great scientists who had breakthroughs say that it came to them almost fully formed as a revelation. It already arrived as if it had been already formed at a deeper level, and then suddenly they just received it. And some report that they are overpowered almost by the sudden influx of an amazing thing that then becomes perhaps a work of art or an amazing insight or piece of music that comes from that place.

And those things that come from that deeper place are the things that remain because although most humans are not sufficiently connected to be able to create any of these things, there are quite a few who have at least have some connections and so they are able to recognize the greatness in something when they see it. And so humans value, for example, the great classics of literature. There are some books that have survived for 2,000 and more years.

It's miraculous because a book is a very fragile thing. And for many centuries, it can only survive if there were always people who valued it enough to copy it again. And then a few more copies, and then they got damaged and burned, and then one copy survived, and then some other people saw how valuable it is.

They could sense there was something transformative in it, and so they copied it again. So books such as the Tao Te Ching or the Bhagavad Gita, one of my favorite books, The Meditations by Marcus Aurelius, 2,000 years old. Somehow they survived even the Dark Ages when almost nobody could read and write except a few monks in monasteries, and they kept it alive.

But the main purpose is not to produce, necessarily produce some great thing or have some great insight that may come as an addition. The main purpose is to bring this state of consciousness into your life, and then whatever happens through it happens. And so when you know yourself in the deepest sense, then even more important than any creation, for creation, by the way, you need some kind of vehicle because you can touch the source of creativity within you that transcends, far transcends the person.

But if you want to create something, that power needs to then manifest through you into this world, and it needs some kind of vehicle, whether it is your mind, so it would be the case when you speak or you write, it would use your mind as a vehicle, that the vehicle needs a certain amount of preparation. It needs to be able to give expression to this power instead of being so overpowered that you go crazy. The God-intoxicated, sometimes considered holy men, but they look a bit crazy, so the mind is unprepared for that.

It gets overpowered by that. In order for the creative force, the creative power to operate through you, it needs some kind of vehicle, so it could be if you are a musician, then that is the vehicle, and it's not enough to take up an instrument and say, okay, I'm now going to learn the guitar, and after three weeks say, I still haven't composed the

greatest guitar work ever. Why isn't it coming through me?

It sometimes takes a long time to develop the vehicle until it becomes capable of transmitting something that comes from a deeper place. There was a book published a few years ago, I don't remember the title, where the writer examined people who created great things, and he came to the conclusion through his analysis that in most cases it involved 10,000 hours of practice before the creative element came in, but even then there's no guarantee, of course, that it will. So he even examined phenomena like the Beatles.

The Beatles produced relatively simple music if you compare it to the classical music, but there is enormous spiritual power in these simple, very simple tunes, and this is why they're still playing them, and they will still be playing them in 100 years and 200 years from now. There's something there that touches you, and so it came from a deep place, but before they created that, they were playing hundreds and thousands of hours in little nightclubs in Liverpool and in Hamburg, and so he examined that, and then he compared it to others, also scientists and so on, who pursued a particular avenue of research, and then at some point after focusing mentally on it for thousands and thousands of hours, suddenly something came that was not produced by the conceptual mind, an insight that almost came ready-made, and there it was. Now that kind of thing, although I am connected with that, for me it comes through speaking and writing. That transcendent dimension uses my mind.

If I wanted to create some scientific breakthrough, it's not going to happen. I can't say, okay, now I'm going to be a scientist, and I will find the ultimate answer to whatever Einstein was looking for after he found the theory of relativity. He was looking for something else, which is called something like the unified field theory or something like that.

I don't know exactly what that means, and I can assure you that I'm not going to find it, and you are not either, unless you are a scientist. You have been focusing on that for a long time, nor am I going to excel in creating a great work of music or dance. I don't think so.

And yet if you look at a great dancer, there's not just the technique, but the practice and the technique, of course, is important. Again, we meet 10,000, I don't know if he's right, but it's just thousands of hours, and then if you're a great dancer, something else comes in and takes over, and then you are being danced, and then you become a great, and everybody goes, wow. That may also happen in certain sports where people are able to, they do amazing things.

There are even some types of sport that didn't exist 20 or 30 years ago. I don't know what they're called, but they're amazing, where people go up in the air on little boards, and they go around. How can a human being do that?

So they practice and practice, and then something else takes over, and then you have certain musicians that when they perform, some power comes through, of course, with the help of technical stuff, flashing lights and all kinds of technical stuff, and with some, it's mostly technical stuff. But with a few, there is definitely something there, and people respond to that, and that's not going to happen with me, so you can be sure that I'm not going to be a rock star in this lifetime or the next.

[Speaker 2] (35:33 - 35:52)

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Eckhart Tolle Learning To Outgrow Emotional Reactivity [29aa081e-6558-4a90-a3e0-016f08687a6d]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:35)

Learning to outgrow emotional reactivity. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the importance of finding stillness. He says, we are never more ourselves than when we are still.

Eckhart then answers questions about what we can expect during the stages of awakening. Eckhart says, as we become more conscious, we learn to respond rather than react to conflict. Eckhart explains, we may feel the emotion, but it doesn't take us over because ego diminishes as we step into the light of presence.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 3:31)

So here we are in the present moment. And we start by becoming aware of the present moment. That may be a strange thing to say.

How do you become aware of the present moment? First, you become aware of what is in the present moment, sensory perception. Then you become aware of yourself, become aware of the inner body, the aliveness that pervades the inner body, sense of aliveness.

Every cell is alive. And there's a total sense of aliveness. And that's the entry point into becoming aware of yourself as awareness.

Stillness, one could also say. Stillness is the space for everything. And that stillness or awareness or presence is who you are, essentially.

So as you sit there, I assume you're sitting or maybe you're standing or lying. You become aware of whatever it is you're perceiving. And you're also aware of yourself at the same time, not the historical self, not aware of yourself as a thought, not aware of yourself as an emotion, but aware of yourself as the presence, without which you wouldn't perceive anything, or think anything, or feel anything.

So you're self-aware. And when you're self-aware, like now, you're present within and without meaning. You're aware of the world around you.

And you're aware of a deeper dimension of beingness or presence that is essentially who you are. And who you are, which is this beingness or presence is consciousness, the light of consciousness. And you are liberated from yourself, from the historical self, the personality, the person, the conditioned entity, you are liberated from that, not that it doesn't exist anymore, but you're no longer trapped in it.

And that's a liberation.

[Speaker 4] (3:34 - 4:01)

We'll start with our first question. On the journey to full awakening, do we go through a period of isolation or withdrawal from others when times when we might feel the need to be alone in order to maintain a sense of presence? Are there general stages that many people pass through before being present is our baseline?

[Speaker 1] (4:01 - 21:46)

Yes, good question. It is true that as you awaken, or the awakening process begins and then intensifies, you may not always the case, but it is the case for many people, you may not be able to participate in the usual ways in which people interact with each other in this world. Well, perhaps you're able, but you don't enjoy it anymore.

You don't enjoy many aspects of so called normal human interaction. You become bored with human drama, which otherwise fascinates people when they can talk about others, or the faults of others, or what has happened to others or what they have done. You get bored with having to listen to people complaining about other people, which feels a lot of human interaction, and you yourself are no longer inclined to complain about others, or about life in general, or any life situation.

And all the search for excitement through various activities that intensify your feeling of aliveness temporarily, including taking certain drugs, or alcohol, or going to places that are extremely noisy, noise filled, nightclubs, and so on, or the seeking of sensory pleasures, seeking for new experiences, whether they be sexual, or emotional, or otherwise, many of these things begin to be less interesting.

And there comes a time for many people where they find it even difficult to spend a lot of time with people that perhaps they've known for many years, they are friends, or they're family members. But yet, the desire to remove yourself grows. And that kind of conflict can arise within yourself.

You say, well, I don't enjoy participating in this, these interactions anymore. But on the other hand, I don't want to say goodbye to my friends and family members. And yet, you may not be able to help it.

The desire to remove yourself may be quite strong. And indeed, it is helpful if you're able to do that, to spend a period of time when you interact less, much less than you used to. And you don't participate anymore in human drama.

In fact, you don't like having to listen to human drama. You don't feel it anymore by your own reactivity. So the desire for solitude can be there.

And if there's an opportunity, if you're able to find some solitude that can strengthen your rootedness in presence, if you're able to spend periods of time alone, or going out into nature, or might perhaps even go to a retreat, some retreats. That's all fine. And that is, one could call it an intermediate stage where you feel that the world is becoming alien to you, to some extent, the human made world.

So you feel a sense of not belonging to this human made world anymore, or not wanting to belong to this human made world anymore. And it's certainly true that you should remove yourself from very toxic human environments, whether it's the threat of physical violence or emotional violence, whatever, some environments are very toxic. But otherwise, you may find that after a while, as presence deepens, you then go on to the next stage where you're able to actually be with people in a state of complete acceptance or surrender.

So you no longer have a desire for these people to behave differently, you're able to completely accept them for who they are. And this especially, especially wonderful and beneficial and thing to do with family members, because family members, yes, of course, in some cases, you may want to remove yourself completely from family members, if there's violence or whatever it may be. But in most cases, there's a karmic link there.

And if you're able to go back into visit your parents or siblings, or adult children, or whatever it may be, and if you're able to no longer demand in any way, internally or externally, the words or thoughts, that they should behave differently or be different. So this sense of exasperation, or impatience, or irritation with the limitations of other people, which is the other people's conditioning, that falls away as you become more present. And then you can know that you no longer feel alien to these people, you feel a sense of connectedness, deep connectedness, but not no longer on the level of mind, the deeper level.

And you can be there in an ordinary human environment, and remain in a state of presence, without fueling the unconsciousness of others, but also without demanding that these humans should be more conscious than they are, and feeling there's something wrong when they are not. And I experienced that, just to give a personal example, for a number of years I had, as I was a young adult in my 20s. I loved my father, but I also had resentment towards him.

He had, of course, he had a huge ego, especially at that time. And he had left me and my mother when I was 11, and disappeared. And his ego was so strong that one could not ever question any viewpoint or opinion that he had, because he was so identified with it.

Anybody who questioned his viewpoints or opinions would immediately trigger enormous outbursts of enormous anger. How dare you disagree with me is the underlying thought. Of course, that's all ego.

And so although I loved him, at the same time, I resented all these things in him. And when I went through the shift, through this shift in consciousness, at 29, after that, I was able to be with him. And in fact, it's always in a state of lovely presence, as I was listening, he would, he would usually talk at you not talk with you.

And I could sit and listen and accept him totally for who he was. I know that I knew that's not who he essentially is, but that's the egoic overlay. And there was a complete acceptance of his conditioning of his personality, complete acceptance.

So there was no longer any discomfort. Although I must add, even at that point, it would not have been my choice to spend a very long period of time with him, not days and days and days. But when I visited, I could spend an afternoon, I could spend two or three days being there and listen.

And then it was time to go back home. At that time, I was already living in another country. We were in different countries.

So to summarize, at first you feel alien as you begin to awaken, there's a sense of not belonging anymore, not wanting to participate, almost some kind of resentment. You don't belong to this world anymore. There's a growing need to be in solitude.

And then as presence grows, you're able to go back into the world without resenting it and without feeling that it should be different from the way it is. And so you are then in the world, to use an old Christian term, you're in the world, but not off it. You can be in it.

It does not mean that you still value highly periods of aloneness, of being just with yourself. And if you're able to have them, if your life situation allows you to have time alone, and you will enjoy that greatly, even in that second stage, when you can go back into the world and surrender, accept wherever humans are at in their present stage of development, of evolutionary development. And yet, yes, you may still love your solitude.

And loneliness, what before might have been loneliness before you began to awaken, becomes solitude. Now, what's the difference between loneliness and solitude? Loneliness means you're alone and not comfortable being alone.

There's a sense of something being wrong, something vital is missing. So that's lonely. And in state of presence or complete acceptance, the loneliness becomes transmuted or converted into solitude.

And solitude is a love something lovely. It's the same state. But internally, you experience it very differently.

Solitude is a very sweet and wonderful thing. And you can be in solitude only when you're in touch with the deeper, the transcendent dimension of who you are, the essence

of who you are, the presence, the consciousness. When you sense that in the background, so to speak, and sometimes perhaps even in the foreground, then that's being alone is a lovely thing.

Not probably not continuously, but you love periods of time when you're perhaps out in nature, or you're alone in your room. And that's very enjoyable. That is also that yes, it is a sign.

One of the many signs of awakening is that you enjoy being alone. And as you bring more presence, you don't absolutely need to be alone. If there's little or no opportunity, then you're perfectly able to surrender to whatever situation you find yourself in.

So how you respond to other people is a good indicator of where you're at. So when you see that you're no longer enjoy participating in any so called normal human activities, then that's the beginning of the awakening process. And as it deepens, so first, you may want to remove yourself from the world become, you don't belong anymore, don't feel alone anymore.

And then after a while, presence deepens, and you are then you're back in the world, but in a different state of consciousness. So it's an interesting process. One more thing, when you accept other humans, let's say family members, with whom you share a lot of past, when you accept other humans, just the way they are, without demanding that they should be more conscious, or trying to change them, or justifying your own existence, when they criticize you, you need to demanding that your parents should understand you.

All these things, after a while, drop away. What difference does it make to you whether your parents understand you or not? Whether they appreciate what you do or not?

Maybe they do. Maybe they don't. When you are connected with the essence of who you are, whether somebody understands you or not, doesn't really make any difference.

You enjoy it. If they do, that's lovely. My father, now my mother, my father, whoever it may be.

So you can now understand what the spiritual path that I'm on and they appreciate it, and so on. That's fine. Or maybe the opposite is true.

They don't. Maybe they say, are you still involved in all that nonsense, Eckhart Tolle and all that nonsense? Are you still reading those books?

Why don't you do something useful? And that's a good test for where you're at, your degree of or lack of absolute reactivity towards other humans. That's wonderful reflection, which tells you how far you have progressed on your journey of awakening.

And that's, of course, why Ram Dass said, if you think you're so enlightened, go and spend a week with your parents. So there's deep wisdom in that. Because it's easy to say, okay, yes, you sit alone and say, oh, I'm enlightened.

I'm totally present. Isn't it wonderful? And then Thanksgiving comes or Christmas comes and you go to visit your parents with whom you share a lot of past.

And are you triggered into reactivity? Or are you able to come to that state of complete acceptance? And that tells you where you're at spiritually.

It doesn't matter. You could have great visions of angels and fireworks, internal fireworks. And that's lovely.

Perhaps it happens or doesn't happen. But the real test that tells you to what extent your awakening is actually, in many cases, other people. So don't run away from people.

You need them and they need you. And when you accept somebody, totally, the likelihood that they will change is much greater than when you do not accept them for the way they are. So after I was able to completely accept my father, certain changes happened in him.

He did not become totally free of ego, but in certain areas of his life, the ego diminished considerably. In other areas, it remained. But I had some miraculous things that I saw in him that were not there before.

And I believe they happened because this state of complete acceptance of another human being is something very powerful. There's the power of presence behind it. And of course, there's a whole school of psychotherapy based on this premise that when you accept somebody, totally unconditional acceptance, Carl Rogers is the founder of this school of therapy.

When you accept them totally for who they are, then change is much more likely than when you demand that they should be different from the way they are. So this is all very interesting. One can talk about it for a long time, but I think I've said enough for the time being.

I hope this is a little bit helpful.

[Speaker 2] (21:47 - 22:36)

Thank you. Hello, Eckhart. I want to say thank you because your teachings speak directly to me, and I've been practicing them since 2005.

And I've definitely seen a lot of progress in my life because of your teachings. And although I don't react to the world like I used to, neither on the outer physical level or on the inner emotional level, the world is still able to get its hooks into me and cause me to

react, especially emotionally, sometimes. So my question is this.

Can I expect to ever get to a place where I no longer react unconsciously to any outside stimuli? And is this even possible?

[Speaker 1] (22:37 - 30:14)

Right. Well, that's an interesting question. You know the difference between, when we use words, between react and respond.

React, I'll just explain briefly for others. React means something that comes from your mental emotional conditioning. Your mental emotional conditioning, mind patterns, force you to react to certain situations, people, events in a certain way.

So you don't have a choice because you're not aware enough. When you react, the reaction takes you over. You become it.

Response is something different. Response arises out of awareness or presence, which means you do the right thing or you say the right thing in the moment. It's not conditioned by your past.

It comes from a deeper dimension within yourself. And that's, by the way, what is conventionally or traditionally called wisdom, which the world needs desperately. As I'm sure everybody's aware, the world desperately needs wisdom.

There's intelligence everywhere, but intelligence is not enough. Wisdom comes from the deeper level. So your question really is, is it possible to become free of the conditioning so that you're no longer at the mercy of your conditioning, where the conditioning no longer operates at all?

Yes, there are certain personal characteristics that may remain, but these are not the characteristics that cause dysfunction or suffering. There may be minor things that remain that are part of your personality, but the reactivity that is karmic and causes suffering to yourself and others, that eventually does go away. Yes, you become free of this compulsive way of reacting to events, people, and so on.

In the meantime, you don't need to now project some future moment when you, I will become free, or when am I going to be free? You don't need to ask all these questions. You're already, to some extent, you have a certain degree of freedom already when you can be aware while the reaction happens.

There's still an awareness in the background, so you're no longer totally in the grip of the reaction. So you can still feel its power. It might even still force you to say something.

So there's a discussion, and there's an emotion that builds up in you, and before you know it, something comes out that is either aggressive or defensive of your ego. And

because you have identified with a mental position, therefore you need to defend yourself. That's the delusion, because you've identified with the thought, the thought, there's a sense of self in the thought, and then you become aggressive or defensive, or withdraw, whatever the reaction may be.

But it's possible that just as you say those words, in the background there's an awareness that this is what's happening. So it's still happening, but there's an awareness in the background that knows, oh, or it could be just a few seconds after you've said something, suddenly, oh, there it was. And that's an enormous gain in consciousness already, the time gap between becoming aware of a reaction, and the reaction itself shortens.

So at first, it could be a whole day or two before you wake up again. Maybe a situation makes you angry, or irritated, or a person, you have a disagreement with somebody, and only after a day or two, suddenly the awareness comes in, and you suddenly realize that all this time you have been in the grip of unconscious thought processes. Even if that person wasn't there anymore, you were still in the grip of unconscious thought processes connected with this particular person or situation.

And so a day or two later, you say, oh, and awareness comes back. And as presence deepens or intensifies, the time gap between this kind of reaction or reactivity and the incoming awareness, the time gap gets shorter, it shortens. And so then you reach a point where immediately after it's happened, immediately after the awareness is there, which means, of course, that the length of time in which you're involved in that kind of personal drama or whatever it may be, is shorter too.

So you're no longer fueling the interaction, the drama, which is the normal thing how people interact. And then after the time it has become very short, then almost simultaneously, suddenly you become aware that as you react, the awareness is still there, but yet your reaction is still there. And then the next thing is, you reach a point where you can sense the reactivity in you, but there's so much presence or awareness, that immediately it subsides because you have identified it for what it is.

This is not to be confused with suppression. There's no suppression behind this. It's just the light of your presence shines on, it's the light of awareness.

You can feel the emotion in you, and yet it does not take you over. It may not even cause any thought. Or if it causes a thought, you're aware of the thought, but you're not in the thought.

And then when you're able, when this happens, then you're almost, you're almost, you could say, 75% free. It's still there, but it's no longer possessing you. You're no longer at its mercy anymore.

And there's freedom there already. And if you have certain reactive patterns that are very strong, perhaps going back to childhood, or certain aspects of your pain body may be there. And it could well be that some remnants of this remain until the end of your lifespan here.

But it no longer matters that much, because the awareness, you're no longer at the mercy of these things. So that's really how it works. And it's a lovely process.

And you need all these things because if you were not challenged by your conditioning, then presence would not deepen. It's only when you're challenged by the conditioning and by other people who trigger your conditioning, that this presence deepens. So you actually can be grateful for all these things, because this is how the universe and how humans evolve.

They evolve through challenges. So it's a wonderful process.

[Speaker 2] (30:14 - 30:29)

It is. It really is. So I think you're right.

I think I'm about 75%. I have a ways to go, which means there's something to look forward to. And it gives me some hope.

[Speaker 1] (30:30 - 30:45)

Yes. Well, in the meantime, enjoy the journey. And enjoy the most important part of the journey, which is always this moment.

How conscious you are is determined by how conscious you are in this moment. That's all there is.

[Speaker 2] (30:46 - 30:50)

Yes. Thank you, Eckhart. I really appreciate everything.

[Speaker 1] (30:50 - 30:53)

Oh, you're welcome. Thank you. That was a great question.

[Speaker 3] (30:55 - 31:15)

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Eckhart Tolle Letting Go of The Narrative of Me [6a901cd3-142f-44e7-b72a-39ce92bde6fe]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:40)

Letting go of the narrative of me. In this podcast, Eckhart says we are at a critical juncture. He explains that we must evolve to the next stage of development and transcend the ego.

He says many people try to go back to their pre-egoic state of consciousness, anesthetizing themselves with alcohol, drugs, food, sex, and work, all of which lead to unconsciousness. He says even though the ego is a key part of our development, it's time to let it go. So many of us are stuck in what he calls the narrative of me, the unhappy story we tell about ourselves, which masks our truer, more radiant essence.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 39:51)

He's the son of a very wealthy father, but he says, give me my inheritance. I want to make my own way. And the son goes into some distant land and he loses all the money that his father has given him and becomes destitute and becomes a beggar and even forgets his origin.

And then he sits there as a poor man by the wayside. And then the father sends messengers to find his son and say, don't you remember you are the son of such and such? And then the son travels back and meets his father.

And according to this parable, when the son arrives back home, the father loves him more deeply than before. It was the lost son, lost and regained. Paradise lost, paradise regained.

So this is our, the critical stage we are at now is we either evolve to this next stage where we regain what has been lost, but at a deeper level. We are no longer, we cannot return to a pre-egoic state of consciousness, although many humans try to do it because they can't stand living with themselves. So they try to return to this state of pre-egoic state by perhaps desensitizing themselves with certain substances and so on.

And it slows down your mind and you can become more like, some people become happy temporarily when they take a sufficient amount of alcohol and they become happy. Life is suddenly fine, but you're going to the pre-thinking stage. You're moving towards unconsciousness.

We can't go back. We have to go forward, transcend the ego and then we become free of this burden that, but we had to go through it. It was part of our evolutionary process.

So the vital thing here, what we are talking about is this state of, the state of presence,

the state of almost as if you were expecting something, but you're not expecting anything, but it's a similar alertness. And then you, you go and you look around outside here without too much interference of the conceptual mind. And you then begin to sense the aliveness that surrounds you.

And then you, sometimes you choose one particular object, for example, a natural object like a flower is a very important meditation, a powerful meditation to contemplate a flower, for example, or a tree. Give yourself three, four minutes to contemplate it, not think about it, just observe, be that acute observation without any tension, just give it attention. They found that plants that are given attention grow, actually grow better than plants that are not given attention.

Attention is an energy that flows towards it and that connects you with it. And so the plant, this sounds a little mystical or weird, the plant or the tree can actually sense you, not in the same way that a human senses, but it actually responds to the attention that you give it and it loves it. So you contemplate the tree or the flower and if thoughts arise, they're not important, just let them go.

You don't have to hug the tree, you can, but it's not necessary, but if you feel inclined, then you may do so, that may add tactile sensation, but it is not necessary to sense the presence of the tree, but the tree can sense you also. And as you are aware of the beauty of the tree, the tree realizes through you its own beauty, so to speak. That is a mystical statement, do with it what you will.

I strongly sense that this is the case and there have been many studies that show that the natural world responds to human consciousness. And then also take in the totality of a space where you are, the totality of a landscape or wherever you may be, in a forest, sometimes it's good to focus on one thing and then take in the totality and again, beyond sense perceptions, there's an energy that you can feel. And then if you get much more advanced in this beautiful practice, and you have to be really advanced now to do this, you apply it to other human beings.

Not as easy, nature is easier, your dog is easier, your cat, the bird. With humans, often there's a lot in the way that obscures the being. There's the human, but where is the being?

It's there, but it may be obscured. The personality may be very heavy, the egoic sense of self may be very heavy. And it's like a dark cloud that obscures that which is beyond the being behind the human.

So with some humans, it's a little easier where there's already being shining through. It's perhaps easier here to connect with other humans as in many or most or all of you, the being can shine through the personality to a greater or lesser degree. And so when it does shine through, it's the connection is easier and you can then sense the personality

and that which is beyond and you connect with that.

But you can only connect with that if you have connected with it within yourself first. Only that can recognize it. The ego cannot recognize it.

And only that can penetrate beyond the ego. Unless it could be that the ego is so dense that you cannot sense the being of that person, it's possible. And then you just have to accept and that's how it is.

But in many cases, even with obnoxious personalities, it sometimes happens that you meet such people. They seem to be around quite a bit. And even there, you can sometimes, instead of reacting to the whatever the obnoxious personality is saying, you acknowledge something deeper and you treat this person instead of being pulled to their level through reactivity.

You treat this person as a noble, let's say, I believe it's a saying from Buddhism, I'm not sure. Treat everybody as a noble guest because you recognize that which is beyond the personality and yet, and if only very faintly it's there. And instead of, this is an important skill, not to react to the egoic personality of other humans.

And especially if the egoic personality of other humans is amplified by their pain body. The pain body, when you are identified with it, becomes part of the ego. It gives enormous amplification to the ego, the pain body.

But when you recognize the pain body in yourself, it is no longer part of the ego. I believe everybody knows what I'm talking about, the pain body. The pain body is the emotion that lives in you from the past, painful emotion that still lives in you from the past and from time to time needs to rise up into your mind in order to feed either on your thoughts or on creating drama with other people.

And it loves the drama and it feeds on it, give me more of it. And the pain body feeds on that. And so if you are completely identified with the pain body, it becomes part of your ego and then the ego becomes awful, awful thing.

In some cases, it can even go as far as physical violence. So let's put the pain body aside for a moment because that's a difficult task to not react to the pain body, to be really present. Let's just talk a normal ego, which may still be not very pleasant or dysfunctional, maybe accusing you of something or complaining about something or trying to show off or trying to devalue something that you have, all kinds of weird things that egos do.

Being angry for some reason and he's taking it out on you and all these things. This person can pull you into unconsciousness or it can help you to be more present. There's always, you can go either way.

That applies to any challenge, by the way, not just challenges that come from other humans, any challenge in your life will either pull you into reactivity and unhappiness and anger and irritation and fear, or it can make you more present, more conscious, more awake. You can either go this way or that way. Same with humans.

So very important not to react to the human unconsciousness, which is the ego, but stay present. And sometimes you may be able to just ignore the dysfunctional part of their behavior and just address, not necessarily through words, sense that there's something else beyond that person, beyond the personality. So you treat this person as if he or she were very conscious, a noble guest.

And there have been stories of, there was a story of a Zen solitary monk and during the night a robber came in and wanted the few possessions that were there in the hut. And the Zen master treated him as a noble guest. Oh sure, yes, please.

Would you like this also? And then he said, I wish I could give you the moon also. And according to this story, the thief or the robber was so astonished by this that he experienced a complete change of personality.

In other words, he experienced an awakening and later he became a disciple of this master. This is not a general rule for behavior. It's only, it is something that happens spontaneously in this instance.

There is no general rule. You don't necessarily give everything away unless you, it arises in the present moment spontaneously. Again, we have the famous parable of Jesus turn the other cheek if somebody slaps you.

It's not really to be taken literally. Jesus talks in parables, he doesn't talk literally. So he says, turn the other cheek, hit me here too please.

This is simply, I believe he gave this story as an extreme example of reactivity and non-reactivity. Because in most cases, if somebody slaps you, you will immediately respond in kind and go to do the same thing. And there's no, there's not even a time gap.

There's an automatic reaction. So he's talking about be so conscious that you're free of unconscious reactivity. So there's the absence of reactivity.

Reactivity not only towards people, but also reactivity to situations that you find yourself in. Through reactivity, you're always at the mercy of whatever situation you find yourself in. The situation determines how you feel, determines your inner state.

So if something goes well, you say, oh, that's so great, and then something doesn't, or you find yourself in unpleasant surroundings, or an obstacle appears literally or metaphorically on your path. This shouldn't be happening. Reactivity also implies this should not be happening, but it is.

Yeah, but it shouldn't. And then the arguing starts in your mind or out aloud, and the complaining happens. Other people, situations, and so on.

So you're at the mercy of what happens in your life internally through reactivity. And it's an enormous discovery if you see that something can go wrong, so to speak, in your life, and suddenly you find yourself being free of reaction. Unless something can be done about it, then of course you take action.

You arrive at the airport, and there is a lineup of half a mile at the security, and what do you do? What do you do? Do you just stand there and look around and breathe?

Maybe you go home. That's another possibility. Or are you getting very upset?

Most people would get very upset, and they start thinking thoughts, and every thought makes you more upset. And then they post what's happening on their Facebook and Instagram. You won't believe what's happening here now.

And then they post angry messages to the airline or whatever. And I always recommend for people with certain spiritual practice here, in any situations like that, that any situation that makes you unhappy, yes, if you can remove yourself, fine, we're not talking about that. It's a situation that at the moment there's little choice for action.

You just have to endure it. How do you do that? Now, as an experiment, and for some people that's their first spiritual lesson.

I sometimes mention it when I give a talk in a big city, and there's oftentimes people who have never come much into contact with anything spiritual. So I suggest to them, in any situation they find themselves in that makes them unhappy, it could be a traffic jam, it could be all kinds of things. It could be on the telephone, you're trying to talk to your bank.

You know how frustrating that can be? Because you cannot reach a human being on airline, you lost your luggage, and you're trying to get somebody on airline, nobody will answer. So as an experiment, I ask, ask yourself, because you have plenty of time while you're on the phone, nobody's answering.

How would I experience this moment, if I did not add any thought to it? How would my experience of this moment be, if I added no thought to it? Okay, that's a strange thing, why people think.

Okay, you're in the same situation, that you feel very irritated, very angry, and then you ask, okay, now, how do I experience this without any thought? Then you have to somehow let go of thought. May not be that easy, but it's possible.

You become aware of your breathing, that's a good way of taking tension away from

thinking. And you look around, sense perception, another way of becoming free of obsessive, unnecessary thinking. Breathing, sense perceptions, and feel the aliveness inside your body.

The breathing already takes your attention into the body, and you begin to sense the aliveness. And then there's sense perceptions also. And that all becomes part of this moment, the now.

And you're not thinking anymore, there's just this. And suddenly there's a shift, because you suddenly realize it was not the situation that made you unhappy, it was your narrative that made you unhappy. The mental narrative made you unhappy, not the situation.

Oh, that's amazing. How many people are being made unhappy by their mental narratives? And that includes, for many people, that includes their entire life.

Because what you describe as your life is a story you tell yourself from your past. It's not just things that happened during the past, it includes your interpretation of things that happened to you in the past, which may or may not be correct, it could be very subjective, almost certainly is, but let's put that aside. So there is the narrative of me, and people have this narrative that they live with, they call it my life, and it makes them very, because it's an unhappy story.

So many things happened that people did to me, and that I did to people, and things I lost, things I gained, and some narratives are a mixed bag of happy and unhappy things. That's better than totally negative narratives. But there are millions of people who are burdened with almost completely negative narratives that they describe as my life.

And they experience their so-called life as an enormous burden to carry, and they experience their life as a problem that needs to be solved somehow. Their entire identity is a problem that seeks a solution, but they never find a solution. Sometimes the solution is, I have to move somewhere.

Well, sometimes a move is good, but probably it's not the solution to your unhappiness. Or I find a different partner, but probably not a solution to your unhappiness. The unhappiness, so much of it arises through a narrative in your mind, not the situation.

And your life isn't really your life, because what you call your life, the only place where you can experience your life is in the present moment. This is your life. It's never not your life.

The present moment is always your life. Only the present moment. Only this.

Never anything that happened in the past. That is part of your life situation, one could say. So I distinguish between life situation and life.

Your life is now. Only now. Always now.

And this is the place of freedom. So how do you experience the now? To be free of reactivity.

Experiment with not attaching unnecessary narratives to what's going on in your life. Just be with it. And that includes complaining, for example.

I mentioned complaining because it's an important part of many people's ego structure. Complaining keeps many, for many egos, complaining is the main thing that keeps them going as egos. And they're always at it.

There's always something to complain about. It could be a situation, or it could be other people. That's, of course, a very common thing.

What they did, or didn't do, but should have done, etc. And you know what he said then. And I said, and then he, how dare you?

I said, what can't you do? But then he said, and then he accused me of, and I said to him, how dare you accusing me? Because you look at yourself.

And then he said to me, and this goes on, gossip is part of that also. You'll never guess what she did. Oh my God, no, you don't believe it.

And whenever all these things are being told, gossip and complaining about people, the implication, which is unconscious, is the ego is seeking a sense of superiority. Because whenever you complain about somebody, by implication, you are superior to this person that you're complaining about. And even when you're gossiping about somebody, the other person must be devalued through that in some way, because you are superior.

You can see something that they can't see. They are so stupid. So gossip happens in the same way.

The ego is always in search of superiority, and it fears inferiority. It always compares itself. When it encounters inferiority, it immediately tries to compensate through trying to diminish something that you have.

So these are very fundamental things for the ego works. If somebody has a possession that you don't have, because you can't afford it, but you're still in ego consciousness, then you would try to diminish the value of that person's possession, or explain why this person is inferior to you. So you could be, let's say, you have one man, he's in his Ferrari, and feel superior because most people don't have a Ferrari.

So the Ferrari becomes a mental object that he identifies with, mine, and he looks at others, and there's a guy on a bicycle pulling up next to him, and the guy on the Ferrari looks at him, what a loser. And the guy on the bicycle, who is very spiritual, thinks, what,

look at this superficial, materialistic, obnoxious jerk, polluting the environment with this horrible, horrible car. I'm so happy I'm beyond that.

Each one is superior to the other in their own mind, one way or another. So the ego seeks identification with something, somewhere it must have a superiority. In some cases it might be physical strength or beauty, good looks, that is a big thing for many people, and you identify with that naturally when you're young.

If you look better than most others, it is almost inevitable that that comes from a very important part of your egoic sense of self, your looks. I don't know if it's politically incorrect to say that for women that could, even in these days of equality, could still be more the case than for men, but it can also be the case for men, their looks. That is fine, you have that, and if you have great looks, then that will last for quite a few years, can keep your ego happy, because you feel superior to others, don't look not as strong and muscular and great, that can keep the ego going for a while, but not forever, because time does something to your looks, then suffering begins.

It could be enormous suffering if you haven't gone beyond it by then. You've had a few decades, life gave you a few decades, but you didn't go beyond, but then the suffering starts. It could also be possessions, it could be status of some kind, family background, high social class in some places, not so much in North America anymore, but in some places in Europe still high social class.

England is diminishing a bit, but still exists. It could be knowledge, I know more than you, I'm knowledgeable, you are not, or you become part of a group that feels superior to others, you join a group, and then you have a collective ego, and it could be a religious group, it could be a sect or something, and you join that, and then your ego adopts a collective ego, that group that can be very fulfilling for the ego, and always implication is, this group is superior to others.

If it's religious, often it means we are the only ones in possession of the truth, the others are not, and the others will probably go to hell anyway. But we are the ones who are going to be saved. This is quite common, many sects have that, and people don't know, collective ego can be very, very strong and powerful, and is even more insane than the personal ego.

The collective ego can commit the most horrific atrocities in the name of the collectivity, that the individual ego would not be able to perpetrate. That is how the Cultural Revolution in China, National Socialism in Germany, many other, Cambodia, Pol Pot, the egoic, the collective ego, horrible entity. So the ego will identify with this, that I had, when I was every youngster looking for ego food, how do I find my identity, they're looking for something.

I remember I had to look for something when I was young, so what was there, what could

I, my body wasn't very strong, so I wasn't an achiever in sports at all, but my family was fairly poor, so we didn't have a car, so I couldn't say, my dad has such and such a car, my dad didn't have any car, so that was a bummer. So what to do then, for a long time I was looking, and even in my teenage years, I was still looking for a stronger, better sense, a better ego, and so I didn't have family background, or possessions, or status, or physical strength, or particularly good looks, I don't think so, but then gradually I found, as I was moving towards my 20s, I found, oh, I can become an intellectual, and become very knowledgeable, and then I started reading books, and so on, and then I got to university relatively late, and I developed an ego there, as a very highly accomplished intellectual, and I could show people, show off my knowledge, I could look down on others who didn't know that much as I did, but I was unhappy, so it didn't help the unhappiness, I still felt inadequate, but it was a temporary measure. When we talk about ego, most people imagine, if you have a big ego, you think of yourself as the greatest, I am the one, possession, or power, or great looks, you feel you are the greatest, but ego can be of many, many kinds, a very powerful, very strong ego identity, that is as strong as a victorious one, is the victim identity of the ego, if you derive your sense of identity from having been a victim of someone, or some situation, or imagine having been a victim, or actually having been a victim, now, the world is full of victims, obviously, because humans are unconscious, and they do bad things to other humans, many children are the victims of their parents, because the parents are completely unconscious, and so, many people are actually victims, but the question is, does the memory of those events, does that become incorporated into their ego structure, and they see themselves as victims of a particular person, or a group of people, it could be also collective, yes, people have done bad things to other groups of people, collective, whatever it may be, yes, undoubtedly, that is the case, the danger is, if the ego adopts that, and incorporates it into its sense of self, the main part of your identity then becomes your victimhood, and you talk about it, and you think about it, and it gives you superiority, how does it give you superiority? If you are a victim, by implication, you are morally superior to those others, who have done bad things, it could be millions of people, who knows, so, superiority is important, I do not deny the fact that many humans have suffered at the hands of other humans, and groups of humans have suffered at the hands of other groups of humans, throughout history, that is true, the danger is, if that becomes incorporated into your sense of self, and then you become a walking victim, and you love your identity as a victim, because it gives you superiority, it is a very fashionable thing, unfortunately, these days, but let us not go into this, because it might be politically incorrect, I do not want to go there, so, being not at the mercy of other egos, not at the mercy of circumstances, that is what we were talking about, before we got into ego, develop the ability of being free of reactivity in events, situations, or with certain people, that is a very important part of spiritual practice and awakening, and you practice it throughout daily life, you can practice with that, gradually, all the things that you experience in your daily life, you can have an internal shift, whatever situation you have to deal with at any given moment, if you can achieve this internal shift, realize that

whatever situation you are dealing with, in any given moment, there are two aspects to it, the situation itself, where you need to do something, or take action, or whatever it may be, and your inner state of consciousness, the primary thing in any situation is the state of consciousness with which you meet the situation, that you face the situation, that if you remember that this is primary, and whatever the situation contains, and whatever you do is secondary, primary is the state of consciousness with which you meet the situation, and then any situation that you encounter in your daily life, then becomes your spiritual practice, when you do that, there is a very rapid awakening, if you can transform every situation, what's really, what is the main thing about this situation, it is my spiritual practice, that's the main thing about it, the secondary thing is, I need to talk to my lawyer about that, talking to you, and even if you sit facing your lawyer and talking about something, continue to realize, this is my spiritual practice, and then you deal with it, but you stay present as you deal with it, then everything changes, you may not succeed every time, because the world has a way of pulling you into it, it has a, it wants to hypnotize you into saying, this is what matters, nothing else matters, just this, no, what matters is your state of consciousness, that's primary, so if you can then, from the slightest irritation, through the most serious form of suffering in your life, including impending death, whatever it may be, use that as, what is your state of consciousness in which you meet it, this is my spiritual practice, and then you can go so far as to be grateful for any situation that arises, thank you for that spiritual practice, and then difficult people become your teachers, especially easy people, not so much, you can enjoy them, but difficult people become real spiritual teachers, and even if you remove yourself after being with them for five minutes, at least for five minutes, they were your spiritual teacher, your entire life changes, if you regard every challenge that arises, every situation, as part of your spiritual practice, and as part of staying conscious, and then reactivity gradually dissolves, and your ability to respond to a situation increases enormously, response is conscious response, some situations require you to take action, or to say something, or to do something, not a reaction, but action that arises out of presence, and that is wise action, Buddhists have a term, they say skillful action, and if you do something unconscious, Buddhists sometimes call it unskillful action, it's a nice term, I wish you a peaceful rest, night, sleep, and if you are not asleep, practice inner body awareness, and think as little as possible.

Eckhart Tolle Liberation From Yourself [b2e1b4f6-fdf0-45be-bdbb-ec616d371d11]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:32)

Liberation from yourself. In this podcast, Eckhart encourages participants to start with a moment of stillness. Through quiet and calm, he says, we get in touch with that part of ourselves he called the deep eye.

Eckhart says that by reaching beyond the personality and our physical bodies rooted in pure awareness, there is a deeper dimension to who we are. And he believes it is there we transcend the old inner narratives to find liberation from ourselves.

[Speaker 1] (0:39 - 31:38)

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

I usually start with a moment of stillness. Because it's good to be still. As I said in a book somewhere, you're never more fully yourself than when you are still.

Which also means present, it's the same. And when you're still or present, you hardly remember or don't remember who you are as a person or personality, historical person. You don't need to, you are yourself.

There's a deeper dimension of yourself that is suddenly arising, emerging, that transcends who you are as a person. And that is the most wonderful liberation. Liberation is a term that, as you know, has been used probably over thousands of years in a spiritual context.

So it's not that you as a person, it's not that the person becomes liberated. It's more liberation from the person, from complete identification with your form identity, which is the physical form and the conditioned mind. How wonderful to be free of yourself.

And yet there's a deeper self that the Buddhists prefer to call the not-self, the formless presence. And then there's a shift, and this is all part of the awakening, there's a shift in you from the conditioned entity that derives its identity from the mental emotional conditioning to this transcendent presence. What you transcend is your conceptual sense of identity, your conceptual identity.

And that's so, so liberating. But you can still operate as a person. It's not that you become incapable of dealing with the things of this world, or it could happen if you have no guidance whatsoever.

It's happened to a few people. Once you have discovered the dimension of what I recently have been calling the deep I, I, that's the pronoun I, the deep I, as opposed to

the surface I, which is what you usually refer to when you use the word I, you refer to the historical person. I like, I don't like, I'm happy, I'm unhappy, I want, I don't want.

And all the things that the I does and says, there's that I, and yet there's a deeper I that is non-conceptual. You access it the moment there's a cessation in the stream of thinking, like now, and yet you haven't gone to sleep at all. Except one or two of you are suffering from severe jet lag, that's possible.

So if somebody close to you is asleep, do not assume that they are unconscious, completely unconscious. They may just be suffering from jet lag. So usually you are aware of all kinds of things, sense perceptions, emotions, thoughts, they arise in your awareness.

And if you are still unconscious, spiritually speaking, your awareness gets completely absorbed by those things. Now, every thought that arises, it completely gobbles up your consciousness, like a hungry little entity. So you're always, you're aware, the thought arises in awareness, you may be aware of sense perceptions.

But as you awaken, an added dimension comes in. And that is, you're aware that you are aware. You're aware of yourself as the awareness.

Right now, as we sit here, as you sit here, you're aware of whatever sense perceptions are arising in the room, visual, auditory, perhaps some other senses. And at the same time, you're aware of yourself, but not the historical person as the presence or as the awareness itself, without which there would be no sense perception. And if you're still thinking a little bit, there would be no thinking without that awareness, that consciousness.

So there's a, there's a twofold thing here. You're aware of whatever arises in that field of awareness or consciousness. But you're also aware of that presence or of that awareness directly.

Now that sounds, when I say it, it sounds like a duality, because I'm formulating a sentence when I say there's a subject and an object. And I say, I am aware of awareness. But that's not correct.

It's only the duality creeps in when you, the moment you use language, because every sentence has a subject and it has an object. So it's not so much that you are aware of awareness, because there isn't, ultimately there is no you separate from the awareness. So you cannot be aware of awareness, because to be aware of something is awareness.

So a better way of putting it, therefore, is to say, you're becoming self-aware or awareness through you is becoming self-aware. So that is the, the presence that has no form. Something opens up within you that is very deep and far transcends your form identity.

It connects you with something vast. It's not even something. It connects you with a great depth.

And therefore, I often use the analogy of the ripple on the surface of the ocean. And every human being is that ripple in this analogy. As long as the ripple is not aware of its true nature, it only knows itself as a little ripple.

And it looks to other ripples for fulfillment or wants to protect itself from other ripples and compete with them or compares itself to other ripples. It's a very problematic existence because it only knows the surface of reality. It's an entire, experiencing entire reality as a surface phenomenon, continuously trying to find some kind of ultimate fulfillment, happiness on the surface level, through other ripples, or other situations that are also ripples.

And it's frustrating to live as a ripple because you're just a little, this little thing. And, and some ripples manage to get bigger. They might, they might gobble up a few others and then they grow into a wave.

In this analogy, it means you have your private jet waiting nearby. It's a clear sign that you have grown into a wave. You're no longer just a little ripple.

But you're just as short-lived as the ripple. And now you have to compete with other big waves such as the ocean. It becomes problematic again.

And a moment may come when the ripple or the wave suddenly perhaps becomes frustrated with that surface existence and says, is that all there is that I can't take anymore? Because things continuously, obstacles continuously arise and there's always things that are unfulfilling. And even the most promising things that you enter into, relationships, situations, places, all kinds of, even the most promising things, there's always sooner or later some flaw appears in it.

What's wrong with the world? Why is there always this not, this ultimate fulfillment is always kind of short-lived because you're still on the surface only. And then the moment comes, and perhaps accidentally or because another ripple close to you who has gone beyond its mere ripple existence says something, or you can sense something.

And then perhaps for a moment, there's a cessation in the stream of thinking without loss of consciousness. And the ripple goes, oh, there's more to me than I thought. It doesn't know what it is.

It doesn't have a name for it, but it can sense a depth suddenly. And as it senses the depth, that is suddenly the vertical dimension has come in. It's no longer just the horizontal dimension.

There's the vertical dimension of consciousness where there's only the present moment.

Past and future exists in the vertical dimension of reality. And there's a transcendent reality.

There's the vertical dimension. And the ripple suddenly discovers that it is a manifestation, a temporary manifestation of something vast. And it is not separate from it.

It is a manifestation of it. So it's no longer just a little ripple. It senses its origin in Buddhism and sometimes in Zen, you have strange expression, your true face before you were born or all kinds of expressions to point to it.

So it discovers that it is the ocean, or it probably doesn't have a name for ocean. It discovers its connectedness to something transcendent that transcends its ripple existence. And then gradually, that's the first discovery.

And then it occasionally loses it again, but gradually it is able to have some attention in that depth, even when it is occupied with its surface ripple existence and operates there, it does that. And yet there is a depth, there's a rootedness in being. And that transforms the way in which the ripple, we'll let go of the ripple in a moment.

As you know, the ripple is you. The ripple existence then becomes no longer as problematic as it was before, a little bit more sane. The dysfunction that has created an enormous amount of unnecessary suffering, the reactivity that amplified every challenge that the ripple encountered in life, that amplified it and made a huge thing.

And then through reactivity, that challenge actually grew even worse because you amplified it. Well, the ripple, sorry. The ripple amplified it.

It's easier, we can bypass the remnants of ego in you by talking about ripples, and then the ego doesn't feel offended. That's the power of parables and stories. So the ego doesn't realize that it's about me, so it listens to a story.

And whereas before, the ego would have created a barrier without knowing. It's a little bit like a sugar-coated pill. So you give to a child, and it's, oh, it tastes good.

And then you swallow it, and then it begins to work. It's called, I believe it's called the red pill. And so you discover that there's two of you here.

This is not the ultimate truth, but a temporary way of talking about it, of approaching it, to have a little bit of conceptual understanding of it. But conceptual understanding is not it. It doesn't get you there, but it is helpful to understand it and to see the concepts that I'll give you are actually signposts, and you go where they point.

You don't walk around the signpost and, or start collecting them. Some highly knowledgeable spiritual seekers have collected signposts for 20 or 30 years. They're

extraordinarily knowledgeable about old spiritual traditions, but don't realize that that's not it.

The conceptual dimension is not it. And yet, it does help to have a little bit of understanding. So there's, let's just put it like this.

There's two of you. There's you, the person, and there's you, the transcendent being that is, has nothing to do with your personal history. And I sometimes call that using the fact that the English language does not have a word for, that includes man and woman.

So you have to say human being. In some languages, you have a word that includes man and, in German, you have mensch, which is a good, is a man or woman. But in English, you have to say, human being.

Human still has the man in it, but let's let that go. And so you are, the human is the person. This is how I interpret the term.

And it's, it works beautifully. The human is the, the personality, the conditioned entity, the historical person. That's of course, everybody has a history.

Everybody has a life history and a narrative in their mind that they call my life, which is somewhat problematic. Except when you look on Facebook. So it must be only you whose life is problematic.

All the others are enjoying beautiful meals that they take photos of and are in exciting places. And then you look at it, you think, what's wrong with me? And then you start doing the same thing perhaps.

So there's two of you. There's the problematic person. No, I don't believe there's a person whose life is not problematic.

It can't be. It's, it's in the nature of a person to experience life as challenging. That is not an aberration.

It is not an extraordinary thing that has gone wrong. If your life is challenging, if you encounter problems, big and small, it doesn't mean something has gone wrong. No, that's how it's supposed to be.

What? Yes. The world would be the most absurd place if every human encounters a continuous succession of challenges.

And if that meant that something was very, very wrong, it would be absurd. So it must be then that's an essential part of being here, of being confronted with challenges. Just as every life form from a blade of grass to a tree, to a flower, to animal, the moment it's born, its life is precarious.

And it's threatened by this and that. Most life forms could get eaten up any moment by some other life form. And so they have developed certain powers to defend themselves against being consumed prematurely.

Some are very fast. Some have developed disguises. But these powers have come gradually as a response to the challenges.

So every life form is continuously challenged, not just the human. And so every life is problematic. It does not mean that there's something wrong.

Now the problems arise in two ways. We could somehow divide, although there's not a clear dividing line. There are certain problems that arise only or mainly because you are unconscious and your mind is dysfunctional.

So a very simple example, you wake up every other night at two or three in the morning, sweating profusely, not because it's hot, but because you're thinking very anxious thoughts. Clearly you're not present, as you can see when I act it out. It's called not present.

And so that is one way in which you can experience life is problematic, but it is entirely created by unconscious mind activity. That's only one example. There are many other, for example, a total misinterpretation of other people's intentions, and then react to them as if your total misinterpretation were the correct interpretation.

And all kinds of huge amounts of drama arises out of nothingness. And it happens continuously. So entirely mind generated problems, there's a huge amount of them.

And they create as much suffering as problems that are actual problems when suddenly there's an earthquake and your house collapses. Hopefully you're outside. And that's a big, that's a problem, or there's an accident.

There may be a connection with dysfunctional thinking and the accident, there may be, because you might be totally absorbed in your mind, and then you create an accident. Or maybe there's no connection. I'm not saying that necessarily is always so.

There are certain things that seem to come from the outside. You get old. That becomes a problem after a while.

It's a challenge. As you grow older, the body no longer is able to do what it used to do. It's a physical challenge.

That could also become a huge amount of mental suffering if you are very much identified with either the appearance of your body or the strength of your body. If that was the foundation for your sense of identity, then in addition to losing physical abilities, you have an enormous amount of suffering because your sense of self, which was

derived from identification with the physical form, that sense of self is now becoming shaky, because the physical form is becoming shaky. And that's very, very painful for especially those lucky people who had such good karma that they came into this life with good looks.

So they never... They looked well. They were for 20, 30 years, 40, who knows, they...

That was in... That gave them... In that comparison, that gave them a sense of self.

Then, of course, humans are confronted with deep challenges of loss, not only approaching death, but also loss of somebody close to you, a premature death, loss of a loved one, sometimes loss of a whole family or lost limbs or mobility. You might find yourself in a wheelchair, all kinds of huge things we are confronted with. So you have the suffering that is generated through this misuse of the mind, unconscious thinking, and you have suffering that comes through encountering disaster in one form or another in your life.

That's not to be denied. And we will explore how that also can become an opening into transcendence. So there's the person who lives confronted with problems and with challenges, and there is the potential of discovering, and sometimes through encountering extreme forms of disaster, but not always, not necessarily, but there's a potential of discovering within yourself a dimension of depth that transcends who you are as a person.

And in this moment, when the thinking mind stops for a moment and is replaced with an aware presence, then the transcendent dimension has emerged in you. And the invitation to you is right here and now to see if you can invite that dimension into your life. And it is almost as if you disappeared temporarily, what you before you called I, because when you're not thinking and just are aware, then the person has temporarily subsided and an aware presence has arisen.

And that's the discovery of the transcendent you or the, as I call it sometimes, the deep I. And for some people it comes, and there are many, many accounts throughout history, it comes through encountering extreme forms of suffering. And that is the potential for awakening that is hiding beyond the seemingly most dreadful thing that could happen to you.

And it's all expressed symbolically, whether or not you relate to it as a, whether you're a Christian or you're not a Christian, you simply understand there's something there that the symbol of the cross points to. It doesn't, this is something, I don't think it's fully understood by most churches or conventional Christians, that what the symbol of the cross points to, and a man who is dying on the cross, to me that is the archetype of human and what is possible. The cross is a torture instrument.

It's an expression of extreme suffering. So you have this human being on a torture instrument. Now, when something happens, there is, this human being dies, is in a state of surrender, not my will, but thy will be done.

The human being dies in a state of surrender and the very torture instrument is a symbol for the divine. The cross is a sacred symbol. But the cross is also a torture instrument.

The torture instrument, the greatest obstacle to fulfillment, the greatest obstacle to, to life, it seems, is also potentially the opening into the transcendent dimension. And I believe this, to me, is the, the deep symbolism of the cross. And traditionally, traditionally, many humans who encountered awakening, who encountered it through extreme suffering, and that drove them to a point of surrender, that drove them, because they couldn't stand the pain anymore, that drove them to the state of acceptance of what is.

And then suddenly the vertical dimension opened up. That's also, you could say the cross also points to the two dimensions, the horizontal dimension and the vertical dimension.

[Speaker 2] (31:39 - 31:59)

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Eckhart Tolle Liberation Through Stillness [608c479f-89e9-48ef-8e12-bcc0784a2957]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:33)

Liberation through stillness. In this episode, Eckhart leads a meditation and then answers questions from a live audience. He says the most important thing to achieve in our lifetime is stillness.

Without it, we feel frustrated, angry, and discontent. No relationship or personal success ever satisfies us because life lacks depth. He says stillness is the answer.

That sense of liveness we feel when we're free of thought.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 24:28)

Good afternoon, good evening, good morning, wherever you may be. Beautiful, sunny, early afternoon. And whatever time it may be where you are, it's still the present moment.

And the strange thing is, it may well be that you watch this or listen to this when it's no longer live in the conventional sense of the word, but in a deeper sense, it's always live. Even if you listen to this, watch this 20 years from now, which is possible, then hello, welcome to the present moment, 20 years from now, 30 years from now. And you will still be watching this in the only space there is, which is the space of now.

And what that is, is the space of consciousness, timeless consciousness. And that dimension is realized within you as stillness. Stillness is to be conscious without thinking, or it could also mean to be aware of yourself as the underlying consciousness even when you are thinking.

Thinking, doing, going from here to there, being active. Now, if you ask me what's the most important thing for me in this lifetime, in my life, if I had to say what is the most important thing for you to achieve, discover, realize in this lifetime or any lifetime, I would say it is stillness. To find that dimension of consciousness within you, connect with the stillness, realize that there is a realm of stillness in you.

And if you don't find that, you don't realize that, then you are condemned to continuous almost continuous frustration, discontent, unhappiness in whatever form. Nothing will ever be enough to satisfy you, at least not for long. No relationship, no attainment, no success, no circumstance, no place or location will satisfy you for very long.

In other words, you can't really enjoy life if you haven't realized the stillness, that there is this dimension of stillness in you. In addition to or underneath all the thinking and the emotions and all the sense perceptions that happen around you all the time, and those

things make up your life. If you had to define what your life consists of, the entire thing that you call my life, what does it consist of?

It would be, it is sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, feelings, that makes up your life. Your entire past exists in you as memories or other residues left by so-called past events in the emotional field. So there is no real, what you call your life, there's no past in it as such.

Past exists in you now as certain thoughts, the conditioning of your mind, and certain emotions that are linked to the conditioning of your mind. So those things make up when people say my life, that's what we're talking about. Thoughts, which includes the entire past, which exists as thought, emotions, sense perceptions.

And if that's all there is, then your life is never really satisfying. Lacks depth. If that's all there is, you are shallow.

You live on the surface of life. When you discover that in addition to sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, there's also a stillness in you, not as one other thing, but as the space that enables all the other things, the objects in consciousness, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, the space that enables all the other things that make up your so-called life to be. So we are not adding one more thing when we talk about what does my life consist of?

Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions. And now when I say stillness, we're not adding a fourth thing, no, because stillness is not like any sense perception, any thought, or any emotion. Those are all forms that arise in your consciousness.

Or we could say forms that your consciousness assumes temporarily, appears as. But you are deeper than that. Essentially, you are the consciousness space that enables all these other things to be.

And that is what we mean by using the word stillness. The most important thing, or rather, it is the most important no thing in your life. Not nothing, but no thing.

You can only do that in English. In other languages, it doesn't work. I'd like to point out to you also that as you sit there, I assume you're sitting.

Doesn't matter if you're sitting, standing, or lying. Let's say as you sit there and listen, be aware that this teaching, not the best word, but let's use it, exists also on the level of form, thought, and more importantly, the level of stillness. So as I talk to you, I'm not just conveying words.

More importantly, I am conveying stillness. How is that possible? When you notice that there are gaps between words and sentences as I speak, when you become aware of the gaps, and also when you become aware of an undercurrent of stillness that is there

behind the words, so to speak.

So when you notice the two dimensions to our gathering here, people are gathering here, coming together, not physically, but coming together in consciousness. So you notice two dimensions, the dimension of perception, sense perception, words, and visual perception. And then you can also be aware of an undercurrent of stillness.

And the moment you become aware here now of this undercurrent of stillness that is behind the words and in between the words, the moment you become aware of that, you have found the stillness within you, because the stillness is not there, it's here. And that's the real purpose of our session here, is either to discover the stillness within you, or for most of you, to deepen the stillness that you have already discovered. Deepened stillness doesn't mean something happens to the stillness, it means you become more aware of it.

That stillness is not just an absence of noise, an absence of, in the case of stillness, an absence of mental noise, just as silence is the absence of external noise. So silence is outside, stillness is within, but it's not just the absence of noise, thought, but it's also a sense of aliveness, which is felt with your entire body, not the physical body, the inner body. So your body also participates in this discovery of stillness.

You become, as you first discover it, you become then more comfortable with stillness. You are then able to sit somewhere for a few minutes, in a room, outside, on a bench, in a cafe, wherever, at home, in your car, you can sit somewhere for a minute, two, three, and just enjoy being without needing to fill up every second with stuff, fill up every moment with thought, another thought, and another thought, and another text message, and another email, and some other Facebook posts, they're all filling up your mind. Very few people these days, when you look around, you hardly see anybody sitting quietly, enjoying the isness, the isness of this moment, being still inside, alert, and still, and look around, and listen, and be aware of your presence, that's the stillness. And that is a dimension where the personality, the person is transcended.

There's no ultimate satisfaction within your personal sense of self. The liberation from your personal sense of self comes with the realization of the dimension of stillness. Doesn't mean you no longer are a person, of course, you are still a person, you have a personality, but you realize there is infinitely more to who you are than the conditioned, limited person, personality, personal self, sense of self.

Part of your personal sense of self will be the collective sense of self, so it's not entirely confined to you as a person. Everybody's personal sense of self consists in part of the collective sense of self, which are certain mind structures, thought patterns, meaning, views, opinions, perspectives, convictions, all that you have absorbed from the collective, that you absorb when you watch the media, when you watch the news, you absorb the collective perspectives, and then you think they are yours. The culture in

which you grow up, you absorb certain collective thought patterns that virtually everybody holds, anybody you come into contact with, an identity, a form identity, which could be connected to political affiliations, it could be connected to religion.

A lot of religion is thought structures that people identify with. There's still pockets in most religions where there is an opening into the transcendent, but it's sometimes hard to find those little openings that are within the structure of the religion, which may be 90% Thought structures, ideologies, if you identify with them, they give you your sense of self, which usually implies that you are right and others are wrong. Your collective is right, other collectives are wrong, that's an essential part of it.

Delusion, it's a form of delusion, but very, very common. So your sense of self, your person is partly personal, it's your family background conditions it and all those things, and partly collective. You may not realize how much of your thinking is conditioned by what you take in through the screen of the news and whatever you connect with, and that's fine, everybody has certain perspectives, but the danger is, if you identify with those viewpoints, opinions, perspectives, convictions, then you are trapped in thought, and that makes up the ego.

Ego is complete identification with thought forms, and then what's lacking in your life is the transcendent dimension. It's only there where you can be liberated from being trapped in your personality, your person, which is ego. And the evils of this world created by humans are due to that unconsciousness, which is to be trapped in that limited, collective, personal sense of self.

The personal sense of self, when there's no awareness of the underlying dimension of stillness, is dysfunctional enough, it creates a lot of totally, ultimately unnecessary conflict. But the collective sense of self, the ego, when humans get taken over by that, when it becomes much stronger, even in the personal conditioning, that's truly, in many cases, truly mad. And you can see the madness these days, it seems to be coming more to the surface, which may be a good thing, it's being exposed more, you can see more clearly how people communicate with each other through the internet, how angry they get, how they make others into enemies.

Just one false sentence, one false word, and people will attack you on the internet. Crazy. Don't be part of that craziness.

But how not to be part of that craziness? Well, find the stillness, and then while you, if you watch the news or read whatever people post, you can read it and you can sense the underlying stillness or presence as you read. And you may still completely disagree with what somebody says on there, but it no longer means that whoever said or posted those statements, that you regard them as your enemy.

That's crazy. Now the human ego is having a new field of operation that it didn't have

before, where it can really play itself out, and that is on the internet. If you haven't found, if you haven't realized the stillness, then your entire life or lifetime really hasn't been successful, let's use a conventional term.

How do you measure success? Whether you've made it, what the world tells you success is, certainly that's not it, because all the people who have achieved it are still unhappy, frustrated, dysfunctional in many ways, unless they have found the transcendent dimension within. I've recently started to use the pointer expression, the deep I, not referring to this I, but the I, the pronoun, first person, I, the deep I.

Finding that transcendent dimension within, that's realizing the depth within you, and that is the deep I. And then you have the superficial I, which is your personal self. So when you use the word I, usually it refers to the personal self, me and my story, I sometimes call it.

And then suddenly realize there is a deeper sense of beingness or presence in you, and that is the deep I. The surface I continues to exist. It's never going to be perfect, you as a person.

Yes, the dysfunctions, most of them will go away. You no longer create suffering. You don't contribute to the suffering in this world that disappears as you become aware of the transcendent, the deep I.

And yet, on a personal level, you're not going to be perfect. You will have your limitations. You're good at this, but not good at that.

Certain habit patterns, if they don't create suffering for yourself or others, may still persist. It's fine. You have your likes and dislikes without being totally consumed by them.

There's a sense of freedom on the surface. You might prefer this to that, but if it's not, that's fine too. You can pursue goals, but they're no longer egoically motivated, which means the delusion that you're going to be happy when you attain this goal, that goals.

And what happens is you're actually happy within the activity that is there towards the attainment of this goal. You find the doing fulfilling rather than hoping for some fulfillment in some future moment when you attain what you want, because getting what you want, that's already the end. What do you do then?

So you can be enjoying the doing, the activity. Stillness doesn't mean that you become passive. Yes, you become comfortable with sometimes just being, yes, but you don't become passive.

You are still active. Your aims are no longer determined by the shallow self, the ego. Your aims come from a deeper, from your deep eye, which may want to.

There's a deeper intelligence in you that goes far beyond the conditioning of your mind. And that is really universal intelligence, your aspect of that. The intelligence that underlies the entire sense-perceived universe, that which organizes form.

And so you can pursue goals that are in alignment with the deeper eye, not for some shallow personal satisfaction, which doesn't really come anyway. And when it comes from the deeper eye, you're not excessively attached to the outcome. You enjoy the present moment, the doing in the present moment.

And if you enjoy the doing in the present moment, that means you can sense the being that's in the background. You don't get lost in the doing. So you can do, but there is a stillness behind it.

One could say it's the center of the wheel. There is the wheel spinning, but the axis, the center of it is still. The central core of stillness within you.

And then you don't get frustrated when obstacles arise on your path to where you want to go to. You realize the arising of obstacles is inevitable. How do you respond to the obstacles?

And the way in which you respond to the obstacle is very different when you are connected to the deep eye. And sometimes the very obstacle forces you to connect more deeply, become more present. All the hindrances in your life have been wonderful.

They've taken you to this point. The challenges are absolutely necessary. The challenges arise from the world of form.

And eventually they awaken you to the formless dimension of consciousness within you, which is stillness. For most people, before they awaken to that dimension, the world of form, which is the world, has to become, or has to be recognized as unsatisfying. Either through loss, some kind of loss or diminishment, or through getting everything you wanted in the world of form, and then discovering that you're still unhappy.

So this is the adventure of the unfolding of consciousness on this planet, in this galaxy, through you. You are the consciousness of the universe, realizing its own nature, realizing itself. The universe wants to become more conscious.

So consciousness comes into this dimension through you and countless other life forms, of course. But there's the one consciousness. So you are ultimately not a person.

That's only a temporary appearance, a story, a dream-like thing. You are more essentially the awakening universe. Welcome to a question and answer session.

I will select a few in the moment. Let's see what happens.

[Speaker 2] (24:29 - 25:08)

My question, it's morphed a little bit, but I'll ask it. You've used analogy of either being in a body of water and fighting and going under versus sort of leaning back on the yes and floating and letting life support you. And I understand that our first and absolute purpose is to be present.

What I think I'm missing, the missing link for me, is how I tap into the presence, listen to the presence, so that I can lean back into the yes. How do I elicit something to say yes to?

[Speaker 1] (25:09 - 25:21)

Well, the first question is, are you able to say yes to the present moment at any given time? For example, this moment is okay, right?

[Speaker 2] (25:22 - 25:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (25:22 - 49:09)

So it's fine. Then you have to check when the so-called next moment comes. It's not the next, it's always now.

You have to see whether you can bring a yes to it, the inner yes. And then you find an alignment with it. You're not arguing with what is.

And then you have to check in as much as you can to see whether a resistance arises or you're mentally arguing with the present moment by saying you dislike it, you don't want to be in it, you want to be rather somewhere else and so on. So that gradually you become open to the present moment. And then there's a power that can then come through you.

We could call that also true intelligence, which is not the analytical intelligence, which is measured in our IQ tests, but true intelligence. When you are denying the present moment that this, the true intelligence cannot actually operate, the unconditioned intelligence, you could have many PhDs, but doesn't help. The true intelligence does then cannot operate, or only to get a trickle of it.

But it can only operate when you come into alignment with the present moment internally. So you surrender to what is, that's another word for it. And then without asking for results, and immediately saying, okay, I've been doing it for three days, and I still don't know.

Because if you're asking for results, you can become dissatisfied and impatient. No, first of all, it changes the way in which you experience life, which is already a huge benefit. It enhances the quality of your life.

Ultimately, quality of your life has to do with your state of consciousness, not where you live. That's a secondary thing. But ultimately, by aligning yourself with the present moment, something that I can only call quality comes in, and it's very hard to describe, you can only experience it.

As you bring that in, there's a, there's a rightness or goodness to this moment, no matter what form it takes. There's a, there's a quality that comes in. And then intelligence can operate.

And then that can operate as a sudden realization after a while, but don't look for it. Just your responsibility is to be aligned internally with presence. And then something may come, tell you what it is that you need to do if there's a doing, but your being is primary.

And this is being. And so whatever you need to do may suddenly come into your mind, or it may come because somebody makes a remark, and you suddenly say, oh, ah, now I know. Or life, through some coincidence, takes you somewhere, or brings somebody into your life that has an answer that's right for you.

Many things happen when you're no longer resisting the present moment. So that's the primary practice. So it's, you become almost, one could say, already you feel as if all those good things that perhaps you want to happen had already happened, or were already happening.

Because the true source of experiencing goodness is, it comes from within. If you cannot get in touch with the unconditioned, this is where you can sense that the good that is beyond good and bad, then nothing can help you. And then that's also, you know, there are books about how to manifest things in your life, books how to create, and so on.

Sometimes the emphasis in those books is too much on getting things. And the emphasis can be that, the implication can be that, when you get enough things, when you get all the things that you wanted, finally, your life will be full and complete. But that's not the case.

You might have heard the saying, there are two ways of being unhappy. One is not getting what you want, and the other is getting what you want. And this is very true.

That means, even if you get what you want, but you still haven't found the fundamentals of going deep enough within to experience, to know who you are beyond form. If you haven't gone there, no matter what you get, won't satisfy you. But once you know who you are, you know, you are the presence, your sense of identity is derived from presence.

You can create, or rather, because you're no longer the egoic presence, the presence itself may delight in creating something in your life. The presence may be joyfully creating something in your life. And the most powerful way of creating and being the co-

creator of the one creator, the most powerful way of creating is, as Jesus already said, and many other teachings, to feel the joy and goodness of life now.

So it's as if you already had what it is that you want to create. So if you think having a nicer house or place to live, you want to create that, as long as you don't believe that that's going to make you happy because you feel already, let's not call it happiness, you feel already that joyful aliveness that is presence. And then you can, if that's what you want, create a house out of that because you already have it, basically.

The joy is already in you. It's become secondary whether or not you get it or not. Jesus said, whenever you ask for something, believe that you already have received it and it will be given to you.

This is the sentence that is the secret of all manifestation, is to feel that you already have it and then you can mentally hold the image and that gives power. But it also implies that you're no longer using that to make you happy. You're just participating in the act of creation.

It's a dance. Nothing is going to stay around forever. You have a house for a while and then it disappears, perhaps, or you disappear from it.

So you can participate in the dance of creation, joyfully, without falling into the erroneous assumption that something that you create is going to really fulfill you or make you happy. You have to find the fulfillment and happiness in the present moment. Then creation becomes easier.

And then also you're not going to create silly things that the ego would have told you before. You need that. I need to be a famous movie star to make it.

Well, maybe you will become a famous movie star, but to believe that you will find some kind of fulfillment and true happiness when you become this or that or obtain, attain this or that, that's the error. So if you feel already it's there, it doesn't really matter whether you get it or not. It's the icing on the cake.

So you have to go deep enough into life to experience life in its undiluted, I'm now calling it life, but I could say consciousness, to know yourself as that one life, as that one consciousness that can create anything. But once you've sensed that, the amount of things that you want to create will be far less than the dissatisfied ego, which needs a hundred things and still isn't happy. So Jesus, again, if you do want to create something and don't believe it's going to make you happy, feel as if you already had it, and then it comes.

It's just a game. It's not serious. It's a play of form, lila, the divine play.

You can play with it. And then that takes out the seriousness of the neediness. I need

that.

If I don't get that, I'm unhappy. With that comes this playful quality, which includes enjoying things that come into your life. You enjoy them while they are there without needing to become obsessed with things.

You enjoy the occasional thing. I find it hard when I look at store windows. I sometimes quite enjoy looking at a few things, but I hardly ever see anything that I would want to get.

It's very hard for me to see anything that I want to buy, including clothes. So this is relatively new, but that took me a long time. I have one little weakness.

I love mechanical watches that tick. And this is a little paradox. People say, why do you wear a watch?

I felt a little better because the Dalai Lama has the same weakness for a watch. And I sometimes look at store windows to look at watches, but the good thing is these days the watches have become so big that I don't like them anymore. They're just so huge.

It's like wearing an alarm clock on your wrist. So it's strange how you can enjoy things, but just by looking at them, don't need to have it. You enjoy it just as much.

You look at it for 10 seconds or it's fine. Oh yes, I still occasionally like to buy books. I occasionally buy books, including sometimes a few old books that I like.

They smell nice and have a lovely presence to them. So those forms I enjoy, but it's relatively limited and that's fine. The ego has enormous amount of needs and feels unfulfilled if they are not met and feels unfulfilled when they are met.

So primary practice, presence, going deep enough, realizing who you are is the presence. And that is inherently satisfying. To know yourself as presence is actually the only truly satisfying thing in your life.

And any other satisfaction is really a reflection of that. When people are happy for a moment because they just obtained and the desire they had has just been fulfilled. They were just given it or they obtained the job they wanted.

They obtained the ideal partner. Ideal until after the honeymoon, of course. They got the ideal partner.

Then there's a desire has just been met and then they can actually feel joyful. They go, why is that? It's because for a moment the desire is gone.

It's been met. So what they really enjoy is not the thing. It comes from within because the desire has been removed that had obscured that.

That's been removed. So it's not the thing that they obtained that gives the joy. It's for a moment desire has been met and it's not like the thirst has been quenched.

And so for a moment you feel. And the mind thinks it's that thing that now makes me happy. No, it's the absence of desire that suddenly allowed you to feel the inherent joy, but then it doesn't last long.

The old pattern is still there. And the next thing I'm saying, oh, no, I need more. I need something else.

That's not it. I knew somebody who he bought an expensive car. And after a few months, it wasn't the right car.

And then he bought a Ferrari. And then all of that was, yeah. And after a few months, it doesn't feel right.

It's not, it wasn't, maybe it wasn't meant to have a Ferrari. And there was a third one. I can't remember what it was, whatever.

They're probably Italian. Lamborghini Testarossa or something like that. And then later he said, oh, it's the old pieces of junk, pieces of junk.

And when he said it, I remember the famous Rolling Stones song, I can't get no satisfaction. So it's when the desire has just been met, you feel that's all it is. But always the next thing comes and the next, there's nothing wrong with desire, but to be obsessed with things is dysfunctional.

I've been working for 13 years in an office and I feel that my job is boring and useless. I learned to surrender, but I'd like to change my job, but don't know where to apply. How can I find out what will give me joy and happiness and a feeling of meaningfulness?

Well, start with where you are rather than trying to get away from where you are. You start with always the present moment and you say you have surrendered, but have you surrendered enough? Have you truly surrendered?

So I suggest when you travel to work every morning, enter the state of presence rather than drifting off into thinking so that you're present every moment, whether you're driving or taking public transportation or walk to work, be there, absolute presence. And when you're at work, do one thing at a time and bring in spacious moments as much as possible. They could only be a few seconds, one spacious breath after you made a phone call, two spacious breaths.

And then when you go to have lunch, wherever it is, either you eat the lunch that you brought with you or you go to the restaurant or the canteen or again, present with every movement. So you use what otherwise would be a boring situation and just use it as the

background for presence. So ultimately you're not looking for some satisfaction in the work, but you bring a different state of consciousness to it.

So in a way, your work situation becomes like a canvas. It's just an excuse for practicing presence. And you're lucky that you have a relatively boring job, gives you great opportunity for practice.

If you had a very stressful job that kept you in a state of excitement all day long, would be more difficult. So be thankful that life has given you something relatively boring. And then you make it interesting, not in the conventional sense of interesting, but you bring that the alertness to it.

So you're not working at the stock exchange shouting like a mad person, be on the computers. Now, if there's any stockbroker wanting to ask me a question, please do. That'll be a different answer.

I don't know what I'll say. There's a way there to what it is. I don't know until you ask a question, but yes, use the situation so that as you do that, discontent disappears.

And that is true surrender. You say you practice surrender, the questioner says, but if there's discontent, of course, there's still not complete surrender. There's still, I'd rather be somewhere else.

Or the mind telling you, it's been 13 years, how many more years to retirement? Oh, and then you start counting the years to retirement. So you're losing yourself in past and future.

And you're carrying the burden in your mind of past and future, missing the opportunity of the present moment, because it's not interesting enough, says the mind. So that's good practice. And you may find if you come into such an alignment with the present moment, you feel more alive, even within the routine activities.

There is then an added dimension of aliveness that comes in and you perform even the routine activities with a greater sense of aliveness. And it is often then that change comes into your life. When you align with the present moment, instead of trying to get away from it, internally align yourself with it, so that any kind of no to the present moment dissolves, an inner no.

And so you're so aligned that actually power begins to flow through. That's why I call that the power of now. It's the power of life itself begins to flow through you.

At first it flows into your routine activities. And the way in which you relate to your colleagues at work becomes more present, somewhat different. Some people may notice it, others may not.

And gradually the universe or life notices that you are in a different state of consciousness. And often it is then that change comes into your life, either through a chance event, or a chance encounter, or a sudden idea or realization comes into your head one morning, in whatever form it comes, or some drastic thing, like suddenly your company goes bust, the company that you worked for for so long, suddenly they close down. Everybody loses their job.

Wow, you're free. But you were free already because internally you already became free. So in what way change comes into your life, we don't know.

It is much more likely to come in, but you no longer depend on external change for your inner state. That's the main thing, that you don't depend on it anymore. And even if nothing else came into your life, you would continue practice until your last breath.

And your last breath would be a conscious breath. And you would have fulfilled your purpose on this planet in this form, which is to be a vehicle for consciousness to come into this world. So you don't need to depend.

You don't depend on anything. Change is more likely to come, yes, but the presence practice is not a means to an end. You're not practicing.

You say, okay, I'll practice, but if nothing happens within six weeks, I'll stop practicing. Or the lady, a churchgoing lady, who saw she lived in a house and outside her window, there was a hill that blocked the view of the ocean. So there's a little hill.

And of course, if that hill hadn't been there, her house would have been worth much more. So because of that hill, her house wasn't worth that much. But in church, she heard, if you only have a face as big as a mustard seed, you can sail to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move for you.

She heard that in church, Jesus said. And then she said, oh, okay, I only have a hill there, so I can let's see. And said, okay, I'm going to believe that this hill is going to move.

And then tomorrow morning, I'll open the curtains and see what happens. So she, in the morning, she got up and opened the curtains, and the hill was still there. And she said, oh, I knew it wasn't going to work.

That's the face. So to all of you who are bored at work, there may be quite a few, make it into a spiritual practice, a consciousness practice. Bored at work also means you're not particularly challenged at work.

And in the absence of life challenges, there's always the danger that you fall below thought, and you come into a routine, what you think it's acceptance, but you're really falling below thought, and you go to work, and there's a decrease in your sense of alertness and aliveness, and you become dull, and you go. And sometimes you see

people who've been working in the same place for a long time, they have not, it's just, that's not surrender or presence. They've just gone below thought, not risen above.

So happy practice, present moment, be here now, as Ram Dass says, and really that is the answer, and find the joy that is in knowing who you are, consciousness. We'll take a moment of stillness. If anybody's still thinking, feel the inner body, the aliveness, feel the aliveness in your legs, your arms, your hands, and feel yourself breathing, that creates inner space, and then sense the presence behind it all.

And that presence is not something other than you, it is essentially who you are.

[Speaker 3] (49:28 - 49:30)

From Eckhart Tolle, thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Liberation from the Mind [6777ce05-77d9-460f-85dd-aa1ca36df805]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:36)

Liberation from the mind. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to a live audience. He says the beginning of liberation is when you realize you are not the thinker.

He says many people derive their identity from what the mind tells them. For those who have not yet awakened, that is where they find their sense of self. We free ourselves when we begin to realize there's a vast realm of intelligence beyond thought.

And the things that truly matter, joy, love, inner peace arise beyond the mind.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 33:26)

The liberation is the liberation from believing that this is essentially who you are. That dimension of the mind ultimately, the mental emotional entity, the conditioned mental emotional entity. And the liberation is when you realize the deeper I am or the deep I, and you're then increasingly as this is realized more in your life, more frequently, the space that this deep inner space emerges where you become still, but very present and alert in that stillness.

And then you begin to realize that is something that doesn't need any defense and doesn't need to be enhanced because it already exists in a state of fullness, which we could also call emptiness because emptiness means it has no form. So on that level, you need nothing. And when you are connected with that level, this moment is perfect as it is when you live from that level.

Now there's the level, the surface level on the surface, you may have to take action here and there on the surface of reality, but while you take action, there comes an alignment with the isness of things, because remember, is is the third person of I am, of am, it is, same thing. So there comes an alignment with the isness of things, which and the isness of things is inseparable from the present moment, an inner alignment with the isness of things. That is, you no longer argue with what is internally.

And then if you don't argue with what is, already the false self begins to crumble because it sustains itself to a large extent by arguing with what is on almost continuous inner resistance to whatever is in the present moment. That keeps the egoic self alive. Complaining does it, for example, where's the next thing I can complain about?

Oh yeah, there's something wrong, something wrong. Oh, this guy there, you know what he said? And then I said, you know what he, he didn't even have the decency of, so I told him what I thought of him, stories, stories, stories.

So you become liberated from what some traditions call the false self, I wouldn't necessarily even call it the false self, it's the surface self. But your sense of who you are comes from a deeper place. And then the surface self is fine.

It's, it's your form identity. As a form identity, you're never going to be perfect because the form exists in the world of polarities. If you become good at one thing, then it probably means that you become bad at something else.

You can develop, you can become a great sports person and break many records, but then you won't be solving problems of molecular physics. You know nothing about molecular physics. And the molecular physicist can't even jump one meter.

Oh no, I can't. So you always encounter limitations, as of course you do. So once you are able to access that dimension, it feels so, such a heavy weight lifting of you.

And what is that weight? It's the weight of what the Buddha calls the self, which he said is an illusion, the weight of yourself, the self, the surface self. There's nothing wrong with the self except when it becomes a foundation for your sense of identity.

And then it still continues to exist as your form identity. It is no longer the egoic self. The difference between your form identity and your ego is simply, ego is complete identification with your form identity.

And once that no longer happens, form identity is still there, but your sense of self comes from a deeper place. And then your form identity is no longer ego. It's just your form identity.

And the strange thing is that then these two dimensions can operate in your life, not as separate, but as in a relationship, the same relationship that the ripple has with the ocean or the wave on the surface of the water as with the ocean. That's the relationship between your surface self and your deep I, the surface I and the deep I. They are ultimately not separate.

The surface I is a manifestation of consciousness in the same way that the ripple on the surface of the ocean is a manifestation of the ocean, but they're not separate. It's only when the ripple is unaware that it is the ocean, then there's a sense of separateness, which ultimately, of course, is an illusion. And this realization of yourself as the deep I is so freeing, liberating that you feel a sense of, ah, I'm free of myself.

And then you have a compassionate attitude towards your form identity. And the form identity becomes less crazy because a form identity that is unconscious, is the ego, is crazy ultimately, even if it has areas where it can function. But there's always an element of craziness waiting somewhere.

And certain situations bring it out. You might've noticed it in people around you. I lived in

a house in the countryside in England for a few years, and I had little income, so I had to rent out two rooms.

And I had a number of various people who were staying for a few months. It was a town where people kind of didn't stay forever. They passed through.

A town that attracts strange people like myself. It's called Glastonbury. So I lived there, climbing the tall hill every day.

It was wonderful. And I had tenants in my house, maybe altogether over the three or four years I was there, maybe 10, 12, 10, or 12. And with the exception of two, so let's say there were 12.

With the exception of two, the other 10 turned out to be quite crazy. But you didn't notice it at first. It's only when you start to live with people, you might have found that also.

When you start to live with somebody, after a while, something emerges in them. Sometimes it's a pain body. Sometimes it's some other mental dysfunction that's hiding in some corner of their minds.

And it comes out when it gets triggered by certain situations. And some people are so subject to mood swings that we shared a kitchen. And whenever in the morning at breakfast, I heard the footsteps coming down from a tenant, you never knew who was going coming down the stairs, a lovely, happy person or some angry monster.

And two did not manifest craziness. So the unobserved mind is crazy in one way or another. Of course, in some cases, extremely crazy.

But by the way, I'm using crazy because very soon it'll belong to the growing number of words that are politically incorrect. So I'm using it as much as possible until I can't use it anymore. What do you mean crazy?

I feel insulted by crazy. You're judging people. Well, that's true.

But then on the other hand, 200 million humans killed by other humans in the first half of the 20th century alone. That's crazy. Okay, I've said it one more time.

So your form identity begins to operate a bit more smoothly. And there's a connectedness with a deep eye. The mind, your mind becomes informed often by this other intelligence that is deeper but non-conceptual.

And then it uses your mind. It can use your mind in whatever way. So we are here to practice more this other way of knowing that comes from the deep eye.

We are educated. Most of you, some of you have PhDs. And if you're unlucky, you even

have two PhDs.

So we don't need to here train the analytical mind or memory. There's nothing wrong with that. There are courses you can take and books you can read.

That's all fine. It has its place. And we're not here to increase knowledge.

We are here to access non-conceptual knowing. So there's the knowing through concepts, mental analysis and judgment. And that you do, for example, when you perceive things and you label them mentally because you know what they are, or you think you know, you can meet another human being.

And after a minute, you've already formed an opinion about that person. And if somebody asked me, what do you think of that person? You will immediately tell, well, I think he's...

whatever it is. Of course, you may have deep insight into the makeup of other people. But in many cases, the opinion that you have of others are a reflection of who you are.

And in many cases have absolutely nothing to do with them. That's another matter. They're more telling of who you are.

And you know the saying, you don't see things as they are, you see them as you are. So which means you see them through the conditioning of your mind, the screen. And that is knowing things through concepts.

And here we want to step out of that and practice knowing things through awareness or through presence, which means you don't apply thought. And that is your practice, especially here on the retreat, but for the rest of your life too. As much as you can, as you perceive things, the beauty of nature, other humans around you, or see and you breathe in, you smell, you hear the sounds, you sense the air, the breeze on your skin, all those perceptions.

And your practice is to, as much as possible, refrain from formulating an opinion or judgment. Just be the awareness through which the perception happens. Then you're living from the deep eye.

And occasionally, of course, certain thoughts will come into your head, but then may be able to recognize them as just part of your conditioned thinking. It's no longer a problem. And you no longer completely believe in every thought that comes into your head.

In other words, you no longer get taken over by every thought that comes into your head, hijacked, kidnapped, kidnapped by every thought that comes into your head. And that goes away with you. And then you talk about in your head out loud.

An example I give, you can walk through a forest here. You can look around at some

birds, there are trees, there's a little bit of snow left here and there on the ground. And you can contemplate these things through applying your knowledge, because you might know the name of the tree, the name of the bird and all kinds of things.

Or you can bring a simple awareness to your perception and know it in that way. An example I give is very early on when I went through this transition of consciousness, I began to realize that this other way of knowing. I was visiting a cathedral in England.

It's not very well known, but it's magnificent. It's north of Cambridge. I don't know how far, half an hour, one hour drive.

It's called Ely, E-L-Y. It's the name of the town. It is a very ancient cathedral.

And I walked in there and walked around for 15, 20 minutes going like, wow. And then I walked out. It was an incredible, wonderful experience, that space.

Somebody later asked me a question about it. I didn't know what to answer. Because I knew nothing about this cathedral.

I experienced it only through presence in a very deep way. Now, if I had had a guidebook, or even more so a recording that you can carry that you rent and you put the earpiece in your ear, and it's a guided tour, you press a button and it tells you, okay, now step five steps further, you will see a statue of so and so. This is very interesting.

And that the architectural style and then this section was built in the 12th century. And this was so interesting, very interesting. But it's a totally different way of experiencing this cathedral.

And there's a place for it. If that's the only way in which you can experience things, you're very limited. And you are not very deep.

And you don't experience things in a deep way. Which means you don't experience other humans in a deep way either. And you don't even experience yourself in a deep way.

Everything is surface. There is a place for that kind of knowledge. But if you're trapped in that dimension alone, it's extremely limiting.

Ideally, you would have both. So you go experience that place without any knowledge, through awareness. And there's a depth, you know it, but not you can't say much about it.

Maybe later you could write a poem about it. It's possible. Because that's how creative poems use language creatively.

They have to operate first of all from bare experience. And then later they sit down and then some words may arise. If you could do both, that's a balancing act.

You learn a lot about whatever this place has, the works of art that are in it, or whatever it may be. Or the forest, the trees. But you are not compulsively trapped in that dimension only.

So you are, if you choose to experience it, not through conceptual knowledge you're able to do it. Even though you may have the conceptual knowledge. That's the advanced art of living.

But here we emphasize not knowledge. You're not here to acquire more knowledge. Because there's enough of that in the world.

All you have to do is go to your computer or your iPad and you have infinite knowledge at your fingertips. And it's not going to save you. And it's not going to save the world.

You can increase knowledge and it's increasing continuously. But it's not going to save the world from destroying itself. Only the deeper dimension, if that comes in.

And so it can only come through you. So here you experiment with the beautiful state of not knowing from a conceptual point of view. But there is a deep knowing in that.

Practice it with human beings. Look at them and just be the presence. You can look into their eyes while they talk.

And sense, while you look, sense your own presence, the underlying presence. And if you can sense your own so-called, it's not your own, I'm just using those words. If you can sense your own presence, you can sense their presence or deep eye that is, one could say, underneath the personality.

And then there's a deep connection with the other. And then the other is no longer totally other. And that's wonderful.

And then there's an outflow of goodwill towards the so-called other from you, because you no longer want anything from him or her. You simply enjoy the beingness of the other because you enjoy your own beingness. And so finally, we've come to the word joy.

The joy of being arises from the realization of being. The realization of being inherently is joyful, but it's only one word you could use. As some of you or many of you probably know, in Indian spirituality, that state of connectedness with being is described with three words that are strung together as if they were one word.

And they come from Sanskrit. And the three words that are strung together, the first is sat, S-A-T, which means being. The second word is chit, C-H-I-T, which means consciousness.

And the third word is ananda, A-N-A, A-N-A-N-D-A, ananda, which means joy or bliss, joy. Now that you put these three words together, because then they become one word, sat,

chit, ananda, being, consciousness, joy. There are three aspects or facets of that state of connected, inner connectedness that is the deep eye.

Being means because being, consciousness means consciousness of being, being becoming self-conscious is inherently joyful, sat, chit, ananda. And this is a term that's existed for thousands of years in India. More practical tips so that you don't get distracted too much while you take your attention more deeply while you're here.

Take your attention more deeply into being or into attention itself, purely practical. Don't turn on the TV in your room, please. I have not installed hidden cameras to check on you.

Second, limit your interaction, the interaction with your devices. If you cannot eliminate interaction with your devices completely, and I understand that you may not survive if you do, at least put aside just maybe once a day, 15 minutes, when you check your, whatever it is that comes through, whatever text, email, Facebook, Snapchat, Tinder. It's all very important, but there's something more important and that's why you're here.

So now let's see, I suggest to you that you make an agreement with yourself not to go there any more than is absolutely necessary. And I mean, if you occasionally you have, you get it out and to take a photo is okay, but also don't interact with things around you only through imagining what it would look like as a photo on your phone and then say, okay, I'm going to fully experience this beautiful thing when I get home and look at my photos. In the meantime, I'm more interested in taking this photo because that's what the, there's a species that has developed out of Homo sapiens, a branch species called Homo turisticus.

And they, they walk around continuously with either camera or something. You see them every day, they come in buses. And then in the evening, the Homo turisticus goes home mostly.

And then you are left here and you might notice it becomes quite still outside at this time. And the days are very, very long here. You may find that unusual if you come from a more Southern place that there's still daylight around even at 1030, there's still light in the sky.

So, and then it becomes very still here. So you can walk along the lake or just wherever you are and just be, become aware of that, that surrounding stillness. And as you become aware of the surrounding stillness, of course you become still yourself.

And if you are still, it means you're not thinking or very little thinking. And it means you're aware. It means you're present.

It means you are living through the deep eye. So use nature that is around you, live through the deep eye. And during the daytime, if you're walking and there's lots of,

there's a long weekend here and tomorrow is a holiday in Canada here.

So there's more tourists, Homo turisticus than usual. And if you get upset by the fact that there are so many tourists walking around, then you just practice this beautiful spiritual practice of acceptance of the is-ness of this moment. And immediately you become still too without needing external silence, complete acceptance of this moment, including the tourists.

And you're still, oh, I don't know how tourists will develop in the future as a species. In Thailand, just near Bangkok, they interviewed some near a Buddhist monastery. They interviewed some farmers and farm workers.

They would give food to the monks. That's the tradition in Buddhism in Thailand, in the South, Theravada tradition of Buddhism. The monks come with their begging bowls every morning.

They just stand there. And then the local people come and put food. They are dependent.

It's done on purpose. There's a wisdom behind it. All the Westerners would say, why don't they work for a living?

The monks stand there with their begging bowls. And then the poor people who hardly have enough themselves, they come and put some food, a bit of rice, whatever, in the begging bowl. And the monks just stand.

They don't say thank you, because it's a privilege for you to give food to the monks. That's part of the tradition. So the Westerners interviewed the farm workers.

They, why do you give your food to the monks when you have so little yourself? And they began talking to each other. Well, because we want a better incarnation next time.

So we are accumulating merit. So next time we come, we are born into a better condition. And then the Westerner asked, so what do you want to come back as in your next lifetime?

And then they talked amongst each other. And finally, the agreement was, we want to come back as tourists. Because they observe these people step out of their buses.

They're well-dressed. And some are obviously so privileged that they are quite big bodies, which means they have plenty of money. They can eat as much as they like.

So that's a great thing. And then they do all kinds of things. They seem to have sex all the time.

And so it's a great thing. So wouldn't it be great in my next lifetime to spend my whole

lifetime as being a tourist? They don't realize it would be a dreadful nightmare.

Oh, yes. One more practical thing. Intoxicating beverages.

There's no prohibition here on anything. There's just a recommendation. And that is to refrain as much as possible from intoxicating.

If English is not your native language, it means alcohol. Refrain as much as possible from intoxicating beverages. However, if you cannot enjoy a dinner without a glass of wine, then you can have a glass of wine.

One glass of wine would not unduly interfere with the arising presence in you, but two might, and three will. Unless you are really already deeply engaged in presence, deeply rooted in presence, in which case you wouldn't even want to drink too much, and you certainly wouldn't get drunk. So as little as possible, I recommend none at all would be great.

But since everybody here is spiritually advanced, if you do have a glass of wine, you will not be judged. So we've talked about the distractions on the external level, television, devices, intoxicating beverages, or other intoxicating substances. I would advise against it, at least here.

And never indulge even when you're not here. As you probably know, I've already mentioned, I tried it a couple of times. I have to because people ask me questions about it.

I cannot answer if I haven't tried it. It wasn't that great. I prefer my normal state of consciousness.

It felt a little bit almost oppressive. But I can see a person who is tortured on a daily basis by their mind. It can be a relief to have a smoke.

But here we have something better. We're not falling below thinking. We are rising above thinking.

And that is the next step in human evolution. As you rise above thinking, you don't need to fall below thinking anymore because you become liberated from your mind in the dimension that is transcendent to thought. So, and another practice, of course, here is the moment-to-moment practice of accepting the is-ness of the present moment.

That's a powerful way of, and a quick way of going beyond the surface self, the egoic self, which means stop complaining either internally or externally. Of course, if there's something that needs to be changed, of course you go to the reception or you make a phone call if suddenly there's water coming through the ceiling. I hope, hopefully I'm not manifesting it by talking about it.

There's water coming through the ceiling and the mattress and you are on it and getting drenched. You don't say, accept what is, stay on the bed. Eckhart said, don't complain.

So that's not the practice. But it does mean that when you finally go to the telephone and tell them what happened, it's not done in a complaining manner that says, how dreadful this place is, how can you allow something like this to happen to me? This is dreadful.

That strengthens the ego. No, you just explain what is and what can we do about it? And in the meantime, you surrender to the fact that you're wet.

That's what is. In my very early stages when I was beginning to kind of read, not teach, but I realized after my transition, couple of years after, friends that I had, in a subtle way, they turned into kind of students of mine, which was very weird. So there was one friend that lived in almost continuous discontent with the state of things.

And then I talked to him a bit about many things. I only realized when people like that asked me questions and sometimes I became still because I didn't know the answer, never know the answer beforehand. But then because there was a demand, a question had been asked, out of the stillness, the answer came.

So he must have asked certain things and then the answer came and then he kind of said, oh, what do you mean by that? So there was a kind of spiritual awakening. And one day he arrived where we are going to meet on a, everybody had a bicycle there and it was raining.

It was totally drenched. And he came in and said, oh, totally wet. I didn't complain it at all.

He said, the wet I became, I just, I became a duck and it was totally fine. That might've not been the best example because ducks don't get wet inside. It's, therefore we have the expression water off the duck's back.

But anyway, I know what he meant, which means he became totally one with that arising condition.

[Speaker 2] (33:44 - 33:46)

From Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Life Without Unnecessary Suffering [43c4d8cd-f7c4-4969-9168-f55efdbbf81c]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:56)

Life without unnecessary suffering. In this episode, Eckhart sits down with an audience in Paris. He encourages participants to explore the experience of his talk, beyond the words, because it holds the seeds to awakening.

He also talks about the obstacles presented by the ego, which he illustrates with the ancient Greek myth of Narcissus, a beautiful young man who drowned in a pool of water, gazing at his own reflection. Eckhart explains there's a deep truth to this which is still relevant today. He says we risk a similar fate if we identify too closely with the ego and its insatiable demands.

He ponders the possibility of resisting the pull to turn life's difficulties into suffering. He explains that challenges will continue, but we don't have to turn every problem into unhappiness. Eckhart asks the audience to consider, is it possible to go through life without creating unnecessary suffering for ourselves and others?

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 45:55)

It has taken a long time, but finally I'm speaking here in France and in Paris, and I'm very happy to be here with all of you. Our evening operates on two levels. One is the conventional level, words are spoken, concepts, mental concepts, and to some extent you can understand those concepts.

You listen, you understand, but the essence of our evening does not happen on a conceptual level. Conceptual understanding of what I'm talking about will not be enough to make this evening enjoyable for you. Conceptual understanding will not be enough.

It is more a question of inviting you by using concepts as signposts, inviting you to actually experience for yourself or realize for yourself what it is that I'm talking about. And what it is that I'm talking about is a certain dimension of consciousness in you that is awakening or is just at the point of being ready to awaken. And most humans on the planet don't even know that such a dimension exists, although all the ancient spiritual teachers have pointed to it and spoken about it.

And in most humans, it is only a potential, a dormant potential, but not in you because you have come here. Something has drawn you here. So we could say that the subject matter of this evening is really you.

I'm going to talk ultimately about you and I will be pointing to something in you that is easily overlooked, but is of extraordinary importance if you want to live a fulfilled and meaningful life instead of a life that is full of frustration and ultimately suffering. A life

that is experienced, in the words of Churchill, who was actually talking about history, one damn thing after another, one damn thing after another. So the story, if we go back to the beginning, the story of you, let's travel back in time to a prehistoric mythological time where we encounter a young man going for a walk in the woods.

And his name, according to ancient Greek mythology, is Narcissus. He looked into the pond and he saw his own reflection in the pond. And he was amazed at the beauty of his own reflection.

Now you might think, is that perhaps a very ancient prophecy of the selfie? Can't take my eyes off it. No, it was not a prophecy of the selfie, but there's a connection, of course, there is a connection.

This is the glass surface of the selfie. And here we have the reflection of his own image in the water. That story in mythology often expresses a deep truth, which otherwise humans would not understand or could not express in any abstract way.

The truth needs to be embedded in a story. And this is, there's a very deep truth here that points to the arising of a mentally created self image that people have and live with. So it's almost as if you had a phantom that walks with you wherever you go, that is your mind created image or concept of who you are.

And that is what we call the ego. The ego is a mental image conditioned by the past, conditioned by your environment and many other factors, a mental image, a conceptual sense of self that you identify with so completely that you disappear in it and live through it. You believe that that is who you are.

And that is the conditioned mind-made self. It consists of layers, different layers. At the most fundamental level, first of all, everybody identifies, first of all, with your physical body.

That's the most fundamental level of identification. You believe that you are the body, you identify with the body that you are. And the body, of course, already is a problematic thing to identify with because you compare this body, that you say, I am this body, this physical form, and then you compare to others.

And it can be a source of pride if your body is better looking or stronger than most other bodies. The ego gets in there and feels inflated, greater. It can also be a source of suffering or shame if your body is not the way you think it should be or society tells you it should be, or when you compare it to others, it's not as strong or as beautiful.

You suffer. You have a sense of self that feels less than. On the other side, you might have a sense of self that feels more than.

But I can see how people who are good-looking or strong or both, how easy it is for them

to seek a large part of their identity in their external appearance. And that can be fine for a while, but inevitably, of course, what is a source of pleasure for some years, gradually and perhaps even quickly turns into a source of suffering because the body does not last. And a day comes when you look in the mirror and the mirror image is no longer the same as it was 10 or 20 or 30 years ago, especially if you have a photo of yourself next to the mirror.

Something went very wrong here. And then it becomes a source of suffering. Now in our civilization, there are repair jobs that you can do that for a while will help you feel you're still okay and good-looking, but inevitably you suffer, begin to suffer more and more because who you think you are is diminishing.

Your sense of self-worth is diminishing and that's a source of great suffering. And of course, humans who identified with a negative body image, they are suffering already when they are young. They don't have to wait until the body grows old.

So we have identification with the body and then you put clothes on the body, of course, that they become an extension of the body and they can add something. They can hide things. They can conceal things that don't look so good or they can enhance things that look good.

And then it's nice when people are looking at me. It feels good to the ego. This is, I call it form identity, form, physical form.

And that's only the beginning of your form identity. Now we go on to what you identify with on the level of the mind, because here we have a huge set of thoughts, images, and narratives that continuously go through your head that are the result of environment, the culture you grow up in, even the language that you grow up with is more than just a communication tool. The language that you grow up with conditions you already to behave in a certain way.

And so you are recognizable to many people then as, oh, there's a French person. Others can recognize, or there's an Italian, there's an Englishman. They can sometimes easily be recognized because of that conditioning.

So you get a, gradually thoughts arise as a child grows up, begins to grow up. The child learns language. The child asks questions.

What is this? What is that? Gradually concept form in the mind of the child.

And with certain concepts, the child identifies. Identify mean it gives you your sense of who you are. It gives you your sense of self.

My toy is one of the first things. This is my toy. This is the beginning of the ego.

You cannot stop it. You cannot tell a child, don't say my toy. It's your ego.

The child has to go through that stage. The ego ideally is a stage that people grow out of as they grow up. However, that's mostly is not the case.

Unfortunately, most humans never grow out of it. So my toy, remove a toy from a child that the child has called my, creates enormous suffering. The child will cry and or scream as if you had torn a limb.

You had torn something off the child's body. And of course, if that has not happened, five minutes later, the child would have lost interest in it completely. So it is not the toy that causes the suffering.

It is a mental concept of toy that the child identifies with that causes the suffering. And that is the beginning. Then, of course, the child also is told a name.

The child identifies with a name. This is one of the first things a child is taught. You are John or whatever typical French name might be.

Pierre. Je suis Pierre. Qui es-tu?

Je suis Pierre. Now I know who I am. It's a concept.

And the concept is endowed with a sense of self. And the concept is the thought. But it's not an ordinary thought.

It's a thought that has a sense of self in it. And this is why we use the term identify. You derive your identity from that particular thought.

And once you have this thought, which is a thought form, another aspect of your form identity, then other things begin to accumulate around the name of who you are. Possessions. Toys is possessions.

Then other things accumulate. Things that you can do. Things that others cannot do.

Things that you know that others don't know. Things that your parents have and other parents don't have. And then gradually more and more things begin to accumulate around the central core of the conceptual self.

And as you then grow up, before you know it, you live through this mind-made sense of self. And you begin to develop a narrative. And you call this narrative me and my life.

That's my life. That's me. And that's your history.

Your personal history. And things in your personal history that you strongly identify with. Things that happened to you.

And especially things that other people did to you. Your parents, for example. And there's no childhood that is free of suffering.

There are always people who do things to you. So you have this sense of self that is based on your personal history. And all the things that are the conditioning of who you are.

Your culture. Your collective conditioning. Not only your country.

It might be your religion. It might be many other things that you identify with as me. That's me.

That is I. And then as you grow up, you continue to live through a conceptual reality of yourself that is revived by thinking about it and talking about it. And for most people, it's a very problematic sense of self.

There's no ego that is not problematic. And the ego, that mind-made sense of self, always has a sense of lack. Something is still missing.

Something is not right. I don't know what it is, but many people have the feeling they need to arrive somewhere, but they have not arrived yet. Other people have the feeling that their life has not quite started yet.

They are still getting ready to live. They're looking forward to a point in the future where my life actually takes off. When is it going to?

It's certainly not this, where I live now, the work I'm doing now, who I'm with, but that can't be my life. I'm waiting, as the English expression goes. I don't know how they translate that.

I'm waiting for my break, my big break. I'm waiting for it to make it. And of course, there are people who reach the age of 65 and 70 and say, it never started.

My life never started. I've always been waiting for something, both on a small scale, waiting for the weekend or the next vacation, on a larger scale, waiting for the fulfilling, the ultimately fulfilling relationship, the ultimately fulfilling financial situation, the ultimately fulfilling living situation. I've been waiting for it, and occasionally I thought I had arrived, but it always turned out to be an illusion.

I have spoken to some famous people who tell me that after they became famous, for a while they felt elated. Their ego grew and grew. And then something happened, and they were even more unhappy than before, because there was still that sense of, that's not it.

And they realized that the image that other people had of them was a complete illusion. What the newspapers wrote about them was complete illusion. And so there was this sudden realization that this is not who I am, but who am I?

And then they either take drugs in order to dull the pain, to desensitize themselves to the pain, or they opened up to the deeper dimension of who they are. So let's look for a moment at your life, which is a thing probably of great interest to you. Your life, there's not a single person in this room whose life is not problematic and challenging.

There's no doubt that life is difficult. There's nobody for whom life is not difficult. And if your life were not difficult, in other words, if you were not challenged by life, that would turn into the greatest difficulty.

If you were not challenged by life, then that lack of challenge would become your greatest challenge. But there are very few people, it never lasts for long. You might have a trust fund from your parents or grandparents.

You may have enough money and you never need to work, look for a job, have a nice house already when you're 20, and a great car when you're 20. And you can go wherever you want and there you are. And you would find that this life would become deeply unfulfilling after a few years.

And then that will turn into your challenge. So there's no getting away from the fact that life will always challenge you. Okay, we need to let go of the belief, the unspoken belief that this should not be happening, that there should be no problems in my life.

There are many people who feel that they have personally been singled out by the universe or by God or some malevolent entity to make their lives difficult. I was one of those. I was deeply identified with negative thoughts and whenever something bad happened to me, it already started when I was 16.

Whenever something bad happened to me, I had a thought and that thought would say, of course, bad things always happen to me, always to me. Look at these people, how happy they are. Everything bad always happens to me.

And it did. So the challenges are actually the most important thing in your evolution. Life seems to put obstacles in your path.

I want to get there, but now something is blocking me. There is an obstacle on my path and life does it all the time. Just the moment you think, now I'm there, I made it, I got this great job now, then something else goes wrong in your relationship or your physical body or somebody close to you suddenly has a huge problem or living situation or there's a huge marital thing, your wife falls in love with somebody else.

There's always something to interfere with a smooth functioning. You cannot have all the things that make up your life functioning smoothly, simultaneously. Living situation, work situation, financial situation, health situation, whatever else, maybe all your children are happy and doing very well and you can travel and your body's totally and perfectly healthy and everything is just fantastic.

Well, it could happen for a little while, not long, if you say, yes, I'm one of those people that you're talking about. This has happened in my life. Just wait a little and see what happens then.

So to demand internally that life should leave you alone, don't put obstacles in my path. This is not how the universe functions. Every life form experiences challenges from the smallest life form, even a plant or a little animal.

The moment they are born, they're confronted with challenges. And it's only by being confronted with challenges that evolution happens. If you were not confronted or any life form were not confronted with challenges, life on this planet or any other planet would not evolve and your life would not evolve.

And everybody here is here because you have experienced challenges. You have suffered. You have been unhappy.

And to some extent you might still be, but you're seeing the possibility of transforming the challenges of life into suffering. The challenges will not stop. But the question is, are you internally, because of your mental conditioning, transforming every challenge, the little one, the big one, transforming every problem and every challenge that life throws at you, transforming it into unhappiness, into misery, into suffering, what the Buddha called dukkha, which is translated as suffering, unhappiness, misery, unsatisfactoriness, whatever you want to call it. Now, here we come to the possibility, not of being free of challenges.

If you demand that of the universe or of God, you will be very disappointed and condemned to continuous frustration. No, not demanding that life should not be challenging anymore, but realizing the possibility of no longer transforming the challenges of life into unhappiness or suffering. This is something worth exploring.

Is it possible to go through life without creating suffering for yourself? Now, that's already a strange way of speaking about it, because it's always seems that the unhappiness in your life is created by circumstances around you. Everybody believes that, of course, this particular situation is making me unhappy.

And in many, many cases, the circumstances that make you unhappy are to do with people, because people are so difficult. You might have noticed. So for many people, other people, whether it's relationship or at work, this is a huge source of suffering for many people because other people are making your life difficult, which of course is why John Paul Sartre said, hell is les autres, which is translated into English as other people.

Hell is these people there. But of course, it can come in many forms. Now, a very interesting experiment, you start on a small scale with little suffering, which normally would not even be recognized as suffering.

As you might realize in modern life, there are many frustrating things. And I could take any of the many frustrating things that you encounter in modern life, for example, even just wanting to talk to your bank on the phone. But there's no, you cannot reach, I don't know if it's the same here, you cannot reach a human being.

You can only reach pre-recorded messages. And then you go, select this, select this. And finally, you think, okay, to talk to somebody, press zero after 10 minutes.

And then there's a waiting period now of 25 minutes. But already you've built up an enormous amount of frustration and irritation. Irritation is a small form of suffering.

It could happen at the, also another place where you can encounter this minor suffering is at airports or in traffic. These are when you get irritated. This is not usually recognized as suffering, but it is a small form of suffering.

And somebody who gets irritated several times a day over a period of years builds up an enormous amount of unresolved suffering within him or her. They build up. And then the irritation becomes part of your ego.

And you go through life just waiting for the next thing to be irritated about, because it strengthens your fictitious sense of self or the ego. And the moment you react, the ego gets inflated. Perhaps we've all met people like that.

There's nobody here like that, of course, because otherwise you wouldn't have come here. Or if there is, if you recognize it in yourself right now, that's a wonderful thing. That's self-recognition.

You might be totally irritated with me. Well, that's a great thing to opt to realize that you are irritated with the speaker. Why?

Because he hasn't said anything significant yet. So now you experiment with a small form of suffering. Let's, let's, you know, be on the telephone or at the airport or in the traffic jam.

And you get, how does the suffering arise? You need to have some awareness to ask yourself, how does this arise? Well, the mind says, well, because of this thing that's happening here, these people are totally incompetent.

Or the, the traffic, which are, I live in this, why am I living here? And this just is so, all the fumes and the traffic, it's so dreadful. And then you look more closely, is, is this situation causing you the suffering?

Or is it something that you add to the situation? What, what is it that you add to the situation? What you add to the situation is certain thoughts.

And those thoughts are not pleasant. These thoughts are saying, this should not be

happening. Or they are saying, I don't want to be here.

Or they are saying, I want to be somewhere else. Or they say, this is such a dreadful situation. I can't stand it anymore.

I just can't stand it. I can't stand this. And suddenly you wake up, something else arises, awareness.

Awareness of your own thought processes. That is awakening. That is spiritual awakening, the beginning of it.

When you become aware of the voice in the head, instead of being identified with a voice in the head, there is an awareness. And you're in this situation and suddenly you see, okay, how would I experience this situation if I did not add those thoughts to it? If I just let it be without the addition of certain thoughts that are saying that this should not be happening, I don't want to be here, whatever they say.

That's a good experiment. And then in this experiment, you drop the thoughts for a moment. So there you are, let's say you're at the airline counter waiting to check in, and you've been standing there for 25 minutes.

It might even say the flight is delayed by three hours, or nobody's telling you anything. And there you are getting very irritated and say, okay, I'm not adding any thought to this moment. And I'm just experiencing this moment as it is.

And suddenly you're experiencing this moment as it is. What is it that you're experiencing? You're experiencing yourself as standing there, breathing, perceiving, visual perception.

You look around, humans, lights, people moving here and there, and can feel your body. Perhaps there's a little pain in the body because you've been standing there for a while, but that's not suffering. It's a little pain in the body.

So there you are. And suddenly you feel, well, this situation is not actually as bad as my mindset it was. That's weird.

And then you realize, actually, it's not bad at all. It just is the way it is. You no longer add mental baggage to the situation.

And you take this moment as it is. If you can take action, of course you take action. If you say, okay, I'm standing in this lineup at the airline counter.

I've been standing here for 25 minutes. Maybe there's a better lineup. I can move there.

If you can do something, you do it. But if there's no possibility of changing the situation, this is what is. So to argue internally, to argue with what is, is something that

strengthens the egoic sense of self.

Because this mind made sense of self needs to have enemies. It needs to fight against this and that and that, because then it feels this boundary of me more strongly. It needs opposition.

It needs antagonism. So that's unconscious. The ego gets stronger when you complain mentally.

And the egos, you feel you are morally superior to the situation. When you complain about a person, you're obviously more superior to that person. You know what he did?

And you know what he said to me? And then I said to him, and then how can he do such a thing? Of course, not all the stories that you tell.

And the interesting thing about the stories that the ego tells is that you are always right and the others are always wrong. Isn't that strange? I'm always right.

Other people are always wrong. I hadn't realized that. I must be superior to everybody.

But of course, that's the ego. We remove a huge amount of suffering from life and unhappiness when we do not add unnecessary baggage to situations that arise. And when I say situations, what I mean is, of course, the present moment.

It's always every situation happens in the present moment. Your entire life unfolds in the present moment. In fact, there is nothing else.

We live, most humans live, as if the next moment or the one after that were more important than this moment. But it's not. This moment is always more important than the next moment.

It doesn't mean we cannot make plans. We need to make plans. But whatever plan we make, perhaps, I mean, we plan to meet here tonight.

That's fine. But the no future moment can be more important than this moment because there is only this moment. And when the future moment comes, it again is this moment.

There is no future. Although we need it for practical purposes. But ultimately, if there were a future, somebody would have discovered it and said, oh, there it is.

I found the future. And then, of course, you realize, oh no, it's the present moment. So the future is a thought in your head.

And the past are thoughts in your head. And when are you thinking those thoughts? Now.

So even the past cannot exist without being revived in the now. There is only now. Now,

if we have a dysfunctional, bad, unpleasant relationship habitually with the present moment, and many people live like that.

They always want to be somewhere else. This is never good enough. They're always complaining about something.

If you live that way, then, of course, you are condemned to continuous suffering without even knowing it. And always blaming some external factor. That's the essence of unconscious living.

So one of the greatest or perhaps the most important spiritual practice is to come to a relationship with the present moment that is friendly. You might as well, because your entire life is experienced as the present moment. So no matter what form the present moment takes, even if it's challenging, you no longer resent the fact that this moment is challenging.

You accept, and then you see, is action possible? Do I need to take action? You look, and then you take action.

Or right now, no action is possible. Then you let go of any kind of resistance. And even if you take action, it's better to come to a place of non-resistance first, so that you are more deeply connected with life.

When you are in a place of non-resistance, you connect more deeply with life. You go deeper than the ego. The ego lives through resistance resistance of the present moment.

So the entire edifice of the mind-made sense of self can be transcended if your life becomes more focused on the present moment. And you honor the present moment. That's an important thing, because you encounter life in the present moment honoring the present moment.

Another word for that is gratitude. Gratitude for what is at this moment, even if it's only, you might be sitting in a room, there's a light, you have kind of gratitude for the lights that are shining here, the flowers, which means you appreciate, you give some attention, you appreciate, because otherwise you go through life always pursuing a mental phantom. One day I'm going to be okay.

I just need to get there. I just need to get to the office. I need to get there and there and there.

Of course, you can still make plans. You need to make plans, but you make plans in the present moment without believing that when you arrive at a certain point in the so-called future, this is going to make you happy. Nothing and nobody is going to make you happy.

Yes, your life can improve, of course. The external conditions or circumstances of your life can improve, and sometimes they do. That's fine.

But you're not... to seeking self-fulfillment through that is the error, is the mistake. So in other words, you need to find what is conventionally called happiness, although I don't call it happiness because the term happiness sounds a little superficial.

Something great has just happened to me. I'm so happy. And of course, the next day it disappears or it no longer makes you happy.

But there's something, there's a deeper sense of joy and aliveness and deep inner peace that is there when you live in inner alignment with the present moment and whatever form it takes. Then what happens as you practice that, this is a form of gratitude. In gratitude, you don't even need to say thank you.

You can say thank you for this or thank you for that. Or you can simply, without words, appreciate the life that's happening around you now and the life that is within you now, to feel the life that animates the body. I call it the inner body.

As you sit here now, feel the life that animates the inner body. Every cell is alive. You can feel that aliveness.

And that takes you out of the thinking mind without losing consciousness. And here we come to the actual central point of our gathering here tonight. And that central point of extraordinary importance, it is the next step in the evolution of human consciousness.

And what is that? What is this step? Human consciousness has developed the incredible ability to think over many thousands of years.

You live through a mental image. And as you do, this mental image is the ego. And the ego is never satisfied for long, never satisfied for long, and feels incomplete, has problems with self-esteem and self-worth.

We inhabit a conceptual reality, and we have a conceptual sense of self, and we impose a conceptual sense of self on every other human that we meet. We immediately have judgments about those humans, mental judgments, this and this. We immediately interpret everything according to the conditioning of the mind.

How we interpret things varies from culture to culture, but makes little difference because you would be identified with your particular mental interpretations.

[Speaker 2] (45:56 - 46:16)

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Eckhart Tolle Love Is Recognizing the Other as Yourself [926e791e-50d6-4941-9810-4d751c1e5d7e]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:55)

Love is recognizing the other as yourself. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the future of religion. He says the next step for the human race is to shift from worshiping God as a concept to experiencing God as part of our own essence.

He explains once we awaken to this realization, we no longer contribute to suffering in the world. The ego disappears and with it goes continuous judgment of others. He says when we don't react to their personalities, we recognize the sacred depth of others as the same one in ourselves and the separation between us and them disappears.

Eckhart calls it the manifestation of the one consciousness. He also says this understanding of the other as oneself is love and it connects us to a vastness that we may also call God.

[Speaker 1] (0:57 - 48:50)

Our destiny for humanity is as I see the next evolutionary stage which is this gathering actually is part of that. It looks like just people in a room listening to somebody or that's the surface on the surface that's what it is but if you look deeper there's a huge energy field that's operating and that is the awakening of human consciousness. This is the next stage in evolution of humans and the strange fact is the awakening happens you what awakens you mostly up to a point is well how do I put it without shocking anybody what awakens you is if life takes you out of your comfort zone.

Life needs to take you out of your comfort zone so that you encounter some kind of obstacles or tribulation or something makes you oh that is suffering as the Buddha called it suffering dukkha and the suffering has a function. Everybody has a spiritual teacher I sometimes say for most people it's their suffering and then you may reach a point you will reach a point you have reached a point where suffering is no longer needed for the evolution of your consciousness. It has brought you to this point and for that you could be grateful for most of you it applies that if you had not suffered what you because every human has their share of suffering if you had not suffered you would not unlikely that you would be here.

If I had not gone through deep depression and deep unhappiness for many years I would not be here. I might be sitting on a sofa somewhere drinking beer and what binge watching Netflix and feeling sorry for myself. So it's the suffering so many people have told me so many times that I heard people said if I hadn't had this serious illness or if I hadn't lost all my possessions or if I hadn't lost even in some cases through the deaths of close family members even death of children if I hadn't gone through all this loss and

that I would never have understood your teaching.

It's not really teaching but I call it that and people have told me often they were given a book like the power of now by a friend and they opened it and it was completely meaningless. He said what what is he talking about they put it on a shelf years later they picked it up again and they opened it oh wow but what happened in the meantime well in the meantime the wife left him he lost his job he fell in had an accident and then Rick was in hospital for a long time but when finally recover many bad things happened that that cracked open the shell of the egoic state of consciousness it cracked open what was it Leonard Cohen or somebody had a like there's a crack a crack in everything that how the light gets out or in out I suppose. So the suffering is an essential part of the evolution of consciousness so in your life what looks like the obstacles to your awakening are actually the hidden portal to your awakening. People think if I could only I would awaken spiritually but I need to be left alone by life and I need the surroundings that are conducive to spiritual awakening.

I ideally a resort on on Bali where and I need the purest food and environment that's just brought to me so that I can meditate in peace so and of course body work I need a lot of body work too so I'm these these are ideally if I had that there would be a chance that I could spiritually awaken. I'm not denying that what you are describing may be a very pleasant experience but it is very unlikely that it will lead to spiritual awakening it could lead to a brief moment of aha a brief moment of being present of the perhaps when you're receiving body work your mind stops yes oh it's great but the real thing is the confrontation with the tribulations of your life and then enter into a state of acceptance of the isness of the present moment even if you're in a prison cell and I've had communications from many people in prison and many have said they have achieved a degree or complete sense of freedom or liberation by surrendering internally to the now to the form that this now takes and that is amazing transformation happens when you can accept this moment as it is particularly if it appears to be negative not talking about taking action in order to change things sometimes action is called for but again the question is does the action arise from a state of resistance or dissatisfaction or denial of the present moment or does the action arise out of a state of consciousness of deep acceptance but you still see what needs to be done if you're stuck in the mud somewhere to use a kind of analogy because many people are metaphorically speaking stuck in the mud somewhere if you're stuck in the mud somewhere this moment is as it is and then the next thing is you take action to get out but a different kind of action arises if the foundation was a state of consciousness of acceptance of now there are some successful so-called successful people in the horizontal in the horizontal terms of the word let's say you're business person if you are a business person entrepreneur or whatever the words are you try to create something new now are you conscious while you're doing it or are you unconscious while you're doing it if you're unconscious while you're doing it then it's all egoic based and every obstacle you encounter and you may

realize if you have practiced entrepreneurship basically your entire job is problem solving every day a new problem arises and some business people think this should not be happening and they get angry with every problem that arises and then they react out of that but there are some others and they make it worse by reacting angrily against an arising problem you amplify the problem usually sometimes the problems come in the form of an unconscious human being wanting something but and you react and you increase their unconsciousness and yours and then events sometimes get blown up out of all proportions through egoic reaction and some others tend to be much more successful they don't resent the fact that an obstacle arises and they come of course they come continuously and they immediately look at it instead of complaining about the obstacle they say what is it that can be done and then they're able to be still for a moment there's a key for even very active people who may not be drawn to meditation in important situations and especially when faced with challenges can you be so alert that you're still for a moment and look the situation face the situation fully and then see what is it that can be done and the the answer of what it is that can be done then comes out of a moment of stillness and it's it will be just right for that situation it will not make it worse it will make it better it or it will circumvent the problem or it will transform the problem into something good life continuously throws things at you isn't that strange and many humans believe that when adversity happens this should not be happening there's something wrong well yes it is true that you can positively change your life to a great extent if you for example practice positive attitude positive thinking will greatly help you in transforming your life but even there life will not leave you alone you will still encounter the challenges and that's fine you will still encounter some kind of problematic situation difficult person loss of one kind or another every human needs to experience that and you can change your attitude towards it by realizing that it could not be otherwise evolution itself happens because of it it looks all the obstacles that arise seeming apparent obstacles to the evolution of your life too in consciousness the a are needed because the strength on whatever level only comes when it is absolutely needed this even applies on a physical level and it applies on the mental level and its place on the spiritual level if you want to make your body stronger you don't do it by making your body more comfortable be because there will be no influx of energy into the body because it's not needed but when you make demands on your body then there's a gap where energy is needed you're lifting a weight it's at first not very pleasant and the body is trying out leave me alone but then is this the body says i need more energy i need and then an influx of energy comes or you start jogging at first you go oh like not again at some point the body demands more energy and energy suddenly comes flowing in and then it even begins to be enjoyable with the influx of energy which would never have come if you had not let's put it in this terms if you had not made life difficult for your body the body gains in strength because you made life difficult for your body don't go so far as to make life so difficult for your body that it collapses completely that's another story you find the middle way the middle way in everything so there was a famous orator in ancient greece he had a speech defect he could not talk well as a young man and in

greece to be a great speaker was one of the most highly regarded things to to be an orator and he he wanted to go beyond his speech defect and they say he in order to get beyond it he put little pebbles in his mouth and started delivering speeches to the ocean the sea and he was there with pebbles and was shouting and talking to the ocean to the sea for several years and in the end the speech defect disappeared and he became one of the greatest orators in ancient greece and again there was a demand for it it so if the obstacle hadn't been there there was a philosopher who said everything important happens in spite of everything important happens in spite of didn't don't add anything in spite of something whatever in other words something was holding it back and then it had to the energy was so when you face tribulation in this life then there's an opportunity for generating more consciousness in when you encounter difficult life's difficulties there's an opportunity for developing more consciousness and as you rise in consciousness the transcendent dimension of awakened consciousness comes in you begin to transcend these very problems that before you seemed unsurmountable you transcend them or you live with them and they are no longer that important so you can transcend them internally let's say you have a body that is disabled in one way or another and the problem then as you awaken spiritually sometimes it happens that the body gets healed and at other times it happens that the transcendent consciousness arises and the disability of the body is no longer a source of suffering for you but it was a source of suffering for probably for quite a long time until a very deep surrender happened and in this deep surrender you transcended this source of suffering and then you still have the same body and yet you're no longer psychologically suffering because you have transcended so many things in this life they can be you can overcome an obstacle or you can transcend an obstacle if you overcome an obstacle when external things you do external things in order to remove the obstacle to get beyond it if that is not possible then internally you transcend so it no longer the obstacle the so-called obstacle is still there but it doesn't matter anymore to you it is no longer so in fact you may be grateful for it so when things happen in your life you face it and you look at it and you become the alertness is required when you're faced with a difficult person or situation you become alert so that you don't react out of the conditioned mind even little things when people could get irritated airports these days airports these days are wonderful places for spiritual practice they've always been places for spiritual practice but much more so now this is a small scale thing but if you don't practice with small scale you will not practice with big things relatively small things yes your flight is cancelled again no nobody can give you any information and the luggage is lost long ago and there you are you can either react out of the conditioned mind or you can say this is what is that's what is if you have been irritated and you can use any situation it's been irritated or angry i recommend this spiritual practice and you do it like this how would i experience this situation if i didn't add any thought to it now you can't answer that unless you actually do it so how would i experience this irritating moment and these awful people who are working for the airline and and they're completely uninterested in their job anymore and so on and so on and so on how would i experience this moment if i

didn't add any thought to it while i'm just standing here in this line and any thought would be for example well this line is so long i'm going to be here for at least another two hours that's a thought it's future not now there's no no two hours now this does the how would i experience this moment if i didn't add any thought to it okay let's try it we might as well nothing else to do so there you are and here you are okay i'm not adding any thought to it i'm not in other words i'm not interpreting it either favorably or unfavorably i'm not trying to convince myself this is really good that's another thought and it would be not really true in that here it just don't let anything there you are and you look around and here we come back to sensory perception that's the first thing you notice is hmm oh lights there are lights there's people everywhere or movement of people standing but you don't even call it that you just artificial lights lamps and you're breathing oh yes yes i'm breathing breathing breathing and if you if you become aware that you're breathing it's part of this moment when you when you don't add thought to it you may suddenly become aware that you're actually breathing and then when you become aware they're breathing you might also sense that there is an aliveness that pervades your entire body as you stand there because the breath kind of puts you in touch with the inner sense of aliveness that which animates the body not the physical body that the animating presence within the body that keeps it all together that you sense that but not through thinking it's through sensing it and there you are and perhaps let's say on a horizontal scale three minutes have passed where's the irritation now where's the anger where are the thoughts i can't stand it anymore nothing you haven't added any thought and this moment is actually intensely alive and you can sense this moment whatever it is that you perceive with your senses and you also become aware through becoming aware of your the inner aliveness of the body which is consciousness you become aware of being conscious in this moment you can sense that you are this presence through which you perceive everything and there's a stillness there but it's not the stillness of half asleep stillness alert stillness and there you are and this moment is now free of suffering and you suddenly realize in most cases the unhappiness that you experience in any situation is not caused by the situation in most cases it's caused by your interpretation of the situation in other words the story you tell yourself about the situation so it's not the situation it's the story there was an ancient greek philosopher the first person who ever verbalized that truth a pig that was not very well known he said what makes you unhappy is not the situation it's the story what you tell yourself about it even that little thing if that's all you remember from tonight could change your life but ultimately you don't have to remember anything because it works at a deeper level but yes practice that and always find out when irritation and other things arise how how and where do they arise at the level level of events and situations or interpretation so here we come back to the little practice that we already looked at perceiving without interpretation and then becoming aware of yourself as the awareness behind the perception so to speak the awareness behind the perception the stillness behind the perception there could even be a lot of noise outside in order to realize the stillness within you don't need the outside to be silent let's say there is a lot of noise cars or

engines whatever unpleasant noise is true and you you completely let go of adding any thought to the sense perception there's a noise and there you are not adding any thought this is what is and you you become aware of the awareness that is perceiving the noise and that's the stillness becoming aware of the awareness is the stillness in the midst of noise but you can realize the stillness and sometimes it's precisely in those situations where you would have thought you could not realize it that's where you can realize it in often seemingly situations that are not conducive to awakening but they are including people great opportunity for spiritual practice is people because you might have noticed that people can be very difficult and often they are very really difficult to deal with and for many people their main source of suffering is other people so there's nothing personal in there every human being manifests their level of in evolutionary terms their level of consciousness or unconsciousness nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness or usually unconsciousness now we approach the same thing again from a slightly different angle this awareness is vital not not just the awareness of sense perception that's the beginning of it but then more deeply this the vertical dimension opens up when you become aware of yourself as a presence so to speak another way of experimenting with this ask yourself what does it feel like to be me what is the thing that actually is the most essential thing about me weird me what is the most essential thing about the sense of i is it the story of me the personality or is there something deeper for a moment then let go of the story don't you don't need it right now whatever it is that you think you are what you call my life my life is a narrative in your mind it's not your life it's your story and identification with your story is your personality but it's not your life your life is now but it is not yours life is now and you are it life and consciousness are one what does it feel like to be you right now without any reference to memory or anticipation no reference to memory or anticipation are you still there without remembering who or what you are or what is left when you no longer refer to past or future memory or anticipation who or what are you in this moment without your story and i cannot i i don't expect an answer verbally from you or conceptually because that's not the right answer the answer is deeper you can only sense what is left in the absence of the story what is left of you and that feeling how do we talk about it feeling of beingness the feeling that you are that's left feeling of presence that you cannot define it in any way there's certainly there's no age in it it doesn't matter whether you're 20 years old or 90 years old there's not it's not to do with your age it's not to do with your body which is to connect it with age it's not to do with any life situation whether you are a great success story or the opposite it's not to do with your race it's not to do with any of those things it's deeper than that not to do with man or woman as consciousness you're neither man nor woman what is left is pure presence and now that is important to just to realize that the pure presence that is left that is always there underlying everything that is consciousness itself now there's another question where does it come from maybe we'll go there maybe not we'll see but this consciousness itself is there and then this is when people get afraid of death what they don't want to lose is this there's something they feel there's something very precious that's me they don't want to lose that i don't

want to lose that me and and this this very precious thing it's not a thing is actually if you go if you really go deep enough it is the consciousness that is the essence of who you are and that consciousness in ordinary life becomes mixed up with objects the one consciousness takes on different forms thought forms primarily sensory perception also become thought forms so the consciousness takes on form subgenius forms form and that means the the pure consciousness gets what could say mixed up with forms that arise it it's a little bit like well how do we you can say there's gold and then the gold becomes all kinds of ornaments and jewelry it's formed into this and this and this and this and this many things can be arise they're made of gold but the pure gold is prior to that or another analogy that sometimes occurs to me it got to me that sounds a little strange um if you don't like dairy don't listen to this analogy there's cream the cream and there's the skimmed milk skimmed milk this image came to me a long time ago when i was in deeply immersed in the sense of being and then i opened my eyes and i looked around and i very strongly felt there was the cream or there is the cream and everything else is diluted cream skimmed milk and all the things of this world and and you're the sense of being essentially you if you go deep enough it's not the story the story is all the form that consciousness has taken that's all so it's not separate from consciousness it is a form that consciousness has taken temporarily and so what is it that has taken the form consciousness itself now the analogy i often use is the ocean and the ripple on the surface of the ocean you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean for a long time you only news yourself as a ripple living with other ripples many of them making your life difficult all the rebels are there and at some point the ripple realizes it is not just a ripple it's actually part of the ocean and the tension of the ripple instead of looking at other rebels how what can i do now on the surface of the ocean suddenly the ripple goes oh because one ripple called echard said what is it is that when you stop when this thinking subsides and the rebel goes oh suddenly feels the rebel is actually supported by an expression of inseparable from the vastness of the ocean and then the rebel goes oh life isn't so bad after all and it knows how relatively fleeting horizontal life is but it's now connected to the vastness of the ocean but the strange thing is the ocean itself realizes its own being through the ripple because the ocean and the ripple are one so the realization that you are consciousness and a person only is a surface phenomenon that subsists for a while it can even subsist beyond death and take on another form especially if you were deeply identified with form the identification continues and another some what could say illusory problematic existence arises until you've suffered enough so and then you suddenly connect to the depths of who you are so this now mainstream science will probably tell you that consciousness well it actually hasn't much to say about consciousness it has no idea what consciousness is but it some scientists say consciousness is a byproduct of brain functioning in other words the chemical soup of the brain somehow produces consciousness i don't know how that could be there's undoubtedly a relationship between the brain and consciousness but is that does the brain produce consciousness or is the brain a channel for consciousness that brings consciousness into this dimension does the brain receive consciousness in this way that

a radio receives a transmission and let's say the radio i don't know if people still have radios these days but whatever is the equivalent of a radio the radio is playing a symphony by beethoven and then is the radio producing it no if something a brick falls on the radio suddenly the symphony stops does that mean it doesn't exist anymore or is it just that the instrument for its transmission is no longer functioning so there are some more enlightened scientists or be questioning the material explanation of consciousness but you don't really need to even go into philosophy even just in your personal experience you can verify that who you are on every level not just on the deepest level even the level of the personality which is still relatively superficial but even there you do not exist in the physical realm if you existed in the physical realm it would be possible for a scientist or a surgeon to cut open your brain and find you somewhere if you had an existence in the physical realm it would be somewhere in the physical realm as you would exist perhaps as molecules or atoms but so far no scientist has been able to find you and by cutting open your brain you find all kinds of things it may find that the brain is no longer functioning well been like a radio that's getting too old but you with your countless memories that your millions of memories you have they live somewhere in you but where do they or do they have thought itself memory is thought what is a thought even they are scientists don't really know what a thought is there's some relationship between the brain and and thought but thought itself you cannot find thought in the physical realm so when you think something thinking itself already exists in a non-physical dimension you you cannot find it in the physical realm and if you go deeper that becomes even more true you are multi-dimensional so when you you go under the surface of things which is here under the surface of things you are already most of you is invisible all i can see of you is the physical body but what goes on in you you cannot find it in the physical realm every thought where does it live so we don't need to go too too deep into philosophical discussions but consciousness is a the greatest mystery in the universe we have on the one hand the mystery of the microcosm the atomic and subatomic realm the deeper we go there the more enigmatic the world becomes and we realize ultimately there is no there is nothing physical ultimately but it's still it's a huge mystery the other mystery is outer space if you go into space the vastness and seemingly the infinite nature of space another incomprehensible mystery when i was 12 years old i was puzzled by this thought what is beyond the universe does it have an end and i try to visualize an end of the universe can't do it because what so if it has an end there must be something beyond the end is the universe infinite two great mysteries macrocosm and microcosm but the greatest mystery is that the universe is conscious the universe is conscious wow how do i know that well i am conscious and i'm the universe of course you are you're not a particle that has come into this universe you are the universe you are the universe that is in the process of becoming conscious in this dimension so in this dimension there seems to be an evolution of consciousness even on this planet from very simple life forms gradually to more and more complex life forms more and more consciousness evolution of consciousness where does that come from i can sense the consciousness that pervades the entire universe it is within and without

when you become present you can sense this presence that pervades everything that is the space is itself this sounds a little mystical i can't help it i have to say it the space itself is presence and the consciousness in you this consciousness is as i see it an emanation from a transcendent dimension beyond this universe there is a source of all life it doesn't exist in space or time traditionally the source out of which all life emerges the primordial intelligence that is behind the manifestation of the multiplicity of phenomena the primordial intelligence that is behind it all the organizing principle behind it all traditionally called god and that from there the same way that the sun shines and gives life to this planet the light of the sun continuously is life giving the same way the source the transcendent source of all life emanates into this dimension it emanates consciousness and in this dimension there is a an evolution of consciousness here consciousness itself is timeless so when you sense the essence of who you are or what you are as a conscious presence what you sense is if you don't mind i'll use a theistic term hopefully you're not too uncomfortable with it what you sense is the presence of god in you that is the realization of the essence of who you are you are an extension one could say of god the essence of who you are is timeless and when you can sense that here now nothing to think about just sense that precious presence of some people call it the i am i am beingness itself that is the consciousness of the universe and but but it does not originate in this dimension so this awakening then is sometimes also called god's realization i wouldn't go so far as to say that i am god or you are god but you are yes i know in this the ripple is the ocean and yet the ripple is tiny compared to the ocean the ray of sunlight is connected to the sun and yet the sun is infinitely faster than the ray but they are one so the the future of religion is for humans to transition from from having god as a mental concept to worship to realizing their own essence is eternally connected in oneness with the oneness with the one and then you lose your fear of death and the personality becomes something that loses its heaviness it's something you can live with for a while and the realization also affects the way in which the personality operates the personality becomes considerably less dysfunctional it still has its limitations as a human you have your limitations not the craziness disappears you don't cause suffering for yourself and others except accidentally when you could you stepped on something a worm or something okay sorry very sorry you don't cause suffering you don't contribute to the suffering of this world anymore the relationship with other humans changes you don't react to their personality you can look beyond the personality can sense the essence of the other as consciousness that's a beautiful thing when you can look at another human being and use the personalities there but you're not that concerned with the personality you yes you interact with it but you can sense more something deeper you look at a person there's you're meeting there's a presence in that presence you are one there is not two and that's how this awakening changes the way in which humans interact with each other the sense of absolute separation and continuous judgment that the ego loves disappears and you can recognize the other as in essence as yourself as another manifestation of the one consciousness and this recognition of the other as yourself is love that's what love is you recognize the other as

yourself the sense of separation disappears and this is where we are going as human species we are moving into turbulent time period which is all fine it is needed for the awakening of many more humans there's those numbers that are awakening now remember the comfort zone you don't awaken in your comfort zone so your mission in this world is to manifest allow the consciousness that you are to flow into this world and to operate in this world not through the egoic mind but from the deeper level as much as possible go there the vertical dimension have many moments every day take some deep conscious breaths practice sensory perception without labeling and sense the awareness that is the essence of who you are and that connects you to a vastness that we cannot really name although i did call it god thank you

[Speaker 2] (48:56 - 49:16)

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Eckhart Tolle Love and Connection [4dd089b0-a378-4d81-afae-ad7a016382a0]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:28)

Love and connection. In this podcast, Eckhart meets with an international audience answering such questions as, Are love and consciousness the same thing? Why do our egos need to define the people in our lives as other?

He also addresses a topic that many parents struggle with, navigating screen time with children and the overwhelming impact of technology. Eckhart says, we can help our children by becoming more conscious parents.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 34:38)

So these are questions that people who are not physically present have submitted. Could the word consciousness be replaced with the word love to describe the essence being pointed to? Are they one and the same?

Of course, you have heard the phrase, God is love. It's a very well-known phrase. To some extent, it's a question of how you choose to use words.

Semantics, language. The way I use it is slightly different. Love is the recognition of oneness from the dimension of duality.

So you are in this dimension of duality, multiplicity, and from there you recognize your oneness with ultimately all life. So that act of recognition I would call love. And it is not just a mental thing.

It's an energetic thing because you realize your essential oneness with other humans, other life forms, the totality, and most importantly, the unmanifested. Love thy neighbor as yourself is a recognition. It's not something that you should be doing.

It's something that naturally happens when you are connected with yourself. You remember what Pythagoras said? Humans are disconnected from themselves.

That's why they meet. They run around meeting sorrow after sorrow. Why?

Because they are disconnected from themselves. And we know what that means, not just intellectually, but also we know it experientially because you have been there, I have been there. To some extent you may still occasionally be there in your daily life, but you also have realized, even if it's just occasional glimpses, but probably more, you have realized what it means to be connected with yourself.

So you have disconnected, connected. And when you are connected with yourself, which is the essence identity, then you look at another human being and you can sense their

presence through your own and as your own. You are less interested.

This is an important fact. You are less interested in what makes up their personality. Yes, you see it, but it doesn't absorb your interest that much.

You see it, and that means things like that the ego otherwise enjoys gossiping about other people, telling dramatic stories of what happened, what somebody did or failed to do, and tell it to others. You know what he did? And then he said to me, and then I said, how dare you do this?

And he complained again, he just doesn't see it. What's wrong with him? People love these stories.

They think about them, they retell them, and what others did, failed to do. And usually the implication is that the person telling the story is in some way superior to the person the story is being told about, obviously, because you are judging continuously the other as lacking or not good enough or being a perpetrator of something, behavior. So there's an enormous interest in what the others are doing, what's their intention.

And all that fascinates people when they are not connected with their essence, because then the surface phenomena are so fascinating. When you connect with the essence of who you are and you sense the essence in the other, then that which is not the essence in the other becomes almost a little bit boring. So the human stories that others are so fascinated by become a little bit boring.

And when people come to you and talk to you about them, you go, okay. And you know what he said then? No, I don't.

Well, I'll tell you, and you'll never guess what I said then. I, I said, and of course, I'm always the hero in the story, the one who is morally or in some other way superior to the people I'm talking about. And this kind of discourse, this kind of conversation strengthens continuously the false self in you, the ego, because the ego strengthens itself by emphasizing the otherness of others.

It loves to make the other more other, as other as possible. And then it gets stronger. Or you can take a whole group of people and make this group of people completely other.

You can take a whole nation and make the people of that nation into the other, a whole religion. And there's no need anymore to emphasize the otherness of others. In fact, as you sense the other person's presence, the person isn't really other anymore.

One could almost then say there are no others. There's the same consciousness that inhabits every human, every life form. The same consciousness inhabits you.

There's one being, one could almost say, that inhabits everyone. There's one being that

experiences itself in the disguise of a person, a little role it adopts, a little part it plays. All the world is a stage, and all the men and women merely players, somewhere in Shakespeare, I believe.

And that's amazing. So there's one consciousness underlying all phenomena, and the consciousness incarnates into forms, temporary forms, fleeting forms. When you see the fleetingness of all human forms, then the possibility arises for you to sense that which underlies the human form, your form, which is the one, the being, the one being, beingness or being.

So you love your neighbor as yourself, and you recognize your neighbor as essentially the same as you, essentially. On the surface, there are many, many differences. On the surface, humans are very different.

You can't say that all humans are equal. No, obviously not. Humans are unequal, both in their physical makeup, intelligence, level of awareness, level of energy available to them, life energy, all kinds of things.

And Einstein had an interesting statement. He said, the true value of a human being is determined by the degree to which he or she is free of the self. He had some amazing statements.

If he had not become a scientist, he would have become a spiritual teacher. Now, but let's look at that statement. The true value of a human being is determined by the degree to which he or she is free of the self.

Now, what are you actually saying? If I were talking to Einstein, are you actually saying that not every human being is of the same value? Because that statement seems to imply that not every human being has the same value.

So there's an implication there. In their essential nature, all humans are the same. The consciousness.

But the degree to which this consciousness expresses itself in their outward form differs from human to human. So there's a huge range of levels of consciousness in humans, in different humans. So the degree to which the one consciousness is the essence of every human, the degree to which that manifests through this form, that creates the differences between people.

Human beings are essentially one and the same. But on the surface, there are huge differences, of course. But the important thing is to recognize the oneness, no matter where the other human being is that you are confronting, what is the level of consciousness, even to go beyond that.

If the world as we see it is an illusion of the ego and all is massive hallucination of the

mortal eye, how can I be grateful for my experiences? How can I be grateful for nature? How can I connect with my surroundings if at the end of the day, it's all a massive lie?

Did I say that? I don't remember ever saying that. But I might have said, this could be a dream, you don't know.

Or I might have said, it's a little bit like a dream because everything disappears fairly quickly, just like a dream. But it's not correct to say, all this is total illusion, especially if you're still immersed in it. And it's just a statement.

All one can say is that relative to the realization of consciousness itself, which is the timeless being, relative to that, the manifested world has a certain insubstantiality to it. But that doesn't mean you turn your back on it. It'll catch up with you.

If you say, I'm not dealing with anything anymore because it's all just illusion. I'm not having any of this. I'm doing nothing anymore.

The world will catch up with you. It will challenge you. And the world has many beautiful things in it that are a reflection of that jewel within you that in Indian terminology, spiritual terminology, has a threefold characteristics of being, consciousness, and bliss or joy.

And the Sanskrit terms for that are sat, cit, ananda. You string them together as one word, but they consist of three words. Sat is being.

Cit is consciousness. Ananda is joy. They go together.

The realization of consciousness is the realization of being and consciousness, bliss as one single thing, three aspects of one single thing or other, no thing. And from there, you appreciate this world. You honor the things of this world and you see the beauty of this world, but you don't have expectations that this world cannot meet anymore.

You don't have expectations to be totally satisfied by the things of this world, whether the things of this world are other people or achievements or possessions or any attainments or experiences. You engage with the world, but the expectation of complete fulfillment, joy, whatever you want to call it, is no longer there. And that means your experience of this world, of the things of this world, is no longer a series of frustrations.

Even though you might have your successes, and hopefully you do have a few successes in your life occasionally, but even that, if you cling to that, very often after a while, the success is not that satisfying anymore or it becomes invalidated by another factor or the very thing that is your success now proves to present more difficulties than you've ever had before you succeeded. All kinds of weird things happen that seem to be sabotaging, you're continuously sabotaging your search for ultimate fulfillment in this world. But if there is a self-seeking in it, if there's something longing for something, there's a you that

is longing to be satisfied or liberated or find some final completion of its sense of self through some kind of achievement or attainment or possession or whatever it is, or relationship, that's frustrating because the world does not operate in this way.

It cannot supply those things. But once the expectation is gone, once the demand that you make, please make me happy, you are here to make me happy, that's very frustrating. Nobody can do that, not for long.

And so the demand goes and then you can be okay with the way things are. You can still improve situations and so on, but in the present moment, you're basically aligned with the present moment and it's always as it is. It already is the case.

So you don't argue with the isness of things. So the world, when you don't expect something that it cannot give you, is actually not that bad. It's not such an unpleasant place.

And relative to the realization of beingness, the world is only of relative importance. So otherwise things assume an importance in your life, an overwhelming importance that they don't actually have. It's very rare that all these elements, financial, relationship, health, career, living situation, that all these work beautifully together.

You can strive for it and when it happens for a while, it's fine. But know that it's not likely to last. So the disruption will come in again here or there.

It has to. If it didn't, you wouldn't even evolve. You would not grow.

You would not awaken. The world has a relative reality and is relatively important, but only one thing is of absolute importance and that's realizing who or what you are. Then you can cope with the failures in your life, which, by the way, the places where you fail or where something so-called bad happens is always a greater opportunity for spiritual awakening than the happy things.

Your comfort zone is not usually where you awaken. When you become uncomfortable, then something happens. First you suffer and then potentially you awaken. Please address the subject of prayer.

Where does it fit in and how is it done? Does it serve a purpose and can it be used to help others and the world? Many people who pray, they practice petitionary prayers.

Please, please do this or don't do that. I don't see that as extremely helpful. If you are a child, then perhaps it's nice.

I was brought up as a Catholic and I used petitionary prayer as a child and I lost interest in the church at about the age of 12 when my petitionary prayers were not answered. So I thought, obviously this is not working. There's one little hint, one certain type of prayer

that Jesus talks about.

If you pray for something, Jesus said, I'm going to use my own translation or paraphrase, feel that you already have it and it will be given to you. In those few words, he gives the secret of manifestation, which is to already sense that you have it. You don't want something.

That's not an effective manifestation technique. It comes out of fullness rather than out of a sense of lack. So please give me a nice place to live is not as effective as feeling that you already have this nice place to live.

And the way you feel now is no different from the way you feel when you actually have that nice place to live. In other words, really, it connects you with being, the satisfying place to realize that you are. And then you attach a certain image to the satisfying realization of your beingness.

You combine it with a mental image, and the power of the beingness combines with a mental image, and that is a blueprint for something to appear in the sense-perceived external world. And if you are aligned with the essence of yourself as consciousness, then it becomes much more powerful because that means that the consciousness operates through you to create something. And the term that is sometimes used in contemporary spirituality is you become a co-creator with God, whatever the one.

You become a co-creator. There's a vision that arises in your mind of what this could be your contribution. And then you can become a co-creator.

And again, the way I put it now is very powerful. And it comes from a place of fullness. I have to emphasize, it does not come from a place of lack or neediness.

You cannot manifest very well if you think you need something. Please, God, I need more money. I need this.

I need... Please give me the statement, I don't have it. Jesus said, feel the same way as if you had it, and it will be given to you.

Now, how do you feel you need it? The essence of it is the realization of that alert, vitally alive stillness in you that is consciousness. Become aware of yourself as consciousness, where everything is already there.

There's nothing missing there. And if you do feel that something wants to be created, then you bring that mental image into that fulfilled place already that means you feel that exactly the same as you would if you had it. And that's a powerful way to manifest something.

It's a meditation. Make sure, though, that there is some realism also to that. There are

still certain limitations that are due perhaps to your physical form.

Don't imagine you're growing wings and you're starting to fly. It would be futile for me to attempt to manifest to win a gold medal in the next Olympic Games in some discipline, except curling, perhaps. I might be able to do that.

So the goal is not based in illusion and in ego. People have an illusion of what they want to be, but I want to be a great musician. Okay.

Are you ready for 10,000 hours of practice so that the vehicle becomes ready? And as you practice, you can also begin to... And hopefully the music you produce will add something beautiful and vital to everybody's life.

And it's not just empty noise, which is not uncommon that people listen to, and three months later, nobody listens to it again. There's some other empty noise in the charts. So that's manifestation.

Another prayer, if you want to call that prayer, is simply a prayer that consists of pointers towards your essential reality. So even just a few words. You can write your own, and you can use thought as signposts to point you in the correct direction.

That is a kind of prayer, too. Regarding the topic of illness of the body, you write, Surrender to the present moment, not to the idea of illness, only to the now. End of quote.

I try, but not successfully, because I cannot understand the difference how not to surrender to the illness itself, but only to the present moment. I wrote somewhere, apparently, Surrender to the present moment, not to the idea of illness. If you have an illness...

Yes, sometimes when I speak of accepting what is, which is, one could say, primordial spiritual practice, accepting the is-ness of this moment, because you cannot argue with is-ness. It is the case already. So when I say, accept the is-ness of this moment, people think, well, if they are ill, they need to accept, let's say, whatever the illness may be, I need to accept that I have cancer, arthritis, heart disease, liver disease, whatever it is, I need to accept that I have this disease.

No, that's not acceptance of the present moment, because that would be the acceptance of a thought form as yourself having this illness. So that's not acceptance of the present moment, it's a thought form that's created, and it's a narrative. I'm not denying, by the way, that you have this illness, or that you shouldn't go, I'm not saying don't go to the doctor, I'm saying the illness manifests in this moment as either some disability, or pain, or discomfort.

It manifests in some way, or it may not even manifest in this moment in any way. You

just know that you have an illness, but at this moment it doesn't manifest. So it's important not to excessively dwell on the mental image of yourself being a sufferer of this or that illness, but focus on the present moment, and whatever manifests internally or externally in this moment, you accept it the way it is.

I accept it the way it is. Then things get easier. If you accept the way it is at this moment, rather than continuously dwell in a mental image of illness.

Allow the illness to force you into the present moment more and more, especially a serious illness. Allow it to be the motivating force that pushes your attention into the present moment. Because if you leave the present moment, and you start thinking what might happen, you suffer a lot.

I have met many examples of people for whom the diagnosis of a fatal illness, which sometimes was a true diagnosis, and sometimes actually wasn't, and they became healed. So not every fatal diagnosis is actually true, but some are. But I have met people in whom the diagnosis of a fatal illness acted as an awakener, and they became radiant because it pushed them into absolute presence.

Because when you're diagnosed with a fatal illness, then it's like somebody takes time away from you. Normal future. I'm taking away your future.

That's very painful at first. Because you say, I haven't lived fully yet. I haven't completed my life.

So many things I still want to do but won't be able to do. I haven't developed fully, depending on your age. I haven't developed fully.

There's so many experiences that I still want to have but not having. This is awful, terrible. And so you suffer and you suffer and suffer, and at some point you can't stand the suffering anymore.

And then potentially you surrender, not to the idea that it's all useless and you're doomed. That's an idea again. No, you surrender just to what is.

The is-ness of this moment is what's left. Then the whole egoic structure evaporates and the consciousness that you are emerges. And suddenly you don't need future anymore because the essence of anything that you could experience and could attain or could possess, whatever, is already here.

The essence of all that is already here. Another thing is if you have an illness, not to continuously talk about it. That's important because that, again, could be connected with ego wanting to be more.

You become more problematic, and that's great. You can talk about it. Only talk about it

when necessary.

And don't think about it. Okay, you cannot eliminate every thought of it, of course, but don't dwell mentally on that. Allow it to force you into the present moment.

Often healing happens when people are absolutely present, but don't even expect it, but just be present. How harmful is it for humanity in general to have so much noise, in quotation marks, from the various screens that are continuously in our face, assaulting our eyes and ears? It seems this bombardment of images has rapidly quickened and has become ubiquitous while flooding our senses at every turn.

The questioner is correct. It's terrible. And you have to limit the time you spend on it and be very alert to see if you've become addicted or not.

What effect that will have on subsequent generations that now grow up with it, already as little children, we cannot predict. It could have a disastrous effect if it disables people. They can no longer communicate with true human beings.

The attention span gets shorter and shorter because one image follows another. The mind is continuously cluttered. It was already cluttered before we developed these devices.

But now we have the devices that add an enormous amount of continuous clutter to your mind. Thought input, most of it useless. One clutter after another.

There used to be people, when they were in waiting rooms, doctors' waiting rooms or other places, or cafes, you would sometimes see people, they were just sitting there, waiting. Nowadays, it's very unlikely that you see anybody just sitting somewhere, waiting. They're all on their devices.

For what reason? We don't know. You cannot experience yourself anymore.

It takes you continuously out of yourself. You're completely unaware of what happens within. So this is a technology that, in itself, no technology is good or bad.

In itself, it's neutral. But we cannot predict what effect this will have on the generation that is growing up with it now, has already grown up with it. Can they still create anything?

If you can't focus for long, how can creativity move through you if it cannot be still? Focus attention, focus attention within, and then allow the intelligence to operate through you. If you can't do that anymore, then nothing new will be created.

So with your children, if you have children, you have to restrict the time that they spend with the devices. It won't be easy, but all the people who work in, the guys in Silicon Valley who develop these things, they all are aware of the potential hazards, and many

of them restrict their children's use of these devices. Every age has its new challenges.

There's no end to the challenges. But we'll survive this one too.

[Speaker 2] (34:39 - 35:39)

Hi again. I, myself, am a mother of 2 wonderful boys. My youngest is 14 years old.

I love them with all my heart, and my youngest really keeps me challenged every day. The Internet, and Playstations, and mobile phones, and so on, so on. So my question is really, when I see my boy, he is obsessed with these things, should I just accept this?

Because I find myself struggling to bring him out to life, because it seems like he is trying to escape the now all the time. And that's hard to look at. But if you can say something more about being a parent, how do we be a parent, and see the things that our children are challenged with, how do we help them most?

[Speaker 1] (35:39 - 35:55)

Right, yes. When did he start getting drawn into these gadgets and devices? Many years ago, yes.

And you yourself, do you also use them a lot, the Internet and so on?

[Speaker 2] (35:56 - 35:58)

In my work I do.

[Speaker 1] (35:58 - 36:01)

But not at home so much?

[Speaker 2] (36:01 - 36:07)

I work a lot at home too, so yes, he sees me doing it, yes.

[Speaker 1] (36:07 - 36:18)

Before he reached this teenage stage, were you able to some extent to control the amounts of time he spent with the gadgets?

[Speaker 2] (36:18 - 36:44)

Yes, more than now, because I could say, this is it for today. And he did what I said, but now in this age, they do, and the ego is growing a lot. I think it does that in this age.

And so it's more and more difficult to talk behind the ego, and reach him there.

[Speaker 1] (36:45 - 37:55)

Yes, it's a huge challenge. I don't have a clear answer for it, what to do, but if you can offer occasionally other activities, perhaps that you do together with you and him, or the family together, that do not involve these gadgets, you could do perhaps twice a week, come up with a creative idea, what you can do as a family, and again, not many families these days do that anymore, but set that time apart, so that you can engage in that, somehow encourage him, perhaps by taking him, or to have some contact with the natural world, with nature, go on hikes, sports activities might help too, but having some contact with nature could act as a counterbalance the addictive nature, the hypnotic effect of these gadgets, as much as possible, if you can think of ways in which you get him back into nature.

[Speaker 2] (37:56 - 37:57)

But I will have to force him.

[Speaker 1] (37:58 - 38:39)

Well, at this time you still have some influence, but when he's 16, 17, then you gradually have to let go more and more, and if he continues, then you will have fulfilled your function for as long as you can, to help him not become totally addicted, offer him other ways of placing his attention, and nature is the one thing, if a human being is deprived of contact with nature, which would, by the way, include contact with an animal, do you have dogs or cats?

Yes, both. Does he relate to the dog?

[Speaker 2] (38:39 - 38:46)

He did, and now, I mean, he has to walk the dog every day, but then he's looking at his mobile phone.

[Speaker 1] (38:47 - 41:03)

Yes, it's a huge problem for all youngsters, even for adults, but even more so for youngsters. We have no idea at this stage, and you can't stop it anymore, but I would recommend for parents of young children to have a certain structure in your life, perhaps you had that until he reached his teenage years, to have a certain structure in your home environment that needs to be adhered to clearly, so that periods when they cannot use these things, as long as you can. Now gradually, you're beginning to lose control.

You still have a little bit of control now, but with every year that passes, you have less control. At some point, of course, in three years' time, you have to kind of let go

completely, and the rest is up to him. You have done your best already.

You have provided certain structures in the home environment in his younger years, so he did not get totally absorbed by it, as they do in some families, and now you see the limits of your control. There are still things you can do even now, and then in two or three years' time, whenever it is, then you have to allow him to find out for himself and allow him to experience eventually the suffering that may come with that. Every generation gets challenged again by various things.

As a parent, the transition from needing to protect your child and able to allow the child to find their own way and go through their own suffering, that's the transitional point that you're going to reach soon or beginning to reach. So right now, as I said, you still have a little bit of influence, declining influence, but it's still there. So if you can think of activities to encourage him to explore nature, come into actual physical contact with nature, that would be a healing thing for him.

[Speaker 2] (41:03 - 41:13)

So I think the hard thing is to know when to work with the responsibility and to accept the moment as it is, really.

[Speaker 1] (41:13 - 41:14)

That's right. Yes, exactly.

[Speaker 2] (41:15 - 41:30)

We talked about that. We talked about this being challenged every day and staying in the presence and so on. I think it is very much challenging with children.

[Speaker 1] (41:30 - 48:32)

Yes, huge challenge. But a great opportunity to you. Often there have been quite a few questions here also on the past written questions about bringing up children consciously and what's the main thing to do to bring up children consciously.

What do we do? The main thing is your own state of consciousness at home. That's always your main teaching.

There's often a discrepancy between what parents teach their children verbally and how they behave at home and their state of consciousness. And the children know that. They can feel that, that basically parents are often hypocritical.

They demand certain things from their children, but they themselves don't do it. So the state of consciousness that you are predominantly in at home is the main teaching. I mentioned in A New Earth to be able to, for example, give your fullest attention to your

child when you're listening to the child and not always equate attention with some kind of thing that they either should be doing or should not be doing.

That's how many parents relate to their children whenever they give attention. They say, Don't do this, or you should be doing that. The entire home environment seems to consist of either stopping to do something or doing something that they are not doing.

And that's the only way attention flows out to the child. There's a lack of presence, a lack of the acknowledgement of the being of the child. The entire household is dominated by doing.

And in the doing, which includes the mental doing and the physical doing, in the doing, the being is completely neglected. It's never acknowledged. The presence of the child is never fully acknowledged.

The child is not seen really by the parent. And deep down, the child can feel, can sense that something essential is missing. And what arises then in the child is a discomfort, a sense of lack, and even some anger, sometimes towards the parent, which often comes out when they reach teenage years.

For some seemingly inexplicable reason, the teenager becomes angry with the parent. And they say, What happened to this? How can he turn into this monster?

And it is often the case, don't blame yourself, but it's often the case that for years the child's being felt unacknowledged. And basically that means the child felt not seen by the parent. And then that is almost to be deprived, to be deprived of real lovingness, which is attention, and not the conditional love that is usually attached to the doing or the not doing.

And that is missing, and that's a vital thing that really brings about a lot of conflict between the child and the parent, especially as they grow into their teenage years. Can you be fully yourself? Can you be in your essence as much as possible when you relate to the child?

That includes periods when you're not talking about what he or she should be doing or should not be doing, but just giving your fullest attention. You look or you listen to what they have to say, or you look or you're asking questions, and then you listen. And sometimes it may just be wordless attention too, for brief moments, just looking.

And that changes, that brings in a different energy field into the home environment, and that's the main teaching. Everything else is secondary. What you say to the child and so on is all secondary.

Although there are things you can say that are helpful too. I have spoken a few times about the pain body in children when it begins to manifest, to bring some attention to

the child's pain body after it's happened. Some children have temper tantrums or go sulking and withdraw.

So children already experience pain body attacks, some more acutely than others. And so I recommend that after it has subsided, perhaps the next day or a few hours later, you say, What did you feel? What was that that came up when you started screaming?

What did it feel like? Even perhaps ask a child to draw a picture of what this thing is because painting a picture of it creates some awareness and creates some space around it. And then the next time it comes up, you won't be able to stop it, but you can say, Oh, there it is again, isn't it?

So you're not trying to stop the pain body. You're trying to help the child to become aware of it. And you can start with that already when they're four years old, five years old.

So that is very helpful. It's an amazing challenge bringing up children. And every parent makes mistakes.

That's inevitable. But at least your son is lucky to have you because you are endeavoring to bring him up consciously. And so that's a new thing that's coming in.

There are more humans now who are actually, they may not always succeed, but they are becoming conscious parents. And that is a wonderful thing. In my generation, when I was a child, conscious parent was unheard of.

Nobody had conscious parents. Well, at least nobody I knew. All the parents were very unconscious, totally dominated by ego.

They just, the same upbringing that they experienced, they inflicted on their children. There was no change whatsoever. And so conscious parent is something relatively recent, although there may have been exceptions, of course, in the past too.

There are always exceptions. I just never met them. And certainly my parents were not conscious.

They were just as unconscious as everybody else, trapped in their own ego. And there was constant dysfunction. And it was not a pleasant environment.

And there's nobody to blame. That was the way they brought me up corresponded to their state of consciousness, that's all.

[Speaker 3] (48:33 - 48:52)

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Eckhart Tolle Maintaining Consciousness in The Midst of Chaos [2137d47e-e742-46fa-84b2-cc62b613e285]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:38)

Maintaining consciousness in the midst of chaos. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about practicing presence and peace in a world fraught with conflict and chaos. Eckhart reminds us that we are not dependent on external conditions.

He says it is possible to remain peaceful even in the midst of negativity and destruction. He explains we have the freedom to choose. He says while that choice may not be an easy one, we don't have to be drawn into the dysfunction.

We can be the light of consciousness even in the darkness.

[Speaker 2] (0:40 - 0:42)

Hello, Mr. Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 3] (0:42 - 0:42)

Hello.

[Speaker 2] (0:43 - 0:56)

If I may take a moment for this great opportunity and thank you for being my guiding light, my guru, my teacher, my hope in many moments of darkness and being the spark that awakened me and that continues to do so.

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 0:59)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (0:59 - 1:47)

Thank you so much. My question for you today is, how do I, as an awakening soul, keep faith in manifesting global and personal love, peace, and harmony at this time when there is so much chaos, corruption, fear, and a lot of hate, actually, and anger among the global population and among those close to me? In other words, how do I not fall into the darkness of fear and separation from my source, from my essence, and from separating from others and remembering that, as you say, it is not personal, it is not who they are.

How do I use conscious manifestation to achieve that?

[Speaker 1] (1:47 - 46:39)

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

So, to use the term manifestation in a wider sense, one could say that you manifest the way in which you experience what you might call reality or your life. You could call it your life, you could call it reality. How do you experience it?

And to what extent are you dependent upon external conditions as far as your state of consciousness is concerned? How much freedom do you have? Can you live peacefully in a world that is, to a large extent, not peaceful?

And if that is possible, how do you do that? How do you not get drawn into the conflict and anger, egoic dysfunction of the world, individually egoic and collectively egoic? Let's start by looking at, to some extent, it might be helpful as a starting point to differentiate between what would conventionally be called your life, this is whatever in your daily experience of people that you interact with, whatever you do in this world, work situation, family situations, meeting people here and there, going from here to all your private sphere, there's that, so you meet all kinds of people, some familiar people, some people that you meet briefly, have interactions with.

Then you have, in this technologically advanced society, not everybody, but most people, have another level of interaction with other people, it also becomes part of what they call my life, and that is interaction through technology, you interact through social media with more people than you actually know, this is the case with many people these days, they interact with more people than they actually know in their normal everyday existence, you interact with all kinds of people that you've never met, not everybody, but most these days, because people use all kinds of things, sending messages and so on, and on social media, you also interact with people in a different way, so look at then the third level, so we have actual personal contact with people and whatever the nature of these interactions is, it could be, is it conflict-ridden, is it conflict-ridden in your, or is there some conflict, but also a certain amount of harmony in your daily life, then you look at the other level of social interactions through the media, through social media, what kind of interactions do you have there with people that you might never have met, but nevertheless you are in contact with them, what is the quality of that kind of interaction that you have, how much conflict is there, how much negativity is there, and how much is there, that is a manifestation of consciousness, you have to look at that, many people are, there are people as you, sure you know, especially younger people, but others too, there are many people in this world for whom the human interactions that they have through technology are more, much more important than the actual interactions they have with with human beings, they interact through social media with countless people, and they, the virtual world becomes to them more important than their actual surroundings, it's an amazing thing, I don't believe that is a very helpful thing, but that's how it is, it's a huge challenge, so you have that level, then you have another level where you come in contact with the world through what we might call mainstream

media, you get the news and you get commentaries, and mostly these days the news and commentaries are mixed up, they come in one, you can't just get the news anymore, you already have the news already embedded in a commentary, that third level becomes also for many people almost more important than their daily existence with the people that they actually know and interact with, sometimes of course those levels can meet, for example you hear in the news about people going into stores and not wearing their masks, and then there's a lot of upheaval about that and people get worked up about this and very angry and then you can see little clips of people shouting at each other because somebody's not wearing a mask and then the other person is shouting something back, and to some extent there can be that level and the person level can meet because 10 minutes later you go into the store and you might witness something similar, so your experience of reality or your world consists of these levels, so you have to look at these three levels, first of all it's important not to lose touch with the fact that level one where you have actual human interactions with people in your daily life, which is relationships that you have, people you work with, people you meet casually, but actual human interactions, that really is the main part or should be the main part of your life, should be that the actual living experience, and so what I'm recommending is that you separate or see if you can separate those levels and look at the primordial level of your actual experience with human beings, leaving aside for a moment social media and leaving aside watching the news every day and all the other things connected with the news, whatever, leave that aside for a moment, it's important to see the difference, so when you talk about negativity and destructiveness and or anger and antagonism and conflict everywhere, first of all look at your life, your actual life, does that apply there or to what extent does that apply there, because that's an important part of your reality, it's the reality that you create, that you manifest in your personal life, that is primary I would say, is that sometimes of course the reality that you see in the mainstream, the media, when you watch the news, sometimes the two meet, as I said before, they can meet, so first of all you need to take responsibility for your life here on the level of personal interactions, that's where it starts and that's where you can do a lot of good and you can do harm too, do you contribute there to human unconsciousness, or do you contribute there to the awakening of humanity, every encounter with another human being, whether it's a person you've known for a long time, family member, spouse, whatever it may be, or whoever it may be, every interaction with another, true interaction, not talking about social media, every interaction with another human being is important, what is the quality of your consciousness as you interact with actual human beings, not not ciphers on the screen, actual human beings, what's the quality of your life on that level, and that applies even if even if we were living in a even more the situation we are moving, experiencing a certain amount of upheaval in the collective, that could be worse, it has been worse, it could get worse too, but I don't know whether we'll talk about that, a certain amount of upheavals in the collective, yes, but what I'm saying now would apply even if you lived in a war situation, I would say it's still very important, every interaction that you have with

another human being is of great importance, because the world changes from there, so you begin that, do you emanate, do you have empathy, do you operate from ego, or do you judge people, do you judge, do you confuse people's ego and unconscious behavior with who they are in their essence, or are you able to see the unconsciousness in certain people that you may meet, and then look deeper, realize it for what it is, a dysfunction, a temporary dysfunction in a human being, and you can still have compassion, do you emanate goodwill towards other humans, even humans that can't do anything for you, do you have an empathy, do you feel their being, and only feel their being if you can feel your own being, and you can feel their being is a refraction of yours, you are this one consciousness, one being, so do you emanate goodwill towards others that you meet, all these are important things to be aware of, because that's where your world, that's the foundation for what you might call your reality, your world, Causing Miracles says, which is this cause for transformation, which some people find very helpful, but not everybody, every time you meet a human, it says that it's a holy encounter, a holy encounter, I would add potentially a holy encounter, because in actuality, in most cases, it's not a holy encounter, but potentially, you can recognize not just the humanity, the humanity is a conditioned part of every human being, that's the humanity, you see the humanity, and every humanity is deficient and imperfect, every human, on the level of being human, the humanity is very deficient and imperfect, so you recognize that, but are you able to recognize what I could call, I rarely use that word, the divinity in every human, because in every human, there's humanity, which is conditioned, mind, mental, emotional field, are you able to see that without completely realizing, confusing this with the true identity of that human being, or are you able to see it, and see beyond it, that means, seeing beyond it means to recognize the beingness of the other, their essential beingness, which we could call their divinity, they are also, they emanate from this one source of all life, all beings are emanations from the one source, and so you recognize that, and then it's a holy encounter, when you see more than the humanity, even though it may not be that easy, because the humanity may be quite overpowering in its negativity and destructiveness, but that's part of your spiritual practice, with every time you meet a human being, to see their divinity and their humanity, then you see, after a while, you see the divinity more than the humanity, so to speak, and this is why I use the human, I use the English term, human being, which we use because the English language does not have a word that includes both men and women, traditionally in old books, and so on, people use the masculine, all men, and they included women, but the human were never mentioned, because English language doesn't have a word for man and woman, the German language does, which is mensch, mensch means, could be, is a man or a woman, but English you have to say human being, but I think that's a good thing, because it shows the two dimensions, this, you are a human being, on the human level, you're a conditioned entity, that's, you're conditioned by your past, by your culture, even by the language that you grew up with, by your parent, the parental background, all kinds of things, you are a human, and the human only is ego, there's, so there's a human ego, and then you have the being, the human being, being is the

unconditioned, the consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness, so in your daily life, what reality do you manifest in your daily life on your personal, so-called personal level, that's an important question, and now there's so many people in this world who pay relatively little attention to that level of reality, they give more attention to social media, and listening to, and watching mainstream media, they're so absorbed by what's wrong with the world, they don't realize what's wrong on the foundational level of their own life, and they try to find some kind of solution up there, but they haven't even, there's so much unconsciousness in their own life, so the foundation is, I'm not saying completely disregard things that happen in the world, but that is important too, but it comes next, it comes second, it doesn't, also does not mean your reality needs to be perfect, no, you, but you practice, you realize that it's, this level is very important, and then is the world really on that level, the world, if you are relatively conscious, and you're awakening, or awakened, then you realize on that level, your world isn't that bad, in fact, you are improving the world, because whenever you meet somebody, something, you emanate something, it comes through your words, or your actual action, you help in some way, or you, they simply feel good in your presence, because they can feel, they feel recognized, they feel recognized in their innermost being, and this is so wonderful, so you bring a different, completely a different vibrational frequency into this world, on this level, so that's, that's something to deal with, and there, there's a lot that you can, you can do there, to live more consciously, and then you look at the other levels, then how do you use social media, how, to what extent is it taking over your mind, are you addicted to it, do, how much time do you spend there, do you realize that, or do you, do you still participate in creating false images, or for example, on Facebook, people create images of who they are, how they want to be seen, and then they put out all these pictures of them, they are, and, and everybody's, most people fabricate an image, and they put that out, it's part of the ego, technology helps to, helps the ego to become more and more inflated, and then you get, you have more and more so-called friends, people you've never met, 100 friends, 200 friends, 300 friends, who are they, I don't know, but it feels good to the ego, everybody loves me, they don't, they don't even know you, they like the image that, that you have presented, and then many people feel bad about themselves, because other people, they read other people's images, they see, it's all fabrication, so don't lose yourself in that world, because you lose consciousness, you can use Facebook, but in a real way, I think it's possible to use it in a real way, without presenting some absurd image, now the next level is, what's happening out there, what's happening in the collective, and the way in which you mostly learn about it, is through consuming the media, mainstream media, either on television, or on one of your devices, you learn about what's happening in the world, and it doesn't look good, in fact, a lot of it looks dreadful, and so, now, what's very important, what is the state of consciousness that you are in, while you watch these things, to what extent do these things draw you in completely, are you aware, how much awareness is there in you, while you watch, for example, mainstream media, news accounts, and so on, do you realize what you are seeing, first of all, there are some people who select what's

newsworthy, they say, this is what we want to show people, out of many, many events, every day, a certain number of events are selected, very rarely do they select anything good that has happened, it's almost as if nothing good would ever happen, when you watch the news, anything good happen today, no, it's because it's not news, nobody wants to see it, it seems, the ego thrives on conflict, the ego, because it takes sides, and by taking sides, it becomes more inflated, the false image, so the news, then, they focus on the most, I'm not saying these things do not happen, but they focus on the most dysfunctional aspects of human interactions, and by focusing on the most dysfunctional aspects of human interactions, they amplify the most dysfunctional aspects of human interaction, and this is not easy to see, that they actually contribute to the unconsciousness, first by selecting all the things that are bad, and presenting them, and then, out of those things, they focus on, take a few things and focus on that, and by focusing on one particular type of dysfunction, or unconsciousness, they amplify it, and I don't think they even know that this is what they are doing, they are in the grip of unconscious forces, they're in the grip of unconscious thought streams, collective, and humans don't realize that thought streams, to a large extent, are collective, and thought streams, they live in you and through you, they are like energy formations that use your mind, and these energy formations, you absorb them from the collective when you watch media, and ultimately, every thought is an energy formation, and everybody has experienced, occasionally, some thoughts can become obsessive, some people, it could be a melody that doesn't come out, it doesn't leave your mind, or you have some kind of thought, you can't stop thinking about this, it goes on and on, so this can happen, but on a much larger scale, huge groups of humans can be taken over by certain collective thought streams, and they don't even know that they are being taken over by certain, and usually very negative and destructive, thought streams, an entire country can be taken over by, it happened, for example, let's say, Maoist China, when Maoist China, like, for several decades, everybody got taken over by particular, everybody said the same thing, very destructive behavior, children would denounce their own parents for having said the wrong thing, and be taken away to prison, the most absurd things at the height of the cultural revolution, they would even, they would tear flowers out of the parks, they said, flowers are bourgeois, we don't want any flowers, we must get rid of flowers, the most absurd behavior, and millions of people, all dressed in the same way, all holding up a red book, and shouting the same thing, and believing in it, not realizing that they are possessed by an energy stream, which is a collective mind form, and then they come out of it now, it's no longer, China has grown a lot, it's no longer, in National Socialism in Germany was a similar movement, Soviet Communism in Russia was similar, these are collective energy streams, that people, they possess millions of people, and people are so identified with it, that because they are spiritually totally asleep, they don't know who they are, beyond those thought forms, and so, when you watch the media, you have to be careful that, realize how this functions, yes, these things are happening, what they, and they are, many of these things are not good, but first of all, you get a considerably distorted view of what's going on in the outer world, for the very fact, that all they focus

on, is the worst aspects of society, of what's happening, the most dysfunctional things are newsworthy, many good things, because continuously, millions of good things happen, people helping others, many things happen, but they're not usually reported, there would not be news, yes, of course, you want to be informed, it's good, you want to know what's going on in this world, and some, perhaps, you can help in some way, in the greater, larger issues, that are happening in this world, perhaps there's something that you can do, but when you consume these new mainstream news, be aware, that it is a distorted view of reality, it's distorted, because first, they select dysfunctional, unconscious behavior, as most newsworthy, second, it's also distorted, because once they have selected, out of those things, they amplify certain things, give it special attention, that it gets blown up, and then, it's not just reporting, the reporting of the news, is also interpreted, as they are reporting it, it's not just the news, it's they're already giving you their perspective, it's seen through their eyes, and so, they create further events, by amplifying very unconscious behavior, they create further events in this world, until they don't even know, that that's what they're doing, but the important question is, are they drawing you, as you watch and consume, are they drawing you into unconsciousness, while you watch and consume, are they pulling you down, are you able to be aware, as you watch, so that you are, you don't forget, your connectedness with source or consciousness, do you know, that you are aware, and don't get completely drawn in, feel what you are watching, is human unconsciousness happening, it's not the totality of what is happening, it's you're seeing a partial view of the most unconscious things happening on the planet at this time, so it's important to know that, that then the question is, are you able to stay conscious, to realize it for what it is, to realize, yes, these things are happening, but also, it's a distorted view of reality, yes, and what is most likely happening right now, we need to be aware of that, but it is true, that there is an increase in the collective at the present time, of what we might call dysfunction, or disorder, or even chaos, disruption, we are entering, or we have already entered, collectively, a time period of collective disorder, or disruption, or chaos, there are time periods, that they fluctuate, it's always there, it's true, that the media, the media actually is part of it, they don't just report it, they amplify the disruption, and the chaos, unfortunately, I'm not blaming anybody there, the fact is, that the mainstream media is part of the disorder, that's, that is increasing disorder in this world, and my feeling is, there's more to come, so be spiritually prepared, very important, be spiritually prepared, so that you do not become part of the disorder, that's happening, and increasingly, I believe, going to happen even more in this world, the world always moves between order and chaos, there are two polarities, you should always strive for order, that's important in your life, in the world, but realize, the world, for its evolutionary progress, also needs chaos, periods of chaos and disorder, and out of chaos and disorder, a new order develops, and so there's a gradual evolution of consciousness, when there is disorder, there is a regressive movement, and which means, most people become relatively more unconscious, and in the present time, anybody who is not awakenings, even to some extent, spiritually, will be drawn into deeper unconsciousness, because

they become part of the collective movement towards disorder or chaos, when structures dissolve, and that is a challenge for humans, now especially for you, everybody I'm talking to, and many others, of course, it is your challenge to stay conscious, while this is happening, so that you do not become contaminated by the collective negativity and unconsciousness, it doesn't mean that you necessarily need to completely withdraw from the world, you can still attempt to the best of your abilities, to create a better world, if you have whatever your sphere of influence may be, see if you can bring in more consciousness into whatever you do, whoever you are in contact with, be a bringer of consciousness, you bring consciousness into an unconscious world, without creating some mental conceptual image, I am the bringer of consciousness, then you're lost in ego again, but be prepared for increasing challenges in the collective, do not be drawn into reactivity, and do not be hypnotized by these events, when you watch what's happening in the media, and so on, stay present, what you are watching is an evolutionary story, humanity is displaying, probably entering a regressive period, as they sometimes happen before there's a further awakening of consciousness, perhaps, I'm not for sure, but there's a good chance we're entering a regressive period, which is perfectly fine, it's what you're watching is the evolutionary growth of the human species, and so they are manifesting whatever behavior corresponds to the particular stage in the evolution of humanity, the evolution is towards more consciousness, that's for sure, so don't lose yourself, be present while you watch, and don't watch too much, just watch enough to know what's going on, but don't be hypnotized by the media, and so you can't stop watching, and very important is don't be drawn into the unconsciousness, for example, by regarding certain groups of people as enemies of your dehumanizing certain groups of people, by calling them this, attaching certain labels to certain people, the dehumanization, of course, racism is one example of dehumanization, when you attach mental labels to a whole, to a group of people, and you egoically identify with these mental labels, so you're imposing collective identities on you, other humans, it's a deep form of unconsciousness, so there are many ways of, you can even demonizing other groups of humans in the collective, very dangerous things, but it's unlikely that this will happen to you, but it could, if you're not careful, if you're not alert, so be present, and see it for what it is, don't be part of it, but be, do not necessarily refrain from taking conscious action wherever you can, even conscious action if you engage in social media, be careful that you are not drawn into anything reactive on social media, you don't attack other people on social media that was very unconscious, you can present a viewpoint, you can present an opinion, an alternative viewpoint, whatever it is, but stay conscious in all your interactions, so the greatest challenge is, in an age when there is a growth of temporary increase in unconsciousness on a collective level, your challenge is to stay conscious as a human being, who is conscious while this happens, and I therefore recommend on a very practical level, next time you watch the news, while you watch the news, is beware of yourself, your presence, your awareness, while you watch, so that you don't lose touch with the deeper level of who you are, and see that, yes, it is a distorted view of reality, but yes, these things are happening, but nevertheless, it's not

the totality of what's happening, and it no longer has the power to draw you in, to make you unconscious, it has a gravitational pull, the media, social media too, has a gravitational pull, when you're not careful, you go, and it's, you notice when you watch it, and you're not aware, your mind stops, you're not thinking, so all your mind gets completely taken over by what you're watching, all the words, while you're watching, you're not thinking your own thoughts, or very rarely, so your mind gets completely taken over, it's quite dangerous, so, but this cannot happen if you're aware, how do you, how are you aware? Well, one way that I recommend is, if you find it difficult, be aware of the inner energy field of your body, the inner body, as I call it, incorporate that into your sense of presence, so every, you are present with every cell of the body, and then you can watch, and then you realize that which is beyond all the unconsciousness, and it's in you, it's also in every one person, that they don't know it, it's in every human, but so you, you can remain peaceful, even while the world is chaotic, that's a challenge, I'm not saying it's not a challenge, and the world needs that, of course, it needs that, especially in periods of chaos, it needs a certain number of humans who remain essentially at peace, they remain peaceful, they don't contribute to the chaos of the world, and so, let's see, we're moving into very interesting times, and there's nothing to fear, if you're in touch with who you are, who or what you are, on that level, there's nothing to fear, because ultimately, what people are afraid of is death, and death, of course, is assured to the physical body, will dissolve, but find death before death finds you, and then there's nothing to fear, how do you find death before death finds you? Well, by dying to the mind-created egoic sense of self, that is a conceptual identity, and by dying to that, you realize your essential identity, which is pure consciousness, and that essential identity, Jesus called it eternal life, and in Buddhism, eternal, of course, means timeless, eternal life, in Buddhism, it's sometimes called Amaravati, which means the deathless realm, which the dimension of the deathless, the dimension where there's no death, it's a wonderful description, that's the transcendent dimension, and it's your mission in this world, is to awaken to that, and then you no longer fear things in this world, in 90 years from now, or let's say 100 years from now, everybody who is alive on this planet will be gone, so it's short-lived, the life of the human is short-lived, but the being, the being is the timeless dimension of who you are, it's who you are beyond form, and then you can watch the news not being fearful, and then even if some huge disaster were approaching, it wouldn't matter that much, because you know that everything that we perceive here is, one could say, the surface of reality, all the things we perceive with our senses is a surface dimension, and underlying that, there is something deeper, it's like the surface of the ocean, and the ocean, don't just live on the surface of the ocean as a ripple, but realize you're not only a ripple, because the ripple is going to die soon, but more essentially, you are the ocean, but the ocean would not have realized its own essential identity if it hadn't first lost itself in the ripple identity, and this is why the buddhists say, if there were no illusion, there would be no enlightenment, and so even that is all part of the evolutionary process, which is so vast, we cannot possibly understand it through the mind, perhaps this is enough for today, three moments of

stillness, right now, be aware, the people you see are points of consciousness, and you yourself are a point of consciousness, the one consciousness, assuming form, different forms, and so you are that one consciousness, ultimately, I should be saying not you are, but I am the one consciousness, there's only one I, there's only one I, and I am that one I, there's no you, there's only I, you are I, and so for consciousness to become conscious of itself is very joyful, when you feel yourself, you become aware of being, you become aware of awareness, and there's joy in that, being, consciousness, joy, or as they say in India, sat, sid, ananda, being, consciousness, joy, thank you, thank you, everybody.

[Speaker 3] (46:41 - 47:00)

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Eckhart Tolle Manifesting Our Wants And Needs [172acb2f-39bf-4d0c-8f6b-0392a21d9eca]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:29)

Manifesting our want and needs. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about fulfilling our desires and what we can do to make that happen. However, he cautions against becoming dependent on external circumstances for our happiness.

He says attachment to the outcome can actually become a barrier. Eckhart believes we must visualize that what we want is already ours and that ultimately the external world is inseparable from our state of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (0:32 - 0:32)

Hi.

[Speaker 4] (0:33 - 0:33)

Hi.

[Speaker 2] (0:33 - 1:03)

Thank you. My question was, as you practice presence and conscious living, the definition between wants and needs changed. And sometimes it can get confusing.

And so I was wondering if you could elaborate for us a simple way to define between egoic wants and versus a divine need that's calling forth to be manifest through us.

[Speaker 1] (1:06 - 1:18)

To you, how do you see the difference between wanting and needing something? Or do you see that they're very similar or are they fundamentally different? How do you see that?

[Speaker 2] (1:20 - 2:04)

Fundamentally, from my religion, they were very different. Needs were food, water, shelter, everything else was. But I live in Las Vegas and I have five kids and a pool really feels like a need and not a want.

But they did change where I realized there's a lot more up to me than I thought about what my needs are to... I'm fine if nothing changes. I'm happy and content and fulfilled.

And yet, you know, that would be nice kind of a thing versus I need this to be happy. I need this to...

[Speaker 1] (2:04 - 2:30)

That's a good starting point. So maybe without... I don't want to intrude into your personal sphere, but maybe you could share what it is at the present time that you would want or need or like to manifest at the present time.

Did you mention pool? Yes. Do you have one?

[Speaker 2] (2:31 - 2:31)

No.

[Speaker 1] (2:32 - 3:07)

Ah, okay. Well, that's good. That's a good goal to have to practice manifestation and it's something reasonable if you live in this extreme heat.

And have you already done some practice in manifesting it or are you doubting whether it would be a good idea or whether you become drawn into ego if you start wanting to manifest that?

[Speaker 2] (3:08 - 3:57)

Yeah, I've done a lot of work with it and I feel really good about it. I feel like it is, you know, like you said, that feeling of that energy, almost like turbulence, like it does need to come forth. And I find myself balanced between this new beautiful way of living and presence that, oh, it's just totally possible.

And I don't have... I'm not going to show up and how it's going to happen. I don't have to stress, I've done that, I'm not going to do it again.

And then I think I slip back into those old, and maybe that's my ego, like, but you have to have a plan and you have to work hard and there's a certain way to do it. And then I get... I don't know how to explain what happens.

[Speaker 1] (3:58 - 14:09)

Yes, yes. Well, I would suggest that you practice with that visualization. It's, as far as I can tell, it's not something that you do to enhance your egoic sense of self.

I can see the reason why it would be good for you and your family to have that. And do you know how to... the best way to manifest?

You know this, the very essence of manifestation is to... Jesus said, of course, believe that you have it and it will be given to you. So that's the key for all successful manifestation is to believe that you already have it.

And, of course, people ask, I've spoken about that a few times, but it's always helpful to mention it again. I mean, Jesus even said you can say to a mountain, move from here to there, and it will happen. In other words, he's saying that what we regard as the external world, ultimately, is inseparable from your consciousness and your state of consciousness.

And this promise that you can, at the moment in the human development, what he said there, right now, it is to be understood metaphorically to say you can tell a mountain, because nobody on this planet has yet... even Jesus didn't do it. He didn't say to a mountain, move from here to there.

But it is at the moment to be something metaphorical. It means you have enormous... there's enormous power in you to affect change in the external world, external reality.

In the long term, you could even take that literally as where humans are moving in the so-called future as humans, because it's... humans are engaged in an evolutionary process. We are not finished.

I don't know if we're even halfway there, but that doesn't... we can't know where we are, because we're in the middle of it. We don't have a bird's eye view of where we are in the evolutionary process.

Retrospectively, it's always easy to see things. So, that's where we in the middle. Are we halfway there?

Are we a quarter there? 10%? 90%?

No, I don't think so. The evolutionary goal for humans is ultimately to realize the oneness of everything that arises in consciousness is really an aspect of consciousness. And the time would come when humans once left ego behind a long time ago, and then where humans can simply manifest by holding a thought, and there it is.

In the meantime, we practice the way that we do. There's a time gap and not everything appears, but often they do if you do it rightly, and if it's not egoically contaminated. The image, the foundation is the feeling of well-being.

The well-being is not the physical well-being, it's the deeper well-being that arrives from the depths of who you are. I've just realized that the English word, the well, is a deep thing. You go down at the bottom of the well, there's the water, the living water.

So, the well-being, you have to find that well-being in the present moment, in the depths of who you are, by becoming still, becoming aware of yourself as awareness, becoming aware of yourself as consciousness. There's no longer you and consciousness. Your sense of identity merges, it becomes, it is the consciousness.

That's the wellspring, the well-being that is. Then, you have an image, the pool in your mind, and you bring the image, you merge it with a sense of well-being. So, it's already as if you were enjoying the pool, because the well-being contains every experience that you could have.

It's already there. So, the well, and this means when the pool comes, you will not, you will enjoy it, but fundamentally, it will not make any difference to your sense of well-being. It's on the surface, yes, it's nice to jump into the cooling water when it's so hot outside.

So, on the surface, it's very nice, you can enjoy that. But deeper down, there's no change in that, because you already, so that means you already have the pool. When you bring it, you merge it with the sense of, and that empowers it.

You can then either keep the image in your mind, you can, you know the famous things that people, you can read about it in many books about how to manifest, you can have a vision board, but people do. Sometimes it's, it can be quite nice, and it has worked for many people and does work for many people. And again, when you have a vision board, where you put an image of something that you look at often, again, not making the mistake of believing that this is something that you need for your happiness.

It almost seems contradictory that excessive attachment to the outcome prevents you from manifesting powerfully. Because that will take it into the future, and they would, you would create a sense of lack. So, you already, this feeling that, as Jesus said, when you pray for something, believe that you have it, it has been granted, you have it, and it will be, it will be given to you.

That's the important part is the, you have it already. It doesn't say believe that you will get it. You can also use, I don't know if you do, affirmations, verbal affirmations, that your gratitude, the one that starts with gratitude is very good, because gratitude is a very powerful manifesting tool.

The gratitude for something, not only gratitude for something, it's generally a wonderful thing to practice gratitude for whatever is in your life now. I have, every day I have enormous gratitude for the trees that I see from my living room, and just to contemplate that, I don't have a thought in my mind, I'm so great anymore, I'm greater for these trees. The gratitude is there.

Well, sometimes a thought comes in, and I've been here for many years, thought comes in that says, probably every day, several times, I look and I say, so beautiful, so beautiful. And then I look at the sky, and then I go, so beautiful. That's my gratitude.

But other people may say, more explicitly, what they're grateful for in their life, in the here and now, not some abstract thing that you call your life. What can you be grateful

for in the here and now? This simple, a simple object, just whatever it is, but you can also be grateful for something that has not yet appeared in the external, like your pool.

The same feeling that you have for something that is here now, visible to your senses, can have the same feeling for something that is not yet there. So then, if you use verbal affirmations, I'm so grateful for this lovely swimming pool that myself and my family are able to enjoy every day. It's very simple, but you have to repeat it for several minutes.

But it's not just the power, it's not ultimately the words. The power is the gratitude already derives from the connectedness with the well-being within you. That's the source of gratitude.

So you bring it together. Again, in practical terms, don't overdo it, don't do too much of it. Enjoy the rest of your life in between, do an affirmation twice a day for maybe 10 minutes each time.

For example, whatever feels comfortable, or maybe in between occasionally when you're waiting for something, still feeling. Not in an obsessive way. Again, that's not powerful.

Never bringing in willpower, I will get this pool, I must have this pool. If you do, maybe you would get it, but it's not pleasant journey, and even then it probably wouldn't make you happy. So this is a simple thing to practice with, and other things may come in your life that you may want to manifest.

And that's all, that's the surface of life. You need to honor the surface of life. It has its place.

You need to honor your personal needs. You have certain needs or preferences on a personal level, but they don't dominate your life. So it's again living in the two dimensions, being and doing, the human and the being.

Thanks.

[Speaker 2] (14:09 - 14:10)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (14:10 - 14:13)

Thank you. Let's go on to another question.

[Speaker 3] (14:14 - 15:10)

Hi Eckhart, thank you for taking my question. So my question is about that balance between being and doing that you keep reminding us about. And you see, I understand that it is okay to have worldly, to desire worldly things, as long as we remain rooted in

being.

Now, for those of us who aren't fully awakened yet, by default, we're not rooted in being, we're in and out of being. So could we actually achieve that balance? And if we can't, aren't we then, by trying to manifest some worldly thing, aren't we then jeopardizing our main purpose, which is to awaken?

[Speaker 1] (15:11 - 34:50)

Okay. Thank you. Good question.

Very good. Yeah. You're more likely to awaken if you participate in this world by doing rather than withdrawing as much as possible and focusing exclusively on being.

One could imagine perfect circumstances to connect with being. Some people may have enough money not to have to work. They can live in the most environment that is most conducive to meditative practice.

They can have the healthiest food imaginable, all things that are most conducive to spiritual practice, and deeply connect with being that's that perhaps would be for many people, an ideal situation, but not attainable for most people, but perhaps attainable for some people, people around these days, young people who've made a lot of money through whatever they do on the Silicon Valley internet apps or whatever they develop, and suddenly they have a billion dollars in the bank.

So you could imagine perhaps if that, I would not recommend that you try to manifest such a situation, because it would not be the most conducive for spiritual realization, because it would be like a plant that grows in a greenhouse under ideal circumstances, ideal conditions, moisture, warmth, water, air, gets everything, it grows very quickly. But the slightest thing going wrong, a draft, somebody opens a door at the greenhouse for too long, a draft comes in, and the plant quickly withers and dies. It hasn't, there has been no, this is only an analogy.

I've had many stories like that of people who were in that, including Buddhist monks I've spoken to, they lived in ideal environment in Buddhist monasteries, and the moment they got out and had to interact with the world again, they talked, I don't need to retell the stories now, but one monk told me he had attained blissful states of being in the monastery over a period. Then he had to go out into the world and interact with the world again, in the city, people had to talk to various reasons, he had to do it, talk to people, and he could feel himself very quickly losing what he thought was the state of enlightenment. And suddenly he was in a state of angry resistance, and he even found himself shouting at somebody.

The deepening happens through the challenges of life. If you could remove the challenges of life, it's virtually impossible to remove the challenges of life, but if you

could remove for a period of time the challenges of life by living in a totally protected environment, that would become your greatest, the lack of challenges would become your greatest obstacle to spiritual awakening. So the very thing that you thought was the greatest thing that could happen to you would become the greatest hindrance.

The lack of challenge would, after a while, turn into your biggest challenge. It would be huge. So humans develop, grow through being faced with challenges.

Now, some challenges come to you are seemingly out, suddenly out of nowhere, they suddenly appear in your life. As you know, some challenges are of a collective nature, as happened recently for millions of people all over the planet. Out of nowhere, suddenly millions of people got faced with the challenge of this virus, suddenly came out of nowhere and affected everybody's life.

Suddenly was that the collective, these collective challenges can happen, affecting millions at the same time. In addition to the collective challenges, similar things can happen on your personal level. Suddenly there's a health challenge, suddenly there's a financial challenge, suddenly there's a challenge of somebody close to you in distress or suffering, somebody dying close to you, loss of home, breakdown of a relationship or marriage, all kinds of, suddenly these things appear, they have to be dealt with, suddenly they come.

Then there are also voluntary challenges that you can create for yourself, which is quite a good thing too, the something that you want to achieve, because then you create, it is a challenge, let's say there's a gap between, I'd like to, I'd like to become a, I don't know, whatever it may be, a musician, if you're already practicing music, I want to write a book, I want to create a, open up a hairdressing salon, I want to open a restaurant, because most restaurants are going bust now, maybe a good idea to open a new one.

That's a challenge for so many people who have worked in these fields now, huge challenges. It's to be recommended to have some goals in your life, maybe not at all periods in your life, because a person's life has different stages, and there may be a stage in your life when you don't feel called to create a challenge for yourself in order to manifest this or that, there may be a period of life when you're fine with what is, but if you stay there for very long, the world, if you don't challenge yourself, the world will challenge you. If you challenge yourself, the world will also challenge you, that's true, but if you don't challenge yourself at all, then the world will create something for you, a big one. So people who want to escape from, they don't want to interact, they don't want to participate in life so much, so they try to just keep away, no, I don't want a relationship, it's just too complicated, it's just too messy, I don't want to get in, I'm more interested in spiritual awakening, so leave the relationships alone, and then I, no, I don't want particular creative, don't want to create anything or learn something new, it's just, it's stressful and it's hard work, I'm more interested in spiritual awakening, and I just sit

here and just do the minimum to keep myself alive, and so there are people like that, and after a while the universe gives you a huge challenge that you never chose, but there it is, now face that, because you haven't faced anything else, you haven't voluntarily created anything in your life, you refuse to participate in life, now here I'll give you something, because the humans need the challenge, and that could be the beginning of your awakening, it will be painful at first, of course, we grow through the challenges of life, so instead of imagining some situation that would be ideal, work with what you have, that is the training ground for your spiritual awakening, is working with what you have, and within that, practice, if you wish to do so, practice manifestation for this or that, but the challenge is here not just the manifestation, to stay connected with the present, without losing yourself in what you want to manifest, not losing yourself in the doing, do, you can't escape, you have to do while you're here in this form, you have to somehow participate in the doing of things, but don't lose yourself in the doing, that's equivalent also to losing yourself in your mind, the thinking, they go together, if you lose yourself in your mind, you also lose yourself, because mind is the most fundamental doing, it's the thinking that you do, that people do all the time, they do the thinking, so if you're completely identified with the thinking, you lose yourself in your mind, and you do things, you're lost in the dimension of doing, that's vitally important to always bring back awareness to the present moment, always, that's the entry point into the being dimension, so always, as much as possible, return attention to the present moment, so that you can, you discover the well-being that is there within you, that is inseparable from the vertical dimension that's the present moment, and then yes, if you're engaged in doing, you will make sure that the, what you want to manifest, that it, that's not a, that's not something that ultimately you do, it's something that happens for you, so when you, let's say you have a goal, and you visualize it, if you feel that you have to create it, that's not it, there's a power greater than you, that creates it for you, if you have to write a book, if you have to give a speech, let's say I, well not these days, but often I give talks to people, let's say the average number is about 3000 people, I give a talk to 3000 people, if I thought I have to do that, now I have to do this talk, that would be very stressful, and that stress would prevent me from giving a good talk, because it would not be connected, the talk happens, is the talk comes from the depths of the being, uses my mind, and then the words come, so there's no, there's no sense of doer, that is perhaps the secret, and then also Indian teachings such as Advaita, the teachings of non-duality, they often, very profound teachings, non-duality, it means that you are not the doer, if you think you are the doer, then that's a state of illusion, and then you're of course still trapped in ego, the doing happens, that happens through you, so you allow it to happen, your mind just, it focuses, but the, it's a bit like a, you can have a steering wheel or something, your mind wants to achieve, it says wants to achieve this or that, but the power comes from somewhere else, it's not you, you don't have to do it, also very important to lose the sense of once you have achieved something, some kind of great success or small success, one could fall back into the sense of, I did this, I did it, yeah, I did it, that would be falling back into illusion, all the great, let's say the people

have achieved very great things, they have the greatest composers or artists or brilliant insights that certain scientists had that were not arrived at ultimately through thinking, it was a preparation for the inside, like the theory of relativity suddenly came to Einstein, suddenly the realization comes, the deepest things come as gifts from that realm of unconditioned intelligence, that's where the power lies, if then you have achieved something and you have the sense, I did it, your ego claims possession, it takes credit, if your ego takes credit for something, then you're beginning, the power becomes obscured again, for example, when I had in my 20s, when I thought I was very concerned about how is my life going to, how is my life going to be, what am I going to achieve, am I going to achieve nothing, I wanted to be, the ego was very strong, wanted to, it was fearful all the time, anxious all the time, if somebody had told me, you're going to be a great spiritual teacher, the ego would have said, oh, that's great, it's wonderful, well, let's say a psychic had told me that and the psychic, if it had been a good psychic, he or she would also have added, but you have to die to yourself first, so when you become a real teacher, it won't feel as if you had achieved something, then I would, my ego probably would have said, oh, let me think about it, I don't know if I want that and as to this day, I don't have the feeling that I have achieved these books, it's just, it's nothing, it's not, I didn't do it, it's, yes, there is a sense of satisfaction when people come and say, often happens, people say, your books changed my life or something like that and it's lovely, it's satisfying, but I know, there's no, who am I, I mean, there's just a consciousness, there's no separate entity that has achieved something, this separate entity got out of the way and then the consciousness could use that mind, that's all, I haven't achieved anything, so spiritual awakening is not an achievement, it's a realization, that's very important, so your practice then is the doing and the being, be engaged in doing and manifesting and then losing yourself, it'll happen several times, you will lose yourself in the doing and then you realize you lost yourself, for example, when some negative state arises, stress arises, very clear indicator that you've lost yourself in the doing, stress arising, impatience, anger, complaining, you lost yourself in the doing, that's, and then it's, ah, and then return and then it deepens, it deepens and then you, then it, you truly, through the challenges, partly challenges that you create for yourself in a good way, because you want to create this or that, and the answer challenges that seemingly come out of nowhere, personal or collective, you work with that, those are necessary for the evolutionary process, even the viruses are necessary, it's strange to say that, the virus is unnecessary for the evolution of human consciousness, very strange, but true, we are one, the one being, the one consciousness, then names and forms become almost irrelevant, also other things become almost irrelevant, such as gender, age, personal history, color of your skin, those things recede to the periphery, the background, you realize that which is beyond those external appearances, practice a moment of thoughtless awareness, looking at each person, and then the totality, and realize there's only the one consciousness, in disguise, disguising itself as a man or woman, or black or white, or whatever color, or whatever age, or personal life situation, whatever it may be, is the one consciousness, so a moment of

stillness, when we become aware of ourselves, or let's put it in the first person, I become aware of myself as consciousness, not the person, the person is a temporary appearance, in essence, I am consciousness, and that in itself, for a limited period of time, occasionally, you could use that as a pointer, I am consciousness, to occasionally say to yourself, but after that, there's a stillness, the truth is not in the words, the truth is, the words are the pointer, I am consciousness, and that consciousness is the consciousness of the universe, of course, it's not a separate consciousness, that's amazing, it frees you from this limited, absurdly limited sense of identity of who you are, and yet you honor that also, it has its place, short-lived as it is, it has its place, whatever it is, you honor it, race, gender, whatever you, it's fine, it has its place, essentially, it's not who you are. Thank you to all of you, we will meet again.

[Speaker 4] (34:51 - 35:11)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Narcissus And The First Selfie : Releasing Our Delusions [104036a7-6283-4837-9fd8-398132b67871]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:05)

Narcissus and the first selfie, releasing our delusions. In this podcast Eckhart talks about self-seeking. He says many people who are unawakened look for an identity in self-centered thinking.

He explained these people may define themselves through social status, good looks, or the accumulation of wealth. Eckhart draws a parallel with the ancient Greek myth of Narcissus, a beautiful man who fell in love with himself gazing into a pool of water. Eckhart jokes that this was humanity's first selfie, and he explains this myth is also where the word narcissism comes from.

He tells us the human ego has existed for thousands of years and continues to wreak havoc today. He also warns that technology and social media strengthen the ego. Eckhart advises that whatever identity we have created for ourselves, that we wear it loosely.

Don't become lost like Narcissus. Instead, make a practice of releasing our self-centered delusions.

[Speaker 1] (1:07 - 37:24)

Self-seeking, that's what most humans who are unawakened, that's where they're looking for themselves in some enhanced thought form of me, identity. They're looking for an identity in thought, a thought form. It might be perceived as possessions, status, or whatever it may be, but it's really, it's all experienced in your mind.

That is the unawakened state. And we have technology available to us to amplify the unawakened state, to amplify the human ego. That's a, yeah, all these platforms amplify what was already there before we came up with Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, many other names.

Before we came up with that, there was already the human ego. It already existed for many thousands of years. And it all started, of course, with the arising of thought, the arising of image-making in the mind through thought.

Oh, that's me. That's me. The first selfie ever taken was, happened in a mythological past in ancient Greece, when a man called Narcissus, which is where, of course, where the word narcissism comes from, a mythological figure, Narcissus, a beautiful young man.

There was a time before iPhones, of course, a long time ago. It was also time before the

mirrors. They hadn't made mirrors yet.

So one day, this beautiful young man saw his image in a pool of water, and he fell in love with himself. I'm so beautiful, he said. Oh, and that mythological tale is really has a deeper significance.

It speaks of the arising of a egoic consciousness, which is an image of yourself that you live with and through. You live with and through a mentally created image of yourself. And so the mythological story of Narcissus is that reflection, a reflected me.

And then that is really the beginning of ego. And now we have selfies. So there's pool of water.

We don't need that anymore. We can continuously amplify our delusion by taking these photos and posting them into the world. And then that's me.

And then other people confirm your existence as an important figure called Instagram influencer. And then you have the power then to make thousands of people or hundreds of thousands of people as unconscious as you are. Identity, the delusion of identity.

Often people ask you, what do you do? So you have to give an answer. They want some kind of identity.

I often say, I'm a writer. Because if I say other things, it gets too complicated. I'm a teacher of being.

That's a very strange identity. Or even worse, I am nobody. And if you say that, and you mean it, because there's some truth in this, but if you say that, and there's probably some spiritual pride behind it, when you affirm your essential nobodiness with a sense of unconscious pride, because you're so spiritual, you're no longer, you're no longer an identity.

And then I am no, I am nobody. I was never born and I will never die. And what you have done, all this might be true.

But you have, you identify with another image of yourself. It's a very spiritual one, but it's just as egoic as the one who identifies with the Lamborghini Testarossa, or whatever. So to simplify, I say, I'm a writer.

And sometimes to make it even more simple, then people don't ask any more questions. I say, I'm retired. I can do that now, I'm old enough.

And it's not untrue, because I retired many decades ago from this externalized existence. So that's fine. I'm retired.

Oh, okay. No further questions asked. I was walking, not long ago, on my daily walk on

this forest trail, and a couple were coming in the opposite direction, a young man and his girlfriend, wife.

And as they were walking past me, he stopped and said, I know you from somewhere. Where do I know you from? What's your name?

I said, Eckhart. Oh, yes, YouTube. I'm watching you on YouTube all the time.

And then he said to his girlfriend, he's a famous YouTuber. So I have a new identity now. And now my ambition is, perhaps I too can become an Instagram influencer.

All I need is wait for a different body. So hold your form identity loosely, because obviously, everybody has a form identity that consists of many different things. But it depends what importance you give certain aspects of your particular physical, psychological form.

Obviously, you have a form identity. It always starts with the body, of course, to some extent, you can't get away from that. This form identity begins with a body.

As you may remember, when I talk about form identity, I differentiate between form identity, which is physical form and psychological form, and essence identity, which is who or what you are beyond the physical and beyond the psychological, you as the consciousness, the transcendent consciousness, which is there. The moment you become still, and you're still awake, you haven't fallen asleep, stillness remains. That is the beginning of realizing your essence identity.

But your form identity, yes, it varies from person to person. What importance do you give certain aspects of your form? As I said, it begins with a physical body.

And for some people, that's already a huge chunk of their form identity is their physical appearance. And in some cases, it's a source of pride. So it makes you feel special because relative to others, your body is better looking or stronger.

Or for many others, it's a source of suffering and shame because the body isn't good enough. It's not, it doesn't look good enough. It's not as you compare, the ego compares its identity with others.

And then you look at other, some people are made temporarily happy by their bodies by identifying with it, and others are made unhappy by their bodies. But in either case, it's egoic identity. You might think that if you have a beautiful or strong body, obviously, only for a few years.

If you are really identified with the beauty or strength of your body, then you're in for a lot of suffering. When that beauty or strength diminishes, then you begin to really suffer. Your sense of identity begins to crumble.

No matter how hard you try to repair the decaying form, you can't really, well, you can spend a lot of money trying to patch up the things, but can't go on forever. And then eventually, as it sometimes happens with some very beautiful actors, actresses, when they get really old, and even the repair jobs don't work anymore. Then you never see them again.

They live in hiding. It's very sad. They live withdrawn, don't want to be seen by anybody anymore.

Very sad end to their lives. By the way, there's nothing wrong with, be very happy if you have a strong and beautiful body. Enjoy it while you can, is my recommendation.

But it's not to be despised. It's lovely, wonderful. It's not essentially who you are, obviously.

So find who you are beyond that as soon as possible. Before it starts to decay. Find who you are beyond that.

That's important. So, but it's not only the ego is not only amplified by identification with a stronger, beautiful body. The ego is equally amplified.

If you have a shame or unhappiness attached to what you consider to be an undesirable looking body, that's also of strong, egoic thought form. It's just as strong as the one that takes pride in your appearance. Sometimes people think ego always refers to somebody who feels better and bigger than others.

Big ego seems to be like a triumphant sense of identity. That can be the case. But the ego is equally strong.

In the opposite of that, regarding yourself as inferior and suffering because of that, comparing yourself unfavorably with other people on whatever level, seeing yourself as a victim of life, that's an equally strong egoic identity, a thought form. So the ego is not necessarily and always a triumphant sense of identity. It can be just as strong as the opposite of that.

So identification with the body, ultimately it will bring you suffering. As I said, even if your body is strong and beautiful, and you identified with that, you move towards suffering. And if your body is not, you're not happy with it, you're suffering already.

So in either case, go deeper, go deeper. And then that's one identification. The other identification may be other external things to your body.

Now, obviously, to some extent, the things that you put on your body become an extension of the body. So you look for, if you want to create a certain image, to reinforce the image that you've already created for yourself, the way you dress becomes an

extension of, you identify with that, as much as you identify with the actual physical body, it becomes an extension of the physical body. So that can become important to what you put on, become part of your identity.

And all the advertisers, the manufacturers of clothes and brands, they all know that, that ultimately, you're not buying a piece of clothing, but you're buying an identity. And they all know that. And that's what they advertise.

They advertise an enhanced sense of identity. And again, it does not mean there's anything wrong with enjoying something beautiful to put on your body. The question is, does that give you your sense of identity?

Or is it simply something that you enjoy? Very big difference. In the same way with a possession, there's no need to let go of all possessions, because if you radically, as some spiritual people have done until during the past, sometimes it may work.

But the danger is, let's say you're so spiritual that you say, I don't want any more possessions, nothing. And that still exists in some countries. In India, there's an unbroken tradition going back thousands of years of humans who have done that.

And they still, some still do it. So they walk, some of them are actually totally naked. Some were just in loincloths.

They are supported because this is valued there. To relinquish all attachments completely in your attempt to find the deeper dimension with the being of you, that is where you are connected with the divine, with God's source. The danger is when you do that, you create a substitute identity for yourself as a thought form of me, the one who has let go of everything.

Therefore, the me that is superior to all those who are still attached to all those things. And that's the spiritual ego. And that's very subtle and can be very deceptive.

You can spend the rest of your life, if let go of everything, and then you have this huge spiritual ego walking around and you don't know it. So it's much more helpful, except in some exceptional cases, if that is your calling to relinquish everything, if you very strongly feel that is your calling, then that's why you have to go. But be careful that you don't create another identity for yourself, a mind made identity out of that.

Then you're trapped again without knowing it. But if you do, my recommendation is first of all, because you probably have to let go of your most of your clothes too. Don't go and live in North Dakota or Canada.

Move to Florida or here. Then at least your body is relatively comfortable. But even there, you would still encounter problems.

So my first recommendation would be to move to India. And there you will be looked after by people who kind of recognize that there's a spiritual seeker there. India is still many of these people, the renunciates, the sadhus.

Some are genuine, wonderful beings. And others do it for a living. It's great.

You don't have to work. People give you food. You can just sit around all day and be respected.

For some, it's genuine and others fake. For some people, gender is an identity. Traditionally, being either a man or woman was always an important part of your sense of self.

How important varies from person to person. In some countries where genders are still clearly defined and separated, your gender identity can make up an important part of your sense of who you are. For example, in some countries, if you're a man, you immediately have a certain superiority over the other 50% of humanity, the women, that I'm a man.

And then the woman is also pushed into identification with their role. And so the woman says, I'm a woman. And you're trapped in that kind of identification.

I'm not going into gender because it's a big topic these days. But are you seeking some ultimate identity, no matter what gender you are? There's all these things these days, LGBTQ, et cetera, et cetera.

Okay, that's fine. But are you seeking some ultimate identity in that? That's an illusion again.

Anything informed, you're seeking for some kind of ultimate completion of yourself that only the essence identity can give you. It does not mean that you cannot honor your form identity. It could also be racial.

What color is my skin? Fine, you can be happy with it. You can honor that.

But making that into your main identity, then you're trapped on the surface of life. So there's a difference between honoring your form identity and being trapped in your form identity. And also the importance is mistaking your form identity with the essence of who you are.

Mistaking that for the essence of who you are. That is a delusion. So there's a subtle way of dealing with the forms in your life and being able to differentiate between form identity and essence identity.

Then you can enjoy the life of forms. You can enjoy also a possession that you have or some possessions that you have, an object that you have. Enjoy it because perhaps it's

well made or it's beautiful.

Does that necessarily mean you are psychologically attached to it? Not necessarily. It's lovely.

But you may not know whether or not there is a clinging. And if there's a clinging means you have incorporated into your sense of self. But you may not know whether there is a clinging until perhaps it disappears or somebody takes it away or it gets damaged.

So you might say, okay, I have a Ferrari, but I'm not attached to it whatsoever. And the next day you go to your car and somebody has scratched it with a dress. Oh, who the hell did that?

And you're upset for several hours. You were attached. So to be excessively concerned with accumulation of objects, that's of course a sign that you're seeking yourself in objects again.

And so there's an addiction which some people suffer from, which is called shopping. And this is they want to acquire. The happiest moments in their life is when they go into a shop and they choose something and then they get to the cash register and they pull out their credit card.

And the shop assistant puts it into this shiny luxury bag. It has a name on it that shows how exclusive it is, the name. And then you walk home with the.

And sometimes the first moment of dissatisfaction comes when you arrive home and you take it out of the bag. Do I really want this? Or you wear it once or twice, but then you need something else.

And then comes the compulsion to for more, more, more. That's part of when you're trapped in essence identity, you're always seeking for more, but not necessarily objects. It could be possessions, but it could also be more of even relationships.

It's never, never good enough, especially these days when so many potential partners are available to you on your phone. So you're in a relationship, but maybe the first little disagreement said, no, that wasn't right. He, she wasn't the right person.

And you start looking again, even while the person is going to the bathroom. And you're already looking, you're getting it out and the more can also be experienced as eating excessively or excessive consumption of alcohol, excessive consumption of food. The underlying that can be the psychological need for not being complete enough, not needed to absorb feeling something missing in myself, something important missing.

You're looking for yourself in all kinds of things in all kinds of places. And there, of course, the famous song from the, was it from the sixties or seventies, Rolling Stones, I

can't get no satisfaction. I can't get no.

And of course that is the ego song. This is the song of the ego. And it's sad.

It's very sad. Just before we finish, I'll tell you a little story that happened. I don't know if it's interesting, but I met a man whenever it was before the time when you had to stop meeting people.

So it was years ago. And he's asked, what do you do? He said, I said, people do.

And I gave the most convenient answer. I'm a writer. And what do you write about?

I said, well, no, it was getting difficult because being present, present. Can you explain that? Well, I just can't really be explained in order to evade getting out of having to answer it.

I said, what do you do? And he said, I am a food and wine critic. I have a big website and that's my profession, food and wine critic.

That's not a bad life. He goes around the best restaurants, eating the best food and drinking the best wines. And he said, I'm on my way to a wine tasting in Napa Valley for the whole weekend.

And I just said, this image, this is what they do. They taste a little bit of wine and then they spit it out. And then they talk about it.

They find incredible words to describe each wine. So this is my opportunity to explain to him or to show him what this presence is all about. I said, when you taste wine, if you're very, very observant, you will notice that in the first moments when the wine reaches your tongue, you squish it around in your mouth.

In this moment, you may notice before you say something about it, you're not thinking. You're purely experiencing it in just a few seconds. And he thought, yeah, that's right.

And that's his presence. So even there, he realized that in order to fully experience that liquid, in order to fully experience it, he had to temporarily, briefly set aside any conceptualization because his consciousness was needed fully for the sensory experience of it. And then his mind kicks in.

And then the mind interprets the sensory experience and starts talking about it in ways that I could never do. The mind then begins to differentiate. It talks, it has a, it is a butterscotch-y taste and this and well, the strangest things, the taste of blueberries in the background and whatever.

Very poetic sometimes. But before he could do that, he had to fully be there in the experience, had to be present to it. And that is something that actually applies to many

other situations.

You may find that in the first moments of experiencing something new, you're not thinking because you have to take it, you have to be present with it. Let's say a bird suddenly comes, it lands on a branch in front of you, a bird suddenly lands and there it is. For the first few seconds, you take it in, three seconds, maybe four.

You're not calling it anything. And then the mind may kick in and say something about it. Either it says, I don't know what bird it is, or it knows what bird it is, whatever it is, or I wonder what about it, or where's my phone, I need to take a picture.

And in the first moments, there is a complete experiencing before you name it. If you can catch the first moments, you're entering a room that perhaps you haven't been to before, or you're walking around the street of an unknown city that you haven't been to before, you're walking on the street and you're turning a corner and there a new vista suddenly opens up, here's another street. And you look and you take it in.

And there's always a gap before naming happens. And that's interesting. If you can be aware of that gap, then it can actually get longer.

When you're aware of the gap of not naming, when you first experience something, and of course, food and drink also, it's a good one. It doesn't have to be wine, it could be orange juice, it could be anything. And you taste it, your attention is fully in the perception of it.

And if you become aware of that stillness behind the sensory perception, then it gets longer. And that's a beautiful way of experiencing things by being more of the stillness that's experiencing the awareness than the person that immediately names it or finds some kind of personalizes it in some way, find some kind of personal relationship to it, wants it or doesn't want it or wishes this or all kinds of things. In any given moment, you can experience this moment, predominantly as a person with a normal, so-called normal way of living.

You're very much absorbed in continuous mental creations in psychology. Or you can experience any given moment as a presence, not as a person anymore. When you don't name it in any way, you're just aware, then you're just the awareness behind the perception, a walking awareness.

I recommend that you practice that, especially here, but in your daily life, if you can. So what happens then is the, the person somehow diminishes in its importance, and something else arises that still shines through the person, but is transcendent to the person that is unconditioned consciousness, awareness, presence, whatever you want to call it, that arises. So you diminish and something else grows, something more real than the person.

That is also the beginning of awakening. In esoteric Christianity, and some mystics have said, Jesus is the historical person who realized its essential connectedness with the divine. The transcendent dimension, therefore, was shining through him.

And that's called the Christ. This even in St. Paul in the New Testament, says something like, I'm not good at quoting, but I must diminish and Christ in me must grow. That's the realization.

That is, Buddha could be seen something similar. There was a man called Gautama Siddhartha Sakyamuni, or something like that. I don't pronounce it correctly.

And this was a historical person. And then the historical person, I suppose, at one point, he was asked, Who are you? Or something like that.

And he said, I'm awake, instead of his name. And that is the root of the word Buddha means to be awake. And then the historical person became the awakened consciousness.

And interestingly, for several hundred years, I think five or 600 years after the death of the Buddha, there were no Buddha images yet. They came much later. Perhaps the power was decreasing, they needed more images to remind themselves.

And so then the famous Buddha images, Buddha rupas were created. And some of them are very beautiful. And again, it's important to realize when you look at a Buddha image, ultimately, it's this is not the representation of an historical person.

Obviously, nobody knows what he looked like. So it's not a representation of historical person. It's a representation of a state of consciousness.

And then it can be when you know that you can be it's beautiful to look at into the Buddha rupas, Buddha images that are made by great craftsmen. They have an almost imperceptible smile on their face, very, very slight, you can hardly see it. And the ones that are not so good, they look really serious.

And if they have the good ones that have this hint of a smile, you might say, well, what's he smiling about? If all is emptiness, what's he smiling about? Well, he's smiling because he has transcended the egoic self and is rooted in spacious awareness.

In the past, when I did counseling sessions with people, which often means you just listening to their drama, usually it's a drama. And I didn't know it. But I unknowingly and perhaps stupidly, while I was listening, I was smiling slightly.

And a few times they people stop and say, what are you smiling about? I'm telling you my, my suffering. It was hard at that point, I didn't have that many words yet to explain things.

I can't remember how I explained why I was smiling, but I can do it now. It's because I could sense the reality that was beyond the drama in that person. Through my own realization, I could sense the ultimate delusional nature of their story.

And I could sense beyond the suffering entity, there was a being completely beyond suffering. I could, in other words, I could sense the sanity beyond the surface craziness. In many cases, I could sense their essential beingness, connected with essential beingness.

And that is very pleasant. And that's why I smiled, not because of the story. I wish I could have explained it to them like that.

I have these, my bells here, I haven't used them yet to signal the end of our afternoon sessions. I will now ring the bells. Lovely Tibetan bells.

[Speaker 2] (37:48 - 38:08)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, essential teachings, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast. Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle.

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Eckhart Tolle No One Can Act Beyond Their Level of Consciousness [20033f3a-7b47-4130-a1fb-afc146f3cb48]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:12)

No one can act beyond their level of consciousness. In this episode, Eckhart talks about human unconsciousness by telling the story of his father, who he says had profound anger issues. He compares his father to a volcano often brimming over with red hot rage.

And for years, Eckhart says, he resented his father and despaired whenever he had to brace himself for the next blow up. However, he reveals that after he experienced his awakening, he realized his father was not capable of acting differently. Eckhart states that he finally understood that his father, like so many people, suffered during childhood and was stuck in dysfunctional patterns from the past, resulting in his father's anger and an unconscious life.

Once Eckhart realized this, he says he was able to accept his father unconditionally and release the expectation that his father could or should be someone else. Eckhart explains why we must refrain from labeling others because of their lack of awareness and that no person can act beyond their level of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (1:15 - 41:52)

My dad had problems with anger, huge outbursts of anger quite frequently. It was like living next to a volcano that could erupt at any moment. And he could not help it.

It was impossible. There was no possibility of being different. And so these humans are run by unconscious conditioning, usually goes back to their childhood and what happened there.

I know why my father was angry. I realized much later that it all originated in his childhood, the reasons why he was so angry. And also for a while, also, I felt a resentment towards that.

And only when I was able to awaken out of egoic consciousness, I saw that there's nothing that he could have done differently because there wasn't enough awareness. Now, when you see that, then you don't personalize or you don't create an identity for other humans out of their unconsciousness because in essence, that's not who they are. There's first recognition, then step one, you recognize that no human can act beyond their conditioning in the absence of awareness.

If there's awareness, they can transcend their conditioning. And then they begin to become conscious of their own conditioned mental, emotional, dysfunctional mental, emotional patterns, yes. So they couldn't, they can't help it.

So that's already a useful step in forgiveness, but you may not yet be able to arrive at full forgiveness because of that. Does that mean then, a question may arise in your mind, does that mean then humans are not really responsible for what they do? If they are unconscious, how are they responsible?

And does that mean then that we shouldn't punish them for what they do? If they commit a crime, are they not guilty? That's an interesting question.

The unconsciousness that operates in human, even if you are able to forgive a human, and we'll come, we'll go more fully into that in a minute, even if you're able to forgive a human for their transgressions or whatever they did, and even though the human is not responsible for their unconsciousness, and yet it is built into the structure of human life, they still need to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness. You can forgive a human being, but if a human being has done terrible things to you or to others, you can forgive them, we'll go more deeply into that. This does not release them from suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness at some point.

And usually humans who are violent often also meet violent ends. And this is karmic law, to suffer the consequences of your unconsciousness is the law of karmic retribution. If you cannot forgive, you become part of the chain of karma and there's no end to it.

On a certain level, it is useful because unconscious humans become conscious eventually through suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness. In that sense, they are responsible, only in that sense. So I have to repeat that because it's quite important.

The possibility is there for the unconscious human to awaken by suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness. And in some cases, the consequences of their unconsciousness means prison, for example. And then the state becomes the arm of karma, of karmic retribution.

In some cases, it's that, but the consequences, there could be other consequences of their unconsciousness. So yes, on the one hand, you can say they are not responsible but they still have to suffer. And that is how humans awaken, through suffering the consequences of their own unconsciousness, which brings about suffering.

And through the suffering that was brought about by their unconsciousness, they awaken. And that is also happening on a huge world scale here. If we engage in warfare, humans create enormous amount of suffering for other humans of others' unconsciousness.

Another word for unconsciousness is utter and complete stupidity. On every level, 20 years in Afghanistan, trillions and trillions of dollars, many, many dead, suffering, disruption. Then they leave, nothing has changed.

Iraq, Ukraine, and who knows? Nuclear holocaust is possible too. Produced by complete and utter stupidity, which really should be called unconsciousness.

It's a more, but really, it's just unbelievable lack of awareness. And if that needs to happen on a large scale, that humanity as a whole will produce events that bring about unbelievable suffering, then the remnant of humanity that is then left, there's a possibility that awakening happens through realizing their own madness and then waking up. But hopefully it doesn't have to become that bad before more humans awaken.

It's a good sign that we are here because quite a few are awakening. And what else? And only this can, only this can save the world, not some little change in a political structure or a different political party or whatever.

No, of course not. So unconscious humans produce suffering for others, but also for themselves, and they have to suffer the consequences. In some way, there is something that almost feels right on its own level when humans suffer the consequences.

And many cases of humans who are in prison, they've done bad things. I mean, obviously some humans are in prison who are innocent, that happens too. But humans have done bad, and they awakened in prison.

I've had many accounts, and I had actually, I'm still, it's in the plans of giving some talks in prison. We had to cancel some because of the pandemic and various other reasons. It had already been arranged for me to go to two prisons in California and give some talks there for those prisoners who want to attend, and quite a few apparently wanted.

So I will still do it, God willing. I will give these talks in prison. Some humans have awakened.

And I know from the correspondence I've had, there are some wonderful human beings in prisons. Sometimes it's just a moment of unconsciousness, and their entire life is gone. And they have awakened into seemingly very unpleasant surroundings.

They have suddenly become aware of and transcended their own unconsciousness, their own patterns through the suffering. So that seems to be the law that the self-generated suffering, which is due to unconsciousness, brings about or has the potential of bringing about an awakening. So that's good then.

You see, first of all, that they know not what they do. Can you forgive them? Forgive means not to make an identity for them out of their unconscious actions.

So to see that their true identity is beyond that, because that's the unconditioned consciousness of the being. And if they suffered enough, they might awaken. There's no guarantee that it'll happen in this lifetime.

Then they go into another lifetime and suffer even more. But for the person who has these persistent thoughts about having been a victim, in order to transcend the conceptual identity of me as a victim, you have to go deeper into yourself. Yes, the emotions are still there, but depersonalize the emotions and realize what is in you is an emotion, an energy field of anger or resentment and or anger.

So they are closely related. Resentment is a more of a mental thing, and anger is more of an emotional, emotional thing. So there's resentment, anger, mental, emotional.

So the resentment might subside if you realize that no human can go beyond their level of consciousness, and that's not who they actually are. The anger may not go immediately because that's been living in you for quite a long time. There is in the, if you're able to go beyond the energy field of anger, which most likely is not continuously there because it arises, it subsides, it has periods when it comes up, you relive something mentally, and then the anger comes back.

But you may be going for a walk out in nature and you're suddenly free of the anger because you don't remember any of that while you're looking at a beautiful tree or the sky, or you're aware that you're breathing. Use those times when you cannot feel it and you're not remembering the past to go deeper into stillness that is within you and to become present. Feel the inner body that's beyond the emotional field and be present and become still, become aware what it is, what or who it is that you are, what you are, who you are.

Are you the suffering entity that, to a body, mind, to whom that happened? Or is there a deeper place? And the deeper place actually was never touched by anything that happened.

So there is a place that's beyond the suffering of the person, beyond the emotion. Connect with that, with the being of yourself, become still, become alert. Feel yourself being the consciousness rather than the person.

You are the consciousness that inhabits the person. The bad things happened to the person and all the things that are still living you belong to the person. You are the consciousness that is inhabiting that body, so to speak, temporarily.

And if you go deep enough, that is the unconditioned consciousness. And on that level, that was never touched by anything bad that happened. And so the forgiveness then happens not through saying, okay, I should forgive you, I'll forgive you.

That may not be quite it. But ultimately, forgiveness is the realization that there's nothing to forgive. So find your deep eye, your deeper identity that's beyond all the memories and the emotional pain that happened.

Find your deep identity. Go there, especially in times when you do not feel that turmoil.

And see if you can become, stay rooted in that.

And then the conceptual identity of me as a victim will gradually or perhaps fairly quickly dissolve. It's become part of your ego. So it's very desirable to get rid of it.

It does not mean that you, any forgiveness does not mean you absolve the other person from, as I said, the suffering, the consequences of the unconsciousness. But not through you anymore. So you break the chain of karma.

But life does it. To observe karmic law on one level is quite, can be quite satisfying to people. It feels, these movings that they started making maybe in the 70s, but they're still popular, the kind of movings where you have incredibly bad people who do really awful things, killings and so on.

And then the judicial system doesn't punish them for some reason because they have a good lawyer. And then they're back in the streets. And then there comes a vigilante.

And some actors specialize in that role. And then they attribute justice and they kill them all. And people love watching these movies.

They're just waiting for the karmic retribution. A more enlightened version of a movie like that would be, yes, these are dreadful, deeply unconscious humans. And they perpetrate these acts of violence.

And finally they are arrested and they're put in prison for 30 or 40 years. And gradually in prison, they suffer and suffer in the most horrible conditions. And the moment comes where finally there's an awakening.

Ah, then karma has fulfilled its function. Karma fulfills its function when there is an awakening. In a way, karmic law is very important.

It operates. It's described a lot in the Old Testament, an eye for an eye, et cetera. And then the New Testament points to the possibility of ending that.

But it's very useful. This perhaps requires only a relatively brief answer, although you never know. It's also a brief question.

Lisa from Vermont asks, is there any useful purpose in terms of getting conscious to talk therapy or psychoanalysis? That's a good, short question. Now talking itself obviously is not going to get you there, but if the therapist is a good listener, something is possible.

If the therapist is able to enter the state of pure awareness while you talk, then a transformation is possible. You talk for a while, you talk, and then the state of presence can extend itself and you yourself become present while you're talking. Talking may be helpful up to a point because you may become conscious of a few things that you didn't know before.

If the therapist is a conscious therapist, then the transformation is ultimately not produced by talking, but because you're sitting with somebody who embodies presence, and then something is possible. At some point, you have to stop talking. If the therapist encourages talking for years, and some people go to a psychoanalyst for 10, 15, 20 years, and they talk, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk, and there's no end to it, and it becomes ever more complex and difficult.

So talking can be helpful up to a point when it's no longer helpful, and then something else arises. There's an American, he's no longer alive, an American psychologist, psychotherapist, who is very, very helpful in that respect, Karl Rogers. And Karl Rogers teaches the state of unconditional, nonjudgmental listening on the part of the therapist.

That's the main tool. And that works sometimes, but it's not a technique. So you have to go, as a therapist, you have to go a little bit deeper.

This is not a technique that you can learn. It's not a technique. You have to go deeper.

It works beautifully when it's done rightly, which means there's presence. But there are even some psychoanalysts, which is very much a mental thing, psychoanalysis, Freudian. After a few years of sitting there and listening to their patients, they gradually apply their knowledge less and less, and their particular scheme, how they interpret things through their particular lens, and they gradually let go of that, and they become a pure listener.

And then intuition operates. The more the therapist, or anybody, you don't have to be a therapist, the more you'll be able to be a pure listener, the more the possibility arises that your intuition will speak through you when you communicate with your patient, client, whatever you call it. When you communicate with your patient, if you are a pure listener, then whatever words come to you will arise out of that deep, intuitive level of awareness.

And sometimes, if you are a pure listener, the insight may not come through you. The insight may come through your patient, because the state of presence has transmitted itself. There's an energy field of presence that surrounds you in the room, and the patient becomes found, and suddenly the patient stops talking.

He goes, oh. I tell the story somewhere in the book when I started many, many years ago. When I started seeing people and being in presence with people, I couldn't explain much.

I had no particular knowledge, but I was sitting with people in presence, and something was happening. I didn't know what. Occasionally, I would speak, and gradually, a kind of teaching arose that later became a book, but that took years.

I said things I never knew that I knew them. They came out of my mouth in presence in a

particular situation. If I hadn't sat with this particular person, nothing would have come, but sometimes the insight came from them also, and so at the very early stages, for example, a woman was there, came to see me, and I was in the state of pure listening, just like, so not a single thought, just taking in what she was saying, but not particularly thinking about it.

It was just going in. Something else was more important, and she pointed out to me. She stopped talking one day and said, her mind interpreted it in a particular way, and she said, oh, you are doing healing now.

I said, what? Yes, I can feel it. You're healing me.

I know it. Oh, I didn't know that. And because I was fairly ignorant at that point, I thought, oh, I'm a healer, and then she told some other people, and people started coming to me for physical healing.

A few got healed, and some got healed, some didn't, and after a couple of years, I realized the limitations of when people only come to experience physical healing, it's not quite enough. Can you get rid of this? I have this pain in my knee.

Can you take that away? I don't know. And then I said, I'm no longer a healer.

Healing is, of course, it's a wonderful thing, but the deepest healing is, of course, beyond the physical healing. The deepest healing is the healing of the human psyche, that to reconnect with being is the true healing. Then on another occasion, which I talk about in, I believe mentioned in a book at a similar time, that when I started to see people occasionally, there was a woman living downstairs, very gifted musician who gave lessons in piano and so on, but I have to admit, a bit neurotic, considerably neurotic in the conventional sense.

Whenever you saw her in the street coming towards you, and I was not the only one, many remarked, when you saw her coming towards you, you think, here comes trouble. And invariably, when she came, she would immediately complain about something, what other people had just done to her. Can you imagine what they did and said?

And of course, she had a bad suffering in her past. She had told me about this also, terrible suffering. She escaped from Nazi Germany to England, and it's a terrible suffering.

So all these accumulations lived in her. And one night, it was 11, she rang my bell. I was upstairs, she was downstairs.

Can I come up? Something dreadful has happened to me. I need to talk to you immediately.

Real question of, are you asleep? Well, mind if I start? And then she came with a pile of papers, said to myself, you know what the landlord, what he's just done to me, he's demanded that, won't you take me to court?

You must sign these. We must take a stand against, you must sign these documents. Please sign them immediately.

And I just sat there. Oh. And she went on and on.

And just a wonderful state of deep peace descended upon me. And she, after I don't know how long, 15 minutes of 20 minutes of talking, she suddenly stopped and said, this isn't important at all, is it? That was an incredible awakening.

This isn't important at all, is it? I said, no, it isn't. And then she was quiet for a few more minutes and then she left.

Good night. Thank you. That was very puzzling to me at that time.

The next morning I saw her in the street and she was kind of back to her usual self. So it was not a permanent awakening. And she was a little bit suspicious.

She said, what did you do to me last night? You did something, I don't know what. But last night she said, well, the first, I mean, years I slept like a baby.

You did something to me. Did you hypnotize me? I don't know, I didn't do anything.

So forgiveness, recognition of unconsciousness that is not an identity. Depersonalize the emotions that still live in you. Don't attach them to a story.

Don't repeat the story. How do you get rid of the story? Take your attention.

The moment the story arises again, the reliving of it or the blaming and the accusing of it. Take your attention. Realize it's toxic and extremely unhelpful.

Take attention away from thinking and put it into your body, into your breathing, for example. Come to your senses. Whenever you recognize this mind pattern arising again, realize you don't need it anymore.

You don't want it. It's not your identity. These are impersonal energy fields that still live in you.

That's all. Oh, that was the previous question. It's all one anyway.

So this was about talking therapy and so on. Eventually the answer is always the same, of course. But sometimes the road towards the same place may differ.

You approach it from here, you approach it from there, you approach it from there, but in

the end you arrive at the same place. Christine from Singapore asked, hello, Singapore, hello. It's about the same temperature there as it is here.

I was there once and I believe every day throughout the year, it's basically the same temperature. Hot, hot. Hot.

I've been watching your videos since the pandemic and it has helped me a lot in realizing I am not my thoughts and emotions. But recently I've been in this state where I'm feeling rather low and I can't seem to pick myself up from here. There are lots of old fears and worries rising up again and again, and it's making me feel annoyed.

It is as if a toddler throwing a tantrum in my mind, in my head. It's a nice way of putting it, a toddler throwing a tantrum in my head. I know that all things pass.

During this phase, I have experienced my deep presence, which was filled with peace and joy. Do you have any tips on what it is that I can do to be okay with this constant rising of doubts and thoughts? I like the image of the toddler.

With your permission, I may quote it in a future talk. Now, interesting words here. I'm realizing I am not my thoughts.

Okay, that's a good realization. The question is, is that realization still there when these turbulent thoughts arise? Or is it just, is it more an abstract realization?

I'm not my thoughts. And then the thoughts come and you are your thoughts because they take you over. So the question is, in the moment of these turbulent thoughts arising, are you able to know that you are not your thoughts?

And that knowing is not a conceptual knowing because I am not my thoughts is a mental concept. So on that level, it's easy to know that you are not your thoughts. But there is another deeper, direct, and experiential knowing.

And the question is whether that deeper experiential knowing that you are not your thoughts is there while the thoughts happen. The concept I am not my thoughts does not help you when these thoughts arise, the turbulent, then the toddler throws the tantrum, then no concept can help you. So the knowledge that you are not your thoughts need to move from conceptual to a deeper place.

There are two ways of knowing anything. One is through concepts. The other one is through awareness.

This applies to anything. It applies not just to your thoughts. It applies to anything that you know.

You can know, let's say, a tree or a flower, one of a cactus, since we're here. You can know it conceptually through saying things about it, knowing things about it, its name,

and so on. And or you can know it without words.

You're looking at it or you touch it, not the cactus, hopefully. You're looking at it and not just for a second, but for a little longer, you let its presence speak to you, not through words. You can sense the inherent aliveness in any life form, a flower, tree, whatever it may be.

And you look at it and there's something there that is to unsense the mere sensory perception. You can sense that deep within. You can sense the flower too is present, but not in the same way that you are present.

There's a consciousness that expresses itself through the one consciousness, expresses itself as the flower. And so you know the flower beyond concept. And when you only apply concepts, you only know the surface of the flower, the surface phenomenon of the flower.

The same with thoughts. While the thoughts arise, do you know you're not your thoughts? Are you able, in other words, are you able to be the awareness even to your turbulent thoughts and realizing they are my turbulent thoughts?

I'm verbalizing it now, but when you realize it is not verbal, so you know these are my turbulent thoughts without saying these are my turbulent thoughts. So you're simply in the background of your turbulent thoughts. And if you have to hang on to some part of your inner body and you feel the aliveness in your hand or your feet or your legs and stay present, and then the thoughts come like a little storm or a tornado.

A toddler throwing a tantrum, that works well too because toddlers can throw terrible tantrums. Ah! Ah!

Some little children already have a pain body. You can see it perhaps from another lifetime. It doesn't mean that they are less spiritual.

In fact, the stronger your pain body is, the more likely it is that eventually you will awaken because you can't stand it anymore. That was the case with me too. So knowing that you're not your thoughts on the conceptual level is good, but are you able to know it while it happens, while the turbulence happens?

And you are. So that's the key. And again, as I say to many other people, practice while you're not tortured by the mental turbulence in good times.

Invite presence into your life in good times. Practice presence in good times so that when you're being challenged, either externally or internally, presence is sufficiently strong for you not to get completely identified with whatever turbulence arises externally or internally. You could even, as it sounds a little strange, as a little practice, set aside a few minutes and say, I don't know if it'll work, you can try it.

I'm going to invite turbulent thoughts. I'm going to invite this toddler and see what he does. Try to think turbulent thoughts.

It may not work or it may work. And see if they can stay present. Another thing that might be helpful, the influx of turbulent thoughts, at some point it starts.

At some point they begin to rise. Be very conscious and are you able to detect the beginning of an influx of mental turbulence, mental emotional turbulence? Are you able to catch it at the beginning stage?

And then it may not actually arise fully anymore. If you catch it early, be alert and it's, oh, there it is. Another question you may ask yourself, this influx of turbulent thoughts, does that, is it sometimes triggered by a particular event that is external or not?

Maybe yes, maybe not. Is it when your energy is low? I believe you mentioned some low energy here.

Yes, I've been in this state where I'm feeling rather low and I can't seem to pick myself up from there. It could be that when you feel low, there's also less awareness in you. And so then the turbulence, which is probably to do with your pain body, the turbulence comes in when there is diminished awareness in you.

So be particularly alert when there is, when you feel physically at a low energy level. You can still be alert though. Very interesting practice.

The knowing non-conceptually is of course, part of the awakening into awareness when you have the two modalities of knowing. I sometimes call that unitive knowing because conceptual knowing creates a barrier between you and that which is known through concepts. It keeps a barrier between you and the other human being.

When you conceptualize, we talked about it earlier. When you conceptualize another human being, you form images and concepts about who he or she is. And then you relate through the screen of conceptualization.

So that is not helpful. That creates separation between you and the other. Unitive knowing is to recognize and to know the other directly, not through concepts.

And the strange thing is you can have both. It's not necessarily a question of either one or the other. You can have certain concepts and ideas about another person or anything.

And yet at the same time, not be totally confined to your set of concepts that you have about the other person. There may be beautiful moments when these concepts don't operate and you're able to commune with that person without concepts. So the concepts may be there, but you're not trapped in them.

You may know certain things about a person. Perhaps there's certain behavior patterns

in another person and you know this person tends to do this kind of thing. He tends to, maybe he tends to lie occasionally or quite often.

He's done it many times. And yet you are not trapped in a mental concept that he's a liar and that's all there is to him. He's a liar.

Yes, he lies sometimes, but there's more to that human being. It's a pattern that operates in him, a pattern of unconsciousness. But you're not trapped.

You don't trap yourself and trap him or her in that conceptual reality because that's all you ever meet after that, a liar, not a human being. And that's only one example of many ways in which you can conceptualize another person. He's an oppressor.

I am the oppressed. You wear glasses, you must be an oppressor. Yeah, Cambodia, crazy, crazy.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (41:58 - 42:18)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Nothing In This World Provides Lasting Happiness [40f12108-f5d0-48c7-b893-76340b4e43b3]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:10)

Nothing in this world provides lasting happiness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about how many of us strive to become a bigger, better version of me. He explains we do this through a myriad of achievements, wealth, status, possessions.

Eckhart says it's like the person who believes buying a more palatial home will somehow signify they've made it. He says when we're so invested in outcomes, we neglect the journey. He believes even spiritual seekers fall into this trap when they chase after enlightenment, which becomes another form of ego.

He explains these behaviors are all a misguided quest for fulfillment and identity. Eckhart cautions against looking for ourselves in everything we do because no goal will ever make us happy. He believes who we truly are has nothing to do with outcomes or achievements.

He says our deepest selves are rooted in consciousness itself. Eckhart describes it as the one transcendent source of all life. He says becoming aware of this dimension is the only thing that will bring lasting fulfillment.

[Speaker 1] (1:13 - 22:34)

The essence identity of awareness, and we are penetrating more deeply now, the essence identity of awareness has nothing to do with your personal history. You cannot say you can only get there if you have fulfilled certain things in your past. Sometimes the most unlikely people can suddenly awaken.

People in prison for crimes can suddenly awaken. Or somebody who has been practicing spiritual practices for many, many years. Perhaps can somebody awaken?

Or the spiritual practice could prevent you from awakening because you've used it in the wrong way. Because you've used your spiritual practice in your search for something in the future, something to happen to you in the future. Some new mental concept to add to your sense of identity, which is still ego.

And the mental concept that perhaps you were looking for is me as the enlightened one. That I really want to get there. And I want to become the great spiritual teacher.

And I want to get there. And I'm working hard to get there. I meditate five hours a day.

Nothing wrong with that. It can be beautiful. But what is the intention behind it?

Trying to arrive somewhere in the same way that the non-spiritual person is looking for a

bigger house. Or one day I'm going to have a private jet. I'm really working towards that.

When I have a private jet and that mansion and another house there. And whatever car satisfies my ego. If possible an Italian car that makes a lot of noise so that people can look at me.

Look at me. I made it. And in the same way that a non-spiritual person looks for on this dimension, on the surface dimension I call it.

You look for some kind of completion, fulfillment of your identity. The search for fulfillment of your identity becomes a bit more refined when you become spiritual. But you may still be trapped in that search for ultimately a bigger me.

A bigger version of me. That's a pitfall of spiritual seekers. In other words they are looking to time to achieve something.

In other words it's future. You look like everybody else but on different levels. You're looking to the future to complete yourself.

Now obviously past and future, in other words time, you cannot deny on this level of existence the reality of time. And you cannot deny that even it is not a bad thing to want to improve yourself on the level of, I call it the horizontal dimension, supposed to the vertical dimension, which is a deep eye in the present entry point, present moment. In the vertical dimension, yes, obviously I'm not denying everything in the horizontal dimension.

Obviously there are things that you as a person would like to achieve. Why not? You may want to learn another language.

You need time. You can't do it in an instant. You may want to learn to play an instrument.

You need time. You want to make a cup of tea. Even for that you need time.

Or you want to experience new places and visit new places. Nothing wrong with that. And you need time to go there to experience it.

Or you might have some kind of purpose that you want to build something in this life. Hopefully not just to satisfy your ego. So for all these things, obviously time has a certain function that cannot be denied.

It was helpful for us to get together here without time, which is a date at the time we could not have met here. I could have said one day we are going to accidentally meet in Adelaide in this room. But since time doesn't exist, I'm not going to specify when.

Now that could take a billion years. But there's nothing wrong with time on this level. It

cannot be denied that there is time.

It's everywhere. Whatever you do, it happens in time. Every movement happens in time.

It's a weird expression. Contemporary humans have this weird expression, I have no time. This is really weird.

I have no time for this. I have no time. Nobody has time.

But there's so much of it, it goes on and on. It never stops. And you can't get off time.

It just drags you along. You can't do anything about it. And at first, time is a good thing, because time allows you to achieve things, to experience things, to learn things, to grow, to evolve as a human being.

Nothing wrong with that. So time at first is a wonderful thing. It gives you stuff.

And then time passes, and passes. And then suddenly, what time does, shifts, begins to change. It doesn't give you anything anymore.

It begins to take things away from you. You get old, in other words. And so at first, time is a wonderful thing.

And then it kills you. So you have the two emotions. The positive one is hope.

I hope that things are going to get better. For things to get better, you need time. And the other one is fear, which is the fear that things might not get better.

They may get worse. And so many human egos, egoic, they live torn between these two. Hope and fear, both associated with time, of course.

Hope and fear. But no matter what you achieve, in the end, it all comes to nothing, of course. That doesn't mean you shouldn't strive to achieve anything.

Now, the secret is to be engaged in whatever activities that you're engaged in, in time. But not to lose yourself in the activities and looking for yourself, hoping to find a more complete version, ultimately, of your identity through possessions or achievements or recognition in time. So in other words, you look, the outcome becomes incredibly important to you in your whatever your endeavors are.

The outcome becomes extremely important to you because your sense of self is associated with the outcome. If the desired outcome of your activity does not happen, you become very unhappy. The thing lets you down.

And it diminishes your sense of self, the egoic sense of self, but not in a positive way, not in the sense of losing your ego. It just turns the ego around from positive to negative. So not to look for yourself in whatever you do.

So you're able to be active without the ego contaminating your whatever it is you do. That's very important. Now, how does that happen?

It implies that you need to be rooted in the dimension of consciousness itself, the unconditioned consciousness, the deep I, so that your sense of identity is derived from the deep I, the transcendent dimension, and not the surface I. Then whatever you do on the surface of life can be quite enjoyable. You can also be very active.

What disappears is the sense of stress, because stress means you want to be there, but you are here, and this tears you. The gap between here and there where you really want to be is what creates stress. Stress is always associated with ego.

And all the ancient teachings point to this importance of being engaged, well, not all, but many, being engaged in activities without excessive focus on the desired outcome. Yes, you have a goal. I want to learn this.

I want to become good at this. I want to experience that. You're working towards your goal.

That's fine. But there's not an excessive expectation of when you finally achieve your goal, you're going to be complete and fulfilled and happy. That is a trap and a delusion, because no goal can make you happy.

In the long term, nothing in this world can provide you with lasting happiness and real fulfillment. Nothing on the horizontal dimension can do it. And I have met people who have achieved all that the world tells you.

All the things that the world tells you are desirable. Fame, wealth, good looks, mastery at what they do. They have it all.

And many of them were very unhappy. After a period of the first few, two, three, four years of elation, they were, oh, look at me. Everybody loves me.

And then gradually they became very unhappy. Some of them became much more unhappy than other people who had not achieved all these things. The reason being, they could no longer delude themselves in saying, when I get this, I'll be happy because I have everything already.

So there's nothing left to say. When I achieve this, I will be happy. The delusion is suddenly gone because you have everything already and you're not happy.

But as long as you don't have it, the delusion can continue to operate in your mind. And then again and again you find the world is so frustrating. Relationships are a big thing.

A relationship will make me happy. I just need to find it. I need to find the one who will make me happy.

So you're looking for someone to make you happy. Oh dear. And of course, temporarily you find, yes, I found him or her or some other pronoun.

So temporarily you are getting married. Maybe not, doesn't matter. And then after the first few weeks, months, you start living together, move in together and a little bit time passes and then suddenly this other person displays certain types of behavior that's very weird.

Suddenly it's like being somebody completely different. This is not the guy I fell in love with or the person. What happened?

I chose the wrong person. And in many cases, the person that makes you happy one year, the next year or four years later, very same person becomes the greatest source of unhappiness in your life. The very person that made you happy, so happy, now makes you so miserable.

Your laughter tells me that some of you experienced that. So that too was a kind of delusion. And of course, there are some people who every time this happens, they marry, get married.

There's some people in Hollywood and other places, they've been married six times. Get married, a few months later, gone. So looking for this fulfillment in people, in places, in situations, in conditions, circumstances, looking for the ideal place to live.

And even that doesn't exist. I had friends who moved to Bali. Bali think, oh, I'd love to live here.

I would not be happy if I lived in Bali. Well, here you're already in very pleasant surroundings. But if you lived in other not very nice places, and Bali is a big thing.

I've never been there, but I've heard about it. So they moved to Bali and then they had a house and then it was great. And then suddenly one night they go, the rats were climbing up into their bedroom.

Oh, I can't stand it anymore. This is terrible. Mosquitoes too.

Let's move back to Detroit. Okay. Yeah.

So this horizontal dimension actually is, as the Buddha already said, the Buddha said, wherever you go and whatever you do, you will find unhappiness. And this is why academics, when they study Buddhism, they haven't experienced what Buddhism is. They only read the scriptures and then they read, whatever you do, wherever you go, you will experience Dukkha.

Dukkha is a term translated as unhappiness or unsatisfactoriness or misery or suffering is the usual translation. So that's what the Buddha said. So academics say, oh, this is a

very pessimistic, life denying religion, or maybe it's not even a religion.

It's just a pessimistic, nihilistic. It's not at all, because Buddha said, not only said that, he also said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering, which means I show you how suffering arises. In other words, it's mind created by yourself, unconsciously created, which creates the self, the unconscious self.

I teach suffering and the end of suffering. So I show you how suffering arises, and I show you how suffering can end. So that's the other part.

Of course, academics at universities, they treat it, it doesn't mean anything. Suffering can end, it's just some kind of empty promise. So we have the horizontal dimension of life.

Sometimes you can use the symbol of the cross, which cross is an ancient spiritual symbol that actually predates Christianity, but then it became very meaningful in Christianity with an added meaning. Cross is the intersection of the horizontal dimension and the vertical dimension, the intersection. So that regards states of consciousness, human consciousness.

Humans live in the horizontal dimension is a dimension of time, of past and future, of whatever activities you have, where you as a person exist here in the horizontal dimension. Then there's a possibility of awakening to the vertical dimension of life. The vertical dimension is the dimension of awareness, we could say, or presence.

It is a state of consciousness that is very different from the normal states of consciousness, and yet not totally unfamiliar to many. The important thing to realize, it already is in you, but it is unrealized. This is why we use the analogy sometimes, or Jesus used it as the seed.

It already exists in you, but you haven't realized it, that's all. And that's a very important point, because as I mentioned earlier, many spiritual seekers, they seek to achieve awakening. They seek to obtain, acquire, attain enlightenment or awakening.

And this in itself, that desire to attain, to achieve, is actually an obstacle, because you cannot achieve something in the future that is already your deepest reality here now. So you cannot achieve it, but you can only realize it. It's the important difference between these two words.

Achievement implies time. Realization is something else. You realize something that's already here and now.

This dimension of consciousness is already within you as your very essence, but you are still asleep to it. You have not awakened to it. In India, in spiritual psychology, philosophy, whatever you want to call it, they have the interesting term, it's called

Turiya.

Turiya means the fourth state of consciousness. The first state of consciousness is dreamless sleep. The second state of consciousness is a dream state.

The third state of consciousness is a normal waking state. And then the fourth state of consciousness is the one that is a transcendent state and that it is the purpose of every human being, the purpose of human life here, why you have incarnated here. The purpose is to realize that Turiya, the fourth state of consciousness.

That's all that it is. And so the strange thing is, you can only find it in the now, not in some imagined future. But the weird thing is, some people need to practice for many years, seemingly, they're seeking in time, and they need to seek and seek in time, until they finally reach a point of realization, which is that they don't need time.

But they needed the time to get to that realization. That even applied to the Buddha. He practiced spiritual practices, became highly accomplished at spiritual practices for several years.

And then after he said, there's something not right, he was practicing and practicing. And one day, I'm kind of paraphrasing or summarizing the whole story. And one day, he sat under a tree.

And he stopped, every search stopped. He gave up searching completely. In other words, time disappeared.

He wasn't thinking about his past, or I haven't achieved it yet. Why shouldn't have embarked? I was so well off when I was a young man.

Why did I leave my family? Gone. All that was gone.

No future. Just the present moment. Everything, time passed.

All conceptual thinking came to a stop.

[Speaker 3] (22:36 - 22:53)

And what arose was just pure conscious awareness. And that was the end of suffering. It was the end of the self.

[Speaker 1] (22:54 - 24:20)

And Buddha, as you may know, is not anybody's name. It's a kind of, they asked him, who or what are you? When he started to teach again from this deeper level.

And all he said is, I'm awake. Buddha means the root of the word in Sanskrit is awake, to be awake. Who are you?

Awake. And now, what is the essence of that? What is the essence of that being awake?

As a little experiment, I could ask you various questions. Let's say, put it like this. What does it feel like to be you without memory of who you are?

Without thinking about your past, or the narrative, or what you have suffered, or changed? What does it feel like to be you? What is left when you do not refer to any memory or any anticipation?

In other words, come to the cessation of the stream of thinking, so that there's a gap in the stream of thinking.

[Speaker 3] (24:27 - 24:28)

Doesn't matter how long.

[Speaker 1] (24:30 - 27:23)

Are you still there with the cessation of the stream of thinking? Are you still there? But well, the answer is, what do you mean by you?

So ask yourself, as I realize this dimension of consciousness, where there is consciousness, but there's no content to it, because the content is the thoughts. There is consciousness without content. Are you still there, and what does it mean?

Am I still, because everybody is I, am I still there? And what does it mean, I, when I has no history, and no past and future? What is this space?

What is left? What is left? Very hard to put into words, and the strange is, the moment you put it into words, it's not it.

That's why, at the beginning of this wonderful Chinese book, written 2,500 years ago, if you haven't read it, you should, Dao De Jing. Good translation by Stephen Mitchell, by the way. If you haven't read it, Dao De Jing, at the beginning of the Dao De Jing, it says, the Dao that can be spoken of is not the true Dao.

Dao is that transcendent dimension of consciousness, it underlies, it's not just in you, it's not confined to you, it's not yours, it is universal, it underlies the entire manifested universe, it is the intelligence behind it all, so to speak. Am I still, am I still there, and what does it mean, I, when I have no content? Now, you can't really answer that question, maybe it's a silly question, but the question points you to a realization that is beyond words, and that is also why, similarly to this practice, a similar other practice that also recommended often by Ramana Maharshi, the wonderful spiritual teacher, he often said to people to use the meditation, who am I?

So, these are words, of course. Who am I? He said, meditate on that.

Okay, now, how do we do that? Same thing as just, who am I? The answer is not to be found on the level of your personality, or your age, or your gender, or your sex, or gender, personality, or status in the world, whatever, nothing to do with that.

The answer is not to be found in the conceptual realm at all.

[Speaker 3] (27:24 - 27:37)

So, who am I? The stillness that follows that question is the answer.

[Speaker 1] (27:40 - 28:16)

Although you can't talk of it, I'm talking anyway, because not as a substitute for it, but as helpful pointers no more. What is left that we, my stillness is one word we could use. There's a lovely line in the Bible, in the Old Testament it is, be still and know that I am God.

That's perhaps the most profound sentence in the Bible. Be still and know that I am God. Now, look at those words.

[Speaker 3] (28:17 - 28:23)

Be refers to being, being itself.

[Speaker 1] (28:25 - 29:53)

Still refers to the inner stillness, which is a cessation of conceptual thinking. And know, there is a very deep knowing that far transcends conceptual knowledge. There is a deep knowing.

Know that I am, I am is the first person singular of the verb to be. Many people don't always realize they look so different. It is the realization of I am, without adding anything to it, it is a very essence of beingness itself.

God is the transcendent source of all life. So these, all these words, be, still, I am, God, all point to the one central reality that is beyond words. So in the stillness, you realize that, that is the I am.

And again, in the Bible, another lovely phrase when they ask God, who are you? Was it Moses or Abraham? I can't remember.

Ask God, what's your name? Who are you? And God says, I am.

I am that I am. I am, or I am the I am. I would translate it.

[Speaker 2] (29:55 - 30:15)

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Eckhart Tolle Obstacles To Awakening [229d3782-1d48-4e0e-ac24-2d8eb44e0c16]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:42)

Obstacles to Awakening. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the ego and other factors that block us from deeper awareness. He explains why the ego loves opposition and thrives on feeling superior.

He says being obsessed with the need to be right in a conversation is a perfect example because some may defend their position so fiercely they become completely unconscious. He says awakening is the only thing that can save us from our egos. Eckhart believes with practice we discover a joyfulness in the depths of our being that has nothing to do with what's happening out there.

[Speaker 1] (0:44 - 55:54)

One of the most unconscious things that you can be engaged in is to be obsessed in a conversation with a need to be right. And you don't know what's happening. Why is this emotional need to be right within very unconscious people results in physical violence.

They're just discussing political thing and they get heated up more and more and then physical violence results. What for? Or driving in traffic, road rage.

Completely insane, but the ego loves it. Imagine how what the food for your ego when you get into a road rage. You are so right and that person is so wrong they're not even human anymore.

That's how wrong they are. They're not human. You might as well kill them because they're not human.

So you reduce people to mental figures, to mental abstractions and you reduce yourself because you're so identified with the mental emotional field that arises. You reduce yourself to a mental abstraction. This is the ego.

It's crazy. One important thing again, I'm mentioning it because it may still occasionally arise in you even though you are awakening spiritually. You need to be able to recognize the ego when it arises in you.

The ego loves opposition. Attempts to emphasize the otherness of other human beings. To make the others really other so that this is a mental concept and you can find this phenomenon very powerfully on the internet.

When people attack others through words, perhaps they wouldn't dare say that to their face, but on the internet, the internet is full of very angry egos attacking others and

identifying with their mental positions. So you identify the mental position and if somebody else's mental position you can see as your enemy is the opposite mental position that strengthens your egoic sense of self and the ego loves that. And now through the miracle of technology you can amplify that through the technology and your anger you can send it out into the world and you can make everybody wrong except you.

If you should discover that in when you look back about the last few years in your relationships and people that you have known, if by some strange coincidence or chance you discover that you have always been and are always right in any discussion, the others are always wrong. Isn't that strange? In every discussion, how is it possible that I'm always right and the others are always wrong?

I must be superhuman. No, you have a big ego, that's all. Another thing, I mention that because you might still find it arising in you from time to time.

Related to making wrong is complaining. It's a mind pattern that complains uselessly, not because something can be done about a situation, but complaining uselessly either in your mind or out aloud. You can complain about what are the favorite complaints?

Other people. Oh that's, well there's plenty of opportunity for complaining, you might have noticed. You can complain about people, what they did, what they didn't do, what they should have done, but didn't, and all kinds of things.

You can complain about what you're doing, you're doing it, but don't want to be doing it, but you're doing it, it shouldn't be, it's a very dysfunctional state to be in, but the ego, the ego loves it, it strengthens it. So, and then you complain about a place where you are. Some people never really want to be where they are, it's always very soon, soon they find something wrong here, and you, oh great, complain again.

And then you notice, if you look, what is the, what is the logic behind why complaining, why does that strengthen the ego so much? Well, it does that because this egoic sense of self functions through seeking superiority. It needs to be superior to someone else, but even if you complain about a situation or place, you can still feel yourself, you are superior to this place that you are complaining about.

In other words, whenever you complain about something or somebody or even some activity, you put yourself by implication into a position of moral superiority. So criticizing another human being by implication, you have made yourself morally superior because you're pronouncing judgment. So it's an egoic device, it's unconscious, it strengthens your false sense of self, and this is why the ego loves complaining.

And a good spiritual practice I recommend is, especially if you can detect the complaining pattern in your mind, you know that's been there or is there, set aside, let's say, between one o'clock and two o'clock, I will see, I will let go of any complaint, and I

will just relinquish complaining. See if I can go through one hour of this today without any mental complaint. So, and that's a good spiritual practice.

Now, what do you do when the moment the complaint pattern comes up in your mind, you become aware of it, and because that's your spiritual practice, and say, okay, this is pointless, it is useless, let's see if I can relinquish that. And then you let the thought come and you let go. And this is it, but it requires some awareness in you.

This only awareness can free you of the conditioned mind. And only awareness is the awakening out of the egoic consciousness. And so, the awakening is the realization that, yes, you have this form identity, yes, you have a past, but who you are is deeper than that.

And that awareness comes, begins to come when you become aware of your, the voice in your head. And you take one step back, so to speak, within yourself. And then you become aware of certain patterns, things that you tend to think repeatedly, perhaps been thinking for years, certain thought patterns that form the basis for your sense of self, certain stories that you repeat to yourself and others, things that you have done to people, things that you have suffered from people, things that you have achieved, things that you lost, all kinds of concepts. Now, the ego loves superiority, but of course, many egos find it very hard to get superiority, because for superiority, you need to identify with something that is better than others. So, there are quite a few millions of people in the world whose ego is struggling for superiority, well, you can do it at home, you can do it with your wife or your children, there you can be the controlling one who is always right, or the limited circle of your friends, but if you do too much there, you lose all your friends.

Usually, the ego looks for amplification through possessions, through a body that's better than other bodies. If you're lucky enough, your body looks stronger or better looking than other bodies, then for a few decades, 20, 30, then begins to get doubtful. You can feel superior to other bodies, either stronger or more beautiful or better formed.

So, there's this body identification, there's if you're lucky enough, I didn't, I wasn't, I didn't have a great body, neither beautiful nor strong, so that was out for my ego. Then my ego, you're struggling, how I'm verbalizing something now that was implied or unconscious, the ego looks, where can I be superior? And then my family history, was I from an aristocratic, I could identify with that as a mental concept, my family going back to the year 1200, and my ancestors, no, I couldn't go beyond my grandfather, didn't know who was his father, so there was nothing there.

And then started possessions, no, I was poor, I have no money to buy anything, I could afford a bicycle, but not a car, so there wasn't much superiority, although then I began to see, that was all in my 20s, beginning of finding superiority, not necessarily through possessions, but through enhancing a mental image. And my mental image was, I was

becoming intellectual, so I identified with knowledge, that I knew more than others, and I will show you how knowledgeable I am by making clever remarks and quote obscure philosophers and literature. And I carried my knowledge like somebody else would carry a designer dress or something, that I would carry my knowledge in the same way.

And then I was on my bicycle, and the BMW went past, zooming past me and almost ran me over, and I could think, well, how superior I was to this materialistic, undoubtedly uneducated person, that BMW. So I had a mental concept of myself, obviously, as superior, and you can have that, you have to be careful with that in spiritual terms, that you don't do that to other, but you develop a spiritual concept, who you are, you're spiritually advanced. Now you may be, you probably are, because otherwise you wouldn't be here, but the danger is to live through a mental concept of who you are.

That's a conceptual sense of self, a conceptual identity. Now, what would I have done if I, at least I had my mind, and so I had a relatively developed mind, so I could have a mental concept as a great intellectual, and so one day I would become a professor, I thought. Little did I know what was going to happen, but if I didn't have that, let's say you have neither possessions, nor family history, nor a good body, nor a good, sharp mind, not highly educated, how can I be superior?

And all the, oh, yes, the ego will very quickly find one of the most powerful ways of being superior, and that is you become a victim. I am a victim. You can be a victim on a personal level, because undoubtedly, having been born into this world, you must have met people who did bad things to you.

I did. And, of course, I do not doubt that there were people who did very bad things to you. That we cannot doubt.

It is also possible that there were people who did bad things to your group, whatever collective you identify with, no doubt, this also has happened. But to make that into a basis for your sense of self is a huge prison that you voluntarily enter, but it amplifies the ego. And immediately, the moment you have a mental concept of yourself as a victim, whether a collective victim or personal victim, by implication, you are morally superior to everybody else who is not a victim.

Oh. So the ego can be superior morally, and you're still, you're trapped in mental concepts. It's so seductive, the ego.

And so, every time you, whenever you got seduced into that sense of identity, it's never long before you encounter what the Buddha called dukkha, suffering. Ultimately, in any egoic identity, very soon you encounter unhappiness, you encounter suffering, you encounter a sense of lack, of not enough, you become angry. And so, the suffering cannot be separated from being, living on the surface level of reality, only the surface of who you are.

I compare that with the surface of the ocean, and every human being is a ripple. And some are waves, but it makes no difference. If you're a big human being with VIP, you're a wave.

Most humans are ripples. This is the surface of the ocean. And the ripple may not realize, because it's so identified with its form identity, that all it sees on the surface level is millions of other ripples.

Some of which are threatening, it compares itself, it tries to be superior to as many ripples as it can, but it's trapped in its ripple identity, not realizing that it is a temporary manifestation, very short-lived temporary manifestation of the ocean. Now, imagine a ripple that never realizes that it is a temporary surface manifestation of this vast, almost infinite being that is the ocean. And it lives on the surface in a sense of insufficiency, a very ultimately very frustrating kind of life in the surface I, never realizing the deep I.

But I'm using I as the pronoun when you say I. When you're on the surface only, whenever you say I, you refer to your story, your life that is a mental narrative. And this is what people refer to when they say I.

It's the surface I. But there's a possibility of realizing a deeper I, and I call that the deep I. And that is not related to who you are on the surface level.

On the surface level, your life could be a huge success story, or your life could be, by the way, no life is a huge success story for that long, just doesn't cost, or it could be a huge failure. Let's say your entire life is one bad decision after another, and you end up in a prison cell. Let's imagine that.

So your life could be that, or it could be that. The deep I has nothing to do with that. The deep I is a timeless dimension of consciousness.

And the deep I is encountered. Now you cannot encounter it by saying, now I have it. There it is.

The deep I can never become an object in your consciousness. Everything else is an object in your consciousness. When you look at something, the sense perception is an object.

It arises as an object, and then you look somewhere else, then another object arises, and you listen to something, and there's a sound. The sound becomes an object in consciousness. Or you have a thought.

The thought is like a ripple movement, so to speak, on the surface of consciousness. These are thoughts, and emotions are a little bit deeper, but they're still fairly close to the surface. They are wave movements on the surface of consciousness.

And yet you, the essence of who you are, you are consciousness. You are not an object in consciousness, although when you live through the ego, you make yourself into an object of your consciousness, like Narcissus. It started with him.

He looked into the puddle, saw a reflection of himself, and then he lived with an object in his consciousness and said, I, that's me. Amazing. But humans had to go through that.

We had to go through this egoic consciousness, but now comes a point, very soon, if not already, where we need to go beyond this very limited understanding of who we are, because if we don't, the egoic consciousness becomes increasingly dangerous and even insane, especially if amplified by technology. If the dysfunction is amplified by technology, in the past it didn't matter, people, you could only kill so many people with a sword or a club, but now amplified by technology, that state of consciousness is becoming a menace on the planet. So it's a danger to ourselves and to all life on the planet.

The transition from egoic consciousness to deeper realization of the transcendent consciousness, which is one way of putting it, must happen now, or very soon, in a sufficient number of people, and then the world will reflect this changing consciousness. Whether this can happen without any regressive movement first, I do not know, because many developments, consciousness develops slowly, but now more rapidly than before, but it never is just an upward movement, there's always a regression involved. Whenever there's a movement, you, there's a step back, and then it comes out.

It's a wave movement of consciousness, it goes, it is possible that we may enter a regressive period, I don't know, but it doesn't matter. The important thing is there is already a growing awakening in a growing number of humans, more than ever before, still a minority, but there is an awakening of this consciousness. And now, for the rest of the evening, we need to go more deeply into this awakening, transcendent consciousness.

We've looked at all the things that stand in the way, all the things that are very seductive, they seduce us away from that realization. It's very much when you are trapped in your mind, it's a hypnotic state, and in spiritual terms, you are actually asleep. When you are completely identified with every arising thought, you are in a state of spiritual sleep.

You're dreaming a kind of dream, and the dream that you're dreaming is conditioned by your past. So humans dream different kinds of dreams. If there's no awareness, then you are, in spiritual terms, unconscious.

Spiritual unconscious is very different from conventional unconscious. In conventional terms, when you're unconscious, obviously you are, you're knocked out, you go, but in spiritual terms, when you're unconscious, you're completely identified with the stream of

thinking, plus the emotions that accompany the stream of thinking. That's unconscious.

And then you're not present, you're not here, you're somewhere in your thought world. And even if a person like that looks at you, they see you through the veil of their thoughts, their conditioned mind. They're not really seeing you, not really, it's just, there's a huge sense of separation always.

This becomes the huge veil through which you look at the world, which is your mind, your conditioned mind. And you look at yourself in the same way. You become a stranger to yourself, you become alienated from yourself, you become an object in your consciousness.

This is a purely human thing. Other life forms don't have that, because it arises through thinking, which is a wonderful evolutionary step forward, a wonderful advance, but there was a huge price to pay for the development of the ability to think. There's always a price to pay.

And the huge price to pay was loss of awareness of the essence of who you are. Now, what about all the life forms that haven't arrived at thinking yet? Well, the dog, the dog, your dog or somebody else's dog, everybody knows some dogs.

A dog does not live through a mental concept. The dog has not arrived at the Narcissus thing, even if the dog might see himself in a mirror, either he begins to realize that it's a mirror or gets very excited. But it doesn't translate into a mental image.

The dog has no mental image, has no self-concept, it doesn't have a conceptual identity. The dog has no opinion about you, there's a consciousness there, but it's not abstract, it's not conceptual, it's not thinking, it just is and it looks at you. And there's no ego there, except very few.

And there are some neurotic dogs that show the beginnings of an ego, but the reason is they've lived with humans, a human neurotic ego for too long. But otherwise, it's a miracle how sane often the dog is compared to the owner of the dog. And how joyful the dog is, able to appreciate the present moment, how it greets the owner even after an absence of half an hour, as if it hadn't seen him for 10 years.

Such joy! Wow! He doesn't, he hasn't created a lot of past in the mind, it's just, so the dog exists prior to thinking.

What's happening to us, we are rising above thinking. That is a state of presence. So it's not that you no longer think after that, you transcend thinking, you're no longer in the grip of thinking.

You're able to think, but you no longer look to thinking for your identity, you no longer look to a sense or to a story in your mind and derive from it your sense of who you are.

So if you are not the story, who are you? Ah, well you are not an object that arises in your consciousness.

This is why when they asked Jesus, show us where is the kingdom of heaven, you talk about it all the time, where is it, show us where it is, and he says the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived, it does not come with signs to be perceived, because it's already here, it's within and without, it's already here, it's already here. So the consciousness that you are is not something you need to attain because you are already it. It's not something that you can look for because the very act of looking, the consciousness that's looking for yourself is yourself.

I'm looking for my true self, or you can say I'm looking for God, and you're expecting God to arise as an object in your consciousness. It would be very limited because any object that arises in your consciousness comes and goes. So can you become aware then, and here's the key, can you become aware that in addition to who you are as a person, and not so much in addition, but transcendent to who you are as a person, you are consciousness?

Because this is the one thing that is beyond any doubt in your so-called life. I'm saying so-called because you don't have a life. You are life.

You don't have it because we say I have my life, you separate, you see me and my life. You are life, and life is, the essence of life is consciousness that manifests in various vibrational frequencies. So even if we are dreaming this, perhaps this is your dream.

Let's imagine for a moment that you sitting there listening to man on a chair. Let's imagine for a moment that this is a dream, and if it is a dream, there still needs to be something about this dream that makes this dream possible, and that which makes this dream possible is the light of consciousness in which the dream appears. So the consciousness is prior to everything.

The consciousness is the ocean. The thoughts and emotions, the surface of the ocean, they're not separate. So you are the ocean.

What does that mean? You are consciousness in essence, which is timeless. How can I know that I'm consciousness?

You cannot know it conceptually. You can only know it directly in the gap between two thoughts. For example, now.

And now, in this now, let's just experiment with this now. You don't need to remember anything. What for?

I mean, you don't anyway. You don't, unless I ask you right now, you don't think of your name, you don't think of your email address, you don't think of your telephone number

or your entire past, unless I ask you and then you retrieve it from somewhere. But right now, you don't need any of this.

You don't need. Let's see what happens to you if you don't remember anything from right now. Just let's pretend that all that exists is this moment, and that nothing ever happened.

Wow. All that exists is this moment, nothing ever happened, and nothing ever will happen. And all that's left is this moment.

And in this moment, you don't remember your story, you don't remember your name, and yet there is something here that you cannot define. And what's left when you let go of past and future, which are thoughts, what is left is just a strange sense of presence. This is the undoubted fact that you are.

And when you say it, you would say, I am. This you cannot doubt. Everything else may be some kind of illusion when you add something to this deep sense of beingness, because when you say, I am, it's a sense of being.

If you're not familiar with English grammar, or you've forgotten about it, you might have forgotten that when you say, I am, it's the first person singular of the verb to be. It sounds like a totally different word. Why don't you say, I be?

But for some reason you say, I am. But I am is the sense of being. The sense of being, the sense of, I don't call it the sense of existing, because existing is, existence comes out of being.

X is Latin for out. So it stands out, which means anything that is manifested is existence. Your body exists for a while.

Every object exists. Sense perceptions exist. Thoughts exist.

They are manifested. But they can only exist because there's something that is formless, is a vast space that is the unconditioned consciousness prior to the arising of form. And you can sense it.

This is the great realization. You can sense it within yourself when for a moment you're not thinking, but you're not falling asleep. You're not thinking, and yet what remains in this gap between two thoughts is a sense of beingness.

You undoubtedly know that you are, that you can't question. That is the light of consciousness. You are that.

It's not an object. It's the eternal subject within which everything else arises. So it's the most magnificent thing if you can become aware here and now, or anywhere, it's always here and now, become aware to, we can put it like this now, another little signpost, you

become aware that you are aware right now.

You're aware that you are conscious. That's for sure. And to say that you are conscious is already a falsification.

It happens because we're using language. Language requires a subject and an object in a sentence structure. So even to say I am conscious creates already a duality between you and conscious, as if consciousness were an addition to you.

It would actually be more accurate to say I am consciousness. I am consciousness. And I am this consciousness, I use the analogy of the ripple and the ocean, that consciousness transcends totally who you are as a person, with a personal identity, the form identity.

It is totally transcendent, but it is not separate. It's, you are the little thing that comes out of the totality, out of the vastness of universal consciousness, produces a little ripple, and the ripple is, my name is so-and-so, and I was born so-and-so, and I've achieved this, and I failed at that. But that consciousness has come out of the universal consciousness.

It is an aspect of the universal consciousness that is experiencing itself for a very short time period as a human being. A human being. I love that expression, which we have to use in the English language, because the English language doesn't have a word that contains both man and woman.

The German language has a word, mens, which is both woman and man, one term, combines men and women. English language doesn't have that. So you have to say human being.

Even, well, some people say, well, there's still the word man and the human, but let's forget about that. You have a human being. You are a human being, meaning, this is how I interpret it.

It's very, very helpful. The human is your form identity, who you are as this person. And the being is your essence identity, the transcendent dimension that connects you with the totality of all life, that you are connected with the totality of consciousness.

That is in this analogy of ripple and ocean. The being is the ocean. The human is the ripple.

So you are a human being, and you need to live in both dimensions. If you lose yourself in the human dimension only, you are lost. This is why, in some traditions, you'd say you need salvation.

You need to come to the end of suffering, because if you live only as a human on the surface level of reality with your personal history and that unhappy story of me, you are lost. Basically, you're like, oh, where do I go now? And you're always never going there,

always, there it is.

No, no, go this way. No. Here, the human, and then the being.

The being is consciousness itself. The being transcends the human, but contains the human, like the ocean and the ripple. So you need to become, then, invite the state of pure beingness or presence into your life as much as possible.

And this is right now, for example, are you aware that you are conscious right now? What could be more obvious and ultimately easy to realize that this beingness is the fundamental thing about you, is you are an expression of consciousness. And there's no concepts in it.

It's only by relinquishing concepts can you realize that deeper essence. And then you can look at things, and this is a wonderful spiritual practice. Perceive things by looking or listening or touching, whatever.

You perceive things, develop the ability to perceive things without automatically mentally labeling them. Perceive, just look at a tree, and let go of the label of what it is, and look at it. And when you look at it, then there's in the background, there is an awareness, or we can call that awareness stillness.

It's another signpost pointing to the same place or no place. There's a stillness, but you need an alert, certain alertness, otherwise you lose the stillness immediately to the momentum of the noisy mind. So there's an alert stillness, and in that alert stillness, you can look.

I recommend first to do natural things that don't stimulate thought so much. You can look at a flower, you can look at a tree, you can look at the sky, the vastness, the spaciousness of the sky, without labeling it. Just, now what happens?

And you can do it here. You're sitting here, your sense perceptions, you see me, you hear the words, and you're also aware of the totality of this room. That's the surface level of this moment, is your sense perceptions.

And undoubtedly, that's already a wonderful thing, if you can step out of the conceptualizing mind and become aware of sense perceptions. You could call that come to your senses. In order to come to your senses, you have to step out of the stream of thinking, because otherwise the stream of thinking will absorb your entire consciousness.

So you step out of the stream of thinking. It helps to feel the inner aliveness in your body. The inner body, as I call it.

You've probably already practiced it or read about it in the books. To feel the aliveness that pervades the entire body, which is deeper than the physical body. There is an

energy that pervades every cell of the body.

And this intelligence with an aspect of the one consciousness is the organizing principle behind all the functioning of the body. And you can sense that can provide an anchor for being present. And once you can feel the body and you look around, you do it now as I speak about it, feel the inner body, the aliveness, and then you look around, and you will be able to look.

And it's a wonderful thing. You enjoy it so much. You'll be able to look around without needing to label it.

If you need a label, it'll be there, but not compulsively label or interpret everything. Just let it be, as the song goes. Let it be as it is.

When you come into the awareness of being, you are. And it's a beautiful way of perceiving the world when you are not mentally interpreting it. That is the level of form.

And then you become aware of yourself as the one who is perceiving, but not of yourself as the historical person. Because if you were perceiving through the historical person, you would be labeling things mentally. No, you become aware of yourself as the underlying consciousness in which the perception happens, the light of consciousness in which the perception happens.

So you're aware of two dimensions, the dimension of form and the dimension of formless consciousness, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness, the emptiness, the spaciousness, the essence of all life. And it's not yours. It's not anybody's.

It's the one. And now, if you're thinking in terms of, well, how does that fit in with God? You haven't mentioned God.

Well, that's true. I haven't mentioned God because the term God has been misunderstood a lot over the millennia. Not by everybody, but by most.

God, you cannot, obviously, you cannot understand God. It would be, it's just absurd to even make any statement because it's totally, I mean, language consists of just a few sounds. It's just a few sounds that are made by the vocal cords and air pressure.

So you have the vowels, A-E-I-O-U, and then you add a few air pressure sound. Are you expecting to understand the secret of the universe through the combination of a few sounds? And you're asking God to explain God, but I'll carry on talking anyway.

One can only give almost a poetic image or an analogy of what that is. God is the source of all life, the transcendent source of all life. It has no existence in space and time.

It does not exist because exist means to be manifested. God is the source of all life, that we perhaps can say. Now, we could compare that because we live in this sense-

perceived universe in our dimension, we could compare God to the life-giving principle that we all share, which is the sun.

And there's no coincidence that many ancient cultures worshipped the sun because obviously, without the sun, all life would immediately disappear. The very warmth in your body is ultimately derived from the sun calories. So the sun continuously emanates.

One could almost say, yes, it has a lifespan, but relative to our lifespan, it's eternal. So it's an analogy. The sun continuously emanates.

It emanates, and what it emanates is it gives life. So in this analogy, God is like the sun, but it is the transcendent source of all, not inhabiting this dimension that we know, but it emanates into this dimension and gradually creates this dimension, which is still in the process of being created. The universe, as we know it, is still being created.

The eternal source of all life emanates something into this world, and that is consciousness. Consciousness is the light of God. And when you sense the essence of yourself as consciousness, then you are aware of the light of God in you.

I do not recommend, however, that as some mystics have done in Christianity, in Sufism, in other traditions, they suddenly discovered that, and they were so overpowered that they actually said, I am God. I don't recommend that because people won't like it, and you don't need to say that. It's like the ray of sunlight.

If the ray of sunlight says, I am the sun, it's both true and not true. Yes, it is obviously still connected to the sun. It's inseparable from the sun, and yet it's not the sun.

So it depends how you look at it. But the wonderful thing is, when you realize the essence of who you are, it goes far beyond the essence of who you are. Because when you realize the essence of who you are, you're realizing the essence of the universe.

That is a miraculous thing. And ultimately, there isn't you and the universe. It's a oneness.

You and the universe are one. So when you realize something, the essence, this perceived universe is realizing something through you. When you awaken to this dimension, the universe is awakening to this dimension itself.

It's a miraculous thing. So it totally transcends who you are as a person, completely. And yet, that was the entry point.

The entry point was the unhappy little person. The unhappy little person was like the seed. And the seed became more and more unhappy as a seed.

And when the seed became sufficiently unhappy, it started to break open. And then something else emerged out of this unhappy seed. So let's be grateful for the

unhappiness that has brought us here.

And the frustrating person that you have lived with for many years. Because that was the seed for the awakening of consciousness. And the suffering was the seed.

And the universe continuously is evolving into greater awakening. And it evolves not through, and this is, I hope you don't regard it as bad news. Your comfort zone, which is a wonderful place to be from time to time.

But your comfort zone is not the place where awakening happens. And perhaps you all know that because your comfort, if you were totally in your comfort zone, you would now be watching TV with a beer. I feel so comfortable.

Or you have another smoke. Very comfortable. But life doesn't allow, very soon challenges you again.

And through the challenges, the deepening happens. And even here, as the awakening happens, through the challenges of life, the awakening deepens. And the challenges continue to come, but there's a difference.

Before you are awakened, life's challenges, which are unavoidable, before you awaken, life's challenges are transformed by the unawakened consciousness into unhappiness. And there's an underlying, erroneous belief that life should not be challenging me. Why all these difficulties?

Why does life throw one thing after another on my path to make my life? Is life out, or you might call it God? Is God out to sabotage me?

Is there some weird thing at work that just, why is it always me? Always things go wrong, and then that happens, and I solve a problem here, another one pops up there. That's how life, how evolution happens.

The difference is, you can now face a challenge and see, there it is. I accept this moment as it is, and then see if you can take any action, if it's necessary or not, or possible. Accept this moment as it is, is a very powerful portal into the transcendent state.

I accept this moment as it is, then, because you might as well, because it already is. I think it's much more wise to accept it than not. The ego's very survival depends on non-acceptance of what is.

It's antagonistic to what is, and that strengthens the ego. When you accept this moment because it is this moment, and it is already, then the portal opens up into a place of alert stillness. That's also where you contact the deeper intelligence, and not just your conditioned mind.

This is the intelligence of the one consciousness. So you enter immediately, you enter

the transcendent. Just a simple practice.

As I sometimes put it, make the present moment into your friend, not your enemy. That's already a very powerful spiritual practice. Become friendly with the present moment, no matter what form it takes.

And immediately, there's a deepening in you. And immediately, you feel, in the depths of your being, you feel the deep I, in that alignment with the is-ness of things. So that's a very powerful spiritual practice.

And then, when the challenges come, they're no longer transformed into an unhappy me. No, the challenge comes, and you look. And then, another aspect of what we are here talking about is it activates the deep I as a deeper intelligence.

And this deeper intelligence can deal with things in a much more intelligent way. Action arises. Insight arises.

Intuitive realizations arise from this deeper, from the deep I, the unconditioned consciousness. And wisdom arises. Wisdom is...

Intelligence itself is not enough to save us. I mean, we've developed intelligence in a struct... in a focused way through science, for example.

It's just a focused application of conceptual intelligence. It's through science. And science, which is a focused application of intelligence, is not going to save us.

Without wisdom, it'll destroy us. With wisdom, fine, it'll work. And wisdom can only arise to a human being who has some access to the deep I, the unc...

the consciousness, the unconditioned. Now, one other thing that arises when you have access to that, and you're rooted in the deep I, able to use both dimensions, form identity and essence identity. Able to have one foot in the form identity, one foot in essence identity, so to speak.

And then you have a balanced... a balanced life. And then you don't get frustrated with the things of this world, because nothing lasts for that long.

If you expect to be made happy by the things of this world, you condemn yourself to continuous frustration and suffering. So the world is not here to make you happy. The world is here to make you conscious.

And when you are conscious, you become, I wouldn't say happy, because it's a joyousness in the depths of your being that has nothing to do with what's happening out there, or not happening out there. There was a... I can't remember the exact...

I'm not good at quoting. There's a French writer, Camus, perhaps the most significant

thing he ever wrote was, he said something like, in the depths of winter, I realized deep within myself an invincible summer. So what that was referring to was that dimension of depths.

So it's an analogy. In the middle of winter, I realized within the depths of myself an invincible summer. That means this came out of a, perhaps it wasn't a permanent realization in him, but in the moment that he wrote that, or he was writing about something, an experience.

And it was experience of the deep I that is the invincible summer in you. And that might be a good thing to have in the winter in Winnipeg.

[Speaker 2] (55:58 - 56:21)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle Opportunities For Surrender [22a71d30-2b53-4247-9b7d-c7bb24db8e41]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:59)

Opportunities for Surrender. In this podcast, Eckhart begins with a few thoughts on meditation. He talks about the Chinese philosophy of Taoism.

He says one of its key principles is wu wei, which he explains loosely translated means non-action or to sit quietly and do nothing. Eckhart follows up with a quote from French philosopher Pascal who said, all the troubles of humanity can be traced back to a person's inability to sit quietly in a room. Eckhart says we're so immersed in the outer world that we don't even think to look inward.

He reveals it is our job to rescue our awareness from this hostage-like state of unconsciousness. Eckhart says to start by taking small steps in our daily lives and that all of life's crises, big and small, are meant to be opportunities for surrender.

[Speaker 1] (1:02 - 33:01)

Is this what is called a meditation? Maybe it is. Natural meditation.

Sitting quietly. There's an ancient Chinese saying from Taoism. I'm not sure how to pronounce it.

Something like wu wei, which is translated as sitting quietly, doing nothing. One of the highest virtues in Taoism. Sitting quietly, doing nothing.

But it has deeper implications. It means rooted in being and aware while you sit quietly, doing nothing. Rooted in being the Tao and being aware.

There was a French philosopher, perhaps it was Pascal or somebody like that, a few hundred years ago. And he said more or less all the troubles of humanity can be traced back to a person's inability to sit quietly in a room. So as you go back into your regular daily life, hopefully the retreat does not come to an end, but remains with you and within you.

The essence of the retreat is not the physical location, but a state of consciousness. Transcendent state of consciousness. Your task is to live, one could say, in both worlds or both dimensions at the same time.

Occasionally you may lose yourself in the worldly horizontal dimension, the doing realm, the thinking realm. And usually when that happens, you will notice dysfunctional, unpleasant inner states arising very quickly. Anxiety, fear, anger, irritation.

Resentment, trouble. And if you're in that state and are disconnected again from the

transcendent, the being dimension, the other dimension, that's the unconscious state. And if there is no trouble, you will create it.

That's what humans do. Troublemakers. But what's on an individual level and collectively, if you want to learn a lot, troublemaking collectively and watch the news as much as possible, have the main focus of your attention in your daily life in the present moment.

And the rest of your attention, so that's the main focus. Here's this. The rest of your attention is where you want to go to.

Whatever task you're engaged in has a certain purpose. The purpose is you want to finish the task and it has achieved its purpose. And that's here.

And that's in your peripheral, the peripheral vision of your consciousness. That's where you want to get to. And this is what you're doing in order to get there.

And your main attention is not where you want to get. And in the meantime, you're just doing it in order to get there. You can see how that's already creates an inner stress.

I'm here, but I want to be there. That's a normal way of living is the main part of people's attention is there. But in the meantime, they are here where they don't really want to be.

Rather be there. As shown in famous stickers on bumper stickers on cars, which say something like, I'd rather be fishing. When I visited Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher who is now passed away, he lived on Maui.

On his car, I saw a bumper sticker which said, I'd rather be here now. That's a good teaching on a bumper sticker. And this is a reversal almost of how humans normally usually live.

It's the opposite. That is in itself already a shift in consciousness. And then of course, you're also aware of the past, the certain things that may have relevance in the present.

That's fine. So peripherally, past and future, usually future is more important because you're moving towards that. And here's the central vision of present moment.

In the present moment, you're either actively doing something, or you are more passively perceiving something. You're there as an observer, or you're just there, not actively doing, but simply perceiving. That could be when you travel back from here already.

You might be sitting in a car. If you're driving, you're doing something. That's particularly important to be present.

Or you might be sitting on a plane. And there's a good opportunity for being the, you go

into the witnessing mode. There's nothing in particular to do unless you get out your laptop and start doing.

That's fine. And sometimes, situations arise that are problematic. That's quite normal in life.

They are challenging rather than problematic. And then you face the challenge. You look at it, so to speak, not necessarily visually, but you give it attention that this is a challenge.

Instead of unconscious reactivity, the challenge is your flight is canceled. It's not one of the greatest challenges a human can have. But some people react as if it were.

And when any challenge arises, is there anything I can do to respond to this situation? Or is that something where I simply have to say, well, for the time being, I accept the way it is because right now there's nothing I can do. I heard, for example, at some airports, they're so busy, not sufficiently staffed people, when the plane lands, they're still trapped on the plane for two or three hours.

It has happened in Toronto and other places. That's a good opportunity for surrender. Some people can't do that.

They start screaming and shouting. It has no particular purpose, but they can't help it. It happens to them.

So always the question is, is this an opportunity for surrender or is action called for? And that is some practice to get used to until it becomes second nature to have your attention in the present moment rather than elsewhere. And it usually implies you are aware of your surroundings.

That's inseparable from being in the present through your senses. A more alert human being than a normal human being, but an alertness in which there is no tension. Often alertness in a human is associated with being tense, but there's an alertness without tension.

But it's not enough to be just aware of your sense perceptions. That's a good thing. It also can help you to avoid dangerous situations that otherwise you just stumble into and you don't know how you got there.

You're more alert of your surroundings. You see how animals in that sense are very alert, because if they are not, they get eaten by other animals. So many animals have this incredible alertness, alertness, not the same as the human alertness, but it is an alert awareness of their surroundings that many humans don't have.

They walk in the street and they're not really there in their mind, thinking about all kinds

of things except where they are. And so they're not here. Whereas the bird sitting on a branch, or the deer that's stepping out of the forest when there's a field, and the deer stops for a moment, and the ears, they're very huge ears, they go.

And it can hear probably a hundred times better than the human. Or a bird on a branch sitting, it goes like this. And then suddenly it goes.

And of course there's no decision making involved when a bird suddenly flies off. It did not think, I'm now going to fly off this branch and I'm going to go over there. It just happens.

There's a flow to life. There's no mind. There is a consciousness there, but there's no conceptualization at all.

But when an animal rests, an animal also rests completely. It is completely at rest. Not thinking about my life.

I have to figure something out. What's the purpose of it all? This is why it can be very healing to live with an animal.

Yes, it can be quite a bit of work too, but it can be very healing to live with an animal and to have an animal presence in the house. Dog, cat, usually. This unproblematic existence, except when the dog or cat are neurotic, which can happen, but there are reasons for that.

Usually connected to their early life, just like human childhood, when things go wrong in childhood, it leaves traces. But usually dogs and cats in normal status, unless they're hungry or want to go for a walk, they can be really rooted in being and joyful. The cat purrs, the dog's tail wags, and it's a joy just to see it.

No problem with, no psychological problems, unless it's spent too much time with neurotic humans. It's a conscious practice. So an animal can bring you into the present moment, just to look at an animal in the present moment.

An animal that lives with humans may not be quite as alert as an animal out in the wild, because it knows that the environment is relatively protected. Nevertheless, dogs are quite alert, and cats too. So you become, again, the center of your attention always bring back into the present, because, first of all, because it's all there ever is.

Well, that's a good reason, because it's life itself. Your life situation, yes, it exists in time, there's a past and a future as far as your life situation is concerned, but it's not your life. I wrote about that a long time ago, but it's so important.

People confuse their life situation with something more fundamental, more real, more immediate, deeper, which is called life. Life situation is circumstances and events in your

life. And most of your life situation is an experience in your mind.

And then life situation is certain relationships, work situation, financial situation, living situation, all kinds of often problematic situations. It's very rare that all of these situations are working smoothly and perfectly. Relationships, family, professional, work, financial, living situation, health situation, all working in harmony and perfectly.

It can happen for short periods, but usually something somewhere goes wrong. It has to periodically and frequently. That's normal, and that's good.

But your life situation always has this element of uncertainty, instability too, although you might not recognize that when you look at seemingly solid things. And your life is the experience of this moment, the only thing there ever is. And if you neglect that, you miss the whole thing.

And then you reach retirement age or old age, and you say, was that it? And perhaps you spent your whole life trying to arrive at some point, and the points change that you want to arrive at, but you always want to arrive at some other point. So when your attention is in the present, yes, you're more alert, which is helpful.

You notice things that before you didn't notice, people, objects, all kinds of things around you, natural things. And it's quite, everything is a manifestation of life all around you. And the deeper aspect of being present is not just being aware of your surroundings, although that's fine.

You're aware of yourself as the aware presence. And that is the secret. That is the key.

That is not something that one can easily explain. You can only experience it, what it means to be aware of yourself, not as an ego self, like having a relationship with a conceptual identity. That's me.

I don't like me, or I love me. I'm in love with me. That's happened to Narcissus, and things after that didn't go well for him.

Although you hear that quite often in certain people, they love, I love, I love me. Well, it's a little strange. Who are you?

And who or what is a me? Oh, I hadn't thought about that. I love myself.

I hate myself. Oh, that's worse, even. That's the, that's not uncommon either.

I'm not happy with myself. But who is that I that constantly says these things? Who is that I that has a relationship with ultimately an imagined entity, entity, mind made, conceptual entity.

And this happened to me one night, as I talked briefly about briefly in the power of now,

when my mind said, I can't live with myself anymore. Because the I was unhappy. And I couldn't stand the unhappiness anymore.

So I couldn't, I can't live with myself anymore. And this sentence, suddenly, I looked at it. And I realized it was a very strange statement.

I cannot live with myself. At that point, I realized that there's, there must be two of me here. I and the self that I cannot live with.

That's an incredible, that was an incredible realization. There's two of me. There's the unhappy me that I cannot live with.

Who am I and who is that unhappy me? This is almost like a koan, like a Zen riddle that you can't, hard to answer or impossible to answer conceptually, but I actually can answer it conceptually. I couldn't at the time, it took years before I realized what all this meant.

And that moment, the consciousness that I am that was trapped in the movement of thought and continuously absorbed by the movement of thought. This movement of thought created the entity to the person, the unhappy person, the entity, the unhappy entity, but the mind made entity. And it was so active, that it absorbed all of my consciousness was always trapped in the movement of self identified thoughts.

So it was trapped in there. And when the, this strange statement arose in my mind, and I looked at it, but looking at the statements, a sudden separation happened between the consciousness that was trapped in the movement of thought, who suddenly was able to release itself to extricate itself from the being held, held in the moment of thought and stood back. And there was I as the consciousness, looking at the unhappy thought movement.

So it was a separation. Consciousness was withdrawing from the dimension of thinking. And then, very quickly, thinking subsided.

It was no longer fueled. Without the consciousness, there can be no thinking because thinking is not possible without consciousness. But a thought is consciousness that has taken form.

Whereas the realization of I as consciousness is consciousness that is prior to form or unconditioned. So I became aware of myself as consciousness as the I, and the thought then began to dissolve. Without consciousness, it's nothing.

And thought is consciousness that has taken form. And it dissolved and then I was kind of felt like falling into some hole, but it wasn't fear, not fearful. The next morning, I woke up and I was at peace.

Like a new, a new person or no person. I was just contemplating things around me and

everything was lovely. And I didn't know why I was at peace.

And then I went around the city on the buses, still at peace, the hustle and bustle of London where I was living. I was at peace. Why was at peace?

I couldn't understand it. Of course, now, the peace that passes all understanding. Several years it took me to understand why.

That's very weird. I did not realize that I was at peace for one reason. And the reason was that I wasn't thinking that much anymore.

Especially there's no, the whole movement of thought that is imbued with a sense of self, self referential thought wasn't happening anymore. Occasional thoughts, yes. But a lot of the time, there was just awareness, but I didn't have a word for it.

I just called it peace. And so what happened then was the consciousness had withdrawn from, until then it had been imprisoned in the movement of thought and continuously absorbed by thought. And then it stepped out.

And that is, later I realized that one realization came to me first when I talked to a Zen monk. I happened to see a Zen monk and he, we talked a bit about spirituality and Zen. And he said quite simply, Zen is really quite simple.

It's you stop thinking. I had expected a more complicated answer, but then I realized that's actually happened to me. I stopped thinking, especially overthinking.

I could still think and some thinking of course still happened, but there were long stretches, but there was just a very peaceful awareness. And then what was building up was out of that awareness came a deep joy. And that was very strange.

Sometimes the joy was so intense that it was incredible. And I was just sat there forever in my bench in the park for long periods. That really is what's called bliss.

And it's just, oh, that intensity of bliss that I had for two or three years, I don't seem to have anymore. I have peace, but the intensity of bliss. Now, I don't know what it could be that when you get used to something, it doesn't stand out that much anymore.

And it becomes quite normal. And perhaps I experienced a bliss because there was still the contrast. I remember my previous state of consciousness.

And then I was there, but who knows? But this is the main teaching then, all spiritual teaching come down to this. Consciousness has to be rescued from where it's been.

Conscience has been kidnapped by thought. And this is, your task is to free consciousness from where it's been trapped in involuntary compulsive thinking. That's always thinking that is imbued, the identify with imbued.

So every thought is imbued with a sense of self. So that's the spiritual practice is that the stepping out of the moment of thought so that I is no longer confused with the moment of thought. That would be the super, the surface I.

So the cessation of thought and when you practice present moment awareness and make that the main, the central focus of your life, whether you're active or passive in that moment, it doesn't matter. If you're active, you give your attention to the doing, you honor it, you give it attention so that it doesn't become stressful. That sounds almost impossible, I know to many people.

If you give your fullest attention to the doing, it's not really stressful unless your mind project itself to some future point or your mind while you're doing something, things of several other things that you really should be doing also at the same time. Of course you can't, you can only do one thing at a time. Another definition of Zen that a master gave is Zen is doing one thing at a time.

That's too simple, isn't it? Too simple. So you give, if it's doing, you give your attention to it.

Then if inspiration is helpful in that particular activity, it will flow into what you do because you're connected with the unconditioned consciousness, the presence. With some doings, you don't need any inspiration, you just need to get it done. You do the dishes or whatever it is, you don't need particular inspiration.

All the while you do it in a place of giving it your attention, honor it rather than do something but would rather not be doing it, but I'm doing it anyway. That's how many people live all the time. If you have a work situation where you work for your daily work, you need to decide, is it possible to honor the work that I'm doing, even if it's something simple and may not be what I ultimately want to be doing, but right now I need to honor the present moment.

Whatever it is, in whatever form it arises, it's my responsibility is to honor life by honoring the present moment. And if your work situation is so dysfunctional that the environment in which you work, for example, or the kind of work that is demanded of you may be what is perhaps conventionally called soul destroying, so that this is not a work that you could do and honor it because it's just very unpleasant. If it's that kind of thing, then you need to remove yourself from that situation.

Even though you may be stepping into uncertainty, you cannot remain in a toxic situation like that where the honoring of what you do seems impossible because, for example, you might be surrounded by people who are in very negative states. There are many situations like that. But in other situations, you may be able to say, okay, this is not the ultimate thing that I want to be doing.

But for right now, this is what I'm doing. And I'm able to honor what I'm and I do it carefully and consciously. So only you can know whether you're able to do that, or whether you need to remove yourself from that situation in order to seek something else that is more compatible, that is compatible with presence.

Many, many things are compatible with presence. And quite a few other things are not.

Eckhart Tolle Our Experience Of Life Is Not Determined By What Happens To Us... [d4153b63-479c-4d55-a580-71a3acc400b2]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:53)

Our experience of life is not determined by what happens to us. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to an audience in Chicago. He recalls fond memories of traveling to the Windy City to my Harpo studios back in 2008.

For 10 weeks, Eckhart and I hosted a webinar based on his New York Times bestselling book, A New Earth. The book had a profound impact on me and I wanted to share it with a larger audience and those sessions were groundbreaking to say the least. Since then, millions of people have downloaded that webcast and listened to our conversations.

If you haven't already, you really should. I believe rolling back the ego and focusing on being rather than doing opened the door to awakening for me and for many. Today, Eckhart continues his work, ever reminding us that our experience of life is not determined by what happens to us.

It's defined by how we respond.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 56:40)

Lovely space and wonderful people. All very conscious and present. I can feel it.

Except for one or two. And those one or two were dragged here by a friend who said you must come. But there is a chance tonight that you might begin to awaken.

You may not know what that means yet. And you might say, what are you talking about? I'm awake already.

But to awaken in a deeper and different sense, in a spiritual sense, most of you are here because you are going through the awakening process already, a shift in consciousness. And that is characterized by many things, but primarily the lessening of suffering and unhappiness in your life and a more harmonious way of relating to your fellow human beings and increasing sense of satisfaction that does not depend on external conditions, although you're still able to appreciate lovely things when they come into your life, but you do not become devastated and incredibly unhappy when the lovely things that have come into your life leave you again, because that is how the universe in this dimension operates. There's winning and losing and you gain and you lose. And there's continuous flux.

And there's the impermanence that the Buddha already talked about. And Jesus talked about, and you might say, did Jesus talk about impermanence? Well, he didn't use the

term as the Buddha did.

But he said, don't get, and this is my free translation, don't get attached to the things that can be stolen by thieves or consumed by rust, moss and rust. I'm sure you know the lines from the gospels. Don't get attached to the things that can be taken away by thieves, where thieves break in and steal, or things that can be consumed by moss and rust.

So he uses these two images, thieves coming and taking things away, and the image of seemingly solid material substance turning out to be not that solid after all, because it can be quickly, relatively quickly consumed by rust. Rust dissolves the seeming solidity of matter. And moss, of course, as maybe less so nowadays than used to be, but they still occasionally get into my sweaters.

And suddenly you have a little hole in there. And if you don't take it out soon enough, the entire sweater is gone. Jesus uses these images to talk about the fact of impermanence.

So not getting attached to things, the things of this world, but being able to appreciate the things of this world. Because as you know, in many spiritual traditions, there has been the tendency, both in Christianity and Buddhism and Hinduism, there has been the tendency of completely denying the physical and material realm, or even regarding it as evil. And so there are ascetics, monks, and nuns, and so on.

In medieval times, there were even many religious people who disliked beauty. They didn't want beauty. They said, no, this is all corrupt.

This is, I would suggest, not a balanced way of being in this world. But neither is it a balanced way of being in this world with this excessive attachment to things and the unhappiness arises when you don't get what you want, or when what you have is taken away, or the unhappiness that arises when you simply imagine not getting what you want, or imagine that something that you have, you're going to lose. So you have a difference, a state of consciousness arising that is relatively free of unhappiness and capable of connecting with other human beings at a deeper level than the level of personality or person.

And I have a feeling we may be going into this also more deeply tonight. I have a feeling I'm saying this because, as you might have noticed, the talk tonight has not been planned in advance. So it comes out of the present moment.

So I don't know what's going to be said, of course. We're here in Chicago. I fairly rarely talk about the past, or especially my personal past.

I don't often think about it. However, I could not help being back here in Chicago, thinking about early springtime in 2008 when I flew into Chicago every week for 10 consecutive weeks and did the webinar, seminar on the World Wide Web with Oprah. We

met here in the Oprah studio in Chicago and talked for an hour and a half about the book, A New Earth.

And people all over the world were tuning in. And by now, it's something like 50 million people have watched it by now. Just an amazing event in the collective consciousness and almost spirituality going mainstream.

For a while. It's not yet mainstream, as you might have noticed when watching the mainstream media. But that's fine.

You do not judge the evolution of human consciousness by watching television or whatever happens on the internet. This does not give you a clear reflection of human consciousness. The simple fact is that most of the things that are given importance in the mainstream media are precisely those things where human unconsciousness manifests most strongly, such as politics and all very destructive events.

So the media tends to focus there. And if you take that as a reflection of where human consciousness is at right now, you get a distorted view of where the collective consciousness actually is. So what ultimately matters is and the only thing you can take responsibility for is your state of consciousness in the present moment.

So I just mentioned briefly this event with Oprah that brought many people to the point where they were able to begin to awaken spiritually. And I'm sure there are quite a few of you here who witnessed that webinar. And that was time is a very weird thing.

You know the expression, it seems like only yesterday. And the older you get, the more often you say that. It seems like only yesterday.

And time is a very strange thing. If you look at it, we are all in the grip of time on one level of our existence. Certainly, we are all like passengers on a speeding train.

We could use that analogy. Passengers on a speeding train. And the older you get, the faster the train seems to travel.

And you cannot say, please stop. I want to get off. At least not in the physical realm.

It's not going to stop. And what is the destiny of the train? You are heading for a train crash.

Another word for it is death. So when I say you can't get off the train, that of course is true on one level. And on a conventional level, it is very true.

Another analogy that one could use for time is it's almost like a fire that slowly and then more and more quickly consumes us all. We are being consumed by time. And then in the end, you as a physical form evaporate.

And suddenly the chair, your favorite armchair where you used to sit, is completely empty. And you are gone. This is very strange.

So time is a fire that consumes us all slowly and then more quickly. I spoke a few days ago in New York at the Beacon Theater on Broadway. Yes, I was on Broadway.

And a few days before, I happened to see on YouTube, there was an old video clip that said, traffic and people walking on Broadway in 19, I think it was 1929. And it was like a five-minute clip of hundreds of people walking. All the men were wearing hats and the women too.

Everyone was wearing a hat. And cars, there were already cars. And the people were busy going somewhere very important.

Very important. But now, nobody knows who these people were because they have all already dissolved. And then, as I was in the car approaching the theater, I was looking out of the window and seeing people and cars walking on Broadway in 2018.

And realized, this won't be all that long before all these also will have dissolved. And in most cases, if you took a photo and showed the photo to someone 100 years later, in most cases, you would say, nobody knows who they are, who they were. And even if one or two are remembered, what difference does it make?

So, the very strange fact of how short-lived our existence is on this level, and facing the impermanence of things, impermanence of all phenomena, in itself, strangely, can be either a frightening thing that you don't want to hear about, or it can be either the beginning of a spiritual awakening or a deepening. The contemplation of impermanence, if you don't turn away from it, but contemplate it. And that could be a simple thing, as what I've just mentioned, is watching a clip on YouTube.

I also showed another clip, and that showed a similar thing even earlier. It was Berlin in, like, 1913, the very first cameras and short city scenes there. Just amazing to watch.

If you watch it and don't judge it in any way, just contemplate that, the fact that all these people with all their important business and all their problems, because the strange thing is, by the way, all your problems dissolve with you. When you're no longer here as a physical form, then what you thought were all your important problems, they also evaporate. And many of the problems actually evaporate even before then, because sometimes only a little bit of time is needed, and the whole thing is evaporated.

But at the latest, the problem dissolves when you dissolve. And this is an interesting fact, because many people derive their sense of identity primarily from their personal problems. So when you meet somebody and they start talking about what do you do, who are you, and if they really open up to you, they'll begin to talk about their personal problems.

And so it's amazing how many, for how many people, their own sense of self, and there may still be one or two here to whom that also applies, they regard their sense of self as a problem that requires a solution. And they are continuously looking for the solution of the problem of me. I have to work it out.

You wake up in the middle of the night, I have to work out my problems. And you might have noticed, you have problems. But if you look on Facebook, you might not realize that other people also have problems.

Because on Facebook, they are all very happy. And you see the wonderful dinners they consume in restaurants. And that gives you the misleading impression that you are the only one who has problems.

But everybody carries a burden of problems that is inevitable because life, you might have noticed, is extremely challenging. And there's nobody for whom life is not challenging. There's not even any life form in addition to human beings.

There are other life animals and plants. For all life forms, life is precarious and dangerous and challenging and fleeting. And every life form is confronted with whatever challenges correspond to that particular life form.

So that's a very interesting fact. Life does not cease from challenging you. And that doesn't change even if you awaken spiritually.

You will get other challenges, different kinds of challenges. The only difference is, as you awaken spiritually, the way in which you respond to the challenges changes. And that is all important.

How you confront the challenges of life, how you react to or respond to the challenges of life determines how you experience your life. How you experience your life ultimately is not determined by what happens to you. Because most people think that that's the case.

How you experience your life or what you call your life is ultimately not determined by what happens to you. It is determined by how you respond to what happens to you. And how you respond to what happens to you determines what happens in the so-called future.

How you respond now. Some people, whenever they are challenged by life, they behave as if there was something very wrong with their life. That things are not supposed to go wrong or be challenging.

This is not supposed to happen. And this works on both a small scale and large scale. And you might have met people, and perhaps you were one of those people in the past, people who are continuously complaining about things.

They're continuously not in alignment, continuously out of alignment with whatever is going on around them. Situations and people and places and events. Either something is there that shouldn't be there.

Something is happening right now that should not be happening. Or something is not happening that should be happening. Or I should be somewhere else, but I'm here.

And that's a huge problem. I'm trying very hard to get there, but I'm here. Now, this sounds a little weird when I say it like this, but the sad fact is that many people live like that for most of their life.

They are not aligned with what they are doing right now. Yes, they are doing it, but they are not fully in the doing because they'd rather be somewhere else. They would rather be already at the end of this particular activity.

And in that mindset, that means your life is stressful continuously. Stressful means there's a mental projection of where you need to be or should be, but you're here. So you're engaged in this activity, but you have certain thoughts that tell you either you already want to be at the end of what you're doing or although you are doing this, you really should also be doing that and that and that, but you're doing this.

Dreadful way to live. Normal, by the way. It's called normal.

And you see it when you watch the movies. Everybody's like that in the movies, so it must be normal. They're all like, and people love to see the dysfunctional way in which people live reflected on TV and in the movies.

They reflected their own dysfunction and that's a confirmation that, okay, I'm actually okay because everybody's unhappy. Everybody is living in this way or in a state of almost continuous dissatisfaction, except for brief moments, sometimes to do with having a good meal or sex, could do it for a while. This doesn't last very long.

Or you get what you wanted. You get what you wanted. The thing that you said, oh, that's going to make me happy.

And then you get it. And for a moment you feel, ah, and you feel this happiness arising and you think you feel this happiness because you got what you wanted. But if you look more deeply, you will realize that you do not really feel happy because you got what you wanted.

You feel happy because for a very short time period, the mind structure that was always unhappy with the isness of things, there's something is missing here. I need that. I need to get rid of that.

I need to get, that mind structure subsides. And for a moment, you don't want anything

except what is here now. And that suddenly you feel more alive.

You feel, ah, then perhaps you begin to understand why the Buddha talked about the greatest obstacle to spiritual awakening being continuous. Well, he called it, and in the translations, it's called desire. But a better translation of what the Buddha was talking about is a more vital term is wanting, the continuous wanting, wanting this, wanting that, wanting the neediness, the wanting.

And that is a mind structure that operates in humans that prevents them from experiencing the deeper dimension of reality, which we could call the timeless dimension, the timeless dimension of consciousness. Remember, we talked about time a few minutes ago. We talked about the express train that you can't get off.

We talked about the fire that is consuming you. That is time. That is true.

But the good news is that there is, in every human, a deeper dimension of consciousness. In many humans, it is a deeper dimension of consciousness. It's only a potential, a latent potential, like a seed.

In others, the seed has already begun to sprout. There is the possibility in humans of accessing and living from the deeper dimension of consciousness. And accessing that deeper dimension of consciousness is what we could call spiritual awakening, where you realize that in addition to being a person, a personality or a person who lives in this world of time, of past and future, in addition to being this person, there is more to you.

There are other dimensions to who you are, or more specifically, there is a deeper dimension to who you are than the merely historical person. And that's why we are here tonight, because I want this not just to be a conceptual talk, although, of course, we're using words. But the aim is for you to experience, and even if it's only a glimpse, or to deepen.

For many of you, it will be just a deepening because you already are sensing what it is that I'm talking about. I know what he's talking about. You're already sensing within yourself what it is that I'm talking about when I speak of a deeper dimension of who you are, a deeper sense of identity of who you are.

Now, we need to look just very briefly. I'm sure you're already familiar with this, and you recognize it in your own life. Identity is of extraordinary importance.

Your identity. Very few things are more important than your sense of identity, which is your sense of who you are, because everything flows from there. Everything flows the way in which you act in this world, what you think, how you relate to other human beings, how you perceive so-called reality is determined by your sense of self.

Your sense of self is the filter through which you experience the world, and your sense of

self is your identity. The great question about identity is, who am I? That is the ultimate question.

Now, as you may remember, in ancient Greece, the all-important dictum in ancient Greek philosophy, probably the question was first uttered by Pythagoras, one of the very earliest Greek philosophers. Pythagoras was primarily a spiritual teacher, which is not generally known. It was probably him who said the all-important dictum is, know thyself.

Know yourself. Know thyself. And the Greek philosophers regarded it as so important that it was inscribed in many places in stone.

At the Oracle in Delphi, it was inscribed in stone. Know thyself. Okay, so that points to the fact that identity and self-knowledge is extraordinarily important.

Now, in conventional discourse, if you say, know thyself, or who are you? They say, what are you talking about? Of course I know myself.

And then they come up with, that's my name. That's what I do. That's my education.

That's my personal circumstances. And that's who I am. And anything else would be absurd.

That's how I would conventionally, if you go to a TV station or something and talk, I want to explore identity. And say, what are you talking about? This is the situation.

You're wrong. We have other things to talk about that are more important. There are many things that are relatively important.

And there are other things, or rather, one thing that is absolutely important. And this one thing that is absolutely important is the subject matter for our gathering here. And once you realize that, that deeper dimension in yourself, then all the so-called problems that you have in your life, you are no longer all consuming.

They still exist on one level. But even there, changes may happen and will happen. But you are no longer consumed by your problems.

And that's a wonderful liberation. And that means you no longer derive your sense of identity from your problems. When we look very closely at what a problem is and how it lives in you, we inevitably realize that a problem exists in your mind as a thought or a collection of related thoughts.

So when you wake up in the middle of the night and you say, you think about your problems, which may be either of a physical kind, because health is a big thing, your body can cause lots of problems, especially as you get older. Another very challenging is your financial situation, can be. Another challenging thing can be your professional or your work situation.

Another problem area can be your living situation. And last but not least, other people. One of the greatest problems in your life, you might have noticed, the source of problems in your life, to a large extent, is people.

Because you might have noticed people are extremely challenging. So much so that Jean-Paul Sartre, the existentialist philosopher, said, hell is other people. So these are the problem areas.

Now, we all have problems. I suppose I have problems, but I can't remember them right now. There's a question, I actually mentioned it in one of the books, a question that you can ask yourself if you feel you're being consumed by your problems and you can't cope anymore and it's just getting too much.

The question that you ask yourself that will bring you into a deeper dimension of sanity, a deeper realization of who you are, and that simple question is, what problem do I have at this moment? And you might notice a strange shift because before you said, oh God, to have problems, you need to think about your problems. Okay, let's stay with that question for a while.

What problem do I have at this moment? Now, you might say, well, I have a toothache. I had that the other day, it was very bad, but not right now.

But even if I had it now, it wouldn't be a problem, it would be a toothache. It's only if I make a problem out of it, then the whole identity comes around it. Or you become immediately, there's always a victim, an element of being a victim when you have a problem.

What problem do I have right now? What problem do you have right now? You might not know where you're going to have your next meal.

Maybe your bank account is empty and your pockets are almost empty. I had situations in my life for quite a while like that. Now, that could be, say, you might say, of course, I have a problem now.

I have no money and what am I going to eat tonight? You've already left the now. So if you stay with the now, what problem do I have now?

Well, I'm in a prison cell and I'm in for another 15 years. Isn't that a problem? Well, it is, but I asked about now.

Now, if you really go into it, that removes past and future from your mind. And you might feel yourself breathing. And then you might become aware of sense perceptions.

And you look around wherever you are and you see what you see and you hear what you hear. And perhaps you feel that your body is alive. Perhaps you feel a sense of aliveness

pervades your body and your breathing and your perceiving.

And suddenly you don't actually have a problem. You may have one later, but that won't be a problem. It'll be a challenge.

Certainly there are challenges. If a wild animal came running into this room towards me, would I have a problem? No, because there's no time to make it into a problem.

It would be a challenge. And how would I respond? I don't know.

I might run away. I might face it. I might do what they tell you in Canada when you go for walks in the forest.

If you encounter a black bear, make yourself as big as possible. And you go, ah. But if you encounter a grizzly bear, run.

Well, that might save your life one day. But an animal running towards is not a problem. It's a challenge.

And I would respond to the challenge. Now, if I wake up in the middle of the night and I think about the possibility of being attacked by an animal, that's a huge problem. And there's no solution to it because it arises in my mind.

And now you need to see, first of all, that in the present moment, a problem cannot survive. So if your attention is in the present moment, which is the entire essence of Zen, if you want to study Zen, you can either study Zen for the next 20 years or you can listen to what I'm saying right now. Which is, be present with what is, totally.

Be aligned with this moment. Let go of past and future, except when you need them for practical purposes, but not as something that tells you who you are. And give attention to this moment.

Not only give attention to this moment, whatever arises in this moment, which are sense perceptions and possibly occasional thoughts or feelings. Give attention also. And now we go already, I was going to keep this towards the end of the talk so that you don't leave before, but I'll do it now.

You go so deep into the present moment that you encounter the essence of the present moment. And the essence of the present moment is not what you're perceiving. That's fine.

When you're present, it's even you're perceiving things more clearly and more vitally. And that's already a wonderful change. Whereas before, if you're absorbed in continuous thinking, which is where problems reside, then you are hardly aware of your surroundings.

You're just peripherally aware of what's going, peripherally aware. There must be a sky somewhere, but you may not even have looked at the sky in several days. If you're really absorbed in your problems, you might not have looked at the flowers or the trees or the beautiful dog or whatever.

No, you had more important things to think about. My problems. So you were consumed by that.

And then when you step out of that already, your sense perceptions become more clear and vitally alive. And you see beauty and aliveness where before there was just an obstacle in your path. And you can see other human beings without continuously having to judge them through the mind.

Because when you're present, your sense perceptions are not filtered through conceptualization. That's just one of the keys. We come back to that.

Your sense perceptions are not filtered continuously. Sometimes of course they are, but they are not obsessively and habitually filtered through conceptualization, which means the conditioning of your mind, commenting, providing a running commentary continuously on your life experience. This is what I call the voice in the head.

That talks and talks and says stuff that makes you unhappy a lot of the time. And you don't even know that the voice in your head makes you unhappy. You think reality makes you unhappy.

You think a situation makes you unhappy. And you don't even realize that your inner commentary about a situation makes you unhappy, but not the situation. And that is in 90% of cases of unhappiness.

The unhappiness is caused by your thoughts about something, but not about that thing. You can easily verify that in any situation where unhappiness arises in you in whatever form. I'm using the word unhappiness as a generic term for what the Buddha called suffering.

So whenever you feel anything that doesn't feel good, irritation, anger, resentment, sadness, any form of stress, many, many forms of unhappiness. And now you look at the unhappiness, does it arise from the situation I'm in? Or is my mind saying that this situation is really bad and is complaining as if the complaining could bring about a change in the situation.

Now, sometimes of course, action can bring about a change in the situation, yes. When you become irritated about something, see where does this irritation arise? Is it this situation?

Because I'm standing here and I'm breathing and I'm looking around and I'm standing

and I'm breathing and I'm looking around. Is that enough to make me unhappy? No, to be unhappy, I need to add certain concepts to that situation in my mind and believe in them completely and saying that this is awful.

This is just awful. Why can't they do something about it? They are so incompetent.

And your body doesn't know that your mind is creating this. The body reacts as if what your mind is saying were absolute reality. And the body feels very unhappy too.

You feel emotions that are very unhappy. And if that moment, any time when suffering arises, you say, where does it arise? Is it the situation or is it the narrative in your mind?

What if it is the narrative in my mind and not the situation? Is it the situation or is it the narrative in my mind? Now, and then you said, let's experiment now.

How would I experience this situation if I did not add this narrative to it in my mind? In other words, if I did not add useless, ultimately useless thought to this situation, then what would I be left with? Okay, let's try it out.

Where's your problem now? Well, I'm breathing, I'm looking around and still breathing and looking around. People moving, not moving.

Suddenly you're not unhappy anymore. And you see you're actually become free internally and say, okay, that's it. Here we are, here I am.

It's not that bad actually. I'm breathing and I'm perceiving things. And no thought that I can have in my mind because the delusion is, and this probably stems from childhood.

The delusion is if I can be really unhappy about it, then the thing is going to change. Many children learn that lesson because many children, very young children who often are not given perhaps sufficient attention or love by their parents, they quickly learn that when they become noisily angry and unhappy, a tantrum, that will suddenly give them attention. And so they learn without, not on a conscious level, but they learn unconsciously unhappiness works.

Unhappiness gets me what I want. And that gets stuck as a dysfunctional mind pattern in them. There may be other reasons why it happens.

It might already be in the human collective consciousness been there for hundreds of generations. But as the child learns it anew, unhappiness works. Unhappiness will get me what I want.

And it's actually true for the little child. It's true. But as the child grows up and becomes an adult, it's no longer true.

In fact, often it has the opposite effect. If you're unhappy about something that you don't

have, you're even less likely to get it. So it has the opposite effect, but they never know that because they are stuck with a mind pattern that says unhappiness works.

And for decades, they practice it. And they continuously experience that it doesn't work. And they don't figure it out.

Isn't there a saying, you make the same mistake again and again, and you don't figure out, you don't learn. What a weird thing. You might still discover it occasionally arising in your own mind.

Unhappiness works. If I really, you can voice your unhappiness either internally or externally. And hopefully there's somebody there you can talk to, because if there's nobody there you can talk to and you do it externally, then you're considered totally crazy.

So amazing realization that complaining and becoming a victim in your own mind has no useful purpose, does not work, except for one thing, it continues actually to work quite well. And that one thing is, it strengthens your sense of identity, the egoic self gets stronger. The more of a victim you become, the more you can complain about people and situations and places and what's lacking or shouldn't be here or should be here, should have been said, but wasn't said.

And you can, nowadays you can do it, disseminate it on the internet too. So it amplifies the dysfunction. All that flows out continuously from your mind and it is useless, except for one thing, it strengthens your ultimately false sense of self, because this egoic sense of self that I wrote about a lot in a new earth, needs various things, but primarily it needs a sense of superiority and it needs an enemy.

So the false sense of self needs its enemies and it needs superiority. And you can actually bring that they two are very closely related. There are almost two aspects of the same phenomenon.

Now, how is it when you complain about something, do you have a sense of superiority? Yes, you do. Because when you complain about a situation or a person, by implication, you are superior to the person you're complaining about.

You're superior to the situation you're complaining about. You are morally superior to whatever it is you're judging as deficient. That gives the ego its food.

And so you carry on doing it, although it has no actual useful purpose. In fact, the opposite on a practical level, on a psychological level, it actually has a useful purpose. It strengthens your fictitious sense of self.

It strengthens the ego. In other words, it makes you even more unhappy. And unhappy egos are much stronger than happy egos.

The ego loves its unhappiness. It loves being unhappy. It loves its enemies.

So an enemy can be not only a person or a group of people, an enemy can be a situation. The ego also loves the opposition, the antagonism that comes from having an argument with somebody and needing to be right. An incredible driving force in human beings when they engage in a discussion with somebody.

It might be completely pointless discussion, but you notice after a while an incredible energy that amplifies what you're saying. It's an emotional energy behind it. You might talk about something completely irrelevant, like what's the distance from here to the moon?

Well, it's a million miles. No, it's 150,000, it's 350,000 kilometers. I think that's probably true, but the...

No, no, you need to be right. And after a while, the truth no longer matters. You will introduce a little lie because you need to be right.

I read it, I've got a source for it. I have a degree in astronomy, anything to be right. In traffic, very unconscious people experience road rage, where the other motorist is your mortal enemy.

And he or she might have done nothing more than go too slowly in front, but you needed to get ahead. And the ego in somebody who is engaged in being right is very huge, and the ego loves that. And then you get into an argument, and there's no end to the argument.

And then after a while, if it's you, you walk out of the door, and a few seconds later, the door opens again. You come back in, there's more to say. That ego itself is already quite dysfunctional on the personal level.

It's even more dangerously dysfunctional on the collective level, because ultimately, the ego is identification with mind and mental positions. Ultimately, the ego is a conceptual reality in your head that you derive your sense of self from. And that conceptual reality in the head consists of thought, of concepts.

It's a story in your mind. It had a lot to do with your past, a lot to do with certain things that you have identified with around you. That identified means you derive your sense of self from certain things like your physical body is an aspect of ego.

If you derive your sense of self from it, then the physical body is the first level of ego is a physical body. That's me. And it can be for many people, the physical body is either a great source of unhappiness, because they're not satisfied with the way they look.

So the ego cannot derive a sense of superiority from it. The ego, which compares itself to

others, derives a sense of inferiority from it. So it's very unhappy.

Or the body can be a sense of pride. If your body happens to look better than other people's, then the ego will get in there and identify with the way you look. And that becomes the mental form.

And it gives the ego some nourishment for a while. How long? We don't know, 20 years.

And then gradually it gets more difficult to sustain because suddenly you realize that some people have younger bodies than you. So there's the body identification that becomes part of ego. And you can get a sense of superiority from having a better body.

And for some people, 80% of their ego even more is body. And whenever that's, it can be a man or a woman. And the day will come when you look into the mirror and you're no longer satisfied with your body.

And so you begin to suffer. And then there's still things you can do. There's a whole industry that is repair strategies to delay the inevitable for a while.

Of course, there's a difference between enjoying your good looks. If you have them, it's a lovely thing. Enjoy your strengths or your good looks.

It's wonderful. Go to the gym, wonderful things. But the question is, do you derive your sense of who you are from that?

Or is it something that you simply appreciate but you know it is ultimately not who you are. Who you are is invisible. So that's the next level then is your mind.

And there are many things there, of course, that you can identify with. Anything that the mind links into, possessions, my this, my that, my that. So if you don't have a great body, you can drive in your Ferrari.

And then the guy with the beautiful body only has a VW. So you can feel superior. But if you have neither the body nor the VW, as was the case with me when I was young, when I was in my twenties, I didn't have the body.

I didn't have the possessions. What have I got left? And finally I've got something, knowledge.

So I was reading lots of books and I became more and more knowledgeable. And then I noticed that I could hit, metaphorically speaking, I could hit people over the head with my knowledge, my superior knowledge. And all these people who had developed bodies and possessions, or I lived in England at the time, people who had family descendants going back hundreds of years, aristocrats who derived their identity from their family past.

I didn't have that either. All I knew was my grandfather and knew nothing beyond that. So none of that, these are all ego, but I could hit on, yeah, I'm a great intellectual and I know more than you.

Now that also led to an enormous amount of unease because I was at a university where lots of people who knew a lot too. So there was always the unease, do I know more than this guy or less? These are all forms of ego.

The ego can derive its sense of superiority from many things. Now I had the mind, fortunately or unfortunately, didn't have the possessions, didn't have the body, didn't have the family past, didn't have any of the things. If I hadn't had the knowledge either, where would my ego have gone then?

Oh, easy. And there are millions of egos there, all the people who don't have any of these things. And that is, they are victims.

And I'm not denying that victims don't exist on a practical level. Of course, human beings have done dreadful things to other human beings. But if being a victim or having been a victim becomes part of your sense of identity, that is the trap.

And that is where you get more deeply trapped in delusion. So you need to be able to recognize the mind structures that operate in you. Because if you don't recognize the mind structures, you are at the mercy of your own mind.

You are trapped in the conditioned mind. And that is, spiritually speaking, being unconscious. This is why it's important and even liberating to recognize the mind structures that we all inherit.

And that those are collective mind structures. So be very careful. So once you recognize a mind structure, the possibility of freedom arises.

You're able to step out of the mind and think, oh, I'm not going to go there. I'm not going to be a victim. I'm not going to be engaged in being right.

I would not rather be right than happy. And you can recognize these egoic strategies when they still want to take you over. And freedom is to step out of it and recognize that there is a dimension in you that is deeper.

We can say either deeper or higher. Depends how you look at it. I prefer to say deeper because high seems to imply that your real self is up there.

My higher self is talking to me. I'll use the expression, came to me later, it's not in the books. The deep I, I meaning the pronoun I, when you say I.

Normally, I, as you might have noticed, is one of the most commonly used words in the language. How many times a day do you say I? Many, many times.

How many more times a day do you think I? Or of course, sometimes some people talk to themselves and say you. That's another story.

And some have two people in their heads that argue with each other. Two aspects of ego. Why can't you ever do the right thing?

Well, you are trying and doing your best. No, you can't. You're completely useless.

No, I'm not useless. I just live with the parents I had. What could I have done with those unconscious parents?

I'm not useless. Yes, you are completely useless.

[Speaker 2] (56:43 - 57:03)

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Eckhart Tolle Overcoming the World [6715cd92-e80f-4145-9c3d-6af9eea83687]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:05)

Overcoming the world. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about how many of us react when the world doesn't go our way. He says we either surrender and accept the situation, or more often than not, we go into victim mode.

Victim of circumstance, victim of other people, or even God. He goes on to explain if loss is involved, then bitterness and anger set in, and the ego becomes more entrenched. Eckhart mentions the ancient wisdom of Buddha, who talked about suffering and the end of suffering, and Jesus who said, you will have tribulation, but take heart, for I have overcome the world.

Eckhart asks participants to ponder what it means to overcome the world. He explains it has nothing to do with external power, because it's an internal realization. He says the turbulent times that we live in provide ample opportunity to reach the eternal, boundless part of ourselves.

Eckhart believes we overcome the world when we don't derive our sense of identity from the world.

[Speaker 1] (1:07 - 34:03)

When the self, the little self, the egoic self, when the world does something to it, either one or two things can happen. You come into a deep acceptance, sometimes after suffering, you suddenly surrender, and then something opens up, and there's a, you still are sad on the surface level, but deep down there's a peace that passes all understanding. But it can also happen when you experience loss, that you become bitter and angry.

The ego lost things that it identified with, and immediately creates another set of concepts, self-concepts that say you are angry with the world. I have been, you're the victim of circumstances, you're a victim of God, you're a victim of other people, and you become bitter and angry, and immediately the ego forms again another identity, conceptual identity. This is particularly important because we are moving into turbulent times as a collective, probably affecting perhaps the entire planet, we are moving into a time of turbulence.

I feel this is only the beginning, and at the same time this becomes an enormous opportunity for awakening into this dimension. Because the strange thing is, no human being awakens from within their comfort zone. Sad fact.

The ego doesn't like that, so the fact that there's applause here means you're already

beyond ego, and you've recognized the truth of it, and this is, there's a deep, deep truth in that. I have not met any human that awakened from within their comfort zone. They awaken through facing, to use a some, almost a biblical term, they awaken through facing tribulation.

Tribulation. In this world you will find tribulation, said Jesus. Wherever you go, the Buddha said the same thing.

In this world you will find dukkha, said the Buddha, translated as suffering, can also be translated as misery, unsatisfactoriness, and all just plain unhappiness. So that's what the Buddha said, this word, wherever you go, you'll find that unless you awaken. And Jesus said in this world you will find tribulation.

Then he added, but I have overcome the world. I have overcome the world, and he shows people how to overcome the world. What does that mean?

I have, now Jesus did not have any worldly power, so in that sense he hadn't overcome the world like Alexander the Great, great conqueror, none of that. Overcome is an internal realization. You no longer derive your identity from the things of this world, but you can still live with them and play with them, it's fine, they're actually quite beautiful.

When you play with the things of this world you can appreciate form, and when it leaves you, or it breaks, or it's taken away, you did not need it for your sense of identity. You can enjoy this world when you do not need it to give you an identity. You can enjoy other human beings too, and their company, and their presence, but you don't need them to complete your identity.

Why don't you need them anymore? Because you already have found your identity, and you are connected with your essence identity as the awareness, as the consciousness, that's who I am. So this is a wonderful freedom, and now people will have to find that, because we are moving into such uncertain times.

Many people will lose things that gave them their identity, and that's a great thing, and many people will lose also a sense of certainty or security that was delusory anyway. No matter how many insurance policies you have, it doesn't mean that the universe is not impermanent and fleeting, and to look to things, or people, or situations, or places, or attainments, to look to those things for your identity, that leads to suffering and unconsciousness. Your primary purpose is to find and stay connected to the depths of who you are in being, so that you are not just a human, but you are a human being.

You're conscious of the being dimension. In the being dimension, you have no age, you're not young or old, you have no gender, sorry, you have no status. In the being dimension, whether in the eyes of the world, your life up to now has been a fantastic success story, or the most dreadful failure to take two extremes, makes no difference.

The being is beyond that. There's no age in it, there's no gender in it, there's no differentiation in that. It's the source.

Then you no longer need to defend an identity that was fictitious anyway. You are comfortable with, sometimes, with not being right. Others show you, no, you're wrong.

Oh, really? Whereas before, being right was an important part of your conceptual identity. The most dreadful thing for an egoic self is to be shown to be wrong, because it's a death, it's a kind of death.

And you can, you still have opinions, you have opinions, but the opinions do not turn into an identity. If opinion turns into identity, then we get all the drama that we have on social media and all that, because opinions have become identities. It's crazy.

What is an opinion? It's a mental, it's a concept, a construct. But you can still have the opinion and still voice your opinion without the defensiveness and the aggression that would be there if you equate opinion with identity.

But you need to have something more powerful, deeper, than this mind-made identity. And that's the essence of who you are beyond thought. So it is very important, as much as possible, to remind yourself to come into, and here we come to the one of the main portals, or the main portal into the transcendent consciousness, come into the present moment.

That is where the portal into the transcendent consciousness begins to open up. The present moment is a portal. In the present moment, as much as possible, you take your attention into the present moment, and it has stages.

It is basically, what you say, two or three stages, depending how you divide it. The first thing, when you become present, so have little practices, whenever you're waiting for something, become present. Whether you're in the car, or just a minute waiting for the elevator, or waiting for somebody to answer the phone, a human being to answer the phone, it could take hours.

And so you're waiting, and why waste that beautiful time and use it for presence? Now, how does it work? How do you, how do you transform an irritation while you're waiting into presence?

So you get very irritated. Airports are very irritating places these days, for many people. Don't have to be, but for many people they are.

Security is very slow, and it could take an hour to get through security. Oh my god, why can't they, they should have done something about it a long time ago, why can't they? They're just so incompetent, it's just unbelievable, completely unbelievable.

I'm not ever going to use this airport again. I don't know, and the rest of the world is bad too. I just don't, I just don't like people anymore.

We are going to hell in a handbasket, I can see that. You become very unhappy. There's a very unhappy person.

Why is this person unhappy? Well, because obviously, can't you see what's happening? This is why I'm happy.

You see, you've been standing here for one hour, you're hardly moving, for god's sake. Okay, why don't you experiment with something? What do you mean?

Experiment with being in this situation, without adding any thought to it. The baggage of thought. This situation, don't add any interpretation to it.

Is that even possible? Yes, it's possible. The interpretation is a habit.

It's no more than a deeply ingrained mental habit. But you don't have to be stuck with a deeply ingrained mental habit. Don't add any thought.

Don't interpret this moment, just let it be as it is. Okay, I'll try it. But if it doesn't work, I'm going to get back to you.

Okay, so you're standing there, and now suddenly you do not add thought to this, which means you haven't been standing here for an hour. You're only standing here now. Because the hour was thought.

Time is thought. The hour, the duration was created by thinking. But in the present moment, you are standing here now, not for one hour.

You're not adding any thought. And so what else is here now? Well, one obvious thing is, there's people around you.

And again, you watch people. They're moving, they're standing, moving their lights. And you watch that without interpreting.

It's either good or bad. This is what it is. And the next thing you notice is, you're actually breathing.

Oh, I'm still breathing. Well, that was a thought. But you don't need a thought.

You can just notice you're breathing without telling yourself that you're breathing. You're just breathing. And you know you're breathing.

And you feel that your body is actually alive. There's a life that pervades you. And that life is invisible.

The physical body is visible. But that which animates the body is not visible, but you can sense it. Because it's just consciousness that animates the body.

So you feel the consciousness that you are through entering the inner body. And here's the present. Here you are still standing, not adding any interpretation, not any thought to this moment.

In other words, you have become completely present. Now, if that is the case, you suddenly realize that before you experimented with this, you were very unhappy. But you were not very unhappy because of the situation, because your mind was telling you, obviously, you're unhappy because of all this.

The unhappiness was produced by your thoughts. The unhappiness was produced by us not by the situation, but by your thoughts about the situation. And you can experiment with that in many different situations.

And it works beautifully. And it's a very powerful spiritual practice. Do not add unnecessary.

Sometimes thought is necessary. But in many instances, thought is unnecessary. It creates suffering.

Unhappy thoughts create suffering, misery. And prolonged unhappy thoughts going on not for hours and days, but going on for weeks, months and years, they produce a very unhappy little me that then looks at the entire world through the veil of its own unhappiness. And nothing is perceived clearly anymore.

It's a veil that like a mist of fog that descends. And other people are unhappiness can take different forms. Some people are continuously angry or they they're full of grievances.

And so if you live with that for some time, your identity becomes one big grievance. And there are people walking around this world, they are grievances looking for a cause. And if you are a grievance looking for cause, you've continuously find causes, obviously very easily.

If you want to be angry, the world will give an unending supply of reasons for being angry. So the little practice of not adding thought. So in other words, and again, we come back to that really is stillness arises, a very powerful sense of presence is there.

This stillness is not just the absence of sounds, inner sounds. Silence, we could say is the absence of external sounds. Stillness is the absence of mental sounds, which are thoughts.

But there's much more to stillness and then an absence of something. The stillness is the

presence of an enormous power, which is the power of life itself. This power of life itself, as you become more rooted in that, and go there as much as you can, and until it becomes almost, one could say, second nature to you, and it's always there in the background, then you are connected to an enormous power, that is the power of consciousness itself, that transcends who or what you are as a person.

And then it can operate through you, and you find your life in this dimension, begins to be affected by this power that transcends who or what you are as a person. What form it takes, we do not know. It might flow into your speaking or writing or doing creative work or creating something else or removing yourself totally from where you are and going.

Nobody can predict how this power will manifest through you, but it'll manifest through you in some way. If only, if you are quite old, perhaps you don't have a lot of big projects anymore when you're 95, even 85, I don't know, then it can manifest as a deep, powerful inner peace that emanates and affects people around you, even if you don't say anything. And this is what old age is supposed to be, that old age is supposed to be an opportunity for self-transcendence, because the self that you had identified with is coming to an end.

You might as well transcend it now. That's the ancient saying, die before you die, that's what it refers to. Don't wait.

The old age is a wonderful opportunity for letting go, no longer needing the egoic consciousness. But if you reach the age of 70 and you've been so trapped in egoic consciousness, you've rejected whenever anything, even remotely spiritual or whatever came into your life, you immediately rejected it. Sometimes when you're so old, nothing will free you anymore.

You're trapped in an ossified personality and a grumpy, you know, it's a grumpy old man, that kind of thing. Or woman, I suppose. Leave me alone.

I know everything. It's all nonsense. Don't give me that.

I know it all. I've seen it all. It's just rubbish.

You're just a personality, strong personality, and one day you suddenly you drop dead. So use your daily life, which is the best practice. Don't look for an ideal situation to practice away spiritual awakening.

The ideal situation is the situation you're facing right now. That's ideal for you. Use that and use the time that we are moving into for deepening, deepening, intensifying the already occurring awakening in you.

When so-called bad things happen, you look at it, let go of adding any thought to it. What is bad on one level is no longer bad from a higher level of existence. There are

different levels of truth.

For example, incurring a serious illness is usually considered bad. Of course, it is a life-threatening illness. You would call it bad.

But is it? It's an opportunity for awakening, too. And I have met over the years quite a few people, many, who were faced with a life-threatening illness, and it drove them into disidentifying from all the stuff that they had identified with, and they began to awaken as pure presence.

I saw a few that shortly before they died, and they were luminous and absolutely there. The personality was completely gone. It was just an enormous, beautiful presence.

That is the ultimate possibility as you approach death. Interesting story from my own life. As you know, our gathering was postponed because I was diagnosed with a potentially life-threatening illness, and it required immediate surgery.

So that is an interesting, very interesting story. After the exam, the man, the doctor said, you have the big C word. You have cancer.

Oh, well, the moment of my personality was disconcerted for a minute, and then I sensed a very deep, there's usually a presence in the background, but the presence that I sense usually in the background somewhere suddenly filled my entire being. And then in the following days, I was just walking around as basically I had died already. I was just, just consciousness was left.

And 10 days later, I had a big surgery, and this thing was removed. And then the examination happened again, and they said, well, you seem to be free now of it. Hasn't spread anywhere, it seems.

Oh, that's fine. Thank you. It's, so this is, it came to me, I was already well prepared for that kind of thing.

But it can be a very powerful opening for anybody if you know how to, how to approach it, if it happens. And death will come one way or another. So, one could say, people love these concepts.

They have self-concepts that say, I could say, the ego always looks for new self-concepts. Okay, what can I add? Okay, now I could say, I'm a cancer survivor.

Okay, I have another concept. I could feel good about that until something else happens. Conceptual identities, again, be very careful with any, yes, also if you're engaged in spiritual awakening, be very vigilant so that you do not replace one conceptual identity with another conceptual identity.

For example, you might progress from being attached to your BMW or your Ferrari, and

derive an enhanced sense of fictitious identity from that. And then you go beyond that, because you go to a talk by me, and you suddenly realize, oh, my Ferrari is meaningless. Okay, I'm letting go of that.

I'm now going on a bicycle just to show the world how spiritual I am. And then without knowing it, you have just as big an ego as before. It's just as shifted to something else.

This is sometimes called a spiritual ego. Can be very, very strong too. But so the ego is looking always, be careful so that the ego doesn't come in through the back door, as it tends to do.

Oh, I acquired another, the other day, I acquired another identity. I was walking in a forest, going for a walk, and a couple, a young couple, a man and a woman, came the opposite direction. And the man looked at me and stopped for a moment and said, I know you from somewhere.

What is your name? I said, Eckhart. Oh, yes, I watch your YouTube all the time.

And I watch you all the time on YouTube. And he said to his girlfriend, look, this guy is a famous YouTuber. Great, I'm now a famous YouTuber.

I'm very proud of that. My next ambition is to become an Instagram influencer. Now, you might think I'm too old for that, but there are many wonderful filters you can use.

And you won't even recognize me. Beware of conceptual identities. Again, people, they want to give you identities.

They want to impose identities. Don't take them on board. Don't, don't accept them.

People call me a spiritual teacher. Again, it's a conceptual identity. And it is true that in this moment, I'm a spiritual teacher.

But if I'm still a spiritual teacher, when I get out of this building, and I carry this mental concept with me and derive my identity from it, then I'm trapped again in ego. So spiritual teacher, for example, as many other things, it's a function, but not an identity. When the function operates, one could say, yes, I'm a spiritual teacher right now.

But when I walk away from here, I let go of that. And that's very important. For many of you also who are undestined, or many of you are already one way or another engaged in some kind of work with people, spiritual teaching, quite a few of you will become, if you're not already, spiritual teachers one way or another.

And again, be very careful not to build, not to allow the mind to create another conceptual identity for yourself. So always coming back to realizing that who you are is not somebody, but who you are in essence is consciousness. So when I walk away here, I sit in the car, just conscious presence, look out of the window, can feel the presence, the

awareness.

I'm nobody in particular, just a field of presence. Then it's beautiful. It's free.

You feel completely free. There's nothing to defend and nothing to add. So be careful with that.

Surrender all conceptual identities, then life becomes much, much easier. And particularly important if you're engaged in some kind of spiritual work, because you don't want the ego to come in through the back door again. So the essence of our gathering here is obviously the state of transcendence that is arising in humanity.

You need for the rest of your earthly existence here, you need to embody that and make that the main purpose of your life. Of course, you have other purposes. The purposes operate on the human level, and you should pursue them if they are not totally ego-serving purposes.

That would be pointless. But there are many purposes that you can pursue. That's fine, whether you are a hairdresser or whether you are an accountant or whether you are a stockbroker or whatever it may be.

The important thing then is to realize ultimately what you do is of secondary importance, but how you do what you do is primary, because how refers to the state of consciousness out of which you act. The how is primary. So always pay attention to what is your state of consciousness at this moment.

As we started with that, when I said if there's irritation in you, be aware of that, and then be aware of yourself as the awareness. That is, you're becoming self-aware. Awareness arises more and more, and you become rooted in the awareness.

You become rooted in presence. That is your primary identity. I call it, I wrote about it, form identity and essence identity.

Form identity is a physical body and the psychological form of you. That's the me, the human. Essence identity is that which makes the form identity possible.

That is consciousness, if we want to call it anything. You are that. I am that.

That's an ancient Indian saying to, I am that, and you are that. So that is the purpose of human existence in this lifetime for you to explore. Do not allow the world to tell you whether your life is a success or not, because the world is a little bit insane.

So don't take that on board. Success is how conscious you are, and if your entire life up to this point was one huge disaster, perhaps taking one bad decision after another, that's an extreme. Most people have a mixture of things, but let's take an extreme.

Your entire life story up to now is just as dreadful. Okay, but you're here now, and if you awaken now, retrospectively, all the dreadfulness and the suffering has had a purpose. It had the purpose of awakening, and retrospectively, it all makes sense suddenly.

Wow. So that is, success is whether you are awake or not in this lifetime. Nothing else.

So you can still pursue your aims, but whether you make it or not, that's a weird expression, making it or making what, I don't know. Whether you make it or not is of secondary importance. Many people in LA are very ambitious, they want to become big stars in the big industry here, Hollywood, and yes, I'm sure there are some here, there are some who have made it already, and some haven't made it yet, and maybe they never will, or they will.

It's secondary. You pursue, you do the best you can, but in the meantime, it's all of secondary, it's, I sometimes say, it's important, but it's relatively important. All those things are relatively important, whether you're poor or rich, or whether you are healthy or unhealthy, or whether you are, whatever, successful or not successful, is relatively important.

Whether you live in an unpleasant environment, or in a wonderful environment, is relatively important, but only relatively, only one thing of absolute importance, and that is the realization of who or what you are beyond this temporary form. That's the secret of human existence. And with that, perhaps we will conclude our gathering.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (34:04 - 34:23)

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Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Per Aspera Ad Astra : Through Adversity We Reach the Stars! [4f0ad8a9-6548-4394-8300-6bdda231aa4b]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 1:09)

Per Aspera ad Astra, through adversity to the stars. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions about turning adversity into spiritual growth. A mother wants more emotional stability in her life.

She says she often wakes up feeling full of energy only to find the next moment she's irritable and exhausted. She's concerned about transmitting her negative moods to her children. Eckhart encourages her to remain alert when the low energy takes hold.

He also explains that sustaining consciousness during difficult times is a great art and this could become an important part of her spiritual practice. Another mom asks if suffering is necessary for our awakening, then how do we help our children to awaken without causing unnecessary pain? He says every child will encounter some form of suffering, which is part of the human condition.

He says as parents, we must use wisdom to decide when to protect our children and when to let them experience life on life's terms. Eckhart shares an ancient Roman aphorism. In Latin, it is Per Aspera ad Astra, which means through adversity we reach the stars.

[Speaker 2] (1:12 - 2:24)

Thank you for letting me ask my question. Why is it easier on some days to remain present than others? I recall even as a child waking up in the morning and feeling really good inside or the opposite.

I have studied these feelings throughout my life and I realized that on days when I awake feeling good, I have amazing amounts of energy. I'm much more present and patient and those days just like every song on the radio is a good one. Then suddenly without anything external happening, the energy seems to be gone and I'm unmotivated, tired and very unsettled.

It is almost like the energy is trapped inside because it seems like it is there. It almost makes me angry at times. I've tried to be physically active or meditate, focus on the inner body, but it is very hard to get motivated to basically do any of these activities.

This state can take a day or a week or longer and then eventually I awake feeling great again without anything external happening. I was wondering if you have any input, any kind of practice.

[Speaker 1] (2:24 - 4:02)

Thank you. Thank you. Very interesting.

Yes. Well, these fluctuations, I don't believe in your case what you're describing is not... I'm sure you're aware that there's a condition that is called manic depressive, but I don't think that's probably not what you're describing here.

Manic depressive means these are people who experience incredible highs of aliveness and then incredible lows, whether they can't do anything, can't interact with anybody. When they experience these highs, I don't think that's the case with you. When they experience these highs, they do sometimes a lot of things like they have several sex partners in one day or two or three days, or they go out and spend all shopping expeditions, spend all their money and exhaust all their credit cards on shopping, spontaneous, completely irrational decisions on their high and then they're falling back into the low.

Now, this doesn't seem to be what you're describing because what you're saying is that when you feel good, you are also very present. So a person who is manic depressive, they are not present in either state. They are not present in the high state and they are not present in the low state.

But you feel that you are present when you feel good, you're also present and you're able to appreciate things and everything is fine and you feel more creative and so on.

[Speaker 2] (4:02 - 4:21)

I have much more patience with people around me and I do appreciate things more. Everything even tastes better. It's absolutely amazing how much different these days can be.

It doesn't go into extreme that I go and have sexual relationships with 20 people, no.

[Speaker 1] (4:22 - 4:23)

Or you don't spend all your money.

[Speaker 2] (4:24 - 4:29)

No, no, no. It wouldn't be much spending anyways. Right.

[Speaker 1] (4:31 - 8:10)

So again, the important thing is to when the low states come, which I believe there's probably a physical aspect to it also. Do you feel physically weaker in the low states? When that comes, the important thing is to stay present even there so that you are able

to observe the low as it happens.

It may not be as easy perhaps to stay present when you feel good, but when you feel bad, there can still be a presence in the background that knows what's happening to you so that you're not completely overwhelmed by that feeling. It's not uncommon for people, even people who are already on the path of awakening, when they feel physically not so well or have a pain here or there, they lose presence because their physical body becomes weaker and then they lose their sense of presence. It seems that there's not enough energy left to be present.

That's what they believe. And then, of course, it's also very common to lose presence in other situations like when you drink alcohol. Many people can easily lose presence then, especially if you're not deeply rooted in presence already.

And if you are deeply rooted in presence, you wouldn't want to drink a lot of alcohol. You might enjoy it a little bit here and there, but you wouldn't want to be drunk because your normal state would be so much better and more beautiful. The relief that people seek through alcohol from their unpleasant, painful inner states.

The important thing is the awareness needs to still be there in both situations, both when you feel good, when you feel great. And I don't know how that is related to the low cycles, whether that is related to your menstrual cycle. It's sometimes related in women that they go into more unconscious cycle when that approaches.

So it could, I don't know whether there's a relationship with that. That is often a challenging time for women where they are drawn into unconsciousness. But when you know that, then you can know it's approaching and you can stay particularly conscious so that you can sustain consciousness even when the low comes.

And that is the great art. This is part of, perhaps, important part of your spiritual practice is to sustain the awareness even as the physical energy diminishes and mentally you don't feel as clear, but you can still, are you still able to observe that? Perhaps you can continue even there.

Can you continue to practice inner body awareness even when you feel low? That may be helpful. Another interesting question is when you feel low, does that change your thinking?

In the low state, does the nature of your thoughts change? Do their thoughts become more negative or does it not particularly affect the nature of your thoughts?

[Speaker 2] (8:11 - 8:13)

It does affect the thoughts, yes.

[Speaker 1] (8:13 - 12:34)

That's a very important point because it affects your thought, which means you lose consciousness, you lose presence and your mind gets taken over by this emotional state that rises into up into your mind and controls your thinking. So that's why it's extremely important that you make that the main area of your spiritual practice is there so that remain alert as the low state comes. I don't know how the shift happens from the high to the low, whether it is very gradual, whether it's overnight.

So you suddenly wake up in the morning and the high is gone and you're down low, you're nodding. So perhaps it often happens overnight. So in the morning, you're somebody else.

And that's so in the morning, you're somebody else in a very low state, different kinds of thoughts get through your head. And are you able to observe your inner state at that time, especially there, catch it at the beginning when you wake up in the morning and you realize, oh, there it is, there it is. That's an important thing.

And then you stay conscious. If you don't catch it at the beginning, it's a bit harder to awaken at a later stage when it has taken possession of you completely, including your thinking. When it has taken possession of you completely, you may not be able to get your awareness back unless the awareness power has already grown in you.

But if you catch it at the beginning, it will be easier to remain. The witnessing presence can remain there even as the state continues to be there. And as the witnessing presence arises, it is less likely that the low state will use your thinking, will control your mind and your thoughts.

And if it can no longer control, then you just feel it on an emotional, physical level, but it no longer, because there's an awareness there. So it no longer, and if it does attempt to control your thoughts, the awareness will recognize that this is what's happening, that the low state is trying to control your thinking, moving to control your mind. And so there's the awareness there, and you say, oh, it's trying to control your mind.

And it can't do that if you're aware of it. If you're aware of it, and then at least it can no longer control your thinking. All you're left with then is what you feel at that moment.

And if it can no longer control your thinking, it can no longer feed itself, feed on your thoughts. Because that state, I believe it, in our terminology, I believe that state is actually part of your pain body, because not every pain body is angry. There are many other kinds of pain body.

So it takes you over. And if it cannot feed on your thoughts, it will be less intense and more short-lived, because it can't renew itself by feeding on your thoughts. So it means the periods, the lower periods will become shorter and less intense through the

awareness practice.

And that's only the intermediate step. First they become shorter and less intense, and then gradually you will only experience some form of low state. It'll be mostly physical, low state without low consciousness.

And you can then accept that sometimes you experience lower states. Every human on some level does that physically. You cannot always be physically at a physical peak all the time.

So sometimes that happens, but that's all that is. It no longer will no longer obscure your awareness. Does it make sense the way I described how you approach it?

[Speaker 2] (12:34 - 12:59)

It does make very much sense. The stuff that worries me, I'm okay, not feeling okay at times, but I am a mom and I don't want that to pass over to my family, to my children, to my partner. Because I don't think it's fair.

So I was just wondering how could I deal with it myself somehow, so they don't have to deal with me being this way.

[Speaker 1] (13:00 - 13:44)

Yes. Well, in the meantime, until you become better at the practice, what would help is to tell them when you notice I'm in that slow state today. So just wanted you to know, and then they can know that's already, at least now they know.

And then perhaps they are more careful in the way they say to you, or they leave you alone or whatever they do. You explain to them that sometimes you have that low state and it's not really you. It's not who you really are.

And so, and then just practice. Catch it early on when it arises. And then that's your practice.

[Speaker 2] (13:45 - 13:46)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (13:47 - 14:58)

Thank you. And I believe that will also be helpful for many other people, because you're not the only one who has the, many people have similar experience, similar conditions in their life, or that's the fluctuation of moods. Many, many people experience that.

And the challenge is to stay present, both with the high and the low moods. Isn't it wonderful? They sort of, all the difficult areas in your life are actually always your main

area of practice.

And so then you can be grateful, if not right in the moment, but retrospectively, certainly you'll be grateful for the difficult parts of your life, the adversity in your life, because that's what brings about the awakening of consciousness. Per aspera ad astra, said the Romans, per aspera ad astra, through adversity to the stars. Let's have one more question.

[Speaker 4] (14:59 - 15:00)

Hi, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (15:00 - 15:01)

Hi, how are you?

[Speaker 4] (15:02 - 15:40)

Fine, thank you for having us. My question was, if suffering is our spiritual teacher and leads to awakening, how can we help our children awaken without giving them a bad childhood? Do children need to suffer deeply to awaken?

And I work in with schools, and so I just try to translate your teachings to like a secular way of talking. And I just want to know, like, your thoughts on the most important tools that we can give children to prepare them for the challenges.

[Speaker 1] (15:40 - 29:37)

Right. Oh, yes, good question. Thank you.

Living in this world, some form of suffering will come to every child, of course, in one form or another. Some form of suffering will come that is inevitable. For a parent or an educator, what is required is wisdom.

And through wisdom, you will know to what extent it is advisable or good to protect the child from suffering, and to what extent you need to allow the child to suffer. Many parents, understandably, because they love the child, they have the desire to protect the child from all suffering. And that would include, when they do that, even protecting the child from consequences of bad or dysfunctional behavior, to protect the child from all these things.

As you know, the way we are bringing up children is very much different from the way it used to be 50 years ago, 100 years ago. Safety has become extremely important in people's minds, not only with reference to children, but also, of course, with reference to children, safety is very important. In many parts of the United States, not everywhere in the United States, but in many parts, it's almost, I think, illegal to allow your child to play

outside in the street.

Whereas in the past, when I was a child, we would always be outside and completely unsupervised. And it was in a city, it wasn't a village, playing completely unsupervised for hours on end, going on our bikes, exploring. It was normal.

So there's now a tendency to overprotect a child, partly due to the fact that most parents only have one or two children, so they become very precious. If you only have one, rather than six, seven or eight. My dad was the ninth child in a Catholic family.

Two of his siblings died at an early age, but he still lived with six or seven brothers and sisters. And of course, it wasn't possible to closely supervise all these children, so they were free to do what they wanted to do. So there's a risk involved.

Wisdom is required to see to what extent do you restrict the freedom of movement of your child for the sake of safety? That requires wisdom. If you restrict the child's movement too much for the sake of safety, you also impede their development as finding inner resources of strength and resilience.

And to find inner resources that arise when you're faced with a challenge. When a human is faced with a challenge, inner resources are generated in order to face the challenge. So if you want to protect the child from all possible sources of suffering, then you'd also have to remove as many challenges as possible, because any challenge may lead to some degree of suffering.

There's another reason why there's overprotectiveness and extreme focus on safety, but that's a longer subject that I don't need to go into now. I perceive a shift that has happened in the collective consciousness in the past 40, 50 years. A shift from predominantly I believe everybody understands yin and yang, masculine and feminine principles that the world exists in between the polarity of yin and yang.

Until 50 years ago or so, yang was a predominant principle that governed especially the education of children, discipline, punishment. When I was at school, corporal punishment was totally normal. Things that nowadays a teacher would be taken to court for and lose their job was normal behavior.

And the students were quite disciplined. I mean, there was sometimes trouble, but there was authoritarian, overly controlling children, not allowing them sufficient freedom for creativity and movement for the sake of control and discipline and so on. That's a shift now, of course, from the yang prominent, a significant part of the population has adopted a much more yin attitude towards life.

The feminine values have become much more important, compassion towards people, empathy with people, not offending people because of their race or sexuality, but to have empathy so that we don't hurt people. They're all feminine qualities that have

come in. And that's been a good thing and a necessary thing.

But no good thing, more of a good thing is an even better thing. And more than that, it doesn't remain good continuously. Too much of a good thing becomes a bad thing.

Then it shifts into its opposite. This is why yin and yang are intertwined. And that's a long story.

But as regards education of children, it's now predominantly focused on safety. Like a mother would be most concerned with a child's safety. And the dad who would represent the yang would be concerned with, okay, let's do this.

Let's go climb this mountain. Let's do it. But be careful, you must be careful.

Of course, the roles could be mixed. It could be that the man has more yin than the woman. So in that case, it could be mixed.

But there's yin and yang. So the yin is very strong emphasis on safety because up to a point that is good. And if you go beyond that point, it becomes bad and restrictive.

So again, in many schools, the famous thing, they do sports and all kinds of things. In many schools now because of this empathy that you have, you don't want a child to feel bad. It's a wonderful thing.

You don't want the child to feel bad. It is wonderful. And that's a yin thing, which means the famous saying, everybody gets a trophy.

You just need to participate and get a trophy. So nobody needs to feel bad about themselves. But you don't get challenged that much anymore.

Because we don't want anybody to feel bad because if you challenge them too much, they will feel bad if they can't meet the challenge. It's a very complex and long story. But we have now going to the other extreme where we try to remove as many challenges as possible from children so that they don't suffer.

And some parents almost succeed because they pamper the child so much. Whatever the child wants, he or she is given immediately. Every possible source of suffering is removed.

And if you could do that by the time the child reaches adolescence, the child's ego would be dreadful. A very unpleasant ego would have developed in the absence of all challenges. Never had to experience the consequences of behavior.

No behavior, no matter how dysfunctional, had any consequences. And then they become an adult. And then it gets really difficult.

Sometimes it is not possible to remove challenges. If you were successful in removing all challenges from your child, that absence of challenges would turn into the adult's greatest and most difficult challenge. The fact that he or she was never challenged in childhood by anything.

Overprotected by their parents. So wisdom is required to see how much you allow a child to have a challenge, and even to suffer by not being able to meet the challenge, and to what extent you remove a challenge from a child in order to protect them. Wisdom is required so that you have a balance, the middle way, as the Buddha called it, or the, as Socrates said, nothing in excess.

Not in excess of giving the child too many challenges, so the child is continuously struggling and not being able to enjoy life. And trying to remove all challenges from the child. The middle way between protecting the child and yet allow enough freedom to make mistakes also, that's part of it.

The child needs to make mistakes and realize the consequences of making mistakes. It's all part of the evolution of consciousness. But suffering is inevitable, no matter what you do.

And it's not bad. You have to know to bring a child up, it requires enormous wisdom. And of course, not many parents have that.

But it does, it does require, so that you can be more or less in the middle. Yes, we grow through suffering, and every child will suffer. And if a child is overprotected, that will cause them more suffering when they become an adult, because they were not prepared for life.

So whatever you do, the child will suffer. And yet, of course, we don't want the child to take absurd risks, unnecessary risks. Drugs are a huge problem these days.

You want to get a child away from that. That's a big thing. That's not to allow the child so much freedom that they become, they indulge in drug taking and all that, that is to be avoided at all cost.

It was 20 years ago, I was going for a walk. I was first time I realized the safety thing. I was, there's a school nearby.

And I walked past the school, it was just the beginning of the vacation period. And there's a big sign built signboard outside that says, summer break starting on that date, and have a good summer. And underneath in big letters, it said, be safe.

The main thing was be safe about the summer, be safe. I thought, is that the main thing? I imagined a student coming back after summer break and a teacher asking, well, what did you do during the summer break?

And students, well, I took your advice. We decided not to go to the mountains, because the risk, there's a risk where we could have broken limbs or we didn't climb the mountain. In fact, we stayed at home most of the time because life is so dangerous these days.

We didn't go swimming. No, no, it's too dangerous, can't go swimming. So we were really safe, didn't go anywhere, really safe.

So I thought, of course, safety is important. It's important not to take unnecessary risk, but it is the main thing to be safe. Why not say, have a wonderful time, but also be safe.

That makes sense. Have an adventure even, but don't take unnecessary risks. That's the middle way.

Now, any adventure implies the possibility of something going wrong, because it's not the possibility of something going wrong. It's not an adventure. It's a boring trip.

Any adventure means something might go wrong. So there is an element of risk there. And yet, no human should take unnecessary or absurd risks.

That's also true. And again, we come the middle way between the two, between the extremes. So for a parent, it's to know that you need to be wise.

How much do you allow a child to suffer the consequences of their mistakes, for example, not immediately remove the consequences? And to what extent do you remove suffering from your child? That's only in the situation you can know by being aware, because wisdom arises through awareness.

By being aware, you will know what the right action is, right? Either one way, you go towards safety or you go towards the challenge. And challenge always implies the risk of suffering.

And if you go too much into safety, you also create suffering eventually. You can't get away from it. And that's part of the evolution of human consciousness.

[Speaker 5] (29:40 - 29:52)

Thank you. So perhaps a moment of stillness. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (29:53 - 30:15)

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enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Practice of Presence [6920e193-f03a-480c-a44b-ad3b0170f7f8]

[Speaker 5] (0:00 - 0:30)

Practice of presence. In this podcast, Eckhart discusses with a live audience one of his key spiritual teachings, the practice of presence. He says, presence arises when we free ourselves of incessant thinking and roll back the ego so our essential true self can shine through.

As we become more adept at the practice, he says, it's possible to stay in the present moment through all of life's ups and downs.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 16:54)

You don't have to be as slow as I am to be present. I'm not always slow, but often. Interesting thing to find out for yourself if you've reached a stage in your spiritual evolution where you're able to choose to be free of thinking without exerting willpower to suppress thought and without stopping your breathing and without engaging in a life-threatening activity which could easily stop your mind.

Walking on a tight rope will certainly stop your mind for two seconds before you fall off. Now, some of you are able to do that when you're not being disturbed by anything or anybody. Everything is fine.

You're sitting quietly in your room or outside and then you just go There's an intensity of awareness, but there's no willpower. You're not willing it to happen. You're not willing, you're not suppressing thought.

If you're not yet there, that's fine. You can choose other ways of taking attention away from the stream of thinking by placing attention on sensory perception into your body, the inner body, or on your breathing that's happening naturally. So as the Buddha said, when they asked how to attain enlightenment, he said, just be aware that you're breathing.

Now, as long as you're aware that you're breathing, you can't be thinking. So he didn't say, don't think, he said, be aware of your breath. So your attention moves away from mind and goes, you feel the inflow and outflow of the breath.

You even feel every subtle movement of the breath where it enters your nose and then it flows in. And then it flows out and you follow it with your attention. And then at some point you could let go of that too.

Then you're just not thinking. The important thing is you're above thinking. We're not talking about falling below thinking.

And then you're able to be in that state of pure awareness or presence, even while things happen. That's next step, so to speak, even while you're talking to your attorney, there's a court case coming up. Are you able to be in presence while you listen to what he has to say?

Or there's an obnoxious person in your vicinity. This is not an uncommon occurrence. Since a greater part of humans, if not are obnoxious, but periodically become obnoxious.

In other words, very unconscious. Humans move to different levels of consciousness and unconsciousness. It's not always the same person that you meet.

It's a delusion to think once you have become acquainted with somebody that this is going to be the same person you're going to meet the next day, because he or she may be in a very different state of consciousness the next day, or when an event happens to trigger that person into diminished consciousness. And then one of the sub-personalities that is associated with that diminished consciousness is suddenly there and talking to you. Who are you?

And that's even more shocking if this happens after you've signed a contract that says you're going to live with this person for the rest of your life. And then the mind comes up with strange conclusions. I won't trust anybody anymore.

He really let me down. He's a liar. He's just pretending to be nice.

He was so nice. No, now I know he was just pretending. No, he was nice.

Perhaps he was at a relatively more conscious stage at that time, but now he's not nice because something that you said triggered him and another sub-personality emerged, so to speak, or somebody mentioned the word money. You owe me. And you can observe it in yourself that you're sometimes more conscious than at other times.

You're sometimes very present, even in a challenging situation. At other times, a challenging situation or person pulls you into unconscious reactivity. When you wake up a few minutes or an hour later or a day, as more consciousness emerges through you, the time period between unconsciousness and waking up again out of an unconscious reactive episode is shorter.

You don't stay in it for a week complaining about people and what they did to you. Your mind never stops replaying a situation in your mind, different versions of it that could have happened if you only had said the right thing. And then you can imagine the next time you're confronted with this person, how it's going to unfold.

And you feel angry and can't sleep at night. And you don't even know what's happening to you until something suddenly, it actually is like waking up out of a dreamlike state. What was that all about?

So as far as trusting other people is concerned, can you trust people? Yes, trust everybody to behave. You can trust that they will behave according to their level of consciousness at any given time, complete trust.

No more is possible. Now to be more integrated, to be a human being that is no longer taken over by reactive episodes to such an extent that virtually another person emerges temporarily, there needs to be more awareness that there's still maybe remnants of these sub-personalities surviving for a certain period of time in you, but they no longer take you over. That you can still feel the energy behind it when certain things happen.

But what awareness does, it integrates all that. It's no longer one entity that takes you over completely. And of course, especially the pain body as the most powerful sub-personality and the pain body may even have two or three aspects to it.

So it could be divided into two or three other sub-personalities. But let's treat the pain body as one huge sub-personality when it comes up. To have that no longer controlling you, that requires that energy field of awareness around it, its presence around it.

And then you know it's still there, but it doesn't take over anymore. Or if it does, then immediately after you know, oops, there it was. So eventually awareness, then you become an integrated being with still a few energy flows here and there, but not a big deal anymore.

We'll have some questions, but before, just read two or three questions that people have been sending in questions, people who are watching us, who are with us, but elsewhere in time, in space, and eventually in time too. Except that it's always the present moment. So time ultimately is an illusion, but on a conventional level, we talk about time.

I forgot to say hello to everybody who is not physically present here, but present somewhere else on the planet. This question tends to come up very often. So it is a question that quite a few people have.

If we live with a person who is unconscious a lot of the time, is it possible to have a harmonious relationship whether the person totally awakens or not? That seems to be a recurring problem for many people. Now, if you have brought your unconscious partner here, and he or she actually came along, that means not all is lost.

If he or she is still here. So it depends in what way the unconsciousness of the person that you live with manifests from being in negative states of misinterpreting what you say or do, anger, verbal abuse, and then it goes higher up on the scale of unconsciousness to physical abuse. So if the unconsciousness is not too high up on that level of intensity, it may be possible to live with a person who may not share, not only not share your interest in spiritual evolution, but have no idea what you are practicing or

reading or talking about.

If you try to point something out, that person may just be uninterested. And then if you go up on the scale of unconsciousness, then another person may be hostile towards what you're doing. And there's a big difference, but in both cases, there's unconsciousness.

Your partner may just have no idea what it is, but say, well, yeah, go listen to that guy, Eckhart. I don't know why you go there, but that's okay. I'll be fine.

That's fine. So you can live with that person. And then another one gets angry.

Why do you always have to say, I can't stand it anymore, or whatever, criticize. So you might be able to live with that. What you can live with, only you can know whether you can continue your presence practice and bring surrender into the situation with this person.

And miracles are possible. Miracles do happen. And sometimes the seemingly most unconscious person can suddenly shift.

Now, if that person is very unconscious, usually what is required is some blow, not you physically doing it. I'm speaking metaphorically. Life administers some blow in the form of big loss, accident, illness, and then deeply unconscious people are very much trapped in their ego, can sometimes suddenly open up.

The ego gets cracked. You may sometimes observe that when a person with a big ego is unconscious, when they become ill, they're lying in bed. Sometimes the ego gets even stronger, it seems, but for some people, the ego, there isn't enough energy left to keep the ego going in that, because the illness absorbs so much energy.

And suddenly this person who was never a genuine person that you couldn't talk to heart to heart, because there was always egoic posturing and egoic role-playing there. And suddenly this person is ill, lying in bed, and there just isn't enough energy for posturing and role-playing. And then for the first time, I've observed it a few times, people have told me and I've personally observed, for the first time, you can communicate with that person in a deeper level of presence.

This can also happen when people who had a huge ego all throughout their lives, when they're approaching death, sometimes miracles of transformation can happen in the last moments, in the last days, or in the last weeks of a person's life, when resentments that had been building up over a lifetime and other narratives of an extremely negative nature are let go of, can happen. It can also happen when a person is ill, that when this person recovers, that shift that you observed doesn't last. And the moment strength returns to that person, the old egoic patterns are back.

And it's like, oh my God, you're your old self again. You were so nice when you were ill. Loving and present and open.

Well, just wait, things will happen again. So if there's abuse, and these are more pronounced manifestations of unconsciousness, if there's verbal abuse, can you live with such a person? Only you can know whether you're prepared to do that, whether you can sustain your presence practice, perhaps not.

Physical abuse, if you stay with physical abuse in the hope that this person will become transformed, that is probably a delusion, but I cannot tell you what to do. But if you are alert and vigilant and observe yourself in the presence of that person, you will know what to do. You just have to see that the right course of action is not being sabotaged by certain patterns that remain in your mind, mental, emotional patterns, such as fear of being alone, fear, loss of security, perhaps the security of being with another person, even if it's fear of the unknown, stepping into the unknown.

So you may be held back by certain patterns in your mind. And if you have present enough, you can recognize that and then go beyond it. One more question from here or maybe one or two.

Now the reason why I don't select people, because if I pointed, you would have no idea who I'm pointing at. So the spotlight is on you now.

[Speaker 2] (16:57 - 17:48)

Thank you for these teachings, Eckhart. My question is, you talked in the Power of Now about listening with the body and my work as a coach, probably some other people here work in helping other people too. So hopefully it serves others as well.

I find it so challenging if I'm coaching you, interacting with you, I 100% in the external. I just find that in that moment, I'm so externally focused and yet I totally understand this concept and believe with my heart that there is this greater intelligence that I want to be able to be present for to best serve my clients. So I wonder if you have any recommendations for that?

[Speaker 1] (17:48 - 17:49)

What kind of coaching?

[Speaker 2] (17:50 - 18:05)

So I'm a certified high performance coach. So I basically help people to experience the feeling of full engagement and presence, joy, confidence that comes from living from and into their full potential.

[Speaker 1] (18:06 - 18:10)

So it's a kind of life teaching how to how to live effectively.

[Speaker 2] (18:11 - 19:01)

And yes, yes. Although it is a process, and that we take people through, but so much of my job is is really listening and speaking less. And so that's what I seek to do.

There's some of my teaching, but it is listening more than speaking. So how do you experience the listening when you listen, somebody talks, what your attention is totally on the words, or what is the I close my eyes, and I feel them, I absolutely feel their heart and I hear their words, I seek to hear their hopes and aspirations and struggles and the cracks to sort of dig in to best help them. Yes.

And that's the thing. It's like there's, I just know there's this next level.

[Speaker 1] (19:02 - 24:54)

Well, the foundation to listening is to feel yourself while you listen, rather than trying to feel the other person. But to be aware of yourself as the awareness through which listening happens, that usually affects your entire body. So you listen, you can feel that when you feel yourself, there is almost a physical aspect to it that almost the cells in your body feel more alive.

But there's also a deeper aspect to it. And that is, you can sense your own awareness, you can sense that you are alert and aware, beyond any words. But that alertness and awareness also affects the feeling of the cells in your body.

But it is deeper than the physical body, of course, it's deeper than that. So your interest in the other person and your desire to help the other person takes you out, it takes you into your mind and it takes you out there. Because you so genuinely want to engage and help.

But the greatest help, the foundation for truly very powerful help is to be connected with the essence of yourself, that primary. And then from there, you listen. And then out of that, words come.

Now, of course, you have studied whatever ways you use to teach people, you've studied all that. So you have a considerable amount of knowledge in your mind and you apply that knowledge, that's fine and good. But if you are connected with your essence identity, as I am, as I sit here, I would not be able to say very much if I were not one with my essence identity that the person has relatively little to do with it, it just floats around on the surface.

So all the words really come out of that, then the way in which you communicate would also become more intuitive. And in addition to applying the knowledge that you have

acquired, which is still useful, another element would come into your interaction with the person and that is a very creative and intuitive element. And you may surprise yourself with things that suddenly you say to the other person.

And you find yourself saying things that you didn't know that you knew. And of course, you didn't know them until you said them, they come out. So there's an added dimension that will then come into your work with the other person at this intuitive element where you continuously surprise yourself.

It's almost then as if you were listening to, oh, that was so interesting what I said. Where did that come from? That often happens to me.

But to be rooted in being while you listen and listening is a great thing. Listening is such a vital, vital thing to be able to listen. It's much more than when we say listening to another person goes far beyond auditory perception.

True listening implies that you feel yourself, your conscious presence. In other words, you are aware that you are aware at this moment and the awareness is listening, not the person. And while you're listening, you're not preparing the next thing that you're going to say to that person.

So to some extent, when you're listening that way, you temporarily let go of your knowledge. You temporarily let go of your acquired knowledge. When you need it, it'll be there.

But temporarily you listen in that state of seeming not knowing, seeming ignorance, because there's no thought in it. There's just high alertness. So from a certain point of view of the ego, it would seem that you have voluntarily entered that space of ignorance, but it's not ignorance.

It's only ignorance from the point of view of conceptual knowledge. There's a deep knowing there as opposed to conceptual knowledge. And as you practice that, you actually will be able to bring the two together.

So you can still apply your acquired knowledge, but at the same time, it will be infused with creativity and intuition. And so new things will flow into it. So the two come together.

It can also happen with some people who do this for a long, long time, that gradually the creative and intuitive dimension operates more and more frequently. After a few years, the acquired knowledge plays a very small part, and in some cases even disappears. And something totally new is then coming out of you.

And that could become a new modality again that then other people study. And you write a book about it. So that's how it works.

But the foundation is feeling your presence. And you practice that, practice it with simple conversations where you're not actually trying to help anybody. Oh yes, of course, also this idea that you have to help this person is still an idea.

It's also good to let go of that, that you're not trying to help. This attempt to help, it can be an obstacle to going deeper. If I thought I have to help you all, that wouldn't work very well.

[Speaker 4] (24:55 - 25:52)

Yes, thank you very much. My question. I read your books, and there's one little phrase that you have, and I listened to the tape you've done with Oprah, the 10 sessions you did, about five times.

And you talk about it. But the part when you say, life is the dancer, and we are the dance. And Oprah said, isn't it the other way around?

And you explained it somewhat, but I didn't grasp it. And you being here in front of me is the most joyous thing in my life to have you answer that. I couldn't ask for anything more.

This is one of the most special times of my life. So if you could answer that, I think a lot of people have that question too. Thank you.

Your question is? Life is the dancer. Yes.

And we are the dance, which is the opposite of what we would think.

[Speaker 1] (25:53 - 27:09)

Well, I believe what I meant was, it's always strange when one goes to the past, and people say, what did you mean when you said that 10 years ago? Did I say that? I'm sorry, I went fairly deep.

The dancer and the dance, this analogy, if that's what it is that I used, is, the dancer is the consciousness. And life, as it unfolds in the world of form and multiplicity on this planet and in many other places, is the dance of life. The dancer is who you are in your essence.

The dancer is God, ultimately, the one, the one consciousness. You are the one consciousness. And the consciousness expresses itself as this so-called person or human being.

I love that expression, human being. You remember how I interpret human being? Human is the form.

Being is the formless. Being is the dancer.

[Speaker 7] (27:09 - 27:10)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (27:10 - 27:13)

And human is the dance.

[Speaker 4] (27:15 - 27:19)

That's beautiful. Thank you so much. Thanks.

Yeah.

[Speaker 6] (27:19 - 27:34)

Good evening. I'm French. Nobody's perfect.

So the first time I read The Power of Now, I read the French version.

[Speaker 8] (27:34 - 27:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 6] (27:35 - 27:40)

And it's been translated, The Power of the Present Moment.

[Speaker 8] (27:40 - 27:40)

Yes.

[Speaker 6] (27:41 - 28:01)

And the more I'm listening to you, the more I'm wondering if there isn't a huge translation mistake. Isn't it The Power of Presence? Couldn't we say that the now is the presence and not just the present moment?

[Speaker 1] (28:01 - 32:52)

Ah, interesting. Yes. Le pouvoir du moment présent.

Le pouvoir du moment présent. Okay, I got it. The present moment is usually, when one speaks of present moment, most people will think that what we are talking about, not you, but the uninitiated, most people will believe that we are talking about what's happening in the present moment.

That's the present moment. What's the present? And therefore, since things that happen change continuously, every moment something else happens, or if it's not every moment, but soon after, something else happens.

So one thing happens and then another and another. Nobody knows how many moments there are in one hour because there's no defined duration. But what most people do believe is that every day contains many moments.

Every hour contains many moments. And then when we talk about the present moment, they say, what do you mean, present moment? Which one?

This one? Oh, it's gone already. Where is it?

The now is somewhat better than the present moment. The now is, again, could be misinterpreted as meaning what happens in the now. But when we say be aware of the now, what happens in the now, which is registered through your sense perceptions, obviously is one aspect of the now, but it is not the now.

What happens in the now is an aspect of the now, so to speak. It's the surface phenomenon of the now, and that surface changes all the time. And then you have the now itself, which never changes, and you can verify it in your own life by asking yourself whether you have ever experienced, felt, done, or thought anything that was not in the now.

And you can ask yourself whether anything could possibly happen ever in your life that is not in the now. So the now you cannot escape from. The form it takes changes your body, for example.

When you look at your body 20 years from now, it won't be quite the same, but it will be the now, but something will have changed on the surface of now. So the deeper meaning of now is not what happens, that's not what the now is. The now is the space, the eternal space in which it happens.

And that eternal space in which it happens is consciousness itself. And consciousness is essentially who you are. So in other words, you are the now.

I wish these words had come to me when I was writing *The Power of Now*. But these words that you are the now, very important words, I mean, it's all implied, it's all there. But these words didn't come, they came after the book.

Book was already published, so it's too late to put it in. That's fine. People got it anyway.

Many people got it and are getting it. But so essentially, you are the now, if you understand what now is. And if we say you are the present moment, you are right.

It's more misleading than to say you are the now. So the now is who you are in your

essence, is inseparable from who you are in your essence. The now is inseparable from consciousness itself, which is the space for everything to happen.

But it seems that coming back to the translation, the translator probably thought that in French, it didn't work quite as well as in English to say le pouvoir du maintenant or something. Yeah, or he could have said le pouvoir de la présence. Yes, but that would be a word that most readers wouldn't understand.

The now, they think they understand. In presence, thank you.

[Speaker 3] (32:58 - 33:56)

My heart is pounding out of my body. You have been on my vision board for six years. Okay, so I interview a lot of people, lots of great healers, and I've learned that there's a mind-gut connection.

And when people suppress their feelings, it brings disease in their body. So I'm also a certified life coach. And my question to you is, what is the difference between being in the moment, experiencing something that is happening to me or to you, and saying, let it go?

So how can I, when people are going through real feelings, how do I ask them to just let it go? Because I know that if they don't deal with it, it will create disease in their body. Right.

Does that make sense?

[Speaker 8] (33:56 - 33:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (33:57 - 33:57)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (33:57 - 33:58)

Yes, thank you.

[Speaker 3] (33:59 - 34:00)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (34:00 - 42:11)

The feeling, first of all, needs to be acknowledged and accepted. You can't start with letting go. So you have to start with acknowledging it and accepting that it's there,

because it's part of what is, the is-ness of the present moment.

Whether an external thing or an inner thing, it is what is. And to deny or to argue with what is creates suffering. So you acknowledge, you accept that it's there.

Then how much time you need to be with it depends, varies from person to person and what kind of a feeling it is and so on. And then the question arises, what is the link between that feeling and your thought processes? The person needs to find out whether the thought processes keep that feeling alive continuously, whether they renew by playing out, for example, a past scenario in their minds, by reviving memories from the past, by dwelling on certain narratives that are painful, repeating them in their minds, that gives renewed energy to the feeling.

So the first, the most important thing is to be aware of both levels. What's the level of my thinking? How does that contribute to the perpetuation of what I feel?

And so you also then acknowledge that, oh, these are the habitual thought patterns that go through my mind in relation to the feelings. And then you would begin to realize that the letting go, the most important step in letting go of feelings is to cut the link between your thinking and what you're feeling. How do you do that?

You do it by being aware of your thinking and realizing that thinking is pain. It feeds the old feeling and the narrative, whatever it is, is a painful narrative. And you realize that you've been keeping it alive for some years.

There's some enough awareness, you realized that it has no purpose except to make you unhappy and to perpetuate that feeling. However, you need, and this is how you can help or any counselor or therapist or spiritual teacher can help the other person by observing the feeling and seeing how the mind, the mental narrative has both. The mental narrative and the feeling seem to have a life of their own.

If they have been in there for a long time, they don't want to go. What they want is they want you to be identified with them. They don't want you to be conscious of them.

So this is really the mind aspect of the pain body and the emotional. The pain body is predominantly an emotion, but there is a mental aspect that the pain body needs to rise up into your mind in order to feed on certain types of thinking. In this case, the old narrative.

So you also need enough awareness to know that this thing does not want to go because there's a momentum behind thought patterns that have been active in your mind for a long time. So there's a momentum behind it. So you need to be acutely aware of the process of how it creates further pain.

And when you look through it and see that's actually what it does, then you've

recognized you cannot be deceived anymore by completely believing in it every time it happens. In other words, you see that you create your own pain ultimately. When you see that, that's the beginning of the end.

And then you can reach a stage when the pain is no longer, the feeling is no longer fueled by thinking. Then you arrive at a stage where you realize, I don't need the feeling anymore. In fact, you don't need to let go because then when you do not revive it continuously, it subsides by itself.

So you don't need to actually say, I must let go. It lets go of you rather than you need to let go. It's because you're no longer giving it energy.

You're no longer feeding it. So that's the process. So you need to let go is a bit like saying you need to forgive.

That's another one like that. You need to really need to forgive. Okay, I'll try.

I'll really, have you forgiven your parents? Yeah, I think I have. But, Forgiveness again is in a similar way happens naturally when first of all, you realize that no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness at that time when they acted.

So if you haven't forgiven your parents and yet then you can see they behaved the way they did because they could have done otherwise. My father, for example, I loved him dearly. Well, especially after I became conscious.

And before I became conscious, I had a love-hate relationship with him. I found him very obnoxious, but there was love there too, emotional love. But then when I was free, I could love him unconditionally.

And then I could see that pattern in him that gave me so much pain. His uncontrollable anger, mostly fortunately not directed towards me, but directed towards my mother. But the anger that was directed by my father towards my mother hurt me probably more than it hurt my mother as a child.

And his anger was so explosive. It could flare up at any moment. So you were always walking on eggshells.

And then later I realized where that anger came from. Of course, it goes back to childhood, how he was treated in his family. The seventh child, the youngest child, nobody wanted him anymore.

The mother was tired. He wasn't given much attention. It originated from their anger towards his mother and so on and so on.

And later I realized he could not help himself. He did not have the awareness. He was taken over by this anger.

And the moment I realized that he acted according to his level of consciousness at the time, I didn't need to forgive anymore because there was nothing to forgive anymore. And that's a beautiful thing. So again, similar to letting go of feelings, when enough awareness comes in, the feeling lets go of you and all becomes transmuted into something, an energy field that is good.

And so forgiveness, again, cannot really be practiced in the same way that letting go can't really be practiced. It just happens. And then that's how it is.

[Speaker 3] (42:11 - 42:13)

Yeah, thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (42:14 - 42:19)

And so let's just take a little silence, stillness.

[Speaker 5] (42:39 - 42:59)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle. Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle Presence And Letting Go of Control [f204dce2-610e-4c91-93cd-0998edf8f6f2]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:36)

Presence and letting go of control. In this episode, Eckhart reflects on the power of presence and the accompanying state of stillness. He says it's in those moments when we're not thinking that we experience pure awareness.

Eckhart then answers questions about what presence is not. He says it's not about monitoring our inner state or exercising control over our thoughts or feelings. He believes we don't have to worry if we're living as an awakened person should.

He urges listeners to learn to live in the now and experience life fully.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 11:57)

Hello, everybody. You're all advanced practitioners of presence. So you're not afraid of stillness.

Don't find it frightening or disturbing, but very comfortable and deeply peaceful. And that's our starting point is to become aware of an underlying stillness. The stillness is deeper than the conventional stillness, which is either the absence of sound or the absence of movement.

It's very still, there's no sound or sit still, don't move. But this stillness is deeper, does not depend on whether there's any external sound or not. It doesn't depend either on whether you're actually sitting still or moving.

It's something deeper. It's a dimension of consciousness in you, which cannot be defined conceptually or understood conceptually, but you can know it immediately within yourself. And you know it when you're not thinking, but fully aware.

The world interprets not thinking as something negative. Hence the word thoughtless. Thoughtless in English is not a positive term in the conventional sense, but in the way which you're using it here, thoughtless is a positive thing.

Now, thoughtless is a negative term as used conventionally, because it implies that you're very unconscious, that you're not even thinking, you're kind of falling below thought. You do things impulsively with no thought, controlled by all kinds of inner unconscious forces, emotions, and so on. But here to be free of thought is to rise above thought.

And the world doesn't know much about that yet. The possibility that you can be very alert, very present, but not thinking. There's a space of pure awareness.

Doesn't matter how long it lasts just now. The moment when you're not thinking, but you're not falling below thought, you're rising above thought. You're aware of an underlying stillness.

And in that, you don't know anything, and you don't need to know anything in conceptual terms. And this is a state out of which all knowing actually arises. All creative realizations, all creative activities, anything new comes into this world through having access to the non-conceptual stillness within.

And then things come to you, the great insights come, a fresh way of looking at the world, because you're not labeling everything compulsively. Even the room you're sitting in now, you can look around the room as if you hadn't been there before, without any past. If you're not attaching any labels to anything, you can look around in like a newborn child.

But the newborn child hasn't arrived at thinking yet. It's pre-thought, prior to thought. We are post-thought.

It's a different, it's a similar state, but much deeper. So it's becoming aware of that stillness. And that stillness is the essence of who you are.

And to know the essence of who you are, you don't need to remember who you are. It's memory. So to know yourself beyond memory and beyond anticipation of what you're going to be, that's an incredible liberation.

It's a liberation from the burden of being a person. Everybody carries that burden of themselves, their selves, the burden of themselves. There's a heaviness to it.

And every self is a problematic entity. How wonderful to be able to look at somebody without the interference of thinking. Thinking comes back as soon as you need it.

It's fine. In fact, it becomes more powerful when you're able to think without losing your connectedness with a deeper dimension. So you're looking at me now.

Is that a person? Right now, except when the words arise, I'm not thinking. So in between the words, there is a space of stillness, which is just pure awareness.

And as you connect with me through the technology, but ultimately it all happens in consciousness, you may also be able to be in that state of not thinking, but just aware. So when you're looking at me and I'm not thinking, you're not looking at a person. You're sensing something that is deeper than the person.

And how are you able to sense that? Because it is within you too. It is one with what you are perceiving there.

So when I look at you, you look at me, I reflect back to you who you are in your essence.

Not to anybody, you cannot free themselves even for an instant, a few seconds from the stream of thinking. What I'm talking about is complete nonsense because they have no way of recognizing the truth of it.

It's impossible. So if you're heavily, if you're in this bubble of thought, trapped in this bubble of thought, what I'm talking about now, anybody who is completely trapped in their bubble of thought, they will believe that I'm talking complete nonsense. But if you realize it's not nonsense, if you can realize the truth of it, if only obscurely, but you know, you can sense it, perhaps just briefly, then that's it.

Then you understand, but in a deeper sense than conceptual understanding. And that was the secret of the great philosopher Socrates, was very prolific, enormously creative, very beginning of Western thought. He didn't write anything.

He just talked, but other people wrote it down. And he said, they call me wise. He said, they call me very wise.

They call me the wisest of all people. Why do they call me the wisest of all people? Because I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

Now, not many people later on have understood what he's actually referring to. They thought he was just pretending not to know. No, he was referring to the state of pure awareness out of which all this philosophy came.

The state of not knowing, not conceptual knowing. And this is it. This is what Zen Buddhism is all about.

It's that state. This is ultimately what Tibetan Buddhism is all about. Tibetan Buddhism has a lot of cultural stuff around it.

But at the heart of Tibetan Buddhism is so Zen, which is the practice of pure awareness. If you find it difficult to enter that state, just by choosing to, you can use a little bit of help by being aware of your breathing, for example. And then being aware of the awareness that is aware of your breathing.

You're breathing in, you're breathing out. You're breathing in, breathing out. But you're also aware of that awareness of your breath.

Or you can feel the inner body, the aliveness that pervades your entire body. It might start with your hands and your feet. The body is alive.

So you can sense that aliveness. And then you can sense the awareness that is aware of that aliveness. And the aliveness and the awareness are one.

Everything that you are aware of in that state of awareness is you're one with. It's the end of separation. If you only know conceptual reality, we are separate from everything

and everybody.

And that's the realization of oneness. You hear that word awareness a lot in the culture. There's a lot of talk about becoming aware of, raising awareness of.

That's all fine. You have to raise awareness of all kinds of issues that otherwise people are not aware of. And that's fine.

But it's always awareness of something. That has its place too. But here, this is something deeper.

We're not raising awareness about something. We are raising awareness about awareness itself. And that's a shift in consciousness that happens inside you.

In that instant, there's a shift. Let's see if there are any questions that have survived our meditative beginning.

[Speaker 3] (11:59 - 13:12)

Hello, Eckhart. Your teachings have really helped me. My initial question is the following.

So sometimes when I'm having like casual conversations with friends, I feel that practicing presence while having these conversations is quite restrictive because I feel that most conversations are either about something that happened in the past or about something that is about to happen. And I'm wondering what do present and awakened people really talk about? Because most things are either about something that's going to happen or something that has happened.

And sometimes when I'm having a conversation with a friend that is not coming out of presence, I feel that I shouldn't have it. And when I'm getting excited about a topic, I feel that I'm restricting myself by, I don't know, there's a voice in my head and I'm thinking, oh, you shouldn't be enthusiastic about this. It doesn't come out of presence.

Yeah. I don't know if that makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (13:13 - 26:28)

Yes. Well, that's very interesting. I'm still for a moment to see what the answer is.

You don't need to restrict yourself in any way in your ordinary life. Just allow yourself to feel, if you feel enthusiastic, as you mentioned about something, maybe something that's happening here now or something that's going to happen at some point in the future, you're looking forward to something. And then you think perhaps, oh, I shouldn't be looking forward too much because then I'm not present.

Or if you feel enthusiastic about something that's happening around you, I said, oh, I

shouldn't be because I'm getting too attached to things, perhaps that kind of thought arises in you. And then you would be exercising some kind of, attempting to exercise some kind of control over your inner state. So there's a little controlling entity.

The controlling entity is not presence. Controlling entity is something in your mind that to a limited extent has understood a bit about presence. And then it's attempting to control the way in which you experience life, according to its limited knowledge of what presence is, but it's not presence itself.

So it's your mind still interfering and saying, you shouldn't be experiencing this, you're not present enough. And that itself isn't presence either. It's just a thought that arises.

So the presence is a simple witnessing faculty. You observe that when you're very enthusiastic about something, in addition to being enthusiastic about something, it's perfectly fine to know that you are enthusiastic about it without denying it in any way. But then the dimension of depth to whatever you're experiencing, in whatever way you're experiencing, whatever you're experiencing, by being aware that this is what you're experiencing without censorship, without believing that this is not how an awakened person would act or anything like that, that is not helpful at all.

You might be very surprised how an awakened person, an awakened person you probably wouldn't even, not normally, wouldn't even recognize because he or she would seem so ordinary in the way in which they, even having an ordinary conversation with people, being able to be completely ordinary is part of being present. So you don't have this sense of you become a very special person when you're present. You are a more ordinary person, a more simple person in some ways when you are present, because you do no longer live through a conceptual sense of self.

The censorship that you have in your mind still sometimes going on is part of a sense of self. It's part of a conceptual sense of self. So that is not helpful.

So allow yourself to experience whatever it is that you're experiencing. So allow yourself to experience whatever it is you're experiencing. If possible, be aware of what it is you're experiencing.

So if you're being very much intensely anticipating a future event, for example, then be aware of that intensity in you that says, oh, excitement suddenly arises about something that's going to happen. And so instead of telling yourself or believing, oh, I shouldn't, I must hold back because I'm losing presence. No, be excited.

But if possible, know that you are excited. Be aware of your inner state at any given time, if that is possible. And it is possible, not continuously, you will probably not be able to sustain that all the time, but as much as possible, know what it is that's going on inside you.

So attachment to the ordinary things of everyday life, again, it's not helpful or even possible. It's not advisable either to attempt to get rid of attachments. If you think, oh, I shouldn't want that because I get attached, maybe you see something nice in a shop or something, and you say, oh, no, if I buy that, then I'm going to get attached, it will be part of my ego.

And then you hold yourself back. But you probably think about it more for the next few hours or days about when maybe you should buy it. So you're creating, often you create more of an inner problem when you hold yourself back from something rather than doing it.

So the attachment is something that gradually diminishes the attachment to things, the attachment to conditions, the attachment to whatever it may be, some future moment, the attachment to those things, as more presence arises in you, the attachment gradually diminishes. And so instead of attempting to get rid of the attachment to things, be as present as you can, in any given moment. And then you'll find that gradually, you're less attached to things.

Gradually, yes, you're still able to enjoy things that you do around you, and so on. That's true. But you will find that gradually, the excitement, a kind of nervous excitement about things, that tends to gradually go away, but you don't make it go away.

That doesn't work. So you don't impose some kind of control. I mustn't get excited about this.

No, if you're excited, be excited and know that you're excited. And the more the knowing, as the knowing manifests more and more through you, the things that you're excited about, become fewer. So the things of this world, you're still able to enjoy them.

But it's no longer, they don't give you that high anymore. I've got it now. Because you cannot experience in high without some future point, experiencing a corresponding low.

So when you feel very high about something, yeah, I got it. I did. Oh, I'm so excited.

I'm so excited about this. Or whatever, some future, we're going on vacation, we're flying to Hawaii. Or having something, somebody has just given you something, or you just bought something, and you feel, oh, wow, elated.

And then that cannot exist without a corresponding low that comes soon after, or a little bit after, sometimes very soon after. Suddenly, the very thing that made you excited, suddenly, you're suddenly very disappointed. It lets you down.

That's the expression. People do that too, you might have noticed. You get excited about something you just met, fall in love.

Falling in love is that attachment. It's not love, falling in love. It's that attachment, you get excited.

And then a point will come when he or she, or whatever, lets you down. You really let me down. That's a wonderful expression.

You were up there, and then he or she lets you down. So it's not only people that do that to you, it's also situations and conditions that you encounter that bring you to a high. And then the situation that you encounter lets you down, and you have a low.

And as you experience that in your life, the more you experience that, it's through awareness that you can experience that there are people who reach old age without arriving at any kind of awareness. They are still trapped in the cycle of highs and lows, of the excitement and then the disappointment. Excitement, disappointment.

Happiness, unhappiness. It goes up, down. Some people even in old age don't transcend it.

So the more you experience this, consciously, the more you realize then that the things of this, whatever the world can give you in whatever form, whatever you can experience in this world, is fine. But as you become more present, you're no longer so extremely excited about it anymore. A good thing that comes, that you don't, ah.

You say, oh, it's very nice. It's lovely. That's fine.

And then at some point, the good thing is no longer a good thing, or it leaves you and say, oh, well, that is, that's how the world goes. Whatever arise, as the Buddhists say, whatever arises, passes away. Gain and loss.

Gain and loss. The continuous cycle. And then in an organic way, things don't excite you that much anymore, which does not mean that you cannot enjoy them.

You can still enjoy, be fully awakened, and enjoy the things of this world. If something comes into, you can enjoy the experience of something without the attachment to it. The attachment is you derive your sense of self from it.

It becomes incorporated into your sense of self. That goes away because your sense of self arises from a deeper place. So, that's the, that's the shift.

It's not something that you need to do. It happens organically as presence arises more fully through you. So, just be there as the observer, the observing presence, whatever you experience.

Don't attempt to limit yourself by thinking that this isn't how an awake person would act or anything like that. It's not necessary to do that. The main thing, then, to summarize, don't attempt to exercise some kind of control on the way in which you act in this world.

Control that is to do with how you think a present person would act. So, allow yourself to have the experience that you have. And if you're attached to something, just know that you're attached.

If you know that you're attached to something, there's already some freedom. The freedom is in the knowing. If you didn't know, not everybody who is attached knows that they are attached.

They are really attached. There isn't the additional dimension of consciousness that is the witnessing presence that can witness their attachment. That's a huge difference.

If there is a witnessing presence, then you're no longer 100% attached. You're already, you have one foot out already. And then the more you experience the disappointments in this world, depends how many years people need, how many years of life they need to experience that whatever gives them a high will also give them a low.

So, the more you experience that, the more open you will be to going beyond that limited way of experiencing the world, of being in this world. So, I hope that helps, is helpful. So, enjoy whatever comes to you without losing yourself in it.

So, just be present with it. Don't censor yourself.

[Speaker 3] (26:30 - 26:31)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (26:31 - 26:33)

Thank you. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (26:35 - 27:59)

Hi, Iker. Yeah. So, my question revolves around fixing the person.

So, for quite some time now, I've just kind of been observing my mind and kind of playing out the same patterns day after day after day. And I just sit there and I just continue to observe them. And a lot of them revolved around fixing the person, conditioning certain behavior patterns.

And, I mean, they're not really that quite detrimental. They don't wreak havoc in my life. They're just kind of these little trivial mundane things.

But they're given a lot of importance or my mind says that they're important, especially to awakening and to try to get rid of them. But I find that any effort to change the person, to take responsibility for my life, brings me more and more back into personhood. So, it's something that I can't, it's challenging to escape because I do have

a family.

I have my own business. So, there's lots of things that are going on. But at the same time, the self-will, the personal will is just kind of dropping away.

And so, there's just a lot of confusion about what to do.

[Speaker 1] (28:03 - 31:08)

There was a, I don't know if he's still popular, a psychologist, psychotherapist. He wrote quite a few books. Carl Rogers is the name.

And he created his own school of psychotherapy. It's very simple, profound and simple. There's a lot of spirituality hidden in it without explicitly talking about it.

But one could summarize his approach to personal transformation and change, which is what your question is about. One could summarize his approach saying he believed that, and he learned it through his own many years of practice with practicing psychotherapy with people. As long as you want to change something or change yourself or the psychotherapist wants to change the patient or the client, whatever they call him, it doesn't work.

Change happens when you totally accept whatever it is that arises within yourself. In the case of the therapist and the client of the therapist, the therapist in the state of unconditional acceptance, he just listens. But what he doesn't say, but what is implied is you're totally present when you're with the therapist is with a person.

Non-judgmental, totally non-judgmental, attaching no labels, unconditional acceptance or whatever. The most powerful agent for change then, and this is also implied in every form of spirituality, the most powerful way is not wanting to change yourself or wanting to rearrange who you are internally and so on, but an acceptance of whatever it is that you're experiencing, the way in which you're experiencing this moment. Let's say, for example, there may be certain conditioned patterns in you that you would rather be without, I assume from your question.

There are certain things that maybe you can even give an example, the way in which you interact with people or in certain situations. There may be certain, or when you're alone, certain things that arise in your mind that you would rather be without that must be part of your question because there are some, as you said, they're not gigantic things that make your life totally miserable. There is a succession of smaller things as far as I can tell from your question.

Is that right?

[Speaker 2] (31:09 - 33:54)

Yeah. I mean, just kind of showing up to life, like just taking responsibility for your life, not just taking a spiritual pursuit and kind of leaving everything to the side, but to kind of, as you kind of say, taking care of the human aspect as well as the being aspect. And so, I don't, I'm not actually, I'm not bothered by them.

I can see that these are just mind patterns, energy forms. I mean, even like when I was very quickly, like when I was young, for 13 years, I felt like I was in a cloud of anxiety where I couldn't do anything. I couldn't leave the house.

I couldn't go to parties. I couldn't interact. I couldn't do anything.

And I recognized in that moment, I had no free will of my own. I couldn't do anything. And I feel like that now to a lesser degree, but I'm just kind of observing everything.

And I feel like it's, I guess for me, it's a little bit, it's a little bit, it's a little bit scary and disconcerting because I do have responsibilities, but I also can recognize that I'm not really trying to change anything per se. You know, I'd read Nisargadatta and he would talk about how, you know, our responsibility is only our attitude. That's the one thing that we can control.

And so, you know, that's what I've been kind of bringing my attention to is how I'm approaching these things, but even how I'm interacting with others. So how I'm interacting with, say, you know, someone in my life that's causing friction, I'll often just go, well, there's nothing that they can do about it. Like they're not, they're not necessarily, they're not necessarily in control.

You know, they're not fully aware of what they're doing. But at times, if I continue that process, it can become very robotic. And, you know, like even just practicing like, you know, self-inquiry, I find like, can just be very kind of very stuck in the mind.

You know, it's very easy to ask, who am I? And so I guess part of it is just kind of getting out of that, that stuckness of feeling like something should be changed, something needs to happen. And because it's just, it's just been going on for so long.

And, you know, I've listened to your teacher, like, I'll just pour over your teachings. And, you know, another person that I listened to is Anthony DeMello. And he talks about, you know, stop fixing yourself, right?

Stop giving any effort to fixing the person. But, but at the same time, there's things in my life that need to get done that aren't getting done.

[Speaker 1] (33:55 - 38:44)

So it's like, it's just, it is what it is. Well, on the level of the person, you can never achieve perfection. The level of the person is always unsatisfying.

So you, if you're looking for satisfaction on the level of your personal sense of self, all the things that make up the person, all the conditioning, yes, one can improve it to some extent, but there's there remains always a strong element of dissatisfaction or unsatisfactoriness with any, any person is an unsatisfactory entity. So on that level, there's no, there's no solution. So, and every person has its limitations on the personal, every, even if you meet the Buddha, you will find on the level of the person, there will be certain limitations.

He doesn't create unnecessary suffering for himself or others. Yes, absolutely true. But there will be certain limitations.

I have limitations on the level of the person. There are things that I'm not good at dealing with, to do with paperwork and things like that, all kinds of things that I have, the person that I'm has limitations. So the, the answer is to be more deeply rooted in the presence so that you're not looking for some kind of answer on the level of the person, derive your sense of who you are from presence rather than the conditioned entity in your mind.

And then gradually the, the increasing presence to some extent affects the conditioned entity. Not, it doesn't make it perfect, but it tends to remove major dysfunctions that is there, that are maybe there on the level of the person. So as presence begins to shine through, you know, my terminology that I use is the being and the human.

As you're more aware of the being and derive your sense of who you are predominantly from the being in the, not from the mind created entity, the person, then gradually the being begins to also shine through. It's a bit like a lampshade. Let's say the person is a lampshade and the being is a light bulb.

It's an, it's an, it's just an analogy. Let's say the being that you are is the light, the light bulb, the, the shade of the lamp, the lampshade is the person that, and some lampshades are very, they hardly let any light through. And this is just, of course, it's a very limited analogy, all analogies are, but here gradually the light gradually diminishes the density of the, of the lampshade, but the lampshade will continue to have certain patterns in it.

You can't remove the patterns completely, that's fine. So the answer is not to be found on the level of whatever you do and so on, but be more deeply established in presence in everyday life, not as a separate, not just as a separate practice that you do when you're alone or whatever, but as you go about your business, be, be the, be the, have the, have that sense of the background awareness while you deal with things, talk to people, or you're on the phone, or you're on whatever it is you do, have that sense of the background awareness, and then you do everything in the foreground. And that's, and they're not separate, it's like the surface reality and the deeper reality.

And so they, they merge. That's the practice. So the practice is not trying to fix yourself in any way.

The practice is to be, to bring presence into as much as you can into every moment. And you, many times you may miss it, that's fine too, and then you become present again. That's the, that's the practice.

Don't expect perfection for, on the human level. Big dysfunctions are removed by presence, as presence. Smaller things remain often.

Did you mention Misaka Data? You're reading?

[Speaker 4] (38:44 - 38:45)

Well, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (38:45 - 41:23)

Him, for example, I mean, he continued to smoke very harmful, strong cigarettes, even after awakening. Yeah. So there was no, there was no perfection, many other things probably, on the level of the person, yet the major dysfunctions that make life miserable for yourself and others, they go away.

He didn't seem to be concerned about how long he was going to live, so he didn't, he just smoked. It was a habit that stuck with him. It's hard for me to understand how addiction like that could continue, but it is possible.

There have been cases of, even one or two cases of people who seem quite awake, teachers, who were still, actually even drank like a lot, alcohol. I don't see, I mean, I enjoy a glass of wine or two with dinner, but I don't, I can't get drunk. But who knows?

It is not for me to judge anybody else. The world moves in mysterious ways. And all I know is that major dysfunctions that create suffering in this world for yourself and for others, they dissolve in presence.

Certain other imperfections remain, they're part of the human, they can't get rid of that. If you try to become perfect on the human level, that's horrible, impossible. Also, you're subject to the polarities, good and bad, and so on, light and dark on the human level.

So don't aim for perfection. But through acceptance of whatever patterns still operate in you, conditioned patterns, through acceptance, a lot of change happens, complete acceptance. So the question of wanting to change yourself doesn't arise anymore when there's complete acceptance.

So you completely accept certain things that you observe in yourself. And then quite often change happens through that complete acceptance. Perhaps that's the next step in

your practice, that's completed, then the question arises even anymore.

The question disappears from your mind, how to fix yourself, because you have seen that it doesn't work. So you give up the idea of fixing, wanting to fix yourself. And you don't even question yourself, well, am I going to be stuck with this for the rest of my life?

Or how much longer? That goes away too. So good luck with your practice.

Thank you, Eckhart. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (41:25 - 41:44)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Presence Is the Foundation for Everything [c5af1fc9-ae24-4589-9d67-eb8d2c2e6c3a]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:50)

Presence is the foundation for everything. In this podcast, Eckhart explains why presence is the bedrock for our existence. He says without it, nothing would be possible.

He says most people define themselves through self-created labels based on our past or on an imagined future. He says we must ask, who am I right now? Eckhart believes we won't know the answer fully because it remains a mystery.

He says hiding deep inside each of us is a sense of beingness that we cannot define. Eckhart believes we derive our true self from presence and thus life is synonymous with the now.

[Speaker 1] (0:52 - 44:40)

Good morning to everyone. I haven't prepared anything for this session. In fact, I have no idea what I'm going to talk about.

Now, in theory, that could be very disconcerting, not knowing. And yes, not knowing is disconcerting if you think that you should know. If you accept not knowing, then it's actually quite lovely.

That can could be called trust or faith or resting in being. There's even a little book written in medieval times in England by an anonymous author, which I highly recommend. And the title of the book is The Cloud of Unknowing.

And it talks, of course, in theistic terms. It's about knowing God. It tells you that you cannot know God through concepts.

So you have to remove concepts from your mind and have that space of clear awareness. Although that word is not used in the book. To know, the modality of knowing through concepts is, of course, necessary.

Words, concepts. For many people, that's all there is. They relate to the world almost exclusively through concepts.

But then there's another possibility, and that is not conceptual knowing, but non-conceptual, unitive consciousness. And a term that I sometimes use is, on the one hand, you have object consciousness, where you have a thought as a form, like an object. It's not a physical one, but it's a form that consciousness takes.

That's object consciousness. And most people are completely trapped in. They don't use object consciousness.

Object consciousness uses them. They are immersed in, swallowed up by object consciousness, not realizing that that is only one dimension of human existence. And if you only live in that dimension, which is necessary for being here, but if that's the only dimension that you know, then your life is one dimensional.

And not only that, it also becomes frustrating. There is something fundamentally wrong with life or with your life if all you know is object consciousness. So you only know yourself through object consciousness, which is the movement of thought.

And not only do you only know yourself through that, which is the story you tell yourself, which you call my life. And in many cases, not a happy story. It didn't unfold as it should have.

It's not only, you only, you know yourself, so you know a very limited aspect of yourself, but also the world around you. You relate to the world around you through object consciousness. Everything is labeled and defined, and you have a personal relationship with things.

The stronger your ego is, ego meaning, the stronger your ego is, that means the more you are completely identified with object consciousness. And if you are completely identified, in other words, if you have a huge ego, massive ego, which doesn't necessarily mean you have a gigantic, overpowering personality, well, some egos do. You have some egos you meet and you go, they're intimidating.

But the reverse ego can be equally strong of somebody who is a victim of everything and everybody, and complains about the world, how unfair it all is, and sees everything that's wrong out there, and what they've all done to me, or to the group that I identify with. That's, that gives a very strong ego too. But no matter what it is, it always implies specialness.

The one who has a, what we usually identify with as ego is the big ego. Let's say I'm the biggest, or we are the biggest. It could be a personal ego says I am, or doesn't, might not say it, but I am a genius.

Or it's an ego that is collectively identified, in which case the personal does not come up very strongly. Everything is defined through our group, our identity group. And our identity group can only survive, this conceptual reality can only survive if there are others who are antagonistic.

So you have to make others into enemies, otherwise our identity as a collective will not survive and thrive. But the more I can be, the more the collective can be antagonistic towards other, that they define as others, the other, the stronger it feels its own identity, and that's the ego gets strengthened through that. So you see it, and the form it takes varies from person to person on a personal level.

And on a collective level, the form the collective ego takes varies from age to age. So the form the collective ego took in the, let's say the first half of the 20th century, leading to world wars and leading to genocide within countries and all that, leading to very destructive ideologies. In the same way that on a physical level, a human being can become infected with a virus, in the same way a thought can infect a person or a collective, a group of people, could be millions.

A certain thought form can proliferate, attract other similar thought forms to itself, and take possession of your entire mind. That can happen on a personal level. First of all, in a very simple way, when a thought just doesn't want to go away, it's kind of stuck in your mind, and you can't, you have to think about it, you can't stop.

That's a relatively harmless viral infection by thought, but it can be much stronger than that, when a certain thought form becomes so prevalent in your mind that all other thought forms become inferior to it and are influenced by it. So this is, then the person looks at everything through one particular theory, for example, well, it could be many things. I don't want to put any thought form into your head now.

When you take it to an extreme, it becomes obvious that it is insane. An extreme, for example, in the case of somebody suffers from paranoid schizophrenia, has been taken over by viral thought, which acts the same way as a virus on the physical level. It's completely taken over that person and possesses the mind of that person.

And everything this person looks at is through the veil of this heavy virus infection, so to speak, mental virus infection. It can take over a collective. Then there are certain ideas that arise in people's minds that take people over.

They can spread much more quickly these days, even through the internet and so on. These thought forms can spread very quickly and get amplified in thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of people's lives and then take over your mind. And then you think these are your opinions.

These are your viewpoints. That's how it is. And not only that, you don't recognize them as your opinions.

It's the truth. So to you, you cannot differentiate any longer between an opinion or viewpoint that you hold through which you look at the world. You can't differentiate between that and the truth of how it actually is.

So your opinion becomes the truth and anybody else, anybody who does not share your opinion becomes the enemy and basically evil. So that's, how does this happen? It happens because what is missing is the depth dimension in your consciousness, which we could call, now we've, this is all object consciousness, complete identification with object consciousness, becomes ego, strong ego.

You are possessed by it, basically. You don't use your ego. The ego pretends to be you.

It is a thought form with accompanying emotions that says, that is the self that the Buddha talks about, that the Buddha says, one of the main teachings, the delusion, that is a delusion, that the self is a delusion. Jesus said it too. Did he?

Yeah. Now you might not know that if you only go to the church or, why would he have said, deny yourself? Just these two words.

It's exactly the same as the Buddha's teaching. Why did he say, deny yourself? What's the implication?

The implication is, it cannot be that the self is something real. It would be absurd to deny. If that's really who you are, why should you deny it?

No, the implication is that the self is an illusion. And when Jesus says, deny thyself, quite simply, what he means is recognize the unreality of that mind made conceptual sense of identity. Recognize the unreality of that.

That means deny yourself. Now, but how do you recognize the unreality of it? It's only through the arising of awareness, which is, I call it sometimes space consciousness.

It's not a science fiction term. Space consciousness isn't because it's not about outer space. It's about inner space.

So space consciousness is the other dimension, the depth dimension in you, that is really what awareness is. Now, what space consciousness cannot be understood through explanations. I could talk for many hours here and give you more definitions of space consciousness.

And you may be trying to understand space consciousness. Now, of course, here come to the first important thing. If you're trying to understand space consciousness, that's not it.

Because you're trying to apply concept consciousness to space consciousness and through concept, want to understand it through concept consciousness, you can't. So you have to take the step. Why am I then talking about it?

Because the words are not something that you should believe will enable you to understand space consciousness, but the words are simply pointers or signposts. So they are not explanations as such. You have to go where the words point.

And you'll see now where the words point. The words point towards the possibility of knowing things, perceiving things, not through the screen of thought, but through consciousness. Consciousness is the spacious awareness.

So it's finding, it begins with realizing that small gaps arise in your mind where otherwise

there would have been a continuous stream one thought after another, one object after another, a totally cluttered mind, a mind that never stops talking to itself and going on and on and making your life miserable. There's a possibility of realizing that occasionally, even without you wanting to do anything, naturally, the gaps of some space consciousness arise from time to time in you. And you may not identify it as space consciousness.

It could be that those are moments that feel where you feel alive and you feel it feels good, or you become aware of beauty, or you become aware of a feeling of goodwill flowing out from you towards another human being or another life form. These are moments when suddenly you feel elevated, life feels to some extent briefly liberated from yourself. There are moments of natural self transcendence that occur in your life.

And if they didn't, nothing that I talk about would make any sense to you. Because it's only through those moments that naturally occur, and that may actually occur more as you sit here right now, it's only through that space consciousness in you that it can recognize what I'm actually talking about. If you dragged somebody here, a friend or family member, and that person is sitting next to you, now we don't know whether that person has that bit of openness of space through which he or she could understand, not understand conceptually, but get a sense of what it is, realize what it is that I'm talking about.

Or it could be that this friend that didn't really want to come here, but somehow is stuck here now, might become increasingly irritated and frustrated and longing to get away from here. So if you're not longing to get away from here, that means, in fact, if you enjoy being here for some weird reason, then that means there's something in you that recognizes what these words are pointing to is real and very important. And so they're pointing to a reality in you.

The strange thing is our mainstream kind of world, the mainstream world that you meet through the media and everything else, is largely completely unaware of that. So everything that you are told when you relate to the things of this world through the media and so on, what it tells you is absolutely important, is not absolutely important. What it tells you is absolutely important, maybe relatively important, but not absolutely important.

But if you miss what is absolutely important, then you miss the very reason for being here, because the reason for being here is for you to realize that that's the fulfillment of a human life. So space consciousness arises naturally, even if you haven't practiced meditation or anything. Meditation is a more conscious way of realizing space consciousness, but doesn't...

Sometimes it works for people. Sometimes it works in the limited setting of their meditation practice, but not in the rest of their lives. And other people don't meditate,

and yet it still arises in them.

So it arises naturally. So if you can catch it when it arises naturally in your life, in a daily life, then it deepens, and sometimes the intervals of space consciousness become longer. Now, what am I talking about?

I'm talking about freedom from thought. For example, when you look at something, do you immediately need to call it something? You're looking at a tree.

Maybe you know what the name of the tree is, but does the name of that tree immediately arise in your mind so that there's no gap? You see it, and then you call it something. But even there, if you're very alert, if you're looking at a tree, and then you have something to say about it, or you think about it, even there, you may notice in the first two seconds, let's say, of looking at the tree, there's no thought yet.

Because you have to perceive it first. The perception has to be taken in. And so you need to be aware in that moment where the perception happens.

There's an awareness, but there's a brief moment when the thought hasn't come up yet. You haven't labeled it yet. And if you're lucky enough not to know the name of the tree, then that's a little easier.

However, if you don't know the name of the tree, you could still, you may still find that immediately your mind comes in and says, I wonder what that, what kind of a tree that is. And then you say, hmm, there's an app for that. You can direct your phone at a tree, take a photo, and then send it in, and then it tells you what it probably is.

And that's a miraculous thing. It's wonderful, but it's not for our practice, not useful. For our practice, an app would be useful that removes the concept from your mind.

So notice when you, when you any, when you enter a room or you leave a room, you open the door, you step outside. There's your room, you leave a room, the first step outside, and the first step you take everything in that you see out there. In those first moments, you're not thinking for the first two or three seconds, because you're just taking it in.

And then usually once you've taken it in, you see there's nothing extraordinary, because the mind looks for something to hang, to kind of latch on to this. Oh, look at that thing there. But there's nothing, and then you can, then you go into your usual thought processes.

But if you notice that when you first encounter something, there's always a moment of spacious awareness while the perception happens. Then the perception gets dulled, actually, by conceptualization. So first you have a clear perception, and then immediately the veil of conceptualization arises.

That then becomes the veil or the screen through which you still perceive, but not as vibrantly and as clearly as before. And not, but if you're very heavily identified with concepts, the initial perception almost completely disappears, and it's almost completely replaced by a mental concept. This could happen also when you meet a human being.

When you meet a human being, let's say it's a human being that you haven't met before. So there's that human being, and you relate, and immediately, at first you notice there's a moment of no conceptualization. But if you are, especially if you have a big ego, and big egos are very judgmental and critical, and they need to immediately find some kind of personal position towards that other person, some kind of interpretation.

And if it can be negative, that's even better, because then the ego can feel stronger in its identity. If you can complain about something in the other person or something, find fault in the other person. The ego loves that, because if you find fault in the other person, by implication, you are superior to the other person.

So the ego loves that, and that is how, after the initial perception of a few seconds, conceptualization arises. So if you have a strong ego, become completely immersed in the concepts you immediately formulate for that person, so immediately that human being recedes, almost disappears, and is replaced with a mental concept. And then you think you have a relationship with that person.

And sometimes people do it to each other. Even after they get to know each other, they still, they relate almost exclusively through a conceptual sense of self. And when you relate to another almost exclusively through object consciousness, without spacious awareness, then very quickly you also find conflict arises, very quickly and easily.

And the ego actually wants that. The ego might say, I want a peaceful relationship, but everything it says and does is against peace. Even nations do it.

They say, we want peace, and they prepare for war. We are the most peaceful of nations. So the one thing is then, whenever you enter, whenever you first look at something or listen to something, it could be a sound in nature, it could be even the rustling of leaves on the tree, and there's a slight breeze, and you listen to it, or any sound, you listen to it, in the moment of alert listening, you're not thinking.

And now you might not realize that, but if you realize that, it actually deepens, because then you become more fully conscious of that moment of spacious awareness. And not only it deepens, you may also find it becomes longer. And you're able to listen for longer periods of time without the interference of conceptualization, which is thinking.

In other words, while you're listening, you're still and alert. And from the point of view of the conceptual mind, in that moment of listening without concept, you don't know anything anymore. And the conceptual mind and the sense of self that arises from

identification with the conceptual mind becomes very uneasy with that.

It's very, it's, it gets a little bit shaky and says, you should know what this is, you have to, you have to, it needs to take a position vis-a-vis everything, or at least label everything in order to say, oh, now I know what it is. So when you have labeled something, the mind says, I know what it is. That's, of course, an illusion.

Because just by attaching a thought, or a word, I mean, a thought is a, it's a, it's a word that hasn't been verbalized yet. By saying, oak tree, the illusion is, so now you know what it is. You know nothing because you just attached a label to it.

Doesn't mean you know what that is. And you can attach further labels to it by examining the oak tree in more detail. And you can write a PhD about an oak, oak trees.

And I'm sure people have written PhDs about oak trees. And even these days, they become more and more specialized, probably even about the little part of an oak tree, the roots of the oak tree, the leaves of the oak tree, you can write a PhD about that. There's a lot of stuff in there.

And again, yes, you know a lot. The, do you, do you know it? It's confusing, knowing with knowing about.

Knowing directly, which is through spacious consciousness, and knowing about it, which is, we need both to live in this world. I emphasize here, space consciousness, because you have it, everybody has more than enough of the other, the conceptual. So to live in this world, you need, you need both.

You need the balance between the mind, the conceptual, conceptualized, the ability to conceptualize and to think, which is important. But you also need the ability to not think. If you only cultivate the ability to think, thinking takes you over, you habitually overthink when that happens.

You engage in totally excessive thought movements, becomes involuntary. You are not using thought whatsoever. Thought has taken possession of you, and thought pretends to be you.

That's the unenlightened or the unawakened condition, which we call unconscious in spiritual terms. It's not the conventional meaning of unconscious. The conventional meaning of unconscious means you've dropped.

So when I say, these people are unconscious, it doesn't mean they're, it means they are completely identified with the conceptualizing mind. They're completely identified with thought, that is unconsciousness, spiritually speaking, complete absence of awareness or space consciousness. And so you may know a lot about a lot of things.

You may have vast knowledge of many, many things, including perhaps psychological knowledge, because there's a lot to know about how humans operate. And again, there's nothing wrong with all that knowledge. But it's always knowledge about something.

It's not a direct knowing. Now, then that's interesting. It's an interesting fact.

Sometimes a certain amount of wisdom is sometimes embodied in language. Languages arise, of course, spontaneously over centuries and millennia. And some languages, like Spanish and French, have two different words for to know.

And that points a little bit in that direction. So my French is very limited. So you have to know, connaître, and to know, savoir.

Or in Spanish, you can say, you have one, one says, saber y conocer. Say is I know, y conozco is also I know. But what's the difference?

You can say in Spanish, I know who you are. Say qui eres, I know who you are. And I know you, te conozco.

Conocer would be direct knowing. And the other one is conceptual, I know who you are. But it doesn't mean that I know you.

So one is more conceptual, the other is direct knowing. There's an ancient term in early Christianity, gnosis, I think it's spelled G-N-O-S-I-S. And I believe the G is not pronounced.

The gnosis, that's where the word knowledge comes from. And that refers to these mystics in very early medieval times, and probably even early Christian times, and probably even pre-Christian. The Gnostics, those who practice gnosis, were interested in this direct knowing, direct non-conceptual knowing.

As a human, you need concepts too. So you cannot completely dismiss the world of concepts, that's part of civilization too. But civilization that gets trapped in concepts and loses its connectedness to that which is deeper, can only become barren and lifeless and no longer creative.

Because all creativity arises from space consciousness, from that, the alert inner stillness. And the artist has to go there and produce it from there, and then it takes form. So that's the emphasis here is for us on space consciousness, because we already have more than enough of the other.

Everybody here is highly knowledgeable, obviously, whether or not you have a PhD or high school graduation, regardless, you are highly knowledgeable. And everybody here knows more than Jesus or Buddha ever did in terms of concepts about stuff, because they were not concerned with that. So in terms of knowing about the world, I mean, Jesus didn't, or Buddha didn't know about the Andromeda galaxy or how far it is, or the

molecular structure of water or whatever, or the theory of relativity.

But they were not, this has its place, but they were not concerned with that. Because even then, even though we have far vaster knowledge than they had then, even then people's minds were already cluttered with so-called knowledge. And a lot of that knowledge was actually not true, because the way they interpreted the world was somewhat very limited.

And we think the way the concepts we have now are absolutely true, and we may find in a few hundred years, that many of the concepts through which we interpret the world in terms of science and technology, science and so on, are actually also erroneous. They may be as limited as the concepts people had in medieval times about the world. But we don't need to go there here, that's a secondary consideration.

The important thing is the arising and the deepening in you of space consciousness, which is inseparable from the present moment awareness. This isn't just another way of talking about it, is to talk about it in terms of present moment awareness, that is space consciousness. Now, present moment awareness, now, as you all know, the present moment is all there ever is, normally could argue with that.

And as you all know, it's written in a book somewhere too, nothing ever happened in the past, it happened in the now, because happen and now are synonymous. Something cannot happen except in the now. It can't happen, nothing can happen in the past.

When it happened, it was the now, it happened in the now. Or when it will happen, it will be the now. So there is only the present moment, the present moment and life are synonymous, life is now.

And the past and future again are already concepts that we need to function here in this dimension, past and future. But other than concepts, they have no actual reality. So what is the past?

Certain thoughts in your head. And when do you think those thoughts? Now.

So the thoughts in your head are happening now. What is future? Future is thought, it's a thought in your head.

Because if it were more than a thought in your head, you would, at some point of your life, have been able or at some point would be able to experience the future. It's an impossibility. The future as such doesn't exist.

It's other than a thought in your head. And when the so called future comes, it's again now. So there's only now.

So present moment awareness, first of all, is the awareness of what there is in the

present moment. And that involves usually sense perception. When sense perception is not obscured by conceptualization, you can experience the flower, you can experience this room, and the totality of this room, you can experience it against the background of spacious awareness.

You can experience it and know it, without calling it anything in your mind. You're just aware, and there's the perception. That's beginning of the present moment.

So the beginning of present moment awareness, we become aware of what, what is there in the present moment, which could be an outer thing, or it could be an inner thing, you become aware of when you're present, you can be aware of what thoughts you have. When you're very present, you're not having any thought. When there's just presence in the background, you become aware of certain repetitive thoughts, you become aware of mental positions that you hold and defend.

You become aware in the moment of getting angry when somebody questions your, your mental position. You become aware suddenly when you become aggressive, because somebody questions your opinion, your viewpoint or your opinion, which you mistook for the truth. And then you become aware.

So you begin to disidentify from mental positions, you don't have to give up your mental positions. So you can continue to politically have whatever position you want. You can vote for whoever you want, politically, or whatever it is.

It doesn't mean if you're a Republican or a Democrat in this country, okay, I need to give up that completely. I don't believe in anything anymore, don't want any concepts. Everything is exactly the same.

That's not quite it, no. You can continue to have your position, but recognize it as a position, not completely identified with it. So if you can then have a conversation without attacking the other or having this need to defend your identity.

But if your identity, which means your sense of self, has become mixed up with your mental position, that's a bad place to be in. And that's a recipe for continuous conflict and antagonism with other people who have done the same. They've identified with their mental position, they derive their sense of self from their viewpoints and opinions.

So basically, you're lost in your mind. You're lost in ego. And it's wonderful if you can see conversation between two people who hold very different viewpoints, and yet they don't attack each other.

And when they're having it, you can have a discussion. If there's enough presence in both people, you can have a discussion that can become quite interesting. And you may even both modify to some extent your mental positions.

And you can do that because you are no longer completely identified with it. You didn't need to derive your sense of who you are from your mental concepts. And that is a fundamental shift of awakening.

So where do you derive your sense of self from, if it's not from the mental concepts in your head? You derive your sense of self from presence, consciousness itself, not the form consciousness has taken. Now, where's that?

It's here and now. And you can know it in this moment, if you're not thinking what's left of you. If you're not thinking, do you still exist?

And how do you still exist? If you're not thinking about your past, and you don't have to, let's imagine your past doesn't exist, or it's a kind of dream. It is a kind of dream, by the way, but let's think.

Let's, your past doesn't exist, it's a kind of dream. Let's pretend the future doesn't exist, it's another kind of dream. That's true too, by the way.

So there's only this moment. Now, without remembering the story of your life, if you don't revive it in your mind now, in fact, if there are no thoughts in your mind, what's left of you? Now, it's very hard to define or to even say, what is it?

Who am I without my history? Who am I without past and future? And then you can just ask the question, who am I right now?

And you won't know the answer, not conceptually. It remains a mystery, it remains an open question, who am I? But hiding in there is a sense of beingness or presence that you cannot define.

There is a sense of aliveness, of beingness or presence, which you may even feel with the entire, your entire body becomes, that feeling of presence is not just in the head. There's a feeling of just presence. What is that?

Don't know what that is, it's just presence. Without that, nothing would be possible. You wouldn't perceive anything, you wouldn't think anything.

That is the basis for everything. It's a substratum, to use a geological term. The substratum of everything is that.

[Speaker 2] (44:41 - 45:01)

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listening.

Eckhart Tolle Presence, Awakening and Abundance [d1d8b961-dd69-483a-a9ec-18f53377059d]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:40)

Presence, awakening, and abundance. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about the process of awakening and how to create more abundance in our lives. Eckhart says when we desire something, we believe that we already have it.

He says consciousness is the source from which everything flows. He also believes our state of consciousness determines how we experience life. Eckhart reminds us that while we may want or need many things, we do not need certain outcomes for our fulfillment.

He explains that on the inner plane, we already are complete and have everything we need.

[Speaker 2] (0:43 - 2:08)

Hello, Eckhart. Buenas noches. I'm so grateful for the School of Awakening and for your presence during the entire course.

So thank you for sharing the teaching with us. Thank you. So we've spoken before about asking from a sense of fullness or abundance when in need of something.

However, I don't know how to reconcile asking with accepting the present moment completely because it seems to me that asking kind of implies that something is missing from the present moment. Also, what if what I'm asking for kind of interferes with the plans of the universe or shouldn't be asked for at all? For instance, my kid was recently diagnosed with something and I would like to ask for his healing, but what if the universe needs him to experience that condition so that he awakens?

So in summary, my questions are, first, how can I reconcile asking with accepting the present moment? And second, how can you know whether what you're asking for is reasonable or in alignment with the plans of the universe?

[Speaker 1] (2:09 - 11:07)

Very good question. Very good. Thank you.

So you gave two examples. One is asking for, let's say, abundance or prosperity or something like that. And another one is asking for healing for somebody else.

So these are two examples. And I'd say I'm not sure whether I used the word asking very much. I hope not, because it's not so much asking for something when you want to manifest something, but let's stay with the, let's say, prosperity, one more prosperity in your life.

Asking for more prosperity would be to imply that you don't have it because you have to ask for it. So that's not the right approach. The right approach is not really not to ask for something, but let's start with abundance or prosperity.

You have to go deeply into the present moment where you realize what Jesus called the fullness of life. Let's use that expression, the fullness of life. In some translations of the Bible, it's translated as abundant life.

So he said, I want you to have abundant life. I want you to have the fullness of life. That's another translation for the same thing that he said.

And that's very interesting. What was he referring to? Was he referring to material abundance?

Was he referring to, I want you to be able to buy more things? Was he saying, I want you to build bigger shopping malls so that you can really have abundance? No, he was not referring to shopping malls or buying more stuff.

He was referring to a state of consciousness that is the realization of a dimension in which nothing is missing, in which there is the realization that you, in the essence of who you are, are already complete. You are totally complete and you can sense the fullness of life that is here now, that is inseparable from who you are. And that is ultimately, if you want to put a label to it, it is consciousness itself out of which everything comes.

It's the consciousness that creates everything. But before the consciousness creates things and beings, before the consciousness creates, it is primordial consciousness in its original state. One could almost say that's before the universe came into being, before the Big Bang.

What was there before the Big Bang? No scientists can go there, there's no answer. But that is the primordial state of consciousness, the state before the Big Bang, which in historical terms was billions of years ago.

But that state before the Big Bang is in you now, is in every human now, because you are a microcosm of the entire universe. And even the entire histories of the universe is contained in you. And the timeless dimension of pure consciousness that gave rise and continuously gives rise to the world is present in you as you.

And if you become very still, there's nothing left except the realization of intense stillness and consciousness, which is just you're aware that you are consciousness, you are conscious. That's the fullness of life. Whatever you achieve in this world or whatever you get is secondary, it comes out of that, it's created by that, and it will return to that.

Nothing that you create in the world of form lasts for very long. So you're no longer

looking to anything in the world of form to satisfy you, because you have found the source of all satisfaction already in the depths of the here and now. And that's the realization of the fullness of life.

And from that, if you wanted to make a statement that you would like to have a more pleasant place to live, for example, let's say you live in a very unpleasant place, and you go into that, you realize the fullness of life, and you can then take a mental image, and you can merge it with the realization of the fullness of life. And that means you feel that you already have it, whatever you want to have, you no longer want to have it, you feel it's already there, because it is contained in the primordial consciousness already. And that's what Jesus meant when he said, when you pray for something, believe that you have received it.

He doesn't say believe that you will receive it. He says believe that you have received it. So it's already there in your consciousness.

And so when you do get it, you say, Oh, how nice. But you didn't need it anymore for your fulfillment, because that was, it's already there. So when you then attain something, you say, Oh, that's very nice.

Thank you. But it's no more than that. You don't get Oh, wow, I finally made it.

Yeah, I've got it. Now I have to hang on to it. And then immediately say I have to hang on to it fear comes in.

So you're lost again. Now, with reference to healing, again, you're not asking that is, I know some people do that. But that is not the deepest form of expression is sending healing to somebody.

What you again, you have to go to that place that I just described, the realization of fullness, completeness, wholeness. And then you take the image of this person. And realize that what you realize is the wholeness of yourself is also the wholeness of that person, the condition becomes irrelevant, whatever this person is, you realize, when you bring the image of this person, into the realization of wholeness within yourself, you're basically affirming beyond concept and words, that this person is already whole and complete and healed, that the level where no healing is necessary, because at that level, that person is whole. And then, if healing is appropriate, that person may experience healing, but you didn't ask for it.

You recognized the essence of this human being and you gave no attention to the condition, whatever condition, the form of this person was suffering from, you don't focus on that. And you don't say, you want to remove this condition, or you don't ask God for consciousness, please remove this condition from this person. No, you go to a deeper place, where the wholeness has never been affected by whatever the condition

is.

So this person is whole and complete and holy, whole and holy. So again, that's the true healing. It's always, there's no longer a question of whether the universe needs or the consciousness needs this person to experience this or not.

That's all secondary. If healing is possible, it will happen in that way. And if not, it won't happen and that will be just right.

So that's the way to go for whatever the two questions. The answer is basically the same. So stop asking for stuff or anything.

It's not, you don't need to ask for anything. Thank you, Eckhart. I really appreciate it.

Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (11:07 - 11:39)

We have another question here, Eckhart. This person writes in, you've talked about how most people go through a gradual process of awakening, and that very few people have a sudden awakening. If we have a choice of whether to awaken or not, why do we not all awaken suddenly, if we have the intention to do so?

Do we really have a choice in the matter? Or is there a genetic involvement or grace perhaps involved?

[Speaker 1] (11:41 - 37:33)

Let's see. The intention to awaken, I think that's a part of the question. Intent or intention to awaken can come from a true place, or it can also come from ego.

So first you have to look at the intention or the desire to awaken can be an egoically motivated desire, in which case, of course, nothing is going to happen. So this would be the case if somebody is not satisfied anymore with whatever they have achieved, and feels this sense of something important is missing. And then he or she reads about or hears about awakening or enlightenment.

And then the same egoic self that before was looking for a nice big car or house or seeking seeking enhancement of its sense of self one way or another by identifying with this or that. It says, oh, I found something much better. It's called enlightenment or awakening.

And when I achieve that, then I'll be really, really superior to everybody else. I've been trying to be superior through many things, but I never quite get that feeling, that person would think, if not consciously, unconsciously. So it could be an unconscious desire to achieve a superior state where I'm finally going to be myself.

And finally, people are going to, or you might have an image of yourself as being a spiritual teacher. And you say, oh, well, if Eckhart can do that, I'm sure I can. I just have to work hard enough.

And then I'll be up on stage talking to thousands of people. That's what I really, then I'll be happy. So that's not the real intention.

That's an egoically motivated intention. Now, if it's real, the intention to awaken comes from a deeper place. It is often linked with the feeling that you cannot, that you're not prepared to suffer anymore.

It's more helpful to seek awakening because you want to end the suffering of your life than to seek awakening because you want to achieve enlightenment. This is why the Buddha said, the Buddha didn't say, I teach enlightenment. He said, I teach suffering at the end of suffering.

So that is a more powerful motivation, a more true motivation to seek the end of suffering, because you have seen, wherever you go, you find suffering and unhappiness. Now, then the intention to awaken is already the beginning of the awakening. So when you realize the possibility of awakening, there's a glimpse of something, there's a glimpse of what is possible when you are not identified with your mind.

It could be a simple thing like realizing that the voice in your head is not who you are. You become aware of what the voice in your head has been saying for years, repeating the same kind of things that made you unhappy, the narratives that made you unhappy, suddenly realizing that. And then you say, oh, I want to awaken out of that without knowing that that desire to awaken is already the beginning of your awakening.

And then it's a true thing. Until this happens, there's a moment where it comes as a glimpse or sudden knowing, wow, of something that's possible. You disidentify from your mind briefly, perhaps, or you have moments when you're not burdened by your habitual sense of self.

Perhaps you have brief moments of self-transcendence, either when you're overwhelmed by something in the natural world, or you're witnessing the death of somebody, or you're witnessing the birth of a baby. These are all kind of limit situations where the transcendent opens up briefly. And so you might, where it arises, we don't know.

And once you have had a glimpse or a taste of the transcendent, for whatever reason, it could be that an accident happened to you. And suddenly, you survived. But suddenly, all the things that were important in your life, you realize how that you consider important.

You realize how unimportant they all were. So yeah, you're in your hospital bed, oh my god. And so the transcendent can open up briefly through illness, accident, the

experience of death and dying, even the experience of birth, or some huge problem in your life.

And then suddenly, for a moment, you're free of it. So whatever it is, this can, this happens. Before this happens, this brief opening, there isn't really anything you can do, because whatever you might read about awakening, you might read about enlightenment.

But that's not enough. If the desire comes just because you read something, it's still most likely to be egoically motivated. So the first glimpse or the first awakening comes to you.

And we don't know why it comes to you and not to somebody else. It can come through. Yes, it can come through reading of a book, when you're if you're ready for it.

But there's a reason why you're ready for it. And then a book comes into your hands and you open it. Whatever it is, a book that is, was written from a place of presence or a spiritual book, and you read it, and it begins, you begin to experience glimpses of presence or transcendence just by reading those pages.

So you don't just put the book aside and say, wow, wow. And again, you'll feel, oh, I knew that. I knew that already.

I just couldn't verbalize it. I knew it. So you recognize the truth, spiritual truth, when you see it.

These are moments of awakening. Once the beginning, you have begun to awaken, then an element of choice comes in. This element of choice, you can then cooperate with the awakening process.

And you can, some often choose in certain situations, to be present rather than to be reactive. You can realize that awakening is the most important thing in your life. Your state of consciousness is what determines how you experience your life.

It determines your actions. It determines how you react or rather respond to situations. And thereby, it determines what happens to you next in the so-called future.

So all these things you realize arise out of your presence in this moment, and that becomes the most important part of your life. So once you reach that, you can choose presence. And it doesn't mean you will always choose it, because there may be unconscious subpersonalities in you that temporarily and periodically take you over.

You may get triggered by certain people or certain situations. And you might have said, I want to, one day you say, yes, I want to, I want, I'm choosing presence. I want to be present.

And then the next day, the phone rings and, I don't know, let's say your stockbroker calls and says, I'm sorry to tell you that we invested your money in the wrong place. And it's, you only have 10% left now. Now, in that moment, your desire to be present may have disappeared because it gets overwhelmed by a reaction of the ego.

Or you get triggered by a person that you visit your parents. And you say, one day, you say, I want to continue to awaken. And then you're confronted with your mother or father, who have been telling you the same things for many decades, and they disapprove of what you do and who you are.

And you can feel yourself, you need to defend yourself and get reactive, just as before. So that often you find things, other things become temporarily more important to you than to continue to be present or to awaken. And that's fine.

That's part of the awakening process, too. In other words, you lose yourself periodically, in certain mental, emotional, reactive patterns, and so on. You lose yourself in your mind, you lose yourself in your emotional field.

That's all part of the awakening. And then you can choose to come back to presence at some point. But until you have at least experienced the beginning of transcendence, a glimpse, you can't really do anything.

It's not a choice until it's only once you've experienced the beginning of it, then you can choose or you're not going to choose all the time yet. But you can choose in many situations to be present rather than to be trapped in your mind and identified with your mind and identified with your emotional field. So there are still millions and millions of people who are not ready for presence.

And if anybody talked to them about presence, it would be completely meaningless. I often hear stories of people tell me, I gave the power of now or new earth to a relative or friend and said, you must read this, this book will change your life. And then the relative or friend, a few days or weeks later, you ask, well, what about that book?

Have you read it? And said, well, I started reading it and I read three pages, but it's total nonsense. It doesn't make sense whatsoever to me.

Why did you give me that book? So obviously, and then this story was told me several times by people who were given that book and for whom the book was completely meaningless for several years, it was on their shelf. And then things in the meantime, things happened in their lives.

And one day they picked it up like accidentally or coincidentally. And so, and suddenly it's a, wow, suddenly it meant they had, this was, it became their first opening into the transcendent image. And once this has happened, then an element of choice comes in.

But the first thing you can't choose because you don't have a choice because you're not, choice implies that there's enough awareness to at least briefly or temporarily disconnect from the conditioning of your mind. Until that awareness has arisen, presence, awareness, if only briefly, until that happens, you have no choice because you are totally trapped in the conditioned mind. You're totally identified with the conditioned mind.

There's no, it's like a very heavy layer of clouds. The sky is totally covered in a heavy layer of thick clouds. That's the mental emotional field with which you are totally identified.

There's not the tiniest opening in where you see a blue sky beyond the clouds. So for many millions of people, still there is no choice. And then something happens.

And then there's a beginning of an awakening. And after that, there is an element of choice. But even to say, let me add the last thing now, even to say that you have, now you have an element of choice is a limited way of talking about it.

Because ultimately, you are not separate from the consciousness that awakens. You are an embodiment or manifestation of the awakening consciousness. And when you feel that you have a choice, and who is choosing what really is happening is consciousness is able to manifest, to arise through you.

And you interpret it as having a choice. But ultimately, it's consciousness choosing to come through you. But it is not helpful to think I have no choice.

It's more helpful to adopt the limited perspective that says, yes, I have a choice, then it happens more easily. But ultimately, there's not a duality of who you are, and who or what presence is. So there isn't ultimately a you who chooses presence, because that would be a duality.

You are nothing without consciousness, you are consciousness. So you become you are the awakening consciousness. There isn't really a person there, they're just a temporary perspective.

So in ultimate terms, you don't choose, what happens is when you think you can choose, it means consciousness is arising through you. And, but you don't even need to go there. It's more helpful to feel that you can choose, and you're meant to feel that you can choose and in ultimate terms, there's no duality.

So there's not not you and consciousness, there isn't you and God. Consciousness, by the way, as I use the term, is, I would describe as the emanation of God, like light is the emanation of the sun. God is totally transcendent, God is not located in space or time.

God is the ultimate source of all life. But the source emanates into this dimension,

consciousness, which is the light of the source, the source emanates consciousness into this dimension. And everything is consciousness.

In different frequencies, you could say, inanimate matter is you could say it's frozen consciousness. And then just like water can have different manifesting different, different levels of density and so on. So the ultimate truth is the truth of oneness.

There isn't you. And the most important thing is that there isn't you and presence, because you are presence, present is you. As I often say, as I'm sure you remember, the person that you think you are, the form identity of the person is a ripple on the surface of the ocean.

So you are that ripple as a person, you are the ripple. But the ripple ultimately has no independent autonomous existence. The ripple is a manifestation of the wholeness of the ocean.

It's a way in which the ocean takes temporary form as a ripple. It has no independent life, it has no individual, it's not autonomous, it's one with the ocean. And that's why I believe it was Alan Watts who said, the author and spiritual teacher passed away quite a few years ago.

He said, you are something that the whole universe is doing, in the same way that a wave is something that the whole ocean is doing. So you are an activity of the universe and the universe is not, he did not mean the sense of all the stuff that's in the universe, the sense of the universe, that which underlies the universe, which is the consciousness. So you are something that the whole universe is doing, there's no entity ultimately there, you are an activity of consciousness.

And to see yourself as a person is a limitation. You're not an entity and nothing ultimately is a thing. Ultimately, we shouldn't use any noun at all, because there are no things, nothing is independent, everything is active, everything is movement and vibration.

And everything is consciousness manifesting at different vibrational frequencies, but the one consciousness. And there's no permanent entity anywhere. And that's an interesting, wonderful realization.

So you are an activity of consciousness that manifests in this dimension. I could go on talking about this, but let's stop here. It's a fascinating subject.

And it's not just talking about it is, as I speak, I hope that the words can, to some extent, act as signposts, so that what the words point you experience that to which the words point, which is beyond the words. Ultimately, the essence of what we are engaged in here is beyond time. So it's not really final.

And the essence of what we're engaged in here does not leave you. It doesn't become only the surface becomes a memory in your mind. But it remains alive in you.

And if it works as it's intended to, it amplifies and strengthens the arising presence in you. And it continues to do that. So, although the externals of the situation, once this is over, will recede into the past, that's relatively unimportant.

The essence remains in you, as you, and it is a timeless dimension of consciousness of who you are. And that continues to manifest more fully through you. And that never becomes part of the past.

So, we're not leaving anything behind. It's just, we're going more deeply into the timeless dimension. And that remains.

It's all concerned with discovering the timeless dimension to who you are, and living from that. And I can, for a little while, I, as this temporary person, can reflect back to you who you are. That's kind of my function, to reflect back to you, who you are.

And if you find it helpful, and you love listening to what I say, and you can sense the presence, don't think it's, it's something that's in me. It's, if you can sense my presence, you're really sensing your presence. Because only presence can be a way of presence.

Only awareness can be a way of awareness. So, it's all in you. And the time will come, it may be approaching fast, when you can do without the reflection of presence, and you can become, and many of you already are, you can reflect presence for others.

And a time comes when you don't need me anymore to reflect your own presence back to you. And by doing that, amplify it. And that'll be wonderful.

And you will also find that increasingly, you will encounter situations and people in which, or for whom, you can be very helpful in situations where presence, your presence, I say yours, it's not yours, it's only one presence. It's just a way of speaking. Increasingly, as you embody presence, you'll find you will be, encounter situations and people where presence can make a decisive difference in situations that in other human beings, you're reflecting back to reflect presence back to others.

You can, you may be able to make a difference in a situation that is where conflict arises, and you can bring sanity to insanity. Perhaps you can make a difference even when you interact in social media, instead of being part of the madness. You can bring sanity through your contribution.

That's highly needed. And every time your presence becomes helpful to someone or to a situation, it manifests in situations, the more it grows in you. Many of you may experience or may already have experienced that occasionally you, in a casual conversation, a person mentioned something or a question arises, and you suddenly find

yourself saying something that is some kind of pointer to a presence or to consciousness.

And then suddenly the other person is, oh, wow, it can bring about a first awakening in another human being. Strange thing happened when I went through the spiritual awakening. For the first few years, I couldn't say much about it.

But then gradually, I was able to speak about it a bit more, and I could see what others, how other people's minds made them miserable. And I could say to point things out, and then was engaged in spiritual conversations with people without intending to. And I could sense that the presence in me was growing more strongly every time I was engaged in a spiritual conversation with somebody.

So much so that even people who had not very much sensitivity, sometimes they said, I can feel something here strange in the room, I can feel something. What are you doing? Of course, I wasn't doing anything.

I was just, the presence was shining. And some people even felt it as an energy field in the room, which is amazing. And many of you will experience similar things.

And the more you help others, the more it grows in you. So it's just a wonderful process. And that's what the world needs, of course.

Let's have some stillness. Without the idea that we are doing meditation, meditation is not a doing. Meditation is the realization of being.

So it's a simple realization of being. Being means what's the first person singular of the verb to be? It's I am.

And that's the meditation, the realization of beingness. The realization that you are. I am.

But nothing is added to it. Just I am. Not this or that.

I am. You can either close your eyes or keep your eyes open, whatever your preference is.

[Speaker 3] (37:39 - 38:01)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle Presence, Healing and Wholeness [d80df1da-5a2d-411f-b498-ad9d014e63f9]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:29)

Presence, healing, and wholeness. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience, including healthcare professionals, doctors, nurses, and therapists. They ask how to deal with the expectations of their patients who yearn for healing and wholeness.

He emphasizes the importance of getting the ego out of the way so the power of stillness and presence can shine through. It's only then can one truly be of service to others.

[Speaker 1] (0:32 - 48:45)

I brought some questions here. These survived the selection process. We'll go through some of these, some very interesting questions that you will all relate to.

How can I reconcile being a wellness professional when a lot of times I'm asleep myself? I feel like a hypocrite. There have been a few similar questions.

It is true that there are probably many people working in the field of therapy and wellness who themselves have no access whatsoever to the spiritual dimension. There are many therapists also like that. You are not one of them, because those that really have no access to it don't know even know that there is such a thing.

Or they might dismiss it as mumbo-jumbo. Although yes, certain expressions come to mind, such as when the blind leads the blind, they both fall into the pit, which is somewhere from the Bible, or from the Course in Miracles. There is a chapter entitled The Unhealed Healer.

But there's another side to this. There are many people who may not yet fully be able to live the teaching in their personal private life, who are nevertheless able to, when they step into the helping situation, the therapeutic situation, or the teaching situation, whatever it is, are able to enter that state of presence, so that this intuitive intelligence that comes out of presence is able to use their mind, the unconditioned consciousness, is able to use their mind, and then you can speak and still be extremely helpful. And that even applies to some spiritual teachers, and I've met several who actually told me that they cannot fully live the teaching in their daily life.

They, in other words, they become identified with their mind, they become reactive. One of them told me, a very famous author, he said sometimes his friends tell him to go back and read his own books. And so he was very open about that, because his friends obviously see that he cannot live the teaching.

But when he wrote these books, he was able to go into that presence, so the writing

came out of that state of presence. There's another very famous author, and this was told to me privately, and he, she said, I'm sorry about our interaction many years ago, but at that time I was insane. Now that's a wonderful openness.

I think he, she had become partly insane through the rapid onslaught of fame, which is a huge challenge to the ego. And if suddenly everybody talks about you, that can really trigger the ego in a person. It can be a huge challenge.

So when he, she told me that afterwards, of course, he, she was in a different place, and could like look back, and had enough lack of ego to be able to say that. That was wonderful. But even at that time, that person was able to write these books that helped millions of people.

And you may find the same when you enter the therapy situation. If you're really able to be present with another person, you are not your usual person when, when you enter that situation, you begin to focus attention on the person. The energy begins to shift.

I could say the vibrational frequency in your entire body, you might change, is shifting to a higher frequency. You feel the presence pervading the body and the room, and then you begin to speak. And perhaps that's the very same evening when you talk to your wife or husband, you become unconscious again, trapped in some totally absurd argument and get extremely angry about nothing.

It's quite possible. And then, of course, this question may arise. The person asks, am I a hypocrite?

Am I just pretending that I know? No, because the, the power is not something that comes from the personal level of you. It comes when you get out of the way.

And so some people who may not yet fully be able to live that spiritually awakened life are nevertheless able to get out of the way in those situations. And then consciousness can use them. If only those people who could live it fully were allowed by some authority in the sky to teach or to help others, then there would be very few teaching and helping others.

So you don't need to feel that you are a hypocrite. You are here. That's already a good sign.

And you know that there is a discrepancy, and that's fine. And now if you understand how and why, then you'll be able to actually become comfortable with this shift that you experience when you go into the therapy situation with someone. You can still work on yourself, of course, with your home environment and so on.

That's, that continues. You continue to awaken. It is the case that many people who work with people are learning as they teach themselves.

So because many times as you speak, as you respond to what this person needs, you can come up with things that you find yourself find surprising. Oh, I didn't know that I knew that. Of course, you didn't know it.

It came out of that unconditioned intelligence that is the unconditioned consciousness. And a great learning happens when you teach in that way. Healing is another word for it rather than teaching, because it is, you know, healing in a wider sense, not just physical healing.

Healing of the dysfunction of the egoic mind and so on. That's the healing situation. So healing always goes both ways.

Or as the Course in Miracles says, you're never healed alone. So this, the giving and receiving of healing is the same. Another phrase that you might have heard is that you always teach what you need to learn yourself.

How do you protect yourself when people, clients, are very angry and project this onto you? If they physically attack you, then it might be best to leave the room. I've had a few experiences when I was doing counseling sessions with very angry people.

They were so angry that the energy of their anger filled the entire room. And what I experienced in those situations was an extreme intensification of presence. The slightest emotion that I would have had would have been the emotional body, really it was the extreme pain body, would have latched on to the slightest emotion and get in there and want more of a reaction.

The slightest defensiveness or whatever it may be. So to be totally clear, the anger has, there's no one there that the anger could attack. Because in intense presence, you are, so to speak, you may be visible as people can still see you, but on another level you become transparent.

So the anger comes at you and there's nothing in you that resists it. Any kind of resistance would only strengthen the anger in that person. So if you close yourself, it hits it and it comes back and it gets even stronger.

But if you become totally non-resistant through presence, there's nobody there. The anger passes right through. And that's the only way you can really protect yourself.

The ultimate protection is not to put up a shield. That's one way you could protect yourself. It might be better than no protection at all.

But the real protection is not to be there as a visible target, not to be there as something that can be hit. So you get completely out of the way. So there's no reaction at all to the anger.

And I've seen some miraculous transformations in those situations where suddenly the pain body had absolutely no, it needs something, it needs some reaction. So allow this situation to intensify your presence and experience it being transparent. And then the miracle may happen that at least there, at that moment, the pain body recedes.

When you were in utter despair, would having access to someone like you have helped you? There needs to be a readiness in the person to be helped. Some definitely want to suffer a bit more.

The openness would not be there. So at that time, when people noticed around me that I was unhappy, there was a professor of the university. He was doing transcendental meditation.

And he said to me, you really should be doing meditation. And I said, no, I don't want to do meditation. I lose all my motivation to work.

And that's not what I want. I was a bit scared of meditation. He said it would transform me and make me completely ineffective.

Because I wanted to achieve, I wanted to become an important intellectual. So meditation would have thought might be an obstacle to that. No, I'm not doing it.

So I refused to help. Could have been this was a hint of the universe said, why don't you do transcendental meditation, you might be less anxious. But I didn't do it.

So perhaps if I had met myself, I would have said, who is this guy? I don't know, you cannot help everybody, you might have noticed. And some humans need, and if they cannot, if there's no openness to be helped, it means they are happy with a spiritual teacher they already have.

And his or her name is suffering. Then they just need to experience that a bit more. Because if you show them the possibility of going beyond suffering, or somebody else in a different way shows them the possibility and somebody else does and another therapist and another, or they open a spiritual books in what is this mumbo jumbo, not ready, not ready to listen, need to suffer a bit more.

Suffering has a certain function in the evolution of consciousness. Let's say if you were an omnipotent, the omnipotent God, and you removed all human suffering right now, that's the end of the evolution of consciousness. Of course, you could, if you are totally omnipotent, you could say, let consciousness only express itself right now.

That's not how it works. It cannot express itself except through this. Suffering is necessary until it no longer is necessary for you.

And so it has a function within the totality. You can see it in your own life. I had to go

through it up to that point.

And there's a lot of collective suffering. There's not only suffering in poor countries. Yes, there is.

There is different kinds of suffering everywhere. There's intense suffering in the rich countries. You can probably find more happy people in the poor countries than the rich countries.

So they're just different degrees of suffering. And so at some point, the individual realizes that suffering is ultimately self made, self produced. And then the shift happens.

And then evolution is of a different kind. It is no longer impelled or fueled by suffering. You still evolve, but it's no longer through suffering.

When you encounter a spiritual teaching or a spiritual teacher, that is the moment when that spiritual teacher takes over from suffering, the old spiritual teacher, you get handed over to the new one. That's a wonderful, that should be celebrated in a person's life, the transition from Mr. and Mrs. Suffering, or the guru called Suffering, three, three suffering, to an actual teacher. And for some reason, by some strange synchronistic event, I have two questions here, which may be by the same person.

Are you happy? And then the other one with so much sadness in the world, how can I feel joy? Be happy?

Am I happy? No, I wouldn't call it happy. Some people might use that word to point to a very deeper state of connectedness with being.

But conventionally, happy really is the opposite to unhappy. And so you go from happy to unhappy is, and then something happens. You know the two masks that for theater, comedy and tragedy, the two masks, one is a comedy.

And then there's a tragedy. So usually happiness exists as part of the play of opposites, you experience the happiness, because something makes you happy. And then that thing that made you happy either leaves you or the very thing that made you happy, suddenly makes you unhappy.

Marriage, for example. Or a relationship. Before you start living together, you're happy.

When you start living together, you're unhappy. So if it's not happy, what are we talking about? If you let go of thinking and remain as the awareness, then there is in that awareness emanates a certain peace, alive peace, joy, peace, a peaceful, joyful sense of aliveness.

Inner peace may be a better word than happiness. But one would have to add to it. It's an alive peace.

It's not the peace of having deadened yourselves to emotions, or anything like that. It's an alive, intensely alive peace. You can sense it, even if it's only just a glimpse right now.

Surrender thought. And of course, right now, if you're not thinking about the problems of your life, there are no problems in this moment. There's only a sense of beingness or liveness.

And that is the connectedness with being. And so you transcend the opposites between happiness and unhappiness. In the power of now, there's a little chapter called, beyond happiness and unhappiness, there's peace.

So instead of being subject to the fluctuations of happiness and unhappiness, there's that peace where you realize the essence of who you are. And so you're no longer ego based. Form identity, yes, but not identification with form identity.

So it doesn't turn into ego. And then you function in this world from that place of inner peace. And whatever you do, or who you come into contact with, that your actions, your thoughts become a manifestation of that.

If more people enter that place, then more people become peaceful human beings and do not contribute to a conflict in the world, the madness of the world, don't contribute to the madness of the world. Come back to the question, with so much sadness in the world, how can I feel joy and happy? Yes, there is a huge amount of suffering in the world.

Why is there suffering? Because humans are disconnected from the source of who they are. And that is the fundamental source of suffering.

That's how it arises. So if you say, I refuse to be happy, until there's no more suffering in this world. Okay, so the end of suffering, then I'm waiting for it out there.

And you might even become very active. I'm going to bring about the end of suffering, you do good things. But you haven't brought about the end of suffering in yourself.

So how is the end of suffering going to happen, even if you do good deeds, which is a wonderful thing. But if you are unhappy doing good deeds, then that unhappiness also flows into how you do those things and your interactions with other people. The shift in this world, the end of suffering, to use the Buddha's terminology, the Buddha described his teaching as pointing the way to the end of suffering.

That's the Buddha's teaching. He never used to, he used a negative term, end of suffering. Jesus talked about the kingdom of heaven, which is within you.

He used a positive term. They're both talking about the same thing. So the end of suffering has to begin with you, and then it spreads.

Then, because that changes the way in which you experience the world, it affects others. And then what you, your relationship with other human beings changes fundamentally, because only when you are in connectedness with the essence of who you are, can you have harmonious relationships with others, and can you have, feel this deep sense of goodwill towards other human beings, not conditional upon whether they happen to agree with you, or belong to the same political party, or belong to the same religion, or belong to the same nation. It doesn't depend on that, the same tribe. No, to have a goodwill or benevolence towards all humans that you come into contact with, no matter what their conditioning is.

That can only come from that deep connectedness with being, and where you do not automatically and unconsciously judge others the moment you meet them. So it needs to start with you, then this benevolence, this goodwill changes the way in which you interact with other humans, and that changes on a small scale. And then gradually other human beings here and there can also go to that place within, and then start to live it.

The end of suffering, and let's forget about happiness, let's talk about peace. So it starts with you. Be the change that you want to see in the world.

So if you want to see peace, you have to embody the peace. The end of suffering needs to start with you, your suffering. That's the end of suffering on the planet.

And then you can show the way to others too. You don't necessarily have to become a spiritual teacher, but you may. But in some way, even you don't even need to fully embody that shift in consciousness, fully enlightened master.

No, even just to be undergoing the transformational process, you already begin to teach, so to speak. Even though you might not teach in the conventional sense of the word, but whoever you come into contact with, you affect with your state of consciousness. The Course in Miracles says you become a teacher of God.

A related question here, as a grief therapist, I meet people who suffer a lot and many of them have no access to the spiritual dimension. How can I help them the most? Some people have no access to the spiritual dimension, but if they are ready, then you will help them by being present with them and not necessarily say anything about anything spiritual.

You do not necessarily introduce people to the spiritual dimension by talking about it. You can just demonstrate, for example, what it means to become aware of your own thoughts. You can demonstrate to them what it means and how it feels like to be able to observe your emotions and allow them to be there.

So you can do that together with your client, patient. What are the emotions? So that gradually he or she experiences for himself or herself what it means to be the observer,

the witness of emotional states, to be the awareness.

So to really what is the spiritual dimension, there's no need ever to say anything spiritual because that might lead to defensiveness of the ego. Not just to take them to non-identification with thinking, which starts with a simple thing. What thoughts go through your head right now?

What are the most common thoughts that go to your head during the day? Are there repetitive thoughts? Okay, maybe even write them down.

And when you think that thought, how does it feel when you think that thought? Okay, describe that. And gradually the person can experience the arising of awareness.

So that he or she is no longer totally trapped in the fluctuating emotions and the continuous, incessant, involuntary thinking that happens in the unconscious state. So for many, the first awakening to spirituality is to become aware that there is a voice in their head that comments on their life, on themselves and other people all the time, and has fixed positions, and has its likes and dislikes and hates, this and that. A lot of it, the voice is very critical.

The voice tends to be more negative than positive, because when you have something positive, there's not that much to think about. When you have something negative, you can go and think about it for a very long time. It just gives you much more food for thought.

You can have a loving interaction with another human being, just you meet somebody casually, and the person is friendly, and you feel good, and you walk away, for a few moments you feel good about yourself and the other. And then what else is there to think about? That was a lovely interaction.

But then you meet somebody who is rude to you, and treats you with disrespect, and says something to you, and then after it's happened, you start thinking about it. Why didn't I respond? I should have said that, that would have hit him.

And how does he show that disrespect? Why are people so disrespectful towards me? Is there something wrong with me?

Stories, incessant stories in the mind, having been offended by this person or that person, you can think about that a lot. You can't think that much about a beautiful sunset you saw yesterday evening. What is there to think about?

But something negative, that's great. So that's the voice in the head. It loves that.

It's the unobserved voice in the head is the essence of unconsciousness. So the discovery that there is a voice in your head, and that the voice is not you, but it is a

voice in your head, is the beginning of spiritual awakening. So if you can only just show a client that there is a voice in the head, and that's not you, why is it not you?

Because you know that there is a voice in the head, so there's another dimension in you from where you can know that there's a voice in the head. So that's more essentially you than the voice. And then you can also show that the voice, a lot of the time, what it says is not true at all.

And then you begin not to believe in every thought you think. That's a wonderful liberation. You realize, okay, that's just an old thought.

And then come the awareness of emotions. So that's spiritual. And some people are ready for it.

Sometimes the most unlikely people, suddenly you meet them and say, wow, he suddenly gets it. And that's the beginning of his or her spiritual awakening. And then others are definitely not ready, because it has happened a few times.

I talk about the voice in the head. What is he talking about? What voice in the head?

And then I say, that one. But he still goes, it's not a voice, I'm talking, it's not a voice. So really the spirit dimension is something very practical and simple.

It does not require a lot of talk about, you will transcend the ego when you come to me, or whatever. It's much more practical. You never need to say you need to transcend your ego.

Obviously you know that. So let me show you your true self. It's not necessary.

Just say, is there a voice in your head? I am a therapist and now feel that I don't take people's problems seriously. I don't know if I can continue to be a psychotherapist.

Now this, when I was seeing people for counseling sessions, some of them got angry because when I was listening to their problems, I would be smiling, just a very slight smile. And they got quite angry, some of them, because why are you smiling? You're laughing, do you think this is funny?

Of course the smile did not come as a result of any kind of thought process in my head. I didn't smile because I thought, oh he thinks he has such big problems and these problems are meaningless. No, none of that.

The smile came because I could sense the deeper essence of that human being, because it resonated with my own essence. And I could sense the wellness of that human being, who on the surface seemed very unhappy. I could see the relative insignificance of his or her problems, because I could sense something much deeper in that other person.

And that is also a form of healing, when you connect at that deep level from your essence to the other person's essence, and then all the problems really, they may still be important to that person, but they are only relatively important. So some people got it, they actually stopped talking about suddenly. Once or twice I had people realizing, is this really so important?

Are these problems really so important? And some people realized the amazing thing about the present moment, which is, you cannot have a problem in the present moment. All problems exist on the level of the mind.

What is this, if your attention remains focused on the present moment, there's only always this moment which may be challenging. Some present moments are challenging, there's no doubt about it. We could have a wild animal suddenly burst into this room.

But that's not a problem, because there's no time for the mind to make it into a problem, it's a challenge. And then in the face of that, you face a challenge, and then action arises. Let's say something more serious, you develop a disability.

Perhaps you suddenly can't walk anymore, that is a serious problem, it's a challenge, certainly. Then I have met people, many, who because something serious happened in their lives, first they thought, I cannot live with the burden of that problem, it's just too much to bear for me, I can't do it. And they suffered, and suffered tremendously.

And then either they came into contact with the spiritual teaching, or they did it by themselves. At some point, they couldn't take the suffering anymore. And at that point, they refused to leave the present moment, the now.

And suddenly, there's only whatever condition arises in this moment, that you face completely without any story around it, about me and my past, and my future, and what my life has come to, and it's never going, I'm never going to walk again, and it's all kinds of mental, all the, the suffering arises through the mind, not the situation, ultimately. And that's a deep teaching. The human suffering, and suffering is the psychological level.

Pain, yes, you can have pain, you can have physical pain, you can also have emotional pain, when it is not amplified by useless and incessant thinking, emotional pain has a lifespan, it arises, and it subsides. Somebody dies, a loved one dies, yes, you have emotional pain, it arises, it subsides, and it comes back a few times in waves, then surrender happens, and it's gone, and there's peace left. If the mind amplifies it by incessant thinking, the pain can go on for years.

One event can cause you years of pain, if that event is continuously renewed, remembered by the mind. And many problems that human have, actually have no existence whatsoever. The mind generates the problems, things that could go wrong in

your life, worry, anxiety, what if, all these things.

So in a therapy situation, I've said this so many times, and in the books too, if you think you have problems, and everybody does, in a conventional sense, there's no life that is free of challenges, and there are difficulties for you, there may be difficulties at work, there may be difficulties financial, in your living situation, in your relationships, your health. No human exists here without having certain difficulties in their life. Of course, this is how it's meant to be, otherwise it wouldn't happen, but they don't need to become problems.

The more you are focused on the now, the more free you are of problems. That's an amazing realization. This has helped quite a few people, and that again is an entry point into the spiritual dimension, because the now is a portal into the spiritual dimension.

Here's one that is a personal one. I'm aware of fear that is almost continual in me. My parents were Holocaust survivors, and in spite of my awareness of the anxiety and fear, it does not seem to lessen.

I know you talk about, in any given moment, there's never a problem, but when you're terrified all the time, there is a problem, because you are afraid. Now this is somebody here who, a lot of the time, is in a state of fear or anxiety. It could be related to something in his past, or his parents, or perhaps other generations too.

What to do? You can't get rid of being terrified, having been in a state of fear most of the time. What you can do is not to allow the fear to rise up into your mind and control your thought processes, because then there would be a normal thing when you are identified.

The emotion that's there rises into your mind, and then it causes you to think thoughts that correspond to the emotion, fearful thoughts in this case, and then you would get a vicious circle building up between the emotion of fear, the thoughts you think, which are fearful thoughts, which give more energy to the emotion. So the more fearful thoughts you think, the more it perpetuates the fear that you feel. So to sever the link between the emotion that you feel and your thought processes, and this is not pleasant, but it's possible, you place your attention on the emotion.

You feel it. It's unpleasant, but it's not going to kill you. So feel it, and then you shine the light of awareness on it.

And you may have to do that a lot, and at first it's not pleasant, but it's a burning up of the old emotion. And the only way to get rid of it is to accept it as it is right now. If you want to get rid of it, you can't.

But that complete acceptance of what is, is actually the doorway through it. It's the transformation of it. And if it's extreme, that can become your main meditation in life, and that will become your main teacher, and that will bring about your transformation.

In some people's lives, there is one huge disability, one huge source of suffering or pain. It could be a physical disability. It could be a situation like being in prison.

It could be an emotion like that, that you carry inside, that doesn't want to go away. In certain people's lives, there is one major thing that seems to color your entire life, and affect your entire life, and seemingly makes it impossible for you to ever be free or happy or joyful. But if that one thing, if you surrender to it, allow it to be, and make it as a continuous spiritual practice, you need nothing else.

That one thing will transform you, if you surrender to it. And there will come a point when you are grateful that you had to go through that. It will be the greatest spiritual teacher.

Acceptance of the unacceptable is the great source of grace in this world. It's just a miracle. But it can be an arduous process, especially for this questioner here, who is here.

It may take a while. You have to endure it, and be with it, and surrender to it, a lot of the time. And that's your meditation.

You don't need transcendental meditation. Your pain, your fear is enough. Be with it.

Allow it to be there. And gradually, you will notice the transformation. That's the alchemy of transformation.

The alchemy of suffering into the old meaning of alchemy is base metal. There comes this guy who experiments in the chemical kitchen, and he transforms base metal into gold. So there have been in medieval times, there was a lot of interest in alchemy.

That would be the material level of alchemy. But on a spiritual level, alchemy is the transformation of suffering into consciousness. And that only happens if you bring surrender to the suffering.

The idea behind it is voluntarily embrace suffering, so that it brings about a transformation of consciousness by surrendering to it. I work as a well-being officer at a public primary school, ages 5 to 12. Well, it's a wonderful thing that at least the school has a well-being officer.

Other than being present myself, what would you recommend as the most effective ways to remind children of their essential presence? By the way, our office where children can drop in is called the space. As you say, other than being present myself, of course, being present yourself is the main thing when you are with the children.

And then perhaps you can help them with, unfortunately, is not yet taught at school, which is for children to become aware that they have emotions, but they are not their

emotions. Of course, you don't tell them you have emotions, but you're not your emotions. You have to find a more direct and practical way to show them to be able to be aware of their emotions.

And then you might even be able to show them to be aware of their thoughts. How exactly you can work that out for yourself, how you do it, how you bring it to children, and who knows what comes of that. The main thing is just show them what it means to be aware without ever mentioning the word awareness, because it's far too abstract for a child, so you never mention the word awareness, of course, but on a practical level, you can show them what do you feel right now.

What does it feel like? What would that look like if it were an animal? Maybe you can even draw it, and then you draw your emotion looking like an animal.

And by doing that, there comes a slight disidentification from the emotion, because you never mentioned the word disidentification, it wouldn't make sense. So you start like that, you can see your inner states, you can draw them, and then you can look at certain thoughts they think. What are your thoughts?

What do you think? How do you feel when you think that, for example? All those things that really should be the primary subject that children learn at school, but is not yet, to be aware, an aware human being.

A thousand times more important than mathematics, or biology, or geography, or whatever else they learn. What could possibly be more important than to learn how to be an aware human being? School for me was a nightmare.

I couldn't, it was just, even occasionally now I have dreams when I am an adult, and I'm back in a classroom. How do I get out of here? And here's one question that is just a personal one.

How do I truly forgive myself for not being present with another? Well, I assume the question refers to something that happened in the past, not in the present, because if the other is here with you now, then there's nothing to forgive, you just be present. So it must be something that you were not present with someone in the past, because there was not enough presence in you.

You cannot manifest any behavior beyond your level of consciousness, either that you had no idea what presence was, you were not yet able to access that dimension of consciousness, or it was there very weak in you, not strong enough perhaps to survive in that particular interaction or relationship. Some parents have that feeling also because when they look back upon how they brought up their children, they cannot believe how unconscious they were as parents. Now, there's no such thing as totally conscious parents.

No matter what you do, there's always something that you don't do right. Absolute perfection is just not possible. But there are now for the first time perhaps in history, there are parents who are relatively conscious, who are endeavoring to be conscious as parents.

In my generation, it was unheard of. Conscious parents, what is that? You just, the parents brought you up in the same way that they were brought up in the same way that was sanctioned by the surrounding culture.

That's how you were brought up. Conscious parents, what's that nonsense? And of course, in my generation, I didn't know anybody who had even remotely conscious parents.

So forgiving yourself for not being present, there's always a tendency of the ego to identify with certain conditions. So the ego identifies with the condition of unconsciousness and says, that was me. And I was wrong, I should have been conscious at the time.

But you were not, you couldn't have been more conscious at the time than you were at the time. You forgive yourself by realizing that nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness. And whatever you did in the past, was an expression on your personal level of the evolutionary state of yourself.

If you have still an opportunity to go to this person, and perhaps explain that you were unconscious, we don't know what level of consciousness this person is at, whether this person would be able to listen to you, and even understand what you're saying, or this person may not be alive anymore, or there may not be an opportunity to speak. But either way, you forgive yourself by realizing that there is ultimately nothing to forgive. And that even applies to another person, because if forgiving goes both ways, sometimes you have to forgive yourself, but you also have to forgive somebody else.

If you do not want to carry the enormous burden of carrying a grievance, which is a dreadful thing, just one grievance towards another human being, that is a heavy grievance that you carry, can stop the arising of presence in you. So letting go of grievances is vital. In ordinary human interaction, it is very important to overlook things that humans do, because every human being that you come into contact with, even if they are awakening, they are in the awakening process, they will still manifest occasionally areas of unconsciousness.

So if you want to have a relatively harmonious relationship, many things you need to overlook in the other person. Some insensitivity may arise here and there, they may say or do something that is selfish, or that they may have a very one-sided perspective of something, they may misperceive you, they may misperceive your motivation, you misperceive their motivation, all kinds of things. So to forgive in a present situation

means to overlook.

If you see a fault, don't dwell on it. So thank you. Let's take a moment of stillness.

[Speaker 2] (49:06 - 49:25)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Presence : The Natural Path that Leads to Life [b482ea45-3728-4c2e-be1d-02bd427112aa]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:31)

Presence, the natural path that leads to life. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about freeing oneself from the mind to find presence. He says we must become aware of the harmful thoughts that hold us hostage.

Life's crises need not drag us into unconsciousness. We can stay alert and let them take us to a deeper state of awareness. Eckhart says while the path to presence is narrow, it ultimately leads to life.

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 51:06)

To get out of your mind, remember, I wrote about it in various places, body awareness is extremely helpful. Once you realize your mind is not stopping and it wants to drag you along, one thought after another, oh my God. And at some point you realize it's futile.

That requires a little bit of awareness, but you all have more than a little bit of awareness. You need at some point to realize that certain types of thinking, which is a large percentage of thinking, is not only futile, but harmful. Futile, harmful, it creates suffering, such as worry, anxiety, grievances from the past, resentment.

All those types of thinking, a lot of human thinking is like that. Complaining kinds of thoughts, complaining about people and situations, and this and that, and about my life. All that kind of thinking is, once there's a little bit of awareness, you realize my thoughts right now are futile.

They have no purpose. They're actually causing me suffering. And I don't want them.

I don't need them. Okay, but they don't want to go. The thought's going, come this way, come this way, and then you're back in again.

And then you know they are futile, but you're still being dragged along. Every thought that's coming, follow me. Your attention, I want your attention.

And then you say, enough. Now, you cannot use willpower to get rid of thought. Well, you could, but it doesn't really help for too long because it comes back with a vengeance.

If you suppress thought with willpower, which you could do, especially if you stop breathing, some Zen, especially Western Zen, but some Japanese too, Western Zen practitioners misunderstand Zen. And so when they meditate, they go, I'm not thinking. And of course, then after three hours of meditation, they go into the kitchen and then at

the slightest thing, they burst out.

The lid is off the boiling kettle. So that's not it. But just take your attention away from the mind and a good place to take it is into the body.

Just, okay, this kind of thinking is futile. I don't need it. Therefore, I'm going to feel the inside of my hands.

Are the hands still alive or are they dead now? You can ask yourself, are my hands dead or alive? How can you answer that question without moving your hands or looking at them?

Very simple. Your attention has to move from the head, conscious, the focus of your consciousness has to move from the head into your hands. And then, you know, yeah, of course you can feel that they are alive.

It's hard to describe the feeling, but they are alive. And the more your attention is in your hands, the more you can sense that there is a life, an aliveness in every cell in your hands. Wow.

And already you've taken some attention away from thinking. You can't think that much anymore and be aware of your hands, the life inside your hands. Then why not be aware of the life inside your feet at the same time?

That takes even more attention away from thinking. And then you hold attention in both hands and in both feet. Not that difficult.

So you feel them simultaneously. So once you get hold of the sense of hands and feet, you can also sense your legs, not as strongly, but you can sense the entire body is alive too. There's an aliveness that pervades the body.

To feel that, you need to take your attention away from thinking. And that's why we do it. You need attention.

And inevitably, you cannot feel your body if you're stuck in your mind. So it takes attention away. And then you have this beautiful feeling, especially wonderful at night when you can't sleep.

Why not use this wonderful opportunity of insomnia and feel the aliveness in your body? Not a thought in your head anymore, because you can't. You cannot feel the aliveness in your body and be thinking about your problems at the same time.

And you can actually enjoy being awake at night where a minute ago you were worried and now you enjoy not being able to sleep. I hope I can stay awake longer because it's so lovely to feel every cell of the body is alive. And presence, to be present is not a head phenomenon when we talk the consciousness.

Who am I? In order to sense who you are as presence, you don't just sense it with your head. You sense it with the entirety of your being, including your seemingly so-called physical body.

But what you sense goes beyond physical when you go into the body and the aliveness of it. So to be really present, your entire being is present. Not a head phenomenon.

And as you sit here, and I'm talking about it and every word is a pointer to it. As you sit here, feel yourself as the presence. Every cell is present.

That's ultimately what presence is and it goes beyond the body. It's not really the body anymore. You go into the body and there you have consciousness.

And so that's a beautiful place to quickly get out of thinking that you don't need and that you don't want. Just a conscious choice, directing attention into the body and holding it there. And then the more you hold it, the easier it gets and the more you like it.

You love going there and you don't have to, not just at night. Whenever you're sitting somewhere, feel the entirety of, can even do it while you're driving. It doesn't mean you don't pay attention to the road.

You're still, you're fully present. It's less likely that you'll have an accident when you're present, much less likely. The weird thing is I'm a, most people say I'm a bad driver because I drive in strange ways, but I haven't had an accident in 40 years.

Nobody can guarantee that tomorrow I may not have one. That's another matter, but it's a presence helps. So don't underestimate the efficacy of being in the body, how powerful that is as an anchor for presence and can do it anywhere.

You can do it when you're on the phone talking to somebody so that you don't get lost in mind stuff and get drawn into, no, be rooted in being so that you don't go into, so there's a presence behind the speaking and you can do it easily by holding the inner body awareness, as I call it, inner body awareness. You can do it and with other things that tend to take your attention, to draw your attention out. Now, when you watch television with many kinds of programs, what it actually does is you stop thinking, but not in a good way.

When you watch television, you link into the thoughts of whatever is being talked about on the TV, you link into that, it takes over your mind. So you get rid of your own thinking, but you adopt somebody else's thinking. So your mind is still active although it frees you.

That's why people can get addicted to it. It frees you from yourself temporarily, but it does not elevate you above thinking. It really takes you into thinking and sometimes even below thinking.

But I'm not saying never watch television, but be in the body while you watch it, especially the news, because otherwise you think this is awful. Oh my God, what's happening? It's crazy.

That's all you need to know. It's an expression of human unconsciousness. So again, you have to be very careful with the many devices that people use these days, everybody uses these days, smartphones, which continuously demand your attention.

It's amazing. And this is a new challenge because it's an extension of the mind. It's an extension of the human mind.

And so it can actually amplify what otherwise would just be mind stuff. It can clutter your mind even more. Continuously incoming, seemingly important text messages, making all kinds of noises and saying, I'm important.

Look at me. And if you really see it, it's not important, but it seems to be. And it seems that you are in demand.

People want your attention. It feels good. And another, an email at Facebook and all these people are posting these new things.

And there was a time when people were waiting for something. They would just sit there because there was nothing else to do. And they would become bored if they were in their mind or an opportunity for becoming still in some cases.

So they had suddenly a creative idea because they became still for a moment and out of the stillness, which is intelligence itself, consciousness itself, suddenly they had a creative insight. But nowadays they'd sit there and the first thing they get the phone out of their pocket. They're never bored anymore.

And of course their mind is more and more cluttered with stuff. I don't do like, I don't go like that because that's a younger generation. They go like that.

I go like that. And even then, lots of things I get wrong, but you have to use these things with care so that they don't take over your life, which is another way of the mind really taking you over because they are an extension of the mind, of the thinking mind. So you have an added challenge and that's probably a good thing because it seems to be an obstacle to your arising awareness to have these devices around you, but it's a challenge.

Potentially that's a good thing. And of course it could drag you down too. Don't continuously engage with them.

Allow yourself to have spaces, not just inside, also externally. Allow yourself to occasionally sit for a few minutes, wherever you may be. Let's say there's a traffic jam.

Why not just sit and be and sense the presence that you are and be alert and still and you might suddenly get some creative thoughts instead of repetitive old thoughts. You suddenly, there's some creative insight, a new idea that can only arise out of a moment of spaciousness, inner spaciousness. You have to access that for anything creative to arise in your life.

You have to access the transcendent dimension within you. Einstein had his insights, his great insights into theory of relativity. He did a lot of thinking, but the great insights came to him as revelations and they only came to him as revelations because he was naturally a very slow and quiet and still person.

When he was a child, they had, when he was three, four, five years old, the parents were concerned because he was so slow and this is not valued in our civilization. The slow students, what valued is the quick, what's the answer? Do you have the answer?

Yeah, I know. Yes, yes. That's what it is.

But he, when you ask him a question and he goes, and maybe 10 minutes later, an answer came. And our civilization, unfortunately does not encourage that. And people who are naturally like that tend not to do so well, especially in childhood.

They may do well later, but not in the school system. So into the body, it's so important, inner body awareness. Another very simple device that is connected with inner body awareness, breathe, becoming aware that you're breathing.

It's very simple. Am I breathing or not? You probably are, but you didn't know it.

And all you do is, you don't need to change your breathing, not make some conscious effort. That's another way of doing it, but it's an easier way is simply ask yourself, am I breathing or not? And now in order to find out if you're breathing, your attention needs to go from your mind and from thinking into here, because this is where breathing starts.

It starts, the air flows in to your nostrils and there you can feel it. And you can also feel it flowing into the body. And then you know, oh yes, I'm still breathing.

And so with your attention, you follow the breath into the body and you follow the breath out of the body. It may be that your breathing naturally slows down by itself when you give it attention like that. That's okay.

But the remarkable thing is when you know that you're breathing, you're not thinking. You have to check this for yourself. You cannot be aware that you're breathing and think at the same time.

If you're fully aware of your breath, you're not thinking. Isn't that amazing? So I sometimes say just one conscious breath creates a little bit of space inside you.

A little bit of spaciousness takes you out of the mind. One conscious breath, which is in and out. That's one breath.

One conscious breath. And two is even better. And three.

Three conscious breaths. You can do it in any situation, anywhere on your computer. Again, this computer takes your attention into, it clutters your mind, takes your attention out.

It's one conscious breath. And maybe look away from the screen. Look at the sky through the window or a plant.

And a conscious breath connects you with the inner body, with the aliveness in the body. You can put them to, you can do the both practices as one. The inner body awareness and conscious breath takes your attention away, creates spaciousness inside.

And the other is, another great thing you want to practice is, and this is so important, awareness of sense perceptions without labeling. You can do it anywhere in the middle of the city, in the country, on the beach, at home, in the office, in the restaurant, in a cafe. Let's take cafe as an example.

You sit, you're having a cup of tea or coffee and you sit in a cafe and use it, instead of going to your phone, use it as a spiritual practice. It's a cafe practice, but you don't have to drink coffee with it. You can drink anything.

It's a public place. And you sit there for 10 minutes, let's say, looking around at all, what's happening around you, all the people and what they are doing and sitting. Most of them will be on their phones, that's okay, but you are not.

And you look and there's the room and you might see what's happening in the street also. And as you sit there, you get in touch with your presence, the sense of presence and beingness. Maybe feel the inner body and feel your own presence, the presence of consciousness, you as consciousness.

And then you look around and you listen, there are sounds and you look. And your practice is not to label your sense perceptions mentally. In other words, you're just looking.

And as you look, feel the presence of yourself and then look around in thoughtless awareness. It's a wonderful practice. And you will love what you see because every human is an expression of the one life in their own way.

Every human is quite lovely and lovable, but you don't have to say that in your mind. It's a realization of the aliveness of every human, but you cannot sense the aliveness of every other human if you cannot sense your own aliveness. So your own presence or

aliveness is the basis for sensing the aliveness of other humans.

And by doing that, you love them in a way, not the clinging love that says, oh, I want you. You're quite happy with them doing what they do. You don't need to wanting to interact necessarily.

You just be there. You just love them. They're all manifestations of the one, the one life.

And they're all so different. Isn't that amazing? Not a single human is the same.

Out of the billions, they're all different. That's wonderful. And yet the essence in each one is the one essence that is one with your essence.

And you can sense that if you don't label them. That's a lovely practice to enjoy the aliveness of things in a limited space. If you sit, I mean, you're in a relatively passive situation when you sit in a cafe, there's a coffee, you might be tea, whatever you are drinking, but you're not doing much.

So it's relatively easy to be there as the presence. And you don't have to do it in a way that people necessarily notice. Well, they probably won't notice anyway because they're on their phones.

They don't see anything. But if they happen to be looking up from their phones, they might look a bit weird that you are not on your phone. There's something wrong with you.

So that's one place. Another place of course is in nature. And that's a wonderful way to practice also.

Choose a spot. You stand or sit somewhere. And lying is not immediately advisable if you lie down because that can easily take you below thought.

You want to remain above thought. So you stand or sit and then nature. That might even be easier than in a cafe because in a cafe, there's lots of things still happening that stimulate thought because people are talking or the general energy field is mind.

If you go into nature, you're in no mind. And then the same way you perceive in that alert awareness, the miraculous life forms around you that have no name, if you don't give them names, have no name. And if you don't obscure things with names, you can sense the inherent aliveness.

They speak to you. So there's another dimension that reveals itself to you that is everywhere in nature that you don't know when you're stuck in your mind and label things. And that's a beautiful way of practicing presence.

Don't destroy nature by getting, I mean, dreadfully, you're sitting under a tree in this

miraculous place, the same place where the Buddha found enlightenment, sitting under a tree and you get out your phone. It's such a wonderful opportunity under this, trees are wonderful beings and you sit under the tree and there's the vastness of the sky and nature and to just be there in that moment not as a person, but as a conscious presence. Wow.

And don't overdo it. Even if you just do it for 10 minutes, just be there. Watch.

So the practice is sense perception without mentally labeling them. It requires an alertness. It's a choice.

You make that choice and that's a shift in consciousness. And every time you do that, you are not there as a person. The person is kind of temporarily disappeared.

You are there as a conscious presence, as the deeper presence of life itself. And that's beautiful. Same thing, practice nature, practice in a public place.

You can practice at every traffic light. If you're driving, every time the light is red, practice presence. Red light, presence.

And look at the beauty of that red light. Ultimately, everything is natural because that's energy too. It's a manifestation of energy, the red traffic light.

It has an aliveness too. It sounds weird, but it does. And so there's a light and it's telling you to be present.

People have worked out. I don't know who did it. Somebody reaches the age of 70 and they drive, start driving at the age of 20.

Somebody worked out how many, unfortunately, I don't retain a lot of information in my mind. So you would have spent a year or so or more of your life sitting at traffic lights. And for most people, that is something they don't like.

But it's, why not choose that? Be present. I also, another thing I mentioned, little activities, washing your hands, be there completely.

Takes you out of your mind. Sensory perception. Ah, water, beautiful.

Maybe scent of soap. And you give it complete attention, which means you're not thinking. You're just experiencing.

Elevator, lift, elevator. You're waiting for it. You can either get out your phone or you can just be choosing presence.

And the more you choose it, the easier it gets and the deeper you go into presence. And then you realize after a while, you didn't really choose. Presence chose you.

Presence wanted to come through you. Because sometimes people ask me, well, who is choosing presence? Well, it's just one way of looking at it.

Presence, when you get out of the way as a person, presence is there. So use all those things to transform your life. Use the opportunities of obstacles when they arise.

Seemingly obstacles. Accept each moment as if you had chosen it. That's vital.

So I've given you these portals out of the mind and into presence. And of course, a primordial portal into presence is the present moment. So that is always there.

Coming into the present moment is an aspect of every practice that I have given. It always involves coming into the, whether you go into the body, whether you're breathing, whether you practice sensory perception without labeling. It always involves being more conscious and more fully in the present moment.

Therefore, an associated practice is to simply become aware of the present moment. And that's an amazing thing too, because, and it's so vital because there is nothing else. So if you never fully acknowledge the is-ness of this moment, you miss the whole thing, which is called your life.

You miss the whole thing if you are not aware of the present moment. But how to be aware of the present moment is, encapsulates all that we have spoken about. First level of being aware of the present moment is to be aware of your sense perceptions.

That brings, it's the first step into the present moment. Then perhaps you're aware of your breathing and your inner body and sense perception at the same time. So first you become aware of where you are, what's around you or what you are doing.

And then, you go deeper into the present moment. And the essence of the present moment is you. So if you get the essence of what we call the present moment is consciousness.

And consciousness is the space in which everything happens. Consciousness is the one thing that never changes is the present moment. It's always now.

It's always now. And what is the present moment in essence? In essence, the present moment is not what happens in the present moment.

The deeper essence is the present moment is the space for whatever happens. And there's the space like the canvas, however you want to call it. So you are aware of yourself ultimately as the present moment.

And this realization that ultimately you are the present moment. Those words had not come to me when I was writing *The Power of Now*. So it never got into the book.

Because the words came to me after I'd already written the book. I said, oh, I should have put that in. Oh, no.

Why didn't I put that in? Oh, you're no good. I didn't do that.

So you can, you sense the essence of what present moment really means as consciousness. The one thing that is beyond any doubt that you are right now conscious. And that's not the right way of putting it.

If I say you are conscious, you are consciousness is better. You are consciousness. Everything else could be a dream or an illusion.

Including this room and me talking. Am I dreaming this? He's talking.

He's saying I may be dreaming this. Okay. Maybe you are.

Maybe all of sensory perceived so-called reality is a kind of dream. It's a way of looking at it. Certainly everything dissolves quickly.

And then, where was it? Where has it gone? It's gone.

And a dream dissolves too. But what remains beyond any doubt, even if it is all a dream, there needs to be a consciousness for the dream to be perceived. And you are that.

So that's beyond doubt. Descartes, the philosopher, hadn't gone far enough when he said, I think, therefore I am. He tried to figure out something that was beyond doubt in his life.

Or in human life. What is it that we can be absolutely certain about? Very little.

And he thought and thought and after a few years of thinking, he came up with the idea, I'm thinking, therefore I exist. If he had waited a little bit longer, he might have experienced the cessation of thinking. And then the statement would have been deeper.

Then the statement would have been, I am conscious, therefore I am. And that is the deeper I am that is very different from the I that people refer to in ordinary usage language. When they say I, they refer to the personality that exists in space and time and has a history, me and my story, me and my history is the I, I, I.

The most important word for many people, one of the most frequently used words in the English language is the word I. So it must be very important to everybody. And usually it refers to the person and the story.

But the deeper meaning of I is the presence of I. I as the presence, the underlying presence. I am.

The realization of your essence identity, as I call it. Essence identity. Form identity.

Essence identity. Form identity, if you only know your form identity and know yourself as form identity, it's a very unsatisfying place. But if you know yourself as essence identity, then form identity is actually not that bad.

Yes, there are challenges and so on, from time to time, they periodically arise. But you can actually enjoy all the things that you experience as a person if you no longer have expectations about those experiences that these experiences cannot meet. And those expectations are fulfill me, make me happy, tell me who I am.

No matter what you experience or where you go or who you meet, that won't work. And then if you only know form identity, life is so frustrating. Always you get frustrated by people and situations and it's just one damn thing after another.

But if you have, if you're connected with your essence identity, from there you can enjoy relationships because, for example, you no longer demand make me happy. Don't be unconscious. You should be perfect.

Not going to happen. Even if you live with a Buddha, after a while you will find things you find irritating. Why does he chew his food so slowly?

Why does he never get upset? Why doesn't he make interesting conversation? And again, in any life situation, a new job, a new this, new place to live, sooner or later you find things that are not that great.

But if you are in essence identity, the form identity can be enjoyed for what it is. Quite enjoyable. Quite nice.

It'll come to an end soon. I know everything does. That's okay.

Or it'll break. Or whatever. Or it may not be interesting anymore.

And what has my interest today may be boring next week. That's okay. That's bound to happen.

But in the meantime, you just enjoy a good meal. Fine. You enjoy all the life of form without demanding something that it just doesn't have.

It cannot give you your identity. It cannot tell you who you are. And you learn to let go easily because you no longer need to cling to these things because somehow your sense of self is connected to them.

And so you can buy a lovely car. And you might say, I'm not attached. I'm just enjoying it for the time being.

Or a bicycle. The strange thing is, for years I had a bicycle that was my main form of transport in England. And I enjoyed it as much.

Now I have a luxury car. Well, it's 10 years old, but it's still luxury. And I enjoy both equally.

Just, I loved that bicycle. And one day I lent it to somebody and it got stolen. I had to let go.

And that was a test. Loving something and appreciating something doesn't mean you need to be attached to it because it has it adds something to you think who you are. It got stolen.

And I knew that was a test when this lady, I was counseling her for spiritual counseling. And she said, Oh, I desperately need a bicycle. Well, I can have mine for a few days.

And a few days later she came and said, Oh, no. I didn't lock it. I bought a cup of coffee and I didn't lock it.

And it was gone. And I knew that moment was my test and my realization. Am I attached or not?

Am I feeling suffering or not? And there was a moment of sadness, but no suffering and then it was gone. And that was fine.

So whether the 10 year old car, I don't know when it gets stolen or scratched by somebody that always tells you when you think you're not attached, you may be fooling yourself. So the enjoyment of things also why not enjoy things if they come into your life, you enjoy things. Are you attached?

Is there self-identification or not? And you may never know it until there's loss or it gets damaged in some way. And if you are attached and that's a beautiful lesson too.

Wow. I didn't realize I was so attached. I've been saying for years I wasn't attached and then I wept when I lost it.

So handle things, enjoy the things of this life. People again without having undue expectations of how people should behave. Most of them have their areas of unconsciousness and they will manifest them sooner or later at work.

The quickest way is experiencing unconsciousness in people is living with them. And you very quickly see, oh that's okay. That's a how it's a human being.

If you demand that everybody should be the Buddha it's not going to happen. So enjoy life, the life of form without self-identification with form and be rooted in essence. That is the ultimate life lesson.

So then you move there's a dance I call it between form and formlessness. You have one foot in the transcendent so to speak and the other in this dimension. And so you don't

disappear in the transcendent yet and you don't lose yourself in the form this dimension which includes your mind.

Also the enjoyment of new experiences learning new things using your mind that's all fine you can enjoy all that without feeling that you absolutely need that but you enjoy it when it comes. So it's a dance life is the balance finding the balance between form and formlessness another way of putting it finding the balance between doing and being that's the art of living and now being doesn't necessarily mean sitting still when I say find the balance between doing and being I don't mean part of your life you sit still and the rest of your life you go about your business the balance between doing and being is they flow into each other so even while you're engaged in activities you're not completely lost in the activity if you're completely lost in the activity you're stressed that you're mentally projecting yourself to where you want to be already but you're not there yet so to enjoy an activity is fine but if you lose yourself in it then you lose the being dimension and then life becomes stressful thinking is an activity too, thinking is part of doing and again most humans or those who are not awakening yet are lost in thinking and thinking is a form of doing it's the activity of thought so they're completely lost in thought our civilization as a whole most of it is extremely unbalanced because millions of people are lost in thought, in their minds and are lost in largely useless activities a lot of it is just not very useful but that's fine they are basically lost in doing primarily lost in thinking that's no balance this is why there's so much you don't see how much people suffer psychologically in our so called first world how many millions can only survive with pills or they think they can only survive with have to take this and this in order to not feel too unhappy so that's of vital importance now and this is part of the awakening of consciousness we now come to this balance, I emphasize being because being needs to come in more because everybody's overthinking already, everybody's overdoing and overthinking already that's why I don't talk too much about how to achieve this or that, that has it's place but I leave that to, what's the guy who goes, you can do it Robbins Robbins yeah, I mean that has it's place too, that can be very stimulating for people yeah, yeah you can do it, let's do it go for it, go for it yeah okay, that has it's place but I don't emphasize it because there's so much of that, what the world needs is to come into balance so my focus is on being I'm not saying don't do, doing is great but finding the balance between doing and being, that is the challenge so that you can think without losing yourself in thought and without identifying with thought then by the way thinking becomes much more interesting, thinking becomes much more creative and thinking is a wonderful tool for creating and manifesting but not when it takes you over completely then it's crazy it becomes insane and to a large extent the world is in that level of insanity where they're taken over by the egoic mind look at politics so this is the essence of who you are just pure beautiful presence allow this dimension to come into this world through you as the form in a way the person was a seed and it's time for the seed to give way so that the new consciousness can arise don't wait for things to collapse in your life before you become present don't let the world tell you whether your life is a success or

failure because to a large extent the world is insane so how would you want the world to tell you whether you are good enough or a success but I can tell you what success is success is to become a vehicle so to speak for this new consciousness for presence so that you become aligned with the evolutionary impulse of the universe because the universe wants to become more conscious it is in the process of becoming conscious and that's what the universe wants so to be aligned with that is wonderful if you are not aligned with it you suffer much more and that's fine too eventually suffering will awaken you too and that means even those who are not aligned to the purpose of spiritual awakening in some strange way are part of spiritual awakening even those who seem to prevent or trying to prevent spiritual awakening are necessary part of spiritual awakening because that's the obstacles are so important and without them the evolution wouldn't happen when there is a crisis in your life because it will probably come sooner or later to everybody some kind of crisis be very alert so that the crisis does not pull you back into unconsciousness use the crisis like a dimmer switch to turn up the light of presence so when the situation becomes difficult or critical you go oh if you go to a doctor's office and he or she says well you may have 12 more months to live could happen and of course he or she may not be right at all but that's another matter you can go into dreadful suffering and say I need more time I wanted more time please just time more I haven't fulfilled my life is pleasant I need and that's terrible suffering and you're thinking of course overthinking your mind goes wild or you can go there's only this moment and I'm not leaving it because the moment I leave this moment in your mind I suffer so when you're confronted with a crisis that is often the case you will notice when your attention is in the moment you don't suffer you move away from the moment you suffer you can use the crisis, any crisis in your life let's say a breakdown of a relationship marriage start thinking about it allow it to force you into the present moment this is not denying if in the present moment you experience emotional pain you accept that this is what is but it's more likely that less pain will not arise even when you're acutely present I call it the sword of presence like a Japanese sword it cuts through time past, future just now and so this is the narrow path that leads to life I believe Jesus was talking about the present moment the narrow path that leads to life is just walking on the narrow path of now and then of course you are the master the moment you walk on the path of now you are the Zen master if you want to use Zen or any you are the master master is a masculine and feminine term I suppose you are the master by being a master of is a master of presence, that's all the spiritual master doesn't necessarily know more than you I'm sure for example let's say Jesus or the Buddha almost every I mean everybody in this room has more knowledge than the Buddha or Jesus had on the level of knowledge so it's not to do with knowledge it's to do with presence so if you are present and completely aligned with the present moment you are the master the moment you lose the present moment you are no longer the master and then you'll be looking for the master yourself and back into the now so the only difference between you and the great spiritual master under whatever guise is degree of presence it's not knowledge or anything like that degree of presence are you aligned with the present moment do you

walk the narrow path of now and you're the master and the personality becomes unimportant it's just enough personality to serve as a vehicle so that you can speak and think you pretend you're still somebody and that's fine for the time being but something else speaks through you something else acts through you and that's the master that's the consciousness so right now at this moment everybody in this room is the zen master and so that's where the expression comes from this is it now whether you're still the master when you leave here it's a different matter only you can know it'll still be the present moment but the question, but can I sustain it and all that is just thought stuff just be responsible for this moment that's all take responsibility for your state of consciousness at this moment that's all, easy let's have just a moment of pure presence before we finish this is it, thank you

[Speaker 2] (51:09 - 51:29)

I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle essential teachings, the podcast you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts if you haven't yet go to Spotify and follow this podcast join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle thank you for listening

Eckhart Tolle Purpose of Existence [3307567a-9cec-44d4-9d89-ad57016f16d9]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:42)

Purpose of existence. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience on a wide range of topics like how much of our lives are within our control? Can we really plan for the future?

How do we deal with the pain body and also stay conscious? Eckhart says if we align with the present moment and pay attention to our state of consciousness, the future will look after itself. It's only by embracing the here and now that we have an opportunity to live our lives with clarity and purpose.

And we must learn to accept each moment as if we had chosen it. Because you did.

[Speaker 4] (0:44 - 0:58)

Hello, Eckhart. My question has two parts. I like to know how much of our life is in our control.

And do we really need to plan for the future or just trust what is and have faith that everything happened as it's supposed to happen?

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 5:40)

Okay, thank you. It's often that one answer covers several questions. It may even be the universal answer that covers all questions.

In control, well, if you try to control the future of your life, that will be quite frustrating to control what's going to happen. But you can control not so much control, but you can take responsibility for the present moment, your state of consciousness. At this moment, you can pay attention to what your state of consciousness is at this moment.

And you may sometimes find that your state of consciousness at this moment is one of not complete identification with thinking or an emotional movement, but certain identification with thought or form or a dysfunctional state of negativity, dwelling in negativity. But when you realize that it's not totally dysfunctional. If you're really dysfunctional, it means you're totally identified, you don't know it.

In extreme form, the people who are really mad, have no idea that they're mad. If you know that you're mad, you're not completely mad. If you know that you identified with a negative state, it has arisen, let's say you dwelling in fearful thinking about what might happen to you or probably will happen to you or what you're going to lose, or thinking about the past.

And you realize that this is what's happening, then of course, there's already some presence there. And then you can take responsibility and be the awareness rather than be the thought. That's the identification with thought.

And one could almost say identification with presence or awareness, which is who you really are, you are the awareness. So taking responsibility for this moment, get this moment right, which means be one with the isness of this moment, then you're getting it right. So whatever is arising around you, it is as it is.

So there's a non resistance to the isness of this moment. And whenever you live in the state of non resistance, but oneness with the isness, even the isness inside, if an emotion is there, that's what is. But there's also an awareness, you have to accept what is internally or internally, otherwise, you suffer.

So you accept what is you become the space for what is. And that is the only difference between an ordinary human and a spiritual master is that the master is one with the isness of this moment. That's the Zen master, for example, the simplicity of that is just completely at one with whatever is arising.

There's no knowledge in that it's not needed. But whatever need is needed in that state of oneness comes out of that state of oneness. So if you take responsibility for the present moment, that's when the future, of course, looks after itself, because it's no more than another present moment, or the one eternal present moment.

Future as such does not exist, as you well know, because you haven't encountered it ever. Nor has anybody else. There's no such thing as future except as a thought.

Future is a thought. It can't be more than a thought. Otherwise, you would have experienced it somewhere.

It must have come at some point. But it can't because it's future. So there is no future except as a mind form.

When you try to control the future, you're trapped in certain mind forms, not knowing it. And of course, it's impossible. You can't do that.

So you have no control over the future, but you can take responsibility for the present moment. That's the future. The future already looks after itself.

Take no thought for the moral, for the moral will take thought for itself, or something like that, whatever translation you look at. So that was one part. There was another part to your question.

[Speaker 4] (5:40 - 5:44)

Should we trust and have faith that everything happens as it's supposed to happen?

[Speaker 1] (5:45 - 14:53)

Okay. The powerful faith is to trust that whatever is happening now is fine. You trust in the isness because the totality of the universe has brought about the form that this moment takes.

Everything that happens in the universe has innumerable causes. If you try to trace it back, you have to go back to the beginning of all creation. So whatever form this moment takes in your consciousness is there because the totality of the universe has brought about this particular form, which is not going to last.

But at this moment, it has taken this form. And you trust that that's what is. And you don't ask, why is this happening to me?

What did I do to deserve that? Why do bad things always happen to me? It's not fair.

I wish I was somewhere else. I wish I were somebody else. I wish I didn't have to live with these people.

I wish I was doing a different job. Or you can put a sticker on your car. I'd rather be fishing, golfing.

But this I'd rather be is one of the many ways in which the mind denies the present moment and creates suffering out of that. And so all that is a lack of faith. One could use that.

I sometimes say, I probably wrote it somewhere, except each moment as if you had chosen it. Well, each moment really means this moment because there's only ever this one moment. So let's say, except this moment, which is the eternal now, except this moment, as if you had chosen it, that's the state of alignment with the isness of life.

I'm not telling people, well, if this happened to you, you must have chosen it on some level. I'm not telling them that, although it's a new age teaching. It's not perhaps entirely wrong.

But I'm not saying that because I don't want to make them angry. And it's not entirely correct. It's more helpful to say, except it as if you had chosen it, you don't need to convince yourself, okay, I've got this illness.

I chose that. Why? Why?

Why? Or feel extremely guilty, I have failed. I failed deeply.

I must have done something really wrong. After 10 years of meditation, I'm still getting ill. Why?

In some teachings that are otherwise beautiful teachings, they emphasize so much the physical healing aspect that's a little bit unbalanced. And anybody who follows those teachings and then develops some kind of illness immediately feels guilty, which creates another big problem on top of your illness. I'm not good enough.

So we don't need that. All you need is except this moment as if you had chosen it and then see how life develops for you, how life evolves, how life unfolds. If you just practice, you have nothing to lose.

Just say for one day, half a day, okay, I'm just going to try this out. I'll accept whatever arises, whatever comes into my life, any person, any situation, any event, I'll immediately internally be aligned. I'm going to be aligned with it.

And as if I had chosen whatever happens, I'm going to practice that for the next three hours. Now, you may not even succeed for three hours. Well, you probably will, but some people may not.

And then see how you experience life when that is your state of consciousness of acceptance. And you will see an enormous improvement, not only in the way you feel, you will also see an improvement in the way in which things are reflected back to you by other people, you will see an improvement in how other people relate to you. You will even see an improvement, this may not be as immediate in the brain, which events happen around you, if you're in true alignment with what is.

And that's a truly miraculous thing to experience. Now, but for that to have to do a little bit more than two or three hours. But even just to get your taste of it, start with one hour, 10 minutes.

If there's a place that you dislike, let's say, well, I don't know what you dislike a noisy traffic, city scene or supermarket, or the shopping mall. Well, some people love shopping mall. So don't use that wherever it is that you don't like being there.

And then, okay, let's see if I go there and say, I accept this moment as if I had chosen it, this noise, these people, these surroundings, amazing thing to do. And something you'll notice when you do that, the as if practice, your thinking mind slows down. And something opens up that's deeper than thinking awareness.

Because when you have nothing to argue about, there isn't that much to think about. When you're not you don't, you're not in disagreement with the present moment. And your ego gets deflated.

Because you have nothing to complain about. If the ego has nothing to complain about, it goes. And of course, it may react.

Because it notices it's getting weaker. And then suddenly, before you know it, you're

going to, oh, I hate this. The ego can come back and grab you again.

But that's fine. It's all part of the practice. So the most powerful thing, of course, is the oneness with the present moment.

Now, a secondary thing that's connected with that is when you do things, work of whatever kind, any action of whatever kind, is not to primarily perform the action as a means to an end. But see if you can be active as an end in itself. So it's not primarily a simple example.

You are walking or driving to the supermarket and do your shopping. The walking or driving is not less important than the arriving at the supermarket. And the walking around the supermarket is not less important than finishing your shopping.

And then arriving back home with your shopping, the journey back home, is not less important. Because that's the old consciousness, the unconsciousness. It's always the next moment is the one that's more important that I need to get to.

But I just need to get this thing out of the way so that I can arrive there. So when you're driving to the supermarket, you need to get the driving out of the way. When you're in the supermarket getting your food, you need to get that out of the way, because you want to already be home.

And when you're driving home, you just need to be home already. And when you're home already, there'll be something else. You want to get this out of the way as quickly as possible, because it's just not fulfilling.

Of course, the next thing is not going to be fulfilling either, because the entire mindset is the present moment is never fulfilling. It's never good enough. The next one is always the better one.

So that means the doing is not a means, not to treat the doing as a means to an end always, but as an end in itself. That's connected with the practice of alignment with the present moment. So it can be, that's the active part of it.

The passive part of it, the seemingly passive part of it is just to embrace the is-ness of whatever is arising in this moment. And that's how you control your life. To the ego, it looks as if your life were completely out of control, but it's not.

[Speaker 4] (14:55 - 15:05)

You know, when you say at every moment, think about it as you have chosen that moment, I'm going to think about it when my teenage son's arguing with me next time, if that helps me.

[Speaker 1] (15:05 - 15:06)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:07 - 15:59)

Thank you. Hi Eckhart. So I've been studying acting for the last little while, and I understand how presence is important in acting and any kind of creativity, how that's connected.

But many acting teachers talk about drawing on past memories of painful experiences to bring forth authentic emotional expression when it's needed in a scene during a performance. So in a way, it's like they're calling on their pain body sort of to fulfill this creative need. So my question is, what is your perspective on voluntarily revisiting memories of past pain for the purpose of seeking authenticity in the art of acting?

[Speaker 1] (15:59 - 20:09)

Oh, okay. Thanks. Well, usually, I don't recommend visiting the past.

But there are some practices that can temporarily be helpful. One is now, for the time being, I'm a little, I won't talk about acting until the second part of my answer. I didn't know that until I said it.

Some people have a very heavy pain body that takes them over the past pain body, as most of you know, I call the accumulation of past pain that still lives in you in latent or manifested form. Some people's pain body is so heavy that they cannot stay aware when it becomes so suddenly that it's impossible for them to stay aware as it explodes into their lives, especially anger, which can, some people come so suddenly that it takes them over and they lose presence immediately. And they wake up whenever that wave of anger has subsided and say, Oh, what was that?

It's gone. Well, they were totally in the grip of it. And for those people, I would sometimes recommend to relive in their mind a past episode that something that made them angry and then experience the arising of the emotional field.

And because it's not the actual situation, but a reliving of the situation, it won't be quite as powerful as the actual situation, but powerful enough for you to practice staying present as the awareness in the background while the energy arises. And that can be a very helpful practice for those who otherwise cannot stay present. So if you can do that by reliving a past episode of total loss of awareness, they can then stay aware while that happens.

And then perhaps there may be enough awareness next time, still a remnant of awareness, even though it probably will still be happening. In the case of acting, that would be a similar thing, but you would be doing it for a different reason. You have to see whether you can relinquish that energy when you've come to the end of the acting.

If it stays with you for a long period of time, or you notice that you enter certain negative moods after you've done your acting, which stay with you for hours or days, then I would say it's not worth doing that. Then there may be another way of generating that emotion rather than visiting the past in you. If it can be relinquished as soon as you don't need it anymore, then it could work.

It could even help you with the awareness practice. If you voluntarily, consciously evoke a past emotion, which then of course is no longer a past emotion, it becomes a present emotion. Whether or not there is another way of generating the emotion you need in acting, I don't know.

I haven't done any acting. You have to find out for yourself whether you can so completely believe perhaps in the situation that you're acting out, which by the way is just like normal life. If you can so completely believe in the script that whatever it is you're acting out, and you're so completely in it that that situation itself, that of course is the script, is making you angry because you're so in it, perhaps you don't need to revisit the past.

I don't know. I don't know whether I could generate anger if I tried acting. I don't know how I would do it.

So I may try it. I'll let you know what happens. Let's see what could I remember.

[Speaker 2] (20:12 - 20:24)

There's also the reverse where an acting teacher I was listening to said that you could imagine a possibility of something happening that would be devastating to generate that kind of an emotion.

[Speaker 1] (20:24 - 21:17)

Yes. Yes, that's right. And again, you have to be careful to see whether that lingers in your energy field after the acting for a long period of time, which is not good.

If you're in the grip of a negative mood after acting in some drama, let's say, and you stay, you find yourself being in a negative mood for days afterwards or weeks, then you'll have to see how you can cleanse through meditation practice, through awareness practice, or some other means, perhaps including some physical practice, combining some physical activity with presence, so that you can cleanse yourself immediately afterwards.

[Speaker 2] (21:17 - 21:23)

Yeah, maybe using those strategies is okay. But only if you your primary one is presence first.

[Speaker 1] (21:24 - 21:26)

Yes, yes. Yes.

[Speaker 5] (21:27 - 21:49)

Yes. Thank you. Hi, Eckhart.

I have a sibling who is struggling with paranoid thoughts and delusions and he doesn't think there's anything wrong. So he doesn't want help. And I want to know what I can do if there's anything I can do to help him.

[Speaker 1] (21:49 - 30:28)

Yeah. Perhaps this answer also has two parts. I have a little bit of personal experience because I also had a close relative who suffered from what is usually called paranoia.

I see it as just an intensification of normal egoic state, it becomes much more intense so that you see that it's actually madness, a form of madness. It begins in normal egoic state as suspecting other people's motives. What does he really want of me?

Often projecting negative intentions onto other people when they aren't there at all. Looking suspiciously at strangers that you meet, suspicious about where you are. These are still considered quite normal.

And I could see that because this person, my relative, I observed her for a few years when she was still considered normal. But I already was aware of they have very strong ego, always suspecting others of not being honest and so on. There was always that looking out.

But that was quite normal. Many people have that. They're just distrustful of life and other people.

And then after a few years, I was no longer living there. But I came for a visit and realized by then she had gone further and had actually already been taken to a mental home and then come out again, and then had very strong delusions, total misinterpretations of life around her. And then whenever I visited, then I would be with her.

And whenever I saw her, I could feel myself going into an intensified state of presence whenever I was with her. And she was telling me about what was going on, mostly fantasies. And I could see the enormous amount of fear that was the basis of her state.

There was so much fear in her that her mind, and this I believe is the basis of especially what is called paranoia, which always sees a threat somewhere. Her mind attempted to interpret the fear that she felt, which comes from the state of disconnectedness from

being, the state of ego. And the mind attempting to understand and explain this fear had to find some explanation for it.

So it created some external explanation because it needed to explain it. This is, by the way, also how many dreams happen in that way. We believe often that the dream, let's say we are dreaming of some monster is trying to devour us and we are in panic.

We believe that the dream causes the panic. But in many cases, perhaps all cases, the feeling causes the dream. And so that happens in a dream.

And that can also happen in paranoia. And by the way, that is also in so-called normal consciousness. An element of that is present also in normal consciousness of attempting explanations for bad feelings, instead of facing the feelings directly, trying to find some explanation of why I feel this.

So something you can do is not actually a doing, is to just listen to him in intense presence. So that there mustn't be a single thought in your head, especially not a single emotion. Because if there's an emotion in you, this heavy emotional entity will get in there immediately and grab onto the emotion.

And once more of that, especially any reaction or deny what he's saying. Of course, the moment you deny something, you become part of it. So that all that doesn't work.

Nor do you need to agree to simply total openness. If you spend more time with him, if you can bring intense presence into your interaction with him, your relationship with him, that may be a help, because it could awaken that awareness in him. If he can see that there's something that is delusional, even in a moment of a glimpse of lucidity, then perhaps the awareness can slowly grow in him.

There's no guarantee, but it's something that is a beautiful thing to do, if you want to call it doing. It's good for you, and it's good for him. Second part of the answer is, and it's not easy, but in some cases, you need to allow other humans to go through their karmic suffering.

You do what you can, and there's always a limit to what you can do. And beyond that, there needs to come an acceptance. It's the same kind of acceptance that you would practice in your own, if something were happening to you, as something difficult to bear, what used to be called in medieval Christianity, they called it the cross.

You have to bear your own. Everybody has their cross, and in some people's crosses are very heavy. So you can bring complete acceptance, and this applies to not to you, it applies to sometimes parents who can see that their teenage sons or daughters are doing dangerous and mad things.

They do all they can, but there is a limit. You can't put them into prison. You can't lock

the door.

So there's a limit to what you can do. Beyond that, there needs to come to break an acceptance. Every human has his or her own learning process, and there are enormous differences in the way in which humans learn and grow.

So you also may have to do it with your parents. Your parents may be deeply in the grip of ego. They may disapprove of who you are.

Again, acceptance. All have their own learning process. It's particularly hard if you see somebody close to you.

You can see they're making dreadful mistakes, and you can see that they're going to suffer through that, but it's also true that making mistakes is one of the most important things that a human being can do in their growth. Without making mistakes, nothing much would happen. Creating conflict.

Something must go wrong in your life. As you know, without something going wrong, there's no movie. You can't watch a movie and nothing goes wrong.

Who would want to see that? So while life, I mean, every movie you see, if you go to the very, down to the very basics of the movies, means, well, there are these people, and then something goes wrong. Otherwise, nobody would pay money to watch something not going wrong.

And life in its present evolutionary state is similar, although we are moving out of that, but many humans are still in that. And the wrong is not wrong. It's just, we call it wrong.

And there comes a deepening through suffering and to learning. So we don't know what his path is, but I would suggest that you, whenever you are with him, you make it into very intense presence. That's the most beautiful gift you can give him, is the gift of your presence.

And the gift of your presence may draw forth his presence also. But that's not the main thing. It's just, you're just offering the gift.

[Speaker 5] (30:28 - 30:31)

Thank you, Eckhart. That was very helpful. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (30:31 - 48:38)

Do I have to give up wearing makeup in order to reach enlightenment? The question that may be concerned about being identified with externals, external appearance. The problem is not the makeup or the clothes that you wear, but the question is, where your sense of identity, your sense of self comes from.

Is it derived primarily from the way you look, which would include makeup, it would include the shape of your body, which would include the clothes that you wear. If that is the basis for your sense of identity, then would I recommend that you wear old clothes, remove your makeup, or do something to the shape of your body? No, these things are just externals.

The identification is the problem. So where do you derive your sense of who you are, your sense of I, your sense of self? Where does that come from?

Does it come from the way you look, or does it come from a deeper place within yourself? Does it come from thoughts, that things you tell yourself about yourself, or does it come from a deeper place that is beyond thought? What really matters is going to the deeper place where you realize that who you essentially are is not the form, the external form, nor even the psychological form of the me structure, which consists of thoughts, but the consciousness that's behind all that.

You are the awareness, you are the stillness, you are the presence. And once you know that, then you can play around in the world of form and wear makeup or not wear makeup. It makes no difference.

You can wear nice clothes or you can wear any kind of clothes. It doesn't make any difference. You may still want to wear nice clothes without being identified.

It's perfectly fine. You won't be obsessed anymore. There's a difference between enjoying and obsessing.

So it's not the externals that matter. It matters where your sense of I comes from. So if your sense of I comes from identification with form, it will lead to more suffering because your external form is going to deteriorate.

Oh, you didn't know that? Well, it's maybe not taught at school, but the external form gradually deteriorates. And so no matter how much makeup you use, it eventually can't be hidden anymore that it deteriorates.

And that's fine. And if you had not been identified with the form, it wouldn't matter that much. Actually, it's quite a pleasant thing even to watch how gradually you can hold a photo of yourself next to a mirror.

Oh, that was me 15 years ago, 20 years ago. Oh. And that's not frightening.

If your sense of who you are comes from a place of the formless consciousness, it's very peaceful. And you can even then allow the gradual decay. Really, that's what it is of the form to happen.

It's still be very peaceful. You become more peaceful. So where does your sense of self

come from?

That is the question. The makeup is not the problem or the clothes. What do you think of the Occupy Wall Street movement?

Could this be a vehicle for real change in human consciousness? Several people have asked that. Of course, Occupy Wall Street is now, as I spread, of course, to many other places, not just Wall Street.

It's now called the Occupy Movement. It was even in Vancouver. And in a little corner there, there were a few Buddhist monks meditating.

And a reporter came and asked them, what are you doing here? And they said, we are occupying the present moment. And of course, that's part of the answer.

The movement prerequisite for the success of whatever that is, because I probably don't quite know what success means yet, because they're not focused on actually what exactly it is that they want. The prerequisite for success would be that the participants occupy the present moment. That is the basis.

And perhaps some of them do. They are, perhaps some of them are there. We see structures in this world that have been created by the ego, the egoic ignorance, the egoic consciousness.

And many of them are not capable of change, not true change. And true change wants to happen in this world, because there is a change in consciousness. But the old structures, which includes the politicians, the political structures, all those that are there in place, they are not capable of changing.

This has also happened to a large extent to many religious structures. A lot of the, to a large extent, the awakening of the spiritual awakening of humans that is happening on the planet, especially in certain parts of the planet, much more than others, most of it is not happening through the existing structures of the old religions, but outside of the old structures. Some of it, if the structures are not too rigid, some of the old structures may be able to become vehicles for change also.

There may be some Christian churches that are capable of that, of also being vehicles for the awakening. Some Buddhists and other religions, Sufis perhaps, then they are, but a lot of it is happening outside these structures. It's an embryonic movement, whether it grows into something larger or whether it remains for a while on the mental level as a mental thing and then grows into something else.

But I do feel certain that many movements for change are going to happen outside the existing structures. And this perhaps could be a beginning of that, of embryonic beginning of change that's happening outside the structures. Although because I say

embryonic, because it's still almost unformed yet, they don't know exactly, it's not focused on anything specific.

There's just a general sense not yet, hasn't clearly taken form yet, which is fine because everything needs to be an organic growth to that. Yes, it could lead to something much bigger and other movements could arise inspired by that and then bring about change outside of the existing structures and even bring about collapse of certain existing structures, which would not be a bad thing. Although many of the existing structures are actually going to bring about their own collapse, but that's a different matter.

The banking system and so on, they are very busy bringing about their own collapse. So the danger is that because the egoic consciousness is still floating around in the collective, of course, the danger is that some of these movements get hijacked by, again, by the old consciousness. Although the impulse for it is a different state of consciousness, it's non-violent change.

So there's always the danger when that happens that the ego takes over again and perverts it. We have to just accept that that is a danger. It may not happen because there's a fairly widespread awakening on the planet.

So on the whole, I feel it's a good and inevitable thing. And we'll have to see where it goes, what it grows into, or whether something totally different will arise somewhere else. But yes, change outside of the structures is definitely happening.

And if you feel drawn to participation in some kind of movement, that's a good thing. The important thing, of course, is that you occupy the present moment while you participate so that you don't lose yourself in egoic reaction, that you can embody that state of the state of presence. And so it's not only you, it spreads from one individual, spreads in the same way that an unconscious individual can draw others into unconsciousness.

It's amazing when you can have a group of people discussing something, and one person is deeply unconscious, and five minutes later, everybody is shouting. But in a similar way, it can also happen that out of five people, one person is present, and the entire energy field of the group can be elevated into greater presence. So it can go either way.

Is Facebook an externalized form of the ego? It certainly bears enormous similarities, or is it just another vehicle which the ego has hijacked? Well, of course, to a large extent, what you see, of course, is the ego, because the majority of humans are still in the egoic consciousness.

And every human presents, as far as I can see, on Facebook presents an image of themselves that they have, and that's their page or whatever it is, the image that to them looks good. And of course, the ego is having an image of who you are. It's the Narcissus, the myth of Narcissus, who looked into a pool of water and saw his own

image, and then became enamored with himself, or rather obsessed with himself.

Oh, it's me, me. This is me. Now, then you have an inner image, me, conceptual, then you have ideas and opinions about me.

It's me. And then you have the moment your identity is in the me, then of course, you inflict the same opinions on others. You are that.

So the Facebook, you see the image of who they want to present to the world. I have a Facebook page, and I have once a week or so, I have a posting. Now, I must admit, I have an inner blockage, it seems to, I still don't understand how exactly it works.

So I have to send it to somebody in our office, my contribution, and he puts it onto my Facebook page. And he tried to explain it to me. One day I will learn it.

But I do look up sometimes the comments that people make after I post something. Some are totally weird, but some are... But also many are quite lovely that people are touched, they feel their life is changing.

So there's a, there are more lovely ones than weird ones. And it's wonderful to see the feedback and see how people's lives are changing. And all they say, this is exactly what I needed to hear today.

Thank you so much. And that's beautiful. So here we are using the Facebook, not in the service of ego, but in the service of taking humans beyond ego.

There may not be anything inherently egoic in Facebook or on the internet, it could be used to amplify the ego and it can probably also be used to help in the awakening. So far, probably to a large part of it is ego, but potentially it can be part of the awakening also. Not getting drawn into the electronic media as an addiction, there's a danger there.

That it can stimulate the mind to such an extent that it becomes addictive, even more addictive than watching television. And so I know of people who, youngsters who spend hours every day, can't get away from the screen. What's the next thing?

And the next, and the next, and the next. So it's not all bad news. I asked earlier, somewhat humorously, whether there is perhaps a universal answer that answers all questions.

And of course, the universal answer that answers all questions is stillness. And it is spreading stillness that is in you now, right there, where you're not thinking, present. It's spreading in this world.

It's getting into all kinds of places where I would have thought, no way. Stillness, of course, is only a word. Stillness is the dimension where thought is transcended, where the person is transcended.

And if you haven't found the transcendence, you have missed the mark in this lifetime, which means the purpose of human existence. The purpose of human existence is not eating well, sense pleasure. There's nothing wrong with eating well.

There's nothing wrong with sense pleasure. It's not the purpose of human existence. The purpose of human existence is not comfort.

There's nothing wrong with comfort, but it's not the purpose of human existence. The purpose of human existence is evolutionary. It's awakening.

One could say to become fully human. We could say that most humans have not yet arrived at being fully human, if you want to use those terms. If you want to use different terms, you can say we are now transcending the human.

It doesn't matter. It's the same thing. Fully human, yes, that's already, I believe, Chinese philosopher Confucius already spoke about becoming more fully human.

So it's been, it started a long time ago, Buddha and so on, many teachings, becoming fully human so that we no longer create hell on earth. If you're fully human, you don't create hell anymore around you and in your mind. So that's the purpose.

And it doesn't mean that you're free of challenges. All the challenges that you encounter are helpful in awakening. So we can be grateful for whatever it is that happens in your life when things go wrong, as they tend to do.

So then the primary factor then is consciousness in your life. The rest is details. As Einstein said, I want to know the mind of God.

The rest is details. And the rest, the details in your, if you apply that to your life, is all the details of your life situation. Whatever happens, has happened, will happen, is happening, all those details of your life situation.

But what's the mind of God? What does he mean? Consciousness.

The primary factor is consciousness. That's who you are essentially, which what Jesus called the light of the world. Consciousness.

You are consciousness. You are formless, you are timeless. And knowing that, as having that as the basis of your life, that's awakening and that's the purpose of your life.

What you do externally is secondary. The question is, are you awakening as you do whatever you do? And as whatever happens, happens.

It doesn't matter whether you are in a VIP or doing something menial, it's secondary to as far as the arising of consciousness, the awakening is concerned.

[Speaker 3] (48:47 - 49:06)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Reaching the Depths of Our Being [1d3c8ee5-aac4-40e9-9cec-6b3978539494]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:49)

Reaching the depths of our being. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions from a woman seeking insights for her sister, who recently was diagnosed with a mental disorder. She wants to know how Eckhart views the diagnosis within the context of his teachings, asking, could there be a silver lining?

Eckhart says while dysfunction may be present, he cautions against using labels. He also shares that he believes that many mental illnesses are normal human behavior, which has been exaggerated by the ego. The solution, he believes, is to remain rooted in awareness whenever possible.

With practice, he believes we could avoid acting out unconscious patterns. Eckhart explains there is reason for hope. A path to healing can begin even in the midst of life's most challenging circumstances.

[Speaker 1] (0:52 - 0:59)

Welcome, everybody. Wonderful to be with you in the present moment.

[Speaker 3] (1:04 - 1:11)

Become aware, be aware of not so much of your existence.

[Speaker 1] (1:13 - 1:24)

You exist as a person, but beyond existence, there's a being. Existence is that which manifests here.

[Speaker 3] (1:25 - 2:20)

Become aware that you are. Become aware that you are aware. One could say, become aware of yourself.

Not the usual self, not the historical self, but the invisible, the deeper being that you are, the consciousness. When we put it in language, mistakes creep in very easily. So when I say become aware that you are aware, there's already a mistake in that, because the assumption, if I say that, would be that there's you and the awareness.

[Speaker 1] (2:21 - 2:39)

And you become aware of the awareness. Language creates that duality. So when I say become aware of yourself or become aware of awareness, there's a duality there in

language, which is not there in actuality.

[Speaker 3] (2:40 - 3:02)

In actuality, the awareness that you are becomes aware of itself. Consciousness becomes aware of itself. That's what it means.

Because in essence, you are consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (3:05 - 3:49)

Nowadays, you often read things, or people speak about raising the awareness. You hear that quite often in popular media and so on. Now, it's always nothing wrong with that, but it's always to do with raising the awareness about something, which may be a good thing.

You raise the awareness about nature, the importance of living in harmony with raising awareness of certain issues. They may be real, they may be imaginary, whatever. You raise the awareness of this.

This is not what we are talking about here, because it's not the awareness of something else.

[Speaker 3] (3:50 - 4:00)

It's awareness itself. So it's to sense the being of you, I am.

[Speaker 1] (4:04 - 4:21)

The more you sense that, the more you become liberated from the person, which otherwise occupies your consciousness completely, and it becomes kind of dream-like existence. You live in and through the person with its narrative.

[Speaker 3] (4:23 - 4:28)

And then the person continues to be there, but there's something deeper.

[Speaker 1] (4:30 - 4:43)

My favorite analogy, as you know, is the ocean and the ripple. The person is the ripple on the surface of the ocean, and you are the ocean.

[Speaker 3] (4:43 - 4:51)

You're also the ripple, but the ripple is the ocean. It's just a temporary ripple appearance.

[Speaker 1] (4:53 - 5:11)

And so the essence of all this, the realization of that lies in finding the ability within yourself to realize the space that is beyond thinking, to be able to come to a cessation of the stream of thinking.

[Speaker 3] (5:13 - 5:19)

For example, now, there's nothing to think about.

[Speaker 1] (5:19 - 5:34)

What have I just said? What am I saying? You can't figure out what it means by thinking about it at all.

There's no need to add any thought to this moment, but you're fully here. You're fully present.

[Speaker 3] (5:35 - 5:50)

So the ability to be present without the interference of thought is vital. That is the arising of the unconditioned consciousness that is the ocean.

[Speaker 1] (5:53 - 6:31)

And then as you become more rooted in the awareness, that dimension, the transcendent dimension, you can even think. You continue to think without losing yourself in this unconscious thinking. Unconscious thinking means you become completely identified with a stream of thinking.

Your identity, your sense of self is then in the thinking, in the thoughts. You've lost yourself. You are lost, or you've come back to become unconscious again, spiritually speaking, unconscious.

[Speaker 3] (6:33 - 6:49)

So you can use your mind and yet not lose yourself in the mind. That's the key. That's the art of living, of lucid living.

[Speaker 1] (6:49 - 8:35)

The art of lucid dreaming is not that important. It's a nice experiment, but one of the main things is lucid living so that you can continue participating in this world of form without, yes, appreciating it, of course. You don't deny it.

You don't need to deny it or condemn it. You appreciate it for what it is. You appreciate its beauty, its aliveness.

And it doesn't have that absolute seriousness anymore that otherwise is there when the

world is a place of enormous promise, which is a promise that the world can never keep, and a world of enormous disappointment. If that's all there is in your life, in the absence of the transcendent dimension, there's always a promise of the next moment in whatever form the next moment comes. And then it lets you down.

And then there's another promise, and for a while it's great, and then it lets you down again. And you get quite a few highs for a while. Well, yeah, yeah, that's it.

Oh no, that wasn't it. So in the absence of the transcendent dimension, every situation, every person, every attainment turns out to be kind of disappointing ultimately, or even creates suffering.

[Speaker 3] (8:38 - 8:46)

So you know all that. I'm just reminding you. Let's see what the first question is.

[Speaker 2] (8:48 - 9:59)

Hi, I'm very excited to be here and to be asking you my question in person. Thank you, Eckhart. My question, my twin sister was recently diagnosed with disassociative identity disorder.

Which is otherwise known as multiple personality disorder. We both never knew until now, and neither did our family, her husband, or children. My confusion over this is immense.

There is maybe something beautiful here in this. I do not know. I'm wondering if you may be able to help me understand what it is, and what it means within the context of your teachings.

I was very much like you until I encountered the power of now. I was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder in my early 20s, which I was told was a disassociative disorder. I no longer have this diagnosis.

My sister's challenges are just beginning. I'm very open and eager to hear your particular and unique perspective on this subject.

[Speaker 3] (10:01 - 10:04)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (10:05 - 10:28)

I just wanted to ask you one or two questions before I answer. The symptoms, did the family notice any symptoms before the diagnosis was given by the doctor? Did your family notice anything strange in her behavior?

[Speaker 5] (10:28 - 10:43)

Well, no. Nothing that we would attribute to that. Certain inconsistencies, maybe lying, not being truthful, following through with what she said she would do.

[Speaker 2] (10:43 - 11:05)

She and I never got along just for varying reasons. Dissociative disorder is a highly avoided way of approaching the world. The family also was very much that too.

Even if they noticed things, it was avoided, not talked about, not addressed by anyone.

[Speaker 1] (11:06 - 30:43)

Right. Right. Good.

Thank you. Yeah. I do not doubt that there is a certain dysfunction there.

One needs to be careful with labels. These health professionals, mental health professionals, they were very generous with their labeling people and conditions. We need to be careful with that because then we immediately create a mental image of that person.

From then on, we look at that person through the mental label that has been created. We need to be careful with that. Although I'm not denying that there certainly will be a dysfunction.

The ego is dysfunctional. It's just a question of what degree of dysfunction there is in the ego. This condition, which is called, traditionally was called multiple personality disorder.

Like many so-called pathological conditions, they are an amplified form of ego that already exists in a milder form as part of normal egoic human behavior. For example, I'll come back to multiple personality in a second, but you can take any condition. You can take paranoia, for example, which of course can be a very serious mental disorder, but that many traits of paranoia already exist in the so-called normal human consciousness.

It's, for example, a tendency in quite a few human beings to always easily suspect hidden motives in what people do and say. You suspect what is their real motive. They always suspect that they're talking behind your back.

They're talking about me behind my back. They're always being kind of fearful of people and the intentions of people. This is still normal egoic dysfunction in many, many people.

At that level, it is not diagnosed as anything pathological. It's just a normal, very distrustful person. Behind the distrust, of course, the reason for the distrust is a sense of an underlying fear.

So, that manifests as a distrust of you mustn't trust people. When that becomes more pronounced, the mind develops a narrative that this person has very evil intentions towards me, and it's not only one person, several people. In fact, the whole city is after me now.

It can become amplified, and then it's easily recognized as pathological. It was already pathological even in its milder forms, but it wasn't recognized as such. It was kind of one of the many ways in which the ego manages to be dysfunctional.

Multiple personality disorder, again, in the absence of awareness, many, many humans, they have different clusters of reaction and behavior that become activated or triggered in certain situations or by certain people. So, when these humans are confronted with a certain person or encounter, find themselves in a certain situation, a different reaction, a different response suddenly manifests through them, which is in psychology sometimes called sub-personality. There's another personality that suddenly arises.

So, many, many humans have a mild form of different clusters of conditioning arising at different times. So, there are sub-personalities. A very strong one, for example, is when somebody suddenly gets taken over by the pain body.

So, the pain body is a huge sub-personality that exists in many, many humans, and it's not normally called multiple personality disorder, but it's basically the same thing. So, the pain body comes in and takes you over, and then you suddenly become a completely different person for a while. You were such a lovely, nice guy, always friendly, or a woman or whatever, and suddenly there's a monster there.

What happens? Well, the pain body could also be considered as a sub-personality that takes you over, but it doesn't have to be pain body. It can be other ways where suddenly people revert to childish reactions or responses in certain situations.

They suddenly become whiny and oh, poor me, whatever sub-personality has taken them over. So, what is still regarded as normal egoic dysfunction can, when it becomes more pronounced, it is then recognized as pathological, as very different clusters of behaviors that suddenly take over. There's no clear dividing line between what's still considered normal and what is pathological.

It's a spectrum. So, for the person who realizes that they have this condition, whether it's in a more pronounced form that's called pathological or a person who realizes that they behave very differently in certain situations, the first thing is to recognize it. Do you recognize it in yourself that this is what happens?

That is already an enormous gain in consciousness, to recognize that this from time to time happens to you. I don't know whether in the case of your sister, she is able to recognize that this, when the doctor told her that is the diagnosis, whether she

recognizes that there may be some, there probably is some truth to it, although I'm not fond of these labels, but there may be, there's probably some truth to it, that the question is, is she able to recognize that there is some truth to it, that sometimes she manifests behavior that is different from other times when it's completely different behavior. So, that's a vital thing.

So, to the realization that this happens to you sometimes. Now, in the absence of presence or awareness, almost every human being has some form of subpersonalities, even they may be very mild, but almost every human being has some certain behavior changes between situations or dealing with different people triggered by this or that. The key to transcendence, transcending this, is the ability to observe your inner states.

The ability to observe your inner states. That is the beginning of being able to transcend subpersonalities. And that is by the, it's so important to grow in awareness or presence, because awareness is that which is able to observe what goes on inside you.

And if then you get taken over by a certain behavior pattern, which we could call personality, then at least in that moment, you know that that's what's happening. Then there's still somebody, even you may not immediately be able to stop it. It may still be happening.

For example, in the case of the pain body, you may not immediately be able to stop the pain body, but you may be able to be aware that the pain body has arisen in you and that it is thinking and speaking through you and reacting and creating drama or participating in drama. And you know it's happening. That's an enormous gain in consciousness to know that this is happening.

So as the awareness grows, the ability of these, whatever the subpersonality may be, to take you over completely diminishes. Gradually, it may not disappear all at once. Probably won't, but you never know.

But you don't lose yourself completely in them anymore. There remains an awareness. So the awareness provides a unifying field of factors.

Because awareness means as you become more aware, your identity shifts more and more. And you recognize your true identity as being the awareness rather than whatever behavior is meant, whatever thoughts arise, emotional reactions arise. You're the awareness.

So the key is, I don't know whether how you would explain this to your sister or how you can help her with that. The key is, however, as I said, be aware of what's going, what is going on inside you at any given moment. Be aware of what's happening.

Then that gradually will bring about an end of the dysfunction. The awareness is the key. I believe your sister has a mild form of multiple personality disorder.

It is not a severe form of multi-personality disorder. That is a very debilitating and serious condition. But even there, awareness is still a possibility.

It is a possibility for the person to become aware. And that's why it's also so important to practice some form of meditation or to practice inner body awareness so that the presence, you grow in presence power, so to speak. The presence grows in you.

So the presence can no longer, the awareness, the presence, can then no longer be obscured by whatever the condition is, what we call sub-personality. And for a while, it may still play itself out, but it no longer has this enormous power behind it that cannot take you over completely anymore. And that also means, this is important for everybody because as I said, it's not just this dysfunction.

It's not just something that we need to be concerned with when it becomes pathological. It's almost everybody's, almost everybody will manifest some form of that dysfunction as long as there's not a sufficient presence, not sufficient awareness. So the key is there.

Now, how you are going to help your sister exactly, I don't know. It depends what you communicate with her, but if somehow maybe some intuitively the right words may come to you that may help her so that she can recognize that she has the ability to be aware. She does not to become whatever arises, be aware of what arises.

That's the key. And that applies to everybody, of course, so that you don't, you're not many different people. Again, a mood can, many people can become a moody.

Now, one day they're great, another day they're in a bad mood. And then that determines what they think, what they speak. They are possessed by this bad mood.

And again, it's like a completely different person. I noticed that when I, a long time ago, I lived in a community with, in a house with 10 people or 12, I can't remember. And with quite a few people, I noticed you never knew who was going to, or the breakfast room, we were having breakfast and everybody had their bedrooms were upstairs.

And when you heard the steps coming down and you never knew what particular version of this person was coming downstairs into the breakfast room, who is he or she going to be today? A lovely, light, very spiritual person, or somebody who's, oh, don't talk to me, don't want to know. And again, the recognition of inner states is the key.

At least if people, let's say you're taken over by a bad mood. Okay, there's already, there's a very slight gain in consciousness. If you can, if you're able to say, don't talk to me today, I'm in a bad mood.

Well, at least there's something, at least, you know, you're in a bad mood. Because if you were totally unconscious, you would, 100% of you would become the bad mood. And you would probably even deny that you're in a bad mood because you're, in whatever

way you interpret the world through the veil of the bad mood, to you would become the reality.

And so, even to say, I'm in a bad mood, better don't talk to me. Okay, at least you know it. That's already a gain in consciousness.

And then the next step is not being forced to act it out, so that you can feel the energy of it, but you remain, there's an awareness behind it. And so, gradually your identity is no longer in the arising states. They are still there, but the more fundamentally, your sense of identity is in the awareness, that remains rooted in the awareness.

And then yes, let's be, let's, I use the word rooted. Let's say, to use the analogy of a plant, a plant has roots in the soil, so the roots, if the roots are deep enough in the soil, then the outer condition of the plant, it may be very stormy or windy, and the plant is tossed about in the wind or the storm, but the roots are there, and the plant is firmly rooted there, and that this doesn't matter that much anymore, whatever happens here. But if the roots are not deep enough in the soil, then the winds come and the plants get uprooted and destroyed.

Similar analogy, of course, one of my favorite parables of Jesus, where it talks about a man who is, the man who is going to build a house, and he builds a house on the sand, and the winds come and the storms come, and the rain comes, and because the house is built on the sand, it's swept away. And then another man, before building a house, digs deep, that's what he says in this parable, the man digs deep until he reaches the rock, the foundation, and then he builds the house on the rock, and then the storm comes, the floods come, the wind come, and the house remains standing because it is deeply rooted on the rock. Now, in this parable, the rock is that state of consciousness, of rootedness in being, and then whatever happens in the outer world, because that rootedness in being is a transcendent dimension.

It's not even part of this dimension. The consciousness is not even really part of this dimension. So here, you're rooted in being, and then what conditions, outer conditions still, yes, they change, isn't that?

And perhaps even you, still for a while, you're different people in different situations, but less so, there's more, you become a more reliable person, you're no longer, from day to day, you're no longer a different personality, or from hour to hour, according to the outer situation. Another one, of course, is, I mean, if just one could give many examples, many people differ in the way in which they relate, depending on who they're talking to. So if you're talking to somebody high up, somebody famous, or wealthy, or whatever, or powerful, you talk to them in a particular way, and then you talk to somebody else who is just, has a lowly, low social status, he's just, and the way in which you talk to that person is different from the way in which you talk.

And then again, you have different personalities, it's a milder form of, everybody does it, but there's something, as you become more rooted in presence, the way in which you talk to, it depends what you regard valuable in your mind, the way in which you talk to the Dalai Lama would be the same way in which you talk to the person who is cleaning your floor, there would be no difference. Or if you're not a spiritual person, the way in which you talk to, I suppose, the richest man in the world, whoever that is at the moment, the way in which you talk to him, then would be different, you meet him on a social occasion, and then there's somebody else who is serving you the drinks. Is there a difference in which the way in which you talk to this person or the person who's serving you the drinks, then there's a role playing, you're a different person there and another person there.

The more you're rooted in awareness, you speak and relate to everybody in exactly the same way, that's the same, and you honor everybody, everybody's presence, no matter what their outer position is in this world, that's a good sign. So it's all self-observation is the key, and awareness will free you from the conditioning of your mind, so in whatever way you can convey that to your sister, only you can know that, maybe you can introduce her to inner body awareness, that's a very good start. So that's really all I can say at the moment, I wish you and your sister well, and as she becomes more aware, also your relationship will become closer again, I'm sure of that.

[Speaker 2] (30:44 - 32:01)

It's been a beautiful thing to watch for me to have been immersed in your teachings for the last 15 years or more, and then to see how that is very instrumental in helping, I see fluidity between the parts, even just speaking to her, and through my awareness and a total acceptance of her, but whatever is showing up, no matter what the symptom is, she will start to talk about fluidity between the parts, oh, a vague remembrance of this, and I can see that it's really is just a compartmentalized, compartmentalization is just the teachings have been essential in how I'm approaching her, and it's a beauty, I think there's more beauty in it to be seen, and I'm more hopeful than anything, but it certainly is a challenge, and thank you for all your teachings on being willing to embrace challenges, because for me, for the last 10 years, that was my issue, and so now I'm seeing that the freedom really is in embracing the challenge, yes, this is just another one, really I'm very thankful for you.

[Speaker 3] (32:01 - 32:02)

Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (32:02 - 32:23)

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Eckhart Tolle Real Change Begins with Our State of Consciousness [e69ba6de-8dfc-4b29-b325-5295424845fd]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:40)

Real change begins with our state of consciousness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience. He says the most important thing we can do is to transform our state of consciousness, to realize our connection to the Source, and let go of our self-imposed limitations.

He compares the transcendent realm to the sun. We are like a ray from that Source, shining into this world. Everyone on the planet, he says, is a brief flicker of consciousness.

Here for a short time, but connected to the eternal.

[Speaker 1] (0:41 - 30:39)

The main focus here is transforming your life. Whatever else happens when you live from a deeper state is secondary. And so one could even say that as you rest in that power, there's a book called The Power of Now.

I just remembered. So you rest. That is the power of now.

And so what's the now? The now is consciousness, timeless consciousness. As you rest in that power, fear disappears, and you know your trust comes in, and that changes the way in which you relate to other human beings.

That perhaps is more important than whatever it is that you might create in this world. It's a secondary thing. But how human beings relate to each other is more important because that creates the entire what we call the world.

It's the human-made world. The basis is how do human beings relate to each other? And how do groups, collectives, how do they relate to each other?

And at the moment, it's still, as you will know if you watch the news or whatever it is, it's not going that well. But how a collective behaves depends on the people that make up the collective, all the individuals that make up the collective. So the behavior of a nation, of a collective, is determined by the prevalent or predominant state of consciousness of the probably millions of people who make up the collective.

Now, if the collective behaves insanely, as they tend to do, if a collective behaves insanely, it does not mean that every member of the collective is of that low consciousness. It just needs a slight majority with really low consciousness or a bit more for the collective to behave insanely. And if the ego, the personal ego, is pretty crazy,

but that's nothing compared to the collective ego, when it takes over your sense of identity, the collective egos are the perpetrators of most of the suffering, the human-created suffering on the planet, not the individual psychopaths or crazed criminals or crazed mass murderers like Jack the Ripper in the 19th century.

I mean, they just killed a few people. But the collectives, their behavior, if the behavior of a collective, a nation, were the behavior of a single person, you would immediately recognize that this person is clinically insane and absolutely needs to be confined. So there's a saying, there's some truth in it, comes from a 19th century French philosopher, every nation has the government it deserves.

Oh, that's interesting. Of course, what that means is there is a correlation between the prevalent state of consciousness of the majority, not of all, and the kind of government that this country or this nation manifests. So if you want to know more about the collective insanity, then, of course, I recommend 20th century history.

And you just go, how is this possible? This is completely insane, a nightmare, truly. I can't imagine it's a nightmare.

But the collective, as we said, is made up of individuals. So the change has to happen with a sufficient number of individuals in order for the collective to behave differently. And this is where relationships are important.

And relationships change as you rest in this silent power. And you can sense it in the background and sometimes even in the foreground, perhaps when you're alone or out in nature and very still, you can sense that stillness coming into the foreground and you're just completely, ah. But when you begin to deal with things, if it remains in the foreground, if you are 85% to use, you can't really quantify it, I'm just using, let's say you're 85% to 90% the transcendent consciousness, ah, absolute presence.

Now, in that state, I don't think you would be able to deal with your accountant or your bank manager. So you'd have to come down a bit from there in order to pick up the phone and be able to focus on what it is that you need to focus on or whatever you do in your job. But then there's always a question, a balance between you as a person using your mind and dealing with things in this world and you as the unconditioned consciousness.

So most humans are unawakened, so they're completely only one-dimensional. They're only their mind. But you are two-dimensional now.

You have access to the unconditioned. So when you pick up the phone, the presence recedes and you are then, I'm just picking that figure, let's say 20% present while 80% of your consciousness flows into formulating thoughts about whatever it is that you talk about on the phone or whatever. But 20%, you're still aware of yourself while you talk.

There's still some spaciousness in every relationship. The vital question in any relationship is, is there space in this relation? Is there, while you talk, while you discuss something, can you still sense in the background yourself as that spacious awareness even while you discuss, what are we going to do now?

Or how can we deal with this? There's a difficulty that has arisen and now we need to deal with it. What can we do?

What action can we take? Or you can explain your point of view without being totally or at all identified with your mental positions because you're identified with the space behind your mental positions. That changes relationships and makes the flow between humans much more harmonious because what creates an insane amount of conflict is the self-identification with mental positions, which are thoughts.

That creates an enormous sense of separation between you and the other. And not only that, it's that sense of separation between you and the other is exactly what the egoic identity, the ego wants and looks for. The ego is not looking for an end to the sense of separation.

The ego is looking to strengthen the sense of separation between you and another because the more you can judge and condemn the other and show that he or she is wrong and you are right, the more you feel your sense of self. You define yourself through what you are not. The other defines who you are.

You define yourself through the otherness of others. And so this is when individuals do that, then you get an enormous amount of conflict in relationships. But millions of individuals make up a collective, then the collectives do it to each other, and then you're engaged in an unconscious process.

The collective ego does the same that the personal ego does, except the repercussions are far worse. You need to demonize another country. And then you're constantly being told in the media, this is wrong.

And you begin to believe it. And then everybody feels, oh, we are right and they are wrong. We are the good ones and they are the bad ones.

And when you're being told, that's how it is. So it's a dysfunction. It's a serious dysfunction.

But the change must happen, begin with individuals. The change doesn't come from above, because we've tried that. We've tried to create a better, more sane society by constructing social structures.

If we created a society that is like this, then everything will be much better. Now let's implement that. It sounded good at the beginning.

Everybody should be more equal. We no longer have exploitation. And it all sounds wonderful and reasonable.

And so let's create a government of that. First, of course, you have to destroy the old. Unfortunately, there are millions of people that need to be killed in the process, but let's not think about that.

We're just looking to the future. We need to get there to this ideal society. The end justifies the means.

Is that the expression? The means justify the end, whatever. So what they forget when you create a utopia, which sounds wonderful and reasonable, you forget that there has been no change in the basic state of consciousness of the individuals.

So the egoic state of consciousness is still operating. And once the utopian government is in place, all the people that are in power in that government experience an enormous ego inflation of their own ego because this is what happens to egos when they're given power. If you want to find out about somebody's ego, somebody might look very meek and give this person ego, take one person in a country and say, okay, you are, let's say you are a simple worker and you seem to be fairly free of ego.

You seem to be very modest and except with your wife, but that's not, you seem to be more, you're becoming the president of this country. And so, because you seem to have little ego. Okay, within a few weeks or months, you will experience a transformation because the latent ego in that person is being fed and very quickly becomes blown out of all proportion.

It gets inflated like a huge balloon. And this person becomes taken over by his or her ego and then will do whatever the ego inspires him to do, which is not going to be good. So there will be power structures.

He will have enemies, not only create enemies outside of the collective, he'll create enemies within the collective. And this is how the madness will go on. You cannot create a utopia unless you have tackled the foundational thing, which is the state of consciousness of individuals.

And you can see hiding, if you look, the original ideas behind communism seemed so good when it was first. This is why so many people in the West, too, who said, oh, now we have a solution and they believed in it. And then quickly it degenerated because of egoic consciousness in the people running the country and millions got killed in the process.

But even there, there was already an element in this utopian vision. There was already a strong egoic element that needed to emphasize the otherness of others and make others into enemies, even within the country, not to mention people else. And for example, it

was the class struggle, as it's called.

The antagonism between classes was emphasized and an entire segment of the population was judged as class enemies. And a huge segment of the population became class enemies. And the ego loves that, to emphasize the otherness of others and make others into enemies.

It does it on a personal level and it does it on a collective level. And many of the people who were part of the original Russian Revolution themselves became victims later of the revolutionary process. And it was an amazing, very destructive thing to happen, but it's a learning process for us to see that that is not the way we need now to go.

There's still, I can observe within the collective, the tendency arises again from time to time to divide humans into segments and make one segment into a victim segment, make another segment of the population into the enemy. And this is an unconscious process. You do it when you read the mainstream media.

They are involved in this unconscious process of division. They emphasize the divisions. They're happy with that.

I'm not going into detail. You can find out for yourself when you read the news. So the relationship between humans as you are, when you know yourself not through concepts, then there's always this knowing is also applied to the other when you relate to another human being.

And then you know the other human being also in that way. You know, perhaps, many things about him or her. Depends how long you've known that person or about the person.

So you may know things about that person, or you may know things even shortly after meeting a person. If you have certain life experience or psychological insight, you might recognize certain patterns in the personality that the person has not perhaps spoken about, but you recognize there are patterns in this personality. But you are not trapped exclusively on that level of knowledge because all you know is the way in which this personality has been conditioned to become that personality.

But you don't mistake the conditioned personality of that human being for who he or she is on the deeper level of their being. In other words, you not only know them as humans, you not only know the human level of who they are, you also know them on the being level. And that changes the way in which you interact with human beings.

But you can only know them on the being level when you know yourself on the being level as consciousness. And then you might see certain flaws in the character of this person. Most human beings tend to have certain flaws in their character.

You might have observed them in others, which all that it means is areas of unconsciousness, which is conventionally called character flaws. And you may not know them immediately, but I always recommend if you want to find out, just spend time with them. Either you go on vacation together, which is the end of many friendships, or you start sharing a house or an apartment, which is also the end of many friendships and relationships.

Because then sooner or later, and usually sooner, certain areas of unconsciousness will surface. And you say, oh, this person is difficult to live with. Of course you are not.

But you discover that there's not only the human level, there's also the being level. And you can, while you talk to a person, while you look at a person, you can sense what you share with that person, which is the essence. The same essence underneath the personality, which is the ripple on the surface of the ocean.

Underneath the personality, there is the consciousness, which is not his or her consciousness, in the same way that your consciousness is not your consciousness, the one consciousness. Every human is a manifestation, a brief manifestation of the one consciousness. And knowing the other, not only on the level of concepts, which is the personality, but also on the level of being, that changes the way in which you relate to other human beings.

It also, in many cases, although not all, there's a lessening of conflict. Because in many types of conflict, it requires two to generate conflict. If you no longer participate in generating conflict, then the ego, which wants to emphasize strength in the conflict, then will feel at a loss, because it needs the opposition.

So to approach somebody who is still ego-possessed, mind-possessed, to approach somebody in a state of non-reactivity, without fighting the ego, which wants you to be wrong, for example, that can sometimes enable the other person to have access briefly, perhaps, to something that is deeper than ego. Or the person will run away, because you're not providing enough ego food by opposing that person. Now, in living situations, of course, there are practical matters also to be considered.

So if this person listens to noisy music every night and you can't sleep and so on, there may be practical reasons for not living with that person. But a lot of conflict is unnecessarily produced through mind identification. Most importantly, what determines the relationship is an energy flow between humans.

There's an energy flow between humans that is more important than what is being said. And in the Course in Miracles, which is an interesting spiritual, it's by now become a spiritual classic. I'm not recommending it to anybody because it's not for everybody.

Some people love it, some don't. Every spiritual teaching is right for some and not right

for others. And every spiritual teaching has its limitations, except mine, of course.

Yes. Oh, the ego just crept in. But there's a line in there in the Course in Miracles that says, whenever you meet somebody, it is a holy encounter.

I would add the word potentially. Whenever you meet somebody, it is potentially a holy encounter because when you recognize the essence of the other, that can even strengthen the recognition of your own essence, which is not your own. So there's a mutual strengthening.

And what you recognize is, if you want to use semi-religious language, the divinity of the other, which is the consciousness, which is the light of God, which is, Jesus called it the light of the world. And he said, you are the light of the world. Two people.

He said, you are the light of the world. Really? Just us, this little group, or the others too?

No, the others too. Oh. Oh.

What could that possibly mean when he says, you are the light of the world? Does it mean you are special? Well, it can't mean that because if it's applied to everybody, it cannot mean that you are special.

Only the people who are listening to me, only you here, you are the light of the world because you are here, but the others, of course, are not. No. It's addressed to every human being.

You are the light of the world. So what does that mean? I'm the light.

I'm not particularly important in the world. Most people would think, some people tell me I'm important, but I don't have a concept, so it makes no difference. I can only be important in the world because I have no self-concept of being important in the world.

And if you let go of self-concepts, then the power can come through more easily. So what does it mean? You're the light of the world.

Obviously, it can only mean one thing if it applies to everyone. What is the light, that which enables everything to appear, to perceive, to exist? It's consciousness.

You are a manifestation of consciousness in this world. Without consciousness, this world, what we call world, would not even be. Perhaps there would be a collection of molecules and atoms, but they have not become a world.

It needs a consciousness to create a world, even a table or a flower, without a perceiving consciousness. Perhaps it's a collection, still a collection of atoms and molecules, but it's not a flower and it's not a table. These things are being created through consciousness.

And so there's not the world there and consciousness here. The world and consciousness arise together. So you are the light of the world, means the essence of who you are is consciousness.

That's so simple. And the light of the world comes from the source. It emanates from the source, obviously, which is God, in traditional theistic language, but not in the way that the limited belief of what you conceive of as God, as a controlling patriarch who could prevent all suffering, but for some reason is not preventing suffering.

This is the argument against the existence of God. The most common argument against the existence of God is, of course, there's so much human suffering. If there were a God, he or she would not allow all this human suffering.

Or if there is a God and he or she is allowing this human suffering, this God is morally inferior to me because I wouldn't. And since the God is morally inferior to me, it's not God. So there we have it.

And of course, that's a very limited understanding which becomes the basis for the refutation of the existence of God. But the starting point is already wrong. So we can't do much with that.

But gradually the emanation, which is consciousness from the transcendent source, which is not located anywhere in space or time, but something comes into this dimension of space and time from the transcendent dimension of the one. And gradually it comes in and gradually this universe is coming into being and is still in the process of coming into being as more consciousness flows in from the transcendent source. And that transcendent source, that is what we could call God.

We cannot speak about it because it transcends anything we could name, obviously. So it's not here or there or in time. So the emanation of that, I had used the analogy earlier of the sun and the light of the sun.

So that's quite a good analogy. There's the sun, which in this analogy is the transcendent source, but it's not anywhere in the universe. It's transcendent to the universe.

And that emanates something into this universe and its consciousness is the essence. And so underlying the universe is the universal consciousness and it's expressing itself as you temporarily, a brief flicker of consciousness on the planet. Every human is a brief flicker of consciousness.

That was your life. And then it comes again. And gradually it grows.

And then suddenly a human becomes aware. Consciousness becomes aware of itself. That's amazing.

That's a totally new thing. So more fundamentally than being a person, you are something that is eternal, comes again and again. And that knowledge is only liberating when you realize it beyond concepts.

In other words, you have to taste the honey. And that's why we're here. This is the honey.

Let's have a moment of stillness.

[Speaker 2] (30:43 - 31:03)

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Eckhart Tolle Recognizing The Essence of Who You Are in Everyone [d29cac30-786d-4ef2-b32b-49dc0a96c0]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

Recognizing the Essence of Who You Are in Everyone Eckhart begins this episode discussing the purpose of suffering. He says suffering is the great awakener that cracks the shell of the ego. He believes through the crack something beautiful and profound emerges.

Eckhart describes it as our true essence. He says as we become familiar with this deeper dimension, we discover the very same beingness exists in others. He says recognizing the essence of who we are in everyone is just one of the joys of spiritual awakening.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 14:38)

So as awareness arises or presence, then it begins to shine through the person. The person no longer has the density that completely obscures the awareness, the consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness underneath. And it's often the case that the density is destroyed by a suffering.

And that is the reason why suffering has a purpose in this world. Suffering is here, including even those forms of suffering that are entirely generated by the mind. That too is there to ultimately awaken you.

So all of you have been through different forms of suffering, some very deep, some just a succession of many, many minor frustrations and things going wrong. So you somehow lost confidence in, you lost belief that this world would ultimately be able to satisfy you or make you happy. You say, that's not it.

And perhaps you became frustrated with yourself. That's possible too. So the suffering is a potential awakener.

It has a purpose and it is there to destroy you ultimately, or at least to crack, to create a crack in the egoic shell. And then something emerges through the crack. Some people in this lifetime continue to have an ego, but it's no longer totally an impenetrable shell.

Through suffering, it has received cracks here and there. There's a, is it Leonard Cohen? I think he has a song or poem.

There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in or gets out, I would say. So suffering destroys the false self, the identification, complete identification with your form identity.

And then there comes a point where you begin to awaken. Then suffering is no longer as

necessary as before because you're voluntarily relinquishing your identification with your form, the form of you. And that is a point you've all reached, and that's why you're here.

Suffering may have been necessary to bring you here, and you may still carry suffering within you. And it is possible that this will help you to transform the suffering that you carry within yourself into a realization of what the Buddhists sometimes call the deathless dimension or the deathless. Buddhists don't like to use positive terms.

Christianity says eternal life, but the most a Buddhist would say is the deathless. And Jesus says the kingdom of heaven that is within you, and the Buddha talks about emptiness. So the Christian terminology is usually positive, not in the conventional sense.

It gives you something inspiring to say, Ah, kingdom of heaven. Where? And when?

You begin to believe in something, and that's the danger that the pointer becomes a mental concept that you believe in, so it becomes an idol. But you can't do that with Buddhist terms, so it's difficult. I mean, they've done it, but especially with the Buddha himself.

Emptiness. Do you believe in emptiness? The church of emptiness.

But all it is saying is exactly the same what Jesus said. Heaven means the sky, and the sky is vast spaciousness, the closest you can get to in this sense-perceived reality to consciousness, awareness, which is formless. So he looked at the sky, and he said this vast spaciousness.

The sky actually doesn't even exist. It's just like awareness. Consciousness doesn't exist, because it's the very foundation for existence, but there is no sky.

It just seems to be, because nobody's ever arrived there and says, I'm now in the sky. You can be in a cloud, but you can't be in the sky. You can't touch it.

It's not something. And so it's a very clever way of using something in the sense-perceived realm to point to something that's beyond that. The kingdom of heaven is, in my translation of the term into modern terminology, the dimension, which is the kingdom, dimension of spaciousness, emptiness, spaciousness.

Oh, they're talking about the same thing. The dimension of spaciousness, it is within you. Where is it, they asked Jesus, when does the kingdom of heaven come?

And this is one of the few lines that I can actually quote, because I don't have a good memory for quoting, especially scripture, but he said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived. You can never say it's there or it's over there. What does that mean?

It means consciousness itself can never become an object. You cannot make an object out of consciousness and say, oh, there it is, because it's the eternal subject. If a scientist is looking for consciousness, they can look for a thousand years and build the most incredible microscopes, and they can cut up people's brains and look for, where is that being?

They can even, you can look for, even on the level of thought. I mean, we don't know anything about consciousness and not even about thinking. What is a thought?

In what form does it live in you? How does it survive in you? Think of something, but when you were a child, did you have a dog?

Suddenly the image of the dog comes there. What did it feel like? What was your bathroom like when you were seven years old?

What was it? And you immediately can access a memory of that. Your first teacher at school, at nursery, do you remember in your mind immediately?

Because millions of things live in you, it seems, but in what form? Are there certain molecules that are your first, your primary school teacher, lived in form of certain atoms or molecules in the brain? We don't know even what a thought is.

It's all invisible around. It's invisible. So then if the scientist is looking for consciousness through the microscope, attempting to find, to make it into an object and say, ah, I have found it, he can never find it because the very thing that's looking is it.

So if you're looking for yourself, then where am I? It's a spotlight trying to find itself. And really, that ultimately means looking for God, too, as the source of all life, to look for the source without there outside.

Where is it? But what is consciousness other than the emanation from source? Something emanates from the transcendent realm just as sunlight emanates from the sun.

This is an analogy. But the source of all life that is totally incomprehensible, we can't say anything about it. Well, I am saying something, but it's not easy.

You can't say anything about it because it's transcendent. But something emanates from there into this dimension. And what emanates is consciousness.

And consciousness manifests as forms of life, billions of life forms. And gradually, consciousness emanates more. In some ways, it's an evolutionary process in this dimension, not where the source resides that is beyond time.

There's no evolution there, presumably, but I haven't... Let's not go there. The important thing is you can sense something within yourself when you become aware of yourself as

awareness.

What you are sensing is the emanation, the source emanation, and that is what Jesus said, that you are the light of the world. In another gospel, he says, I am the light of the world. So both are true.

So you are the light of the world. Wow. He doesn't do that to give you a conceptual reality that says, you are very important.

You are VIP. He talks to everybody, but most people don't know that they are the light of the world because they cannot... The light shines through them, but it becomes immediately identified with forms.

They don't recognize the light, or the light doesn't recognize itself yet. So you are the light. The light of consciousness in you is the light of the world.

Without your consciousness, would there be anything here? Would this room exist? We don't know.

Not as a room. Perhaps some atoms and molecules would still be floating around, but there wouldn't be a room or a table or a flower. And so this is an enormous realization of who you are and what you are.

Every... The essence of every other human, and even the essence of every life form, is there in that recognition of who or what you are. Any human that has ever lived, that essence is immortal and ultimately timeless.

It continuously... This one consciousness continuously manifests through different forms. One could even say, to use a modern term, the one consciousness of which you are a temporary expression.

The essence of who you are is exactly one with the essence of who I am. And this one consciousness that continuously manifests through countless forms that have a short existence, there's a brief flowering of form. If you could see a speeded-up version of what's happening on the planet, let's say humans on the planet, you could see that they live, they run around for a few years, and then they die.

So if you saw a speeded-up version, you would say, humans being born, and other things being born...

[Speaker 3] (14:38 - 14:38)

Zzzz!

[Speaker 1] (14:38 - 30:47)

Gone. LAUGHTER Being born... And now we believe these are all autonomous entities, totally autonomous entities, and if they are totally autonomous entities, then it's a...

It's very tragic. Every death is the most terrible thing. But if you are not...

I'm not saying anything that you should believe in. I'm suggesting a different way of looking at the world and at humans. If every human is an expression of the one consciousness, then that never dies.

It gets recycled, to use a contemporary term. The one consciousness gets continuously recycled, and it expresses itself through countless forms, and there is an evolutionary process here at work. And every human that awakens...

And even humans who do not awaken, their life experience is brought back somehow. I had this image of bees bringing back the nectar, the flower from the... They gather from the flowers, and they bring it back to the hive.

And every human that passes out of existence brings a little bit of that life experience into the one consciousness, and then it expresses itself again. It needs to express itself again, especially if it hasn't found its true identity yet, then it is forced to reenact a similar drama. So if the essence of all life is one, and there's only one consciousness that manifests through countless life forms, then when I can sense who I am, the essence of who I am, and then I can look at you, or even think of you, and I can sense your essence as mine, it's the same.

And this recognition of the other as ultimately yourself is a wonderful thing that comes with spiritual awakening, so that you do not mistake the form, the person, the personality that's there in front of you. You do not think that that's all there is to this, because then you're only looking at the human, but you're unaware of the being. And if you only look at humans, then almost every human is not that pleasant.

Not to say obnoxious. And if you have expectations on the purely human level, one could also say that every human will let you down in one way or another. Every human has severe limitations, including this human on the human level.

Of course, you have limitations. And so if you only look at the human, you live in a very impoverished reality, and a reality that is bound to manifest continuously conflict that is ultimately not necessary, but it arises because you do not recognize your oneness with the others, the so-called other. Not only do you not recognize your oneness with the other, when you are here as an egoic entity, you have an unconscious need to emphasize the otherness of others.

You want them to be other, because the more other they are, the more you are strengthened in your fictitious sense of conceptual identity. And this works even more powerfully on a collective level. It works on a personal level, too.

People love to have their enemies. They love to argue, because when you can be right, or you're struggling to be right in an argument, you feel your identities is becoming inflated, especially as you want to be right. This is how it is.

Or if you get angry, anger can be a wonderful ego inflation. And so you can be so angry that everybody is wrong, and you are the only one who is right. And it feels, it's addictive.

To the ego, it feels, whoa, it's like there used to be this movie, TV series, The Incredible Hulk. A human who would, when this human got angry, he would become huge with gigantic muscles, and he would, all of a sudden, and people loved watching that and identify with that. Ego inflation.

That's, so the ego loves its enemies. It actually seeks out. It needs the other.

It defines its identity through the other who is not, who is different on a personal level. On a collective level, it's very dangerous. It's even more insane than on a personal level.

The need for enemies, you find it, enemies, they need to make other groups into enemies, other political parties need to, yeah. The other, oh, he is such and such. I'm not mentioning any names.

So you could easily condemn 50% of the population into the other of your own country. You can do that. The, oh, dreadful, dreadful.

And the others say, oh, dreadful, dreadful. And this happens on the internet more easily because you communicate with many humans that you don't actually see in the flesh. They just appear as conceptual things that's a few words on the screen, and then people get very angry.

And it's wonderful ego food to communicate on the internet, and people are addicted to outrage, Twitter outrage. The dysfunction of the human mind manifests in different time periods in different ways. So here we have, for example, Twitter, one thoughtless tweet can destroy your entire life.

Because a million people are outraged by what you said. Oh, dear, what have you said? So the need for enemies and other nations, you need to, we must have an enemy.

Who are we if we don't have an enemy? Or it could be a racial thing, too. Oh, this race against that race.

It could be genders. It could be men against women, women against men. But the need for enemies in order to experience one's own identity as stronger, that's there, that's part of the egoic dysfunction.

And in politics, you see it all the time. We don't need to go into that. Don't want to

depress you.

You're depressed already, probably, if you've been watching the news. Or anxious. What's going to happen?

What's his next tweet going to be? So the need to emphasize the otherness of others is there very, very strong, because the ego needs it. Imagine, let's say, if you are, let's say your identity is based on political affiliation.

You belong to a political party, or you totally agree with one party, and you feel a significant part of your identity is derived from belonging to this particular group. But it only gives you identity because there are other groups that don't share what this group believes in. So there you have other, and this sustains your identity.

Now let's imagine you're entering a twilight zone, as in the old movies, Twilight Zone. And one morning you wake up, and you find that every human being on this planet belongs to your party. And believes exactly the same thing that you believe.

Exactly the same. Nobody disagrees with anything. Your entire identity would collapse.

You're nobody suddenly. You don't know who you are anymore. In fact, you're nobody, because the other has disappeared.

So, instead of emphasizing the otherness of others and with the part of the egoic insanity, the dysfunction of the ego that has created so much suffering on the planet, when you can recognize, because you have, at least to some extent, you have some access within yourself to the transcendent dimension and the essence of who you are, which is conscious awareness, and then you meet another human. And even if the other human belongs to the other party, you can look at them, and you can still disagree with what they say, but you can sense the essence of who they are beyond the conceptual content of their minds. You can look beyond, and yes, you see the conceptual content of human, you still don't agree with them, that's perfectly fine, and yet you sense there is something that you share and that is consciousness, the essence of who you are.

And then it would be possible to actually even have a conversation if the other has also some access to it. If not, maybe not. Then it's possible to have, perhaps, just to have a conversation.

And if you have a conversation, then the need to be right is no longer there because you no longer identify totally with thought, with mental positions. Mental positions, which is conceptual thoughts, no longer give you a sense of identity because now your sense of identity is derived from a deeper place. Then you can freely discuss something, and the need to prove the other wrong is not there, and yet you can state your case.

You can state this is how it is. You can state the facts, well, at least the facts as you see

them. The other person may state the same facts but see them differently, who knows?

But at least you can have a conversation, and perhaps you can meet somewhere in the middle. It's possible. But the important thing is this emphasizing the otherness of others, which is an egoic need, is no longer there.

And so there are still many things you may not share with the other, and that's perfectly fine, and yet you can sense something within the other that is one with who you are. And with that comes a certain benevolence towards other human beings, which otherwise isn't there. Benevolence means goodwill.

Also, there's an empathy. There's a compassion, even loving kindness towards others, even those who hold different mental positions. There's an underlying loving kindness towards others.

Love, one could even say, it hadn't been misused so much, but love ultimately is the recognition of yourself in the other. So ultimately then, you only ever really love yourself in a positive sense. It's a good thing.

You really love because you recognize the essence of who you are in everyone. So you love yourself. And that is a deeper meaning of loving yourself, beyond the form identity.

And for that, you don't even need to put little stickers on your bathroom mirrors that say, I love myself. At least I'm trying to. Because that's still, on that level, you're still, there's a duality.

You split yourself in two, and you say, I love myself. I'm really happy with myself. And this is not a bad thing.

It's an intermediate step, perhaps, for many people who before hated themselves. Not very pleasant. And then you can have a, you begin to love yourself, but you still have a, there's a split there.

Who are you, and who or what is it that you love? Is it the image that you have of yourself in your mind? Is that what you love?

And what you can talk about? I'm really good. And this is not a bad thing, but you're still experiencing the duality, the split.

But who is the I that loves this thing that you call yourself? So the split remains. Those, this can be transcended, because then you are yourself.

You no longer need to, the split occurred, as I mentioned before, you might remember if you listen. The split occurred when, expressed in mythological terms, when this young man called Narcissus in ancient Greece happened to look into a pool of water and saw his own image before there were any mirrors or selfies. He saw his own image in a pool

of water.

And this is a mythical tale. And he fell in love with himself.

[Speaker 3] (30:48 - 30:48)

Ah!

[Speaker 1] (30:49 - 38:42)

I love myself. Oh! This shows the mythical, there's a deep truth there.

It shows the development of the self in the human psyche. The development of an image that humans construct for themselves, which this became possible because humans had started to think a wonderful evolutionary development, but there was a downside. The downside was that they began to derive their identity from the process of thinking.

And then they constructed mental entities and called it myself. And so the self is a post-conceptual and even an image of who you are. I am beautiful.

I love myself. And this man was no longer happy after that. He lost his happiness and other bad things happened to him, which I don't remember.

And so that shows the split that occurred when the ability to think in humans grew and grew and then identity became bound up with thinking. Now we have reached a stage where we are able to transcend that so that our identity is no longer trapped in thinking. It's no longer derived from thinking.

But of course we can still think. In fact, think much better without the dysfunction of seeking yourself in thought. If you seek yourself in the movement of thought, that is a dysfunction and leads to enormous amount of suffering and conflict with others.

So you can see how a dog exists prior to conceptual thinking and a dog does not have a self-image. I often point that out because it's a miraculous thing. Your dog does not have a problem with self-esteem, for example.

No dog I've ever seen has a problem with self-esteem. And no dog hates himself or herself or itself. And no dog loves him or herself because the dog doesn't have a conceptual self.

It has no self. The dog is itself. It is just...

It doesn't have a problem with himself, itself, herself. It doesn't have... It's not a problem.

And this is how humans love their dogs and other animals, pets, cats too. No problem with body image either. And body image is a source of huge suffering for many humans.

Body image? Oh my God. They hold their magazines who live only for the purpose of addressing people's body image.

You read them every week or every month because it's so problematic. But not to the dog. The dog just is.

The dog has... Even a fat dog, which... I mean, the dog is fat because the humans give him too much food.

But he still doesn't have a problem with it. There's no conceptual identity. It hasn't arrived at a conceptual identity.

Maybe it never will. It's because the conceptual thought processes haven't started. And so...

But we have, and we can't go back. We're not regressing to the state of the dog or the cabbage. We're not...

The cabbage is even happier than the dog, probably. But we are not regressing. No, we are transcending.

We are rising above conceptual thinking, not falling below, unless you drink too much, or intoxicating beverages can easily pull you below thought. And then for a little while before you collapse, you're as happy as the dog wagging its tail. So while we're here, make it your practice, in between sessions, to invite presence into your life so that you don't carry this burden of your problematic identity around with you wherever you go.

Become present, sense perceptions, alert to sense perceptions, so that there's a diminishment in the amount of thinking that you do, without falling below thinking, but rising above thinking. Alert presence, sense perceptions, breathing, walking, doing things, handling something, putting something away. Be there, present in every movement.

Enjoy whatever it is that you are handling. Give it attention. All the little things that one would, or you might normally overlook, and the little things, the table, the surface, the touching it, looking at its presence too.

It is, it's there. Acknowledging all the little things that surround you and the little things that you do. Life consists of mostly little things that you do.

Even if you are VIP, ultimately the moments when you step into your private jets are brief, but after a while that becomes a little thing too. It becomes meaningless. It's only meaningful at first.

So little steps, be able to, one step at a time, acknowledging beauty around you, even when you hadn't seen it before. And so you become still, you become present. Funny

thing happened just before our session.

I have this clock here. It has traveled with me for many years. And just before this session, the second hand broke off and it stopped.

And it still stopped. That's a, as the Buddhists, the Buddhists like the word auspicious. It's a very auspicious sign.

The end of time.

[Speaker 2] (38:49 - 38:51)

Thank you.

Eckhart Tolle Releasing Barriers to Presence [e7b86298-ecad-4b36-8eb6-ada4012de834]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:38)

Releasing barriers to presence. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about clearing away the obstacles to presence. Eckhart says the entire universe is awakening and is in the early stages of something vast.

We are a part of that. To be spiritually awake means releasing barriers created by the mind. Eckhart says while the ability to think is a great evolutionary achievement, people have become so enmeshed in thought they've lost touch with their deeper essence and their spiritual legacy.

[Speaker 1] (0:40 - 54:18)

It's good to be back. I could live here. Who knows what the universe is planning.

So if you haven't been with me before, it might not look very promising to have this man sitting on a chair, knowing that he's going to talk for who knows for how long. He doesn't even walk up and down the stage and gesticulates. Well, he does gesticulate, but he doesn't get up.

And there's no PowerPoint presentation. So there needs to be something here that makes up for the deficiencies, external deficiencies. And that which makes up for the eternal deficiencies is inside you.

Externally, there's only a man sitting on a chair talking for an hour and a half or two hours, who knows, three, four. And yet the words may have some interest, but the words are not the main thing here. Although I'm probably going to talk all the time.

So the words have two functions. Either they point to something that is beyond words, something that you can only recognize from deep within you. In other words, it's not to do with believing in anything I say, but realizing that the words are signposts.

They point. That to which they point is within you. One could say it is a certain state of consciousness.

And to the extent to which this state of consciousness, which we could call the awakened consciousness or presence, can use other words. Again, the words are just the signposts. To the extent to which that awakened or awakening consciousness is already active in you, to that extent you realize what it is that the words point to.

And you don't realize that conceptually. It's not so much to do with understanding conceptually, because what I'm going to talk about does not require you to mentally

work out what it is that I'm saying. What's he talking about?

Presence? In other words, you don't need to think very hard while you're here. And if you can refrain from thinking altogether, that would be best.

I'll come back to that in a second. So one way the words are being used is to point to that, and then the signpost then works. The Buddhist expression, you might have heard, the teaching of Buddha, but could be any spiritual teaching, is a finger pointing to the moon.

That's the teaching. And the Buddhists say, don't mistake the finger for the moon, because that's what the dog does. When you point at something to your dog, it says, there, look, the ball is over there.

The dog looks at your finger, it doesn't look at the ball. So don't do that. The words are the finger pointing to the moon.

Go to the moon. Don't stay with a finger. Another function, the second function, the words have, is they may occasionally, from time to time, point out certain obstacles that you are likely to find within yourself to the realization of that moon.

Let's go to the tonality now. The realization of that consciousness in you. There are obstacles in human beings, in the human mind, that are recurring, that many of you will recognize when I point them out.

But it can be very helpful to point out what the obstacles are in you to the realization of what we might call the state of presence. I sometimes call that the new consciousness, the awakened consciousness, and that is the larger context in which our gathering here happens. It is the context, is the awakening of human consciousness, which one could describe as the next stage in human evolution.

It would be erroneous to believe that humans are a already finished product. They are a work in progress. In other words, they have not been fully formed yet.

We tend to believe that humans were created, well, that's the biblical, some time ago we got, or that we tend, evolutionary process has created humans, but many people believe this is now, we have arrived now, evolution has come to an end. It hasn't. It's really only the beginning, the early stages of something vast, a vast universal movement of consciousness.

The entire universe is awakening, and you are an expression, a temporary expression in this particular form of the awakening universe. So, if you enjoy being here, and it seems to you that time is not passing, that means there's something in you that recognizes already the truth of what I'm talking of. And that will probably, hopefully apply to most of you, but there may be a few people here who didn't really want to come here, but they

couldn't say no to a spouse, or sibling, or friend, and said, okay, I'll come along, I'll check that guy out, see what he has to say.

And then, if this awakening, the awakening of the new consciousness has not yet started in you, then it is possible that you may find sitting here extremely boring, and you may want to feel free to get up and leave. I'm not going to say, what are you doing? And nobody will judge you, because most people here are already beyond that kind of thing.

And if you need to go to the bathroom, or toilet, I don't know whether it's called toilet or bathroom here, don't hesitate, because you might think, oh, if I go to the toilet, people will think that I'm not getting it, or you could just sit there and say, I have no idea what he's talking about, and getting bored out of your mind, which that might be a good thing, or you could tell yourself the ancient dictum, this too will pass.

And if you really go into that, this too will pass, that may take you into presence. So miracles are possible. So the starting point is always, of course, the present moment.

If your attention is fully in the present moment, then you are awake spiritually. But what does it mean to have your attention fully in the present moment? The normal way of being in the present moment is not to be fully there.

You are there physically, but your mind is somewhere else. Your mind is either in the past, or in the future. For many people, the present moment exists only as a peripheral phenomenon in their lives.

They know there's something there that's the present moment, but the underlying belief is there's something much more important that I need to be concerned about, and that's not the present moment. What I need to be concerned about is how to get from here to there, because there is more important than here, always. That's a normal way of being in the world.

It's unconscious. People don't know. Nobody actually says there is more important than here, but they live as if, always, the next moment, the there in time.

It could also be the there spatially. They live, most humans still, especially those who are not awakening yet, as always, as if they needed to get away from this moment. Brief interludes when you're okay in the present moment.

Brief interludes like sensory pleasure. Can you enjoy a meal? It's good to be present, but you can't do it for too long, and you get ill.

Another thing, of course, that takes you into the present moment is having sex. Also, of course, takes you into the present moment, but that doesn't last that long either. And then, of course, another thing that takes you into the present moment is certain substances that you can take.

You can smoke something. And that takes you to the present moment, but there's something that I'll talk a bit more about that in a second. This is, you can drink also.

You can have a stiff drink, as they say, and what happens then, the voice in your head, especially the smoke, the voice in your head is not as frantic anymore. It doesn't, because as you probably know, people have a voice in their head that talks all the time. I don't mean the people who are mentally ill, who actually hear a booming voice that talks to them, but there's always something going on that comments on your life, and has things to say, and that's the normal, compulsive, involuntary thought processes that go through your head all the time, and that it tells you stuff.

It has a commentary. It's the running commentary on your life, and that's thinking. It's fine.

Thinking is an incredibly wonderful evolutionary step forward. It was an amazing development, the ability to think, but it, over time, over a millennia, a considerable downside developed of thinking. A great evolutionary attainment, but for everything there's a price to pay.

So a great evolutionary attainment, and it enabled humans to do the most incredible things, to create cultures, and philosophy, and science, and so on, but thinking gradually took over their lives more and more. Some anthropologists have put forward the theory that when thinking first started happening in humans, of course it coincided with words, where people started to use language. So the words existed, first they existed in the head as thought, and they existed spoken as sounds.

So as they started to use language, then thinking grew, developed. And some anthropologists have put forward the theory that they have some evidence for it. I don't remember what the evidence is.

That when humans first started to think, they believed that gods were talking to them in their head, because it was such a new thing, that suddenly there was a voice, that there was words forming in their minds. And they had, then suddenly they knew who they were. They had names, things had names.

They had names. Who are you? Me, John.

You, oh. And you begin to believe that there's some ultimate reality in the sound that you create for yourself, and that was the beginning of gradually, very gradually, becoming identified with the voice in the head. And that took thousands and thousands of years.

And now we've reached a stage where almost every human is identified with the narrative, the story in their head. It talks to them, sometimes in the first person, I, sometimes in the second person, which means you talk to yourself. Why can't you get

anything right?

Why did you do that? You can have a monologue, you can have a dialogue, you can even be a third person. Now you might remember that from the time when you were completely identified with, you're not anymore, because that's why you're here.

If you were a hundred percent identified with the voice in your head, the compulsive thinking, you would not have come here. There would be no reason to come here, because what I'm talking about would be totally and utterly incomprehensible to you. So the fact that you are here means there is, something has arisen in you that is deeper than thought, that the new consciousness, what a presence, a new dimension of consciousness is there.

For many humans, it's not there yet, and for many humans, the voice in their head is a daily torture, daily torture, because it creates misery in people's lives. It creates an enormous amount of unhappiness, because it has things to say about you, that you are not good enough, you should have done that, you should do that. It complains about yourself, it complains about others, it complains about situations you're in.

It tends to dwell on negative things rather than positive things, because negative things, it can really get in there and become active. With good things, it's harder. I can think for hours about yesterday, when somebody was offended me, and after it's happened, I start thinking, I should have said that.

Why didn't I say that? Next time I meet this person, this is what I'm to say. How dare he not respect me?

I just, people like that shouldn't be allowed to exist. Why doesn't, why doesn't? This is just, you can go on for hours thinking about, and you feel more and more angry, and this is only one relatively insignificant incident, something that happened yesterday, but the mind even there can get in there and amplify that, instead of saying, okay, it's finished, gone, just be present.

It disappears immediately. The animals don't do that, because they cannot keep alive things mentally in their head. So, some, I described in the Power of Now, I was watching, I was writing the Power of Now, and I would go every day for a walk in the park, and I saw the duck, two ducks getting into a fight, and they get quite angry, it seems, when they are fighting.

And then I was surprised, the, that was a teaching of the ducks, they were teaching me the next, something to add to the next chapter in the book. They got into a fight, and immediately, when the fight only lasted 30 seconds or less, and suddenly it was over, and they swam off in opposite directions, and both ducks, and they always do that, they kind of get up on the surface of the water, they almost stand up, and they flap their

wings violently, and when they've done that, nothing ever happened. They swim on.

There's no mind that keeps alive what happened just now. And they have dissipated the energy of it. A great teaching.

But humans do the opposite, if you are unconscious. Unconscious, by the way, I'm going to use that word quite often, probably, tonight. Unconscious does not mean the conventional meaning of unconscious, as you know, is.

So, when I talk about unconscious humans, I'm not talking about, but they are all unconscious in a spiritual sense, means completely identified with the compulsive, incessant thought processes in your heads. Identified with every thought that comes into your head. Now, what does it mean when I say identify?

Identify means to do with identity. It's to do with who you are. It's to do with your sense of self.

So, when you identify with the thought, the thought has you in its grip to such an extent that every thought has a sense of self in it. So, you derive your sense of self, of who you are, your sense of self, you derive it from the voice in the head. And that is, for still millions of humans on the planet, that is still their daily reality.

Their sense of identity, who they are, is derived from the narrative in their minds. And that's an amazing dysfunction, because it creates an enormous amount of suffering that is actually unnecessary. The identity that is rooted in thought is always one that is deficient.

It's, you feel you are never enough, and this moment is never enough. There's always a great sense of something, something is lacking in my life. And what it is that's lacking in your life, every human who is identified with their mind has that sense of, there's something vital that's lacking in my life.

There's something not here that should be here. And what it is, varies from person to person. But it is an underlying structure in the, what I call the egoic mind.

So, ego, in the sense that we use it here, is the sense of self that is completely identified with thought. And, as I mentioned, the tendency of thought, of the egoic self, which is the mind-made sense of self, which is an image of who you are, consisting of certain stories you tell yourself in your mind, and you call it my life. My life.

That's very problematic. On the level of the story of my life, there's nobody in this room whose life, on the level of the so-called my life narrative, that's not problematic. It's heavily problematic.

My life is not easy. Let me tell you about it, if you're willing to listen. And then you can

tell me about yours.

I'm sure it's not as bad as mine, but I'll listen. So everybody carries around a conceptual self that they call my life. And the moments when you're happy, really happy with your life, usually don't last that long.

It is more normal to be, to a greater or lesser degree, unhappy with your life. If you're happy today, or right now, just wait a little. Because things will change, because humans get continuously challenged by situations, and then you become unhappy again.

So the voice in the head, the compulsive, tends to dwell on things that are not good, rather than things that are good. Why does it do that? There's so much more to think about when it complains, than about something good.

Yesterday's sunset, that was so, let's say, you saw a sunset yesterday, it was so magnificent. And in the moment of seeing it, it freed you for a moment from the voice in the head, because you just went, wow. And you felt more intensely alive suddenly.

Why? You didn't feel intensely alive because of the sunset, or it seems that way. You felt intensely alive because you were so overwhelmed by the beauty of it, that for a moment, your thinking subsided, and something else arose, and that something else was presence or awareness.

And you went, and in that moment you felt more intensely alive than you would normally do. And then, of course, on the next day, you can say, that was such a wonderful sunset. I felt so alive.

But apart from that, the mind cannot do very much with it. Compare that to complaining about the person who offended you yesterday. How much the mind can do with that, and how it can get in there and amplify the story, and fantasize what you could have said and will say the next time, and people in general are so unpleasant, and you don't really want to be here with people anymore, and all kinds of things.

So it's hard on the good things, the so-called, the mind can't do that much with it. It tends to dwell on the negative, and the egoic self, the mind-made self, gets stronger when it can complain about something, and when it can make something into an adversary or an enemy. It loves that, because it feels stronger in its sense of self.

People do that. There's often such a thing as a collective ego, nations, groups, entities, collective entities, they love their enemies. They love to make enemies, because then it defines your sense of self more, and you feel more yourself.

It's all illusion. It's all mind stuff. So the mind-made sense of self is a terrible curse, and that is something that we need to transcend, so that we can actually use thinking in a powerful, focused, constructive way, and actually create and manifest things through

thinking.

Thinking is an amazing tool. Where thinking becomes destructive is when it assumes your identity, when you do not think, but thinking happens to you. People say, I think.

It's not true, because the thoughts that go through their head, they have no control whatsoever over the thoughts that go through their head. So to say, I think, is actually not true. It would be truer to say, I am being thought by my thoughts.

Thinking has taken possession of me to such an extent that I think I am it. So in other words, I am actually possessed by my own mind. And how this possession manifests varies from person to person.

It has something to do with your past history. It has something to do with the cultural environment in which you grew up that conditioned your mind to think in certain ways. So that varies enormously.

If you grew up in Saudi Arabia, you would think very different thoughts, unless you lived in the West for a long time. But if you were in just one, just to take one example, you can make many others, you live in one particular culture, enclosed, and you get conditioned by the thoughts of that culture. And if you go in Australia, you have different kinds of thoughts that go through your head.

You get conditioned, the mind gets conditioned in that way. But in either case, if you are not awakening yet, you are completely identified with that. Then you look at reality through this veil or this screen of mental concepts, including the sense of identity, which is mental.

And then you look at the world through that and don't even know it. You don't see anything clearly because you look at it through the veil of judgments and conceptualization. And whatever you perceive, you comment on it.

You immediately call it something. And in most cases, you have some kind of opinion or mental position towards it, including human beings, every person you meet and immediately have, hmm, the mind will tell you about something about them. Or situations, you find yourself in places, situations, people, wherever you are, most people's attention is much more in the narrative in their head than what's actually happening around them.

So that is, it is a case of really being possessed by the conditioned mind. It's a dreadful fate, dreadful. I can sometimes, when I see people, they are so burdened by their personality, which is the conditioned self, there's this, sometimes I feel as if the people, many people are carrying this heavy burden of this personality, which you have been carrying for years.

And then sometimes the older they get, the more rigid it becomes. And immediately they know everything. Whatever you say, they have an opinion about it.

And they don't know it's an opinion, they think it's the truth. And you can't argue with them. It's impossible, completely pointless.

So they are so identified with, they believe in every thought that comes into their head. That's how it is, let me tell you. You just talk to people about politics, that tends to stimulate that kind of dysfunction.

And nowadays you're not confined to speaking to one or two people, the same dysfunction, you can do it on the internet, you can do it on Facebook. You put forward your positions, your mental positions, but you don't know it's a mental position, you think it's the truth. And then you come into conflict with others who are also identified with their mental position.

So you have a conceptual sense of self, a narrative, the me, that's me, me and my life, me and my opinions, me and my likes and dislikes, me, that comes into conflict with other conceptual identities. And actually loves the conflict, because the more you're in conflict with others, the more strongly you can feel your fictitious identity, you feel it even more strongly. That's why some religions in some countries, they need their enemies, you can even see it now, the same mind structure that created the insanity of the first half of the 20th century, with hundreds of millions killed, the same pattern of insanity emerging again.

When I listen to the news, I think, what are they doing? They need their enemies, they must, the collective needs another enemy to fight, we must, and they all participate, the politicians, the media, yeah, they are the evil ones. I'm not saying there are no, there are certain very unconscious people around, political leaders, not to mention any names, but, the big question is whether people who are already very unconscious are drawn into politics, or whether, even a relatively conscious person, when he or she gets into politics, becomes unconscious, I don't know, I haven't solved that yet.

So the important thing is to realize then, there are thoughts that continuously go through your head, and are you able to be aware, for example, of certain repetitive thoughts that you tend to have in your mind? Because they may be there every day, they may resurface in many situations, in relation to other people, to yourself, do you have recurring thoughts about yourself, about your life? Have you already come to a conclusion about how your life is?

Have you reached the conclusion that your life has been failed, you have failed in the endeavor of your life, your life has been a disaster, you've missed out on everything? Is the narrative in your head, what's it telling you about yourself? What is the story of my life?

What is it saying? Is it pleasant, is it unpleasant? Now the question is, what reality does that actually have?

Of course, it's connected with your past, your historical past, you remember the past, you remember things that went okay, you remember the things that didn't go according to expectation, and out of that, a narrative forms, and you call that my life. Now, a great degree of unhappiness in humans that they live with on a daily basis does not arise from the situations they find themselves in. A greater amount of unhappiness arises that is created by an unhappy narrative in their minds, which they call me and my life.

And they don't know that. If they could look through that and see that a large amount of unhappiness in my life, and unhappiness could be anger, it could be sadness, it could be resentment, unhappiness can take many forms. Even a slight irritation is a small form of unhappiness.

And so many people are unhappy with themselves, or they put all the blame on others, which is still part of your narrative. And then you're unhappy with all those people who have messed up your life. I'm not saying that things are done to people that are bad, but I'm talking here about deriving an identity from your historical past, or the way in which your mind interprets your historical past.

It may not be actual events, because if you ask your sibling about a similar thing 20 years ago, he or she might have a completely different story of the same event. Happens quite often. So me and my life, and people are trapped in the conceptual my life, and the problematic my life, and they carry around this burden of my life.

I hope it's going to work out in the future, because I still have years left. I could still achieve happiness. That's the hope.

But then the hope has a downside, and that is, what if it gets worse? And so you go from hope to fear. And of course, I can tell you, it might get better for a while, and then it will get worse, because you're going to die, and the body, either you just die suddenly, or the body gets older and older, and then you're hard to walk anymore, and you get retired, and you don't have an identity anymore that has to do with your social function, and there you sit, and it really is getting worse now.

Who am I now? I don't have a job anymore. Nobody tells me who I am.

Of course, eventually, there's always the form begins to dissolve. I'm not saying that you should not try to improve the conditions of your life, but more importantly, is to realize that you do not have a life, because that's, people say, my life. Now, if you look at the structure of that sentence, my life, there's a duality there, because if you say my life, that implies that you have it.

It's mine. So it implies two duality. If you say my life, there's you and the life that you

have.

It belongs to me. It's mine. So this thought, this language creates a duality in your mind.

Call it my life. That's interesting. So there's me, and I have a life, and then the fear comes in, if I have a life, I might lose it.

And of course, then you visit the cemetery, and you say, yes, they all once had a life, and they lost it. They lost their life. And that's going to happen to me too.

Not realizing you're trapped in certain mental formations that create an illusory identity, and actually create delusion. You don't have a life, because there is not a duality. Without life, there's no you.

So you can't have it. You are one with life. There isn't you and life.

You are life. You don't have it. Now, if you are it, you can't lose it, because you are it.

Of course, we'll have to see more deeply what we mean when I say you are life. But let's for a moment stay with that. You are, you are life, you don't have a life.

So you can say it for yourself, in your mind, I don't, I don't have a life, I am life. This is the end of duality. You realize there's, there's a oneness of you and life.

And when I say life, we can use another word, the essence of being alive. What is the essence? Let's go there slowly.

What is the essence of who you are? What is the essence of the life that you are? Okay, now, normal humans, which means unawakened humans, say, well, the essence of my life is my whatever they identify with.

It's my possessions, my what I have, what I know, what I, my body, all those things that I identify with, let's see, the essence of who I am is whatever I derive my identity from. It could be the physical body, or it could be my car, or my house, or my work, my function in society, or it could be friends that I have, things that I have attained. These things are all in the mind also, let's say your, your, your sense of identity, which is you compare yourself to others all the time, which is you do when you're in your mind, you compare yourself to others.

Let's say your body looks better than other people's body for a while. These two will pass. But for a while, you can get in there and then you become this is my body that also is a mental formation.

So it's not so much you identify with the body, you identify the thought of my body. That's what you identify with. You don't identify with your Ferrari, if you have one.

It's the thought of my car, which makes you superior to others who only have a little car. Or your body makes you superior to others who have a puny and weak body. So you can display for a few years, you display your body on the beach and feel good about yourself.

And after a while, the day comes when you look in the mirror. What happened? There's something wrong with the mirror.

In the past, the mirrors that people made were so much better than the mirrors now. So for a while you identify with this or that, that is quite normal. And so when you ask what is the essence of who you are, most people will tell you, well, I am this is who I am.

This is what my identity is derived from this, this, this, and this. And this bundle of things is who I am. It's not always positive, because I was just talking about having a body that looks better than other people's body.

You could have a body that looks worse than other people's body. And so that serves too. You could either either you look for something else that gives you an identity, like, actually, you're more intelligent than all these stupid beach bums.

So you can say, look at these people, but you have so much more knowledge and intelligence, you can look down on them. Or you can be more spiritual. So if you I can't afford a Ferrari, I'm on my bicycle.

And you say, look at this materialistic person, the Ferrari. Or if that doesn't work, you can see how unfairly treated by life you have been and how so much more miserable you are than most, most people. And you've really been a victim of, of circumstances.

You've been a victim of your birth and of your, your parents did a dreadful job with you. Maybe if their parents had been more conscious, things could have worked out. But they weren't.

But that that also gives you a strong conceptual identity. So if you can't have a positive one, the negative ones can be just as strong, if not stronger, you can have a huge victim identity. It's a favorite thing.

Sometimes in the collective, certain egoic things become fashionable for a while. Nowadays is the victim identity for certain groups of people are very fashionable. So people can feel Oh, yes, we are all been victimized by those people.

And of course, there's some truth in it, in some cases. But to derive an identity is a delusion to derive a sense of identity from that is a huge delusion. That is not who you are.

That's all my life. That's all. So if you are not all those things, so when I asked, Who are

you?

If I ask that question, don't go, let's do this for a moment. Don't go into the past. Can you feel or sense who you are without reference to the past in you?

You don't even need to remember your name right now. What for? You don't remember your email address or your phone number or what happened to you 10 years ago.

Don't need to remember that. Can you still get a sense without reference to your personal history? Can you get a sense of beingness or presence?

There's no past in that at all. But what is that? You can't really describe it.

All you know is that you are, I am, you can sense the underlying beingness or presence of you. But to really sense it, what needs to happen is that for a moment, the stream of thinking needs to subside. And it may be happening for many who at this very moment, the stream of thinking that is normal for most people that never stops except when they fall asleep.

The stream of thinking for a moment subsides. And when I asked you whether you couldn't be sense yourself without reference to your personal history, what I was really talking about, what I was really asking was, can you get a sense of your presence without thought? Ah, and there's enormous revelation here.

This question, who am I, does not have a real truthful answer on a conceptual level. It's not in thoughts or words. The true answer to who am I has no thought in it.

It is a sense of presence or beingness. And you can only sense that if, even if it's only a moment. So the stream of thinking subsides.

And what happens is you are completely present without your mind saying anything. You can perceive everything, you can still, you can see, you can hear, you're fully there. And your mind is still.

Still does not mean that you've gone to sleep. It's the opposite. You're actually more alert in that stillness than you would be if you were identified with this continuous stream of thinking.

That's the stillness, the inherent stillness that actually every human has that you don't need to work hard to attain stillness. Or think that if I follow the right course of action, it might take me 10 years and then I'll be able to have a still mind. No, it's already there.

And if you're not totally miserable and unhappy every moment of your life, that means without perhaps you knowing it, anybody who is not extremely miserable all the time has a little bit of access, without even knowing it, to that stillness within. They don't know it. All they know is from time to time they feel a little bit good.

They don't know for three seconds they stopped thinking. They might have some other explanation of why in that moment they felt good. Maybe they were looking at a dog in that moment because the dog wasn't thinking anything about them, because the dog doesn't think.

The dog is conscious but not conceptual thinking. The dog does not have an opinion about you. And so when you were petting the dog, perhaps you suddenly felt good about petting the dog.

Why? Because for a moment the dog freed you of the judgmental conceptual mind that otherwise would be very active if you were petting a human. It would say something.

Of course you can't do that because people would think you're insane. You can't go up to a human, may I pet you? That would be nice if they did that to each other.

But the humans have judgments about you. So whenever you go to a human, you know that he has certain thoughts about you. So the other human cannot free you from your thoughts.

But the dog or the cat can for a short moment free you from your thoughts. And in that moment it feels good. That's why people love their pets so deeply.

There's a reason, a deeper reason why they love because the pet frees them a little bit from their minds. And there are moments when you interact with your animal that you can experience brief moments of thoughtless awareness. Two seconds, three seconds, but it's enough to keep you going.

It's enough so that your life doesn't become totally miserable. And then you might have other moments. You might have moments when you engage in some physical activity.

You swim or you climb a mountain and then there are moments that your total presence is required by the activity so that there's not enough left for thinking. And again you feel intensely alive. Oh, that was so good.

Why was it so good? Well, I love it. It's just so good.

I don't know why it's good. Well, it's good because it freed you for a moment from the incessant stream of thinking. And there was some degree of awareness or presence arising.

But you didn't even know that. So it's always that that dimension of consciousness is in every human. Now, I must admit, there are still millions of humans where it's so deeply hidden in them that they have no access to it.

But there are others who are beginning to awaken to this dimension within themselves. So now you don't have to wait for certain things to happen to briefly free you from your

mind. You don't have to wait for the next encounter with a lovely dog in the street.

Or you don't have to wait for some beautiful moment in nature when you take in the totality of a forest or the vastness of the sky and you go, ah. Or at night you look up into this clear sky, the vastness of space, the countless stars, which are suns, most of them, and the vast distances and the stillness of it all. And you go, it can still your mind too.

That was my first meditation when I was a teenager. I didn't even know what meditation I did. At that time, nobody talked about meditation in the West.

I looked up at the sky at night. We were living, when I was a teenager, we were living in Spain, so the sky was often, in the summer especially, totally clear. And I would sit on the roof of the house and go, ah, ah.

What I'd realized many years later that while I was doing that, there was no thought in my mind. The space, the outer space created in me that inner space or inner spaciousness. So that's another word for it, another pointer.

The inner spaciousness. If you don't find that, and I'm saying find or discover, I'm not saying achieve or attain. It's not an achievement or attainment because it's already there as the essence of who you are.

But you have to discover it, that it is already there. If you don't find it, you are condemned for the rest of your life to live a very frustrated existence because life will be just one damn thing after another. One damn thing and it never leaves me alone.

But what really doesn't leave you alone is your mind, which reacts to every little thing that happens and amplifies every little thing that happens. It's not so much what people call karma. It's not so much what happens to them.

It's how they respond or react to what happens. And when you're unconscious, you amplify every little challenge in your life becomes a big thing in your mind. Oh my God.

It was only a little thing, but it gets amplified and personal conflicts arise all the time.

[Speaker 2] (54:20 - 54:39)

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Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Releasing Our Anxious Inner Narrative [2ad2194c-07ac-4ae7-9249-e99e12af177d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:57)

Releasing our anxious inner narrative. In this podcast, Eckhart talks further about dealing with adversity. He says, when we experience challenges in the form of loss, including jobs, homes, relationships, political instability, or the pandemic, it's actually an invitation to connect more deeply with the present moment.

Eckhart says the conditioning of our minds determines how we respond to situations. He says, if we spiral down into fearful thoughts whenever a crisis occurs, it's a sign that we're out of alignment. He believes the first step is always to remain in the here and now.

Eckhart says, when we meet adversity with alertness, we learn to transmute fear and are no longer dependent on what's happening around us. It's then, he says, we realize our path to freedom begins with our state of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 38:53)

Whenever you encounter adversity or loss or extreme limitation that suddenly comes into your life, some kind of disruption that comes into your life, that is a call to come more intensely into the present moment, first of all. So allow the, whatever form the adversity takes, whatever it is that you're experiencing right now, allow it to, one could almost say, force you into the present moment. If you're not in the present moment, you will be in a state of fear.

So the first step for manifesting something better is to forget about manifestation and be completely concerned with the present moment only and give your fullest attention to the present moment. That includes not only whatever is happening around you at the present moment, right now, your sense perceptions and so on. This is, of course, part of the present moment.

It also concerns the thoughts that you're going through your mind at the present moment. So there's a huge difference between having thoughts go through your mind and being aware that certain thoughts are going through your mind at the present moment. This is something very important, easy to overlook.

Thoughts go through your mind all the time. For most people, particularly people who have not awakened yet in any way, who are still unconscious, which means completely identified with a thinking mind, for those people, there's no awareness behind the thought. This is why we say they are unconscious.

Without awareness, there's only the movement of thought and the movement of thought

reacts to whatever is happening around you. And the way in which the movement of thought reacts to whatever is happening around you depends on the way in which your mind has been conditioned by past experiences. So the conditioning of your mind determines how you react to things that are happening around you, how you interpret them, what kind of narrative you create around what is happening around you.

You talk to yourself, that's the voice in the head, the thought processes. This talking to yourself becomes a narrative. Without awareness, you are completely identified with the stream of thinking that is reactive to whatever is happening around you.

And if something is happening that is challenging, in other words, some kind of adversity, limitation, loss or disruption of your life, then the normal thing for most people is a very scary narrative that arises in your minds. The way in which you interpret what's happening is scary because you're not only looking at what's happening now, you're also extrapolating from there and saying, how is this going to affect me? What's going to happen tomorrow, next week?

You project yourself into the future where you see things are getting even worse than they are now. You see already how whatever is happening now, how it's going to affect your life and you play out scenarios in your mind which are not pleasant and you don't know what you're doing. You believe that what you're experiencing is the reality, but it's not the reality.

What you're experiencing is what your mind has created. It is a narrative that your mind has created as a reaction to what's happening around you. So you're not experiencing really, you're not experiencing reality.

You're confusing what is happening in your mind with reality. Once an awareness comes in, another word for it is presence. When awareness comes in, you suddenly become aware of the kind of thoughts that your mind is creating.

That is the beginning of awakening, spiritual awakening, the awakening of consciousness. That is to become aware of the way in which your mind functions and what it says. And this is why it's so important to become conscious of the present moment because that is an intrinsic part of being present is to become aware of what your mind is doing in this moment.

And this is why I said, the first step is to forget about wanting to manifest something different. We can go there later. The first step is become more intensely, more acutely aware of the present moment because without that awareness, you are at the mercy of your mind, the conditioned mind, without even knowing it.

You have become a victim of your mind. And so it is true to say that for many people, their worst enemy lives between their two ears and they don't know it. So the most

foundational step is coming into the present moment, which implies the arising of awareness or presence.

And as that awareness arises, you become aware not only of your immediate surroundings, which is part of the present moment, but you also become aware of the thinking mind and what sorts of things your mind is producing. And you look at them, are these thoughts truly a reflection of reality or are they a fiction that my mind is creating, projecting itself into the future where things are usually seen as going to get worse. And then you experience the emotions.

Emotion usually reflects mind activity. So if your mind is producing thoughts that are telling you that your situation is dangerous or critical, although in the present moment, it is very unlikely, highly unlikely that your situation is dangerous or critical in this moment. If it is dangerous or critical, of course you take action.

You have to do something to get out of this immediate challenge, but it's highly unlikely that in this moment there is immediate danger or your situation is critical right now. First step then is coming into this moment and realizing, okay, you become aware of sense perceptions. Then you become aware of thoughts.

It may take a little while for some people who are deeply identified with the stream of thinking. It may not even be very easy at first to become aware of sense perceptions, which is part of being present. Why is it not easy for many people to become aware of sense perceptions?

Because their entire consciousness is continuously being absorbed by the conditioned mind. And so their entire attention is in the thought processes. Their entire attention is consumed by unconscious thought processes.

And if somebody says to them, become aware of your surroundings, it may not be easy at first for people who are deeply, deeply trapped in fearful thinking, particularly, to even liberate some of their attention, so to speak, take some of your attention away from thinking and direct it towards sensory perception. So you may find, particularly when you find yourself in a challenging situation, when the mind has become very reactive and is thinking and thinking, what am I going to do now? What's going to happen to me?

I need to do something, but I don't know what. And all kinds of scenarios. So your mind is, your attention is completely taken up by the unconscious thought processes.

And if then I say, or whoever it is says, become aware of your sense perceptions, you may find there is an almost magnetic pull by your mind. It wants to continue thinking, and it has a certain, I sometimes call it a certain gravitational pull. There's a gravitational pull like a magnet, and you cannot free even a small part of your conscious attention and give it to sense perception.

And sometimes your mind may even be creating a thought that tells you why you cannot give attention to sense perception. And that thought might tell you, what's the point? I've got other problems now.

I have to think about my life. I can't, this is completely irrelevant. I have to solve the big problem of me, my life, my life situation.

I have to think about this. Don't tell me about, become aware of my surroundings or sense perception is pointless. So that the gravitational pull of the conditioned mind is there, and it might even find some kind of justification to prevent you from taking attention, even some attention away from unconscious thinking.

But once you discover that, you say, okay, you don't have to believe in every thought that arises in your mind. You don't have to believe every thought. And even that little realization, that little realization, I don't have to believe in every thought that comes into my mind is already the beginning of a liberation from your mind.

Oh, I don't have to believe in every thought. Interesting. Because that already implies that there's at least a minimum of awareness.

It's not just the thought processes. When you realize that you don't have to believe every thought in your mind, then that already implies that there's some awareness there from, because it's only from awareness you can be aware of a thought. This is a very subtle thing.

It's fundamental to understand this because your mind, your consciousness has another dimension. There's a dimension of consciousness in you that we can call awareness or presence. And most people still don't know that.

And millions on our planet still are so identified with the mind, they have almost no awareness. Some awareness occasionally arises, but they don't recognize it. In other words, there may be occasional moments when the mind subsides briefly.

And that's a little bit of a liberation, but they don't really, they don't know, they don't recognize that and immediately the mind starts up again. So you become aware of your thought processes. And then you realize how much of your thinking is directed towards the future, how much it is creating a scenario that is fearful.

And you realize the connection between what your mind is saying, the voice in the head, it's partly a voice in the head that thinks about, it could also be a visual images that arise to accompany the voice in the head. There are visual images that arise. And when these visual images arise, then for example, you see yourself suddenly as a homeless person sitting on a bench.

Oh my God. You see yourself living in your car. Oh my God.

And fear arises. But the thing is, if you were actually living in your car for a while, some people are, and if you became present in that moment, it actually wouldn't be that bad. Somebody once gave me an old car.

That was the first car I ever had. That was shortly after I spent a period of homelessness. There were sometimes nights when I spent in that old car and I enjoyed it tremendously.

It was just almost romantic to be in this little bubble. This is just a little anecdote. What this is pointing to is really the present moment is never quite as bad as the mental projection of some future bad moment.

And in the mental projection of some future bad moment, there's nothing you can do about it. But if there's something in the present moment, you can meet whatever arises with the power of your conscious presence. This is what is.

So you become, you come into this moment, become aware of this moment and realize in this moment, there is no problem as such. That's a very strange realization. It's not a denial.

It's not a denial. It takes you to a deeper level, a deeper consciousness, and that is presence or awareness. So you realize coming into this moment, you've taken some attention out of your thinking mind and some attention now goes into sense perceptions.

This is a very important part of becoming present. In this moment, sense perception means you look around and you listen, whatever noise may be there. And you really give attention to whatever it is you're looking at or listening to.

You become, come to your senses. If you come to your senses, look at the sky, trees. Anything natural is the best thing to look at if you can, but it could be anything.

So you come to your senses means there's less mind activity, more presence. And then we become aware that the mind activity that you have been engaged in is ultimately not helpful. That the mind activity itself, the narrative, these unconscious scenarios that the mind created, they are not helpful.

You become aware that worrying is not helpful. And worrying, which is thinking in circles, thinking the same things in the same lines, again, without any possibility of taking action. It's not only not helpful, it's actually destructive.

And when you become aware of that, you can more and more let go of unhelpful, mind activity and replace it with aware presence in the now. Now, what about the fear? What about the anxiety?

The anxiety that has been in you for many people, it's in the background most of their lives, some fear, some anxiety. And when they're being challenged as now, the anxiety

that is a kind of background, distant background noise for some people is almost always there, but sometimes obscured by them a second, that suddenly becomes very pronounced. This anxiety in the face of a challenge, the anxiety that had already been there in the background, the fear, that now comes out fully and you are in the grip of it.

And now you become aware of the link between your thought processes and your emotions. And you realize that your unconscious thought process, such as boring, actually fuel the emotion that we call fear or anxiety continuously. So a vicious circle arises, and then the emotion that you feel, which you feel it, tend to feel it in your stomach, you feel it, a contraction, almost a painful thing dwelling in your stomach or solar plexus area, but it can affect the whole body.

The whole body can be tense. It interferes with the harmonious functioning of your body. So it's very, this anxiety lowers your immune system on the physical level.

Even mainstream medicine recognizes the fact that what they call stress, which stress is mostly fear and anxiety, it lowers your immune system and you're much more susceptible to illness. It doesn't mean if you're not anxious, you will never catch the illness, but you are much more susceptible to being sick when you are in an almost continuous state of stress or anxiety. So then the fear, of course, rises up back into your mind and creates more emotionally charged fearful thinking, which is not just fearful thinking.

It's now emotionally charged fearful thinking. And that creates even more of that emotion. This is why it's called a vicious circle.

The fearful thinking feeds the fearful emotion with energy. One could say the fearful thinking vibrates at the same frequency as the fearful emotion. So it is food that the emotion loves.

So it wants more of it. Once you're on the grip of worrying, anxious thinking, you don't want to stop. Well, you might want to stop, but you are not even there when you're completely identified.

It does not want to stop. So you are trapped in a fearful vicious circle of fearful thinking, creating fearful, the emotion of fear and the emotion of fear rising back up into your mind and creating emotionally charged fearful thinking. And when you are in that state, you cannot think clearly.

Whatever thought that arises, what do I have to do now? What can I do now? It's very unlikely that you will have a creative and a useful thought.

Whatever your action you take on the basis of fearful thinking is likely to be not wise, not effective and probably wrong and leads to more suffering. In whatever way you interpret the world through the veil of fearful thinking, in whatever way you interpret the world

when you're in the grip of fearful thinking is going to be a complete misinterpretation. But to you, when you identify with it, it's the reality.

So the first thing is to become aware of thoughts and emotions. That means the awareness has arisen. It's there.

Then once you recognize the futility and destructive nature of certain types of thinking, you're able to increasingly let go of it and replace it, not immediately necessarily with positive thoughts, because you still have a negative emotion there. So if you immediately replace the unconscious fearful thinking with positive thoughts, there's a conflict between the emotion that is still there, which is the fear, and the thoughts that are floating on top there, and you will feel that there's something not right because the emotion says you're in a critical state and your mind has a thought that all is well, life is good, I'm going to be abundant. It's unlikely that this will be effective. So again, realize what kind of thoughts go through your mind, recognize the futility and destructive nature of these types of thought, and then replace these thoughts, not immediately with positive thoughts, but with awareness.

Replace, instead of engaged in negative thinking, be more present as much as you can, be more in the present moment, because after all, that's all there ever is. The mind doesn't seem to know that. All there ever is, is the present moment.

There's nothing else ever in your life, so you might as well give it some attention. You might as well make it the focus of your life, because that is, it unfolds in this now moment, everything. Future never comes, it's always now.

When the future comes, it's the now. When the past happened, it was the now. When you remember the past, you remember it now.

When you think about future, you think about it now. There is only now, so you might as well give it your fullest attention, make it the focal point of your life, and then see what you can do with the so-called future. But first, you need to come into a relationship with the now that is helpful, sane, and that is friendly.

Become friendly with them. When you enter the now, you see the now is not really that, is not a threatening place most of the time, except when there's an emergency happening, then you have to do something, an immediate life-threatening or whatever it is. But the now is actually a much more benign place than the mind would be able to recognize.

But you need to have your awareness there. You have to, you need to be aware. You need to be present in the now in order to recognize that the now is actually, can actually be your friend.

It's not your enemy. The now is your friend. You become friendly with the present

moment.

So you begin to cut the link between your thought processes and the emotion because you let go of these fearful thoughts. You recognize their futility. Instead, you're much more present.

Thoughts will occasionally still come in, and then you recognize them, let go, be more present. However, in that presence, the emotion of fear may not and probably will not immediately disappear because it's been there for a long time. So even if you no longer fuel the emotion with your thinking, you become present, and you may notice, yes, I'm aware of, more aware of sense perceptions, the aliveness of this moment.

You can see perhaps beauty in things, the things that you didn't give any attention to before. However, you can also still feel this anxiety or fear living in you, still there. Even when you're no longer feeding it with your thoughts, you can still feel it, there it is.

And that becomes part of your experience of the present moment, that anxiety. Now, what do you do with it? The normal tendency would be to say, I want to get rid of this.

I shouldn't be feeling this. I don't want to feel this. And some people cannot tolerate the anxiety, so they need to, they might go to their doctor and say, please do something about this anxiety.

The doctor will then give you a prescription. In some extreme cases, those things may be temporarily helpful in some extreme cases, but a lot of the time you would have missed an opportunity. And that is the opportunity of evolving through facing pain or suffering.

If you face the emotional pain that you feel, that it's anxiety or fear, and not try to run away from it, or say, I can't, it becomes so uncomfortable. Being in your own skin can become so unpleasant and uncomfortable that you just want to run away or say, please give me something to do it. I don't have to feel this anymore.

But actually it doesn't help to want to get rid of it. It just creates another layer of anxiety or problems on top of the emotion. Now, I suggest as an alternative approach is to make the emotion that you feel that still lives in you part of your experience of the present moment and accept it in the way you accept the totality of the present moment.

And that's a new way of living, a very powerful way of living, a very powerful way of connecting with a deeper level of consciousness in you of finding enormous power that dwells in you. If you can accept the present moment as it is internally, externally, and internally. So it's not going to kill you.

The anxiety is there, but it's not going to kill you. It might kill you if you react to it and create further anxiety. And you then allow the anxiety to be there as it is completely.

It's almost like saying, it sounds a little strange. It's almost like saying, I don't mind being anxious. Sounds very paradoxical, but it's a very interesting experiment you can conduct.

Any form of unhappiness, of course, some unhappiness is telling you that something is wrong in your life. That's a different story. But habit to unhappiness that arises in you no matter where you go and what you do, unhappiness arises in you.

No matter where you go and what you do, fear and anxiety are there. And this applies to countless humans on the planet. Now, as an experiment, as I said, what happens when they say, I don't mind being unhappy.

I don't mind being anxious. But of course, you're not fueling the anxiety with your thinking. You're aware of your anxiety.

So if you reach that step where you're no longer giving it further fuel or food, and you're becoming aware of the anxiety. And as you place your attention on it, which is part of the attention that's in the present moment, you become aware that it's actually, there's very intense energy in that fear. Almost a burning energy in that fear.

But the energy is not a flowing energy. It's trapped energy. It's like being in a, like a boiling kettle.

You're holding the lid down. It's the energy is trapped, but there is enormous life energy in that fear. And if you can completely accept your fear at this moment, without feeding it any longer with your thinking, just being aware of it, that's what it is.

You may find in a very subtle ways, a change happening. And the change is, it's a transmutation of this energy of fear. When you accept it completely, a transmutation of this energy into intense presence.

So the same energy that before was fear, when it's completely accepted, it suddenly goes, and there's enormous power that was in there trapped. And suddenly it becomes fuel for your consciousness, becomes transmuted into presence or awareness. When it's completely accepted, and then it's no longer fear.

It's just in suddenly intense awareness. And that intense awareness is like a, one could almost say a higher intelligence that suddenly begins to operate in you. You're no longer just reliant on the conditioning of your mind.

There's an intense presence there. And now it doesn't mean it happens once, and then it's never fear again. After that experience, you have to experiment.

It may not last very long, the initial transmutation, then you may fall back into fear. And the fear may repeatedly try to rise back up into your mind and make you think fearful

thoughts. And from time to time, it probably will succeed again.

And you fall back into the same pattern, but then more and more at shorter and shorter intervals, you wake up again and you realize that this is what's happening. And so, and then again, you come to a place of just acceptance, and then notice that the transmutation happens again. It is not just fear.

It can be with any kind of suffering in your life. When it's completely accepted, a transmutation begins to happen. And that is how suffering is actually an essential part of the evolution of human consciousness.

Because if you reach a point where suffering can be transmuted into a higher consciousness, awareness or presence, it becomes fuel for presence. The collective suffering that humans are experiencing at the present time is also an opportunity that's opening up for millions of humans, not that they're all going to recognize that and be able to use it, but some will, perhaps many an opportunity for the beginning of an awakening, or perhaps even more than just the beginning of an awakening, the opportunity for an awakening of consciousness. Because if you don't, then you stay stuck in suffering and you cannot create, manifest a better life for yourself or a better world from the place of suffering.

You need to have gone beyond suffering in order to be able to manifest a better world. So the foundational step then is what I just described. And then you, as the transmutational process continues in you, then you're able occasionally to perhaps have certain thoughts that are no longer in conflict with the emotional reality in you, because there has been a transmutation of the fear.

And when you can feel that intense presence, this is a good time, if you even want to do it, you can have a visualization or an affirmation of the goodness of life or the abundance of life, that life is abundant and it's no longer a lie. Because when you sense that presence in you, before it was fear, perhaps, and then it's become presence, there is a feeling of intense aliveness. There is a heightened aliveness in that presence that would not have been there if life had not challenged you and first made you suffer and then caused you to become more conscious in order to transcend the suffering.

That's how evolution happens. And so there is an aliveness in that conscious presence that is inseparable from what we may call abundance. That brings me to one of my favorite sayings of Jesus.

He said, I want you to have abundant life. That's in one translation. In another translation, he says, I want you to have the fullness of life.

So some Bibles translate it as abundant life. Some Bibles translate it as the fullness of life. I want you to have the fullness of life.

He's talking, yes, abundant life. What does that mean? Abundance in conventional terms, when you think of abundance, we think of many things.

You can have lots of things and you have abundance. But true abundance is something, it's not lots of things, although maybe lots of things may come to you, but you don't need lots of things in order to experience abundance. You experience abundance through experiencing the presence within you is the abundance.

It is the fullness of life.

[Speaker 3] (38:54 - 39:06)

The fullness of life that is within you now. Oh, and then we come to another saying of Jesus.

[Speaker 1] (39:06 - 49:18)

So talking about Jesus, let's use another very important. The most important thing anybody's ever said about manifesting things is in one sentence that Jesus said, all the books written about manifesting. Once you understand that one sentence, you don't need to read any of them.

And that sentence is, when you pray for something, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. Now, the key, of course, is not believe that you will receive it. The key is believe that you have received it, and then it will be yours.

The will be refers to the thing, whatever it is that you pray for. But what does that mean? How can you believe that you have received it when obviously you haven't received it?

Now, this can only be understood together with his statement about the fullness of life. It is when you realize the fullness of life that is the power of your own consciousness. It's not your own, but let's just call it your own.

It's universal consciousness. And this awareness, this presence is universal consciousness. It is, let's temporarily call it your consciousness.

It's not yours because if you say your consciousness, you have a separation between you and consciousness, but there is no duality here. There's only the consciousness that you are. So when you realize that this, the power of your consciousness, the power of consciousness is the fullness of life.

And nothing that you could add to yourself could be any greater than that. So when you realize the fullness of life, which you can only realize in the present moment, when the emotion of fear or other negative emotion has become transmuted into intense presence, then this intense presence is the fullness of life. Anything else that you could obtain in life and that you as a person may want, or may enjoy, or may need on a

personal level is the icing on the cake.

Now to this important realization that all manifestation, you can only be a really successful manifestation practitioner if you realize that whatever you manifest is the icing on the cake, because you already have the cake. You are the cake. If you don't realize that, then life is frustrating because even whatever you do manifest, if you think that's the cake, it's not going to satisfy you for long.

It might even make you sick if you eat too much cake. It may make you sick. So the cake is the essence of who you are, is the presence.

If you then, if you bring an image of what you want to obtain or achieve into that feeling of presence or aliveness, then that can become a very powerful manifestation. You want to have a better place to live, perhaps, whatever it is, but you don't need it to experience the fullness of life. You can only be successful at manifesting if you don't need whatever it is that you want to manifest in order to give you the experience of the fullness of life, which we could use other words to describe it, the experience of being fully yourself, the experience of having made it, the experience of a fuller sense of identity, whatever it may be, because people don't, they don't want the thing that they think they want.

They want the feeling that that thing will give them. You don't want the car just for the sake of the car. You want the feeling that is associated with a car and the mental image that's associated with, I am the owner of this car, it's my car.

That's what they want. The car itself would be meaningless. So they want, whatever they want is always a secondary thing.

They want this fullness of life through something else. So I'm really describing how manifestation does not work. And even if it did work in that way, and sometimes it does in a limited way, it's not the answer and it doesn't make you happy and it won't ultimately solve anything.

So the powerful manifesto, if that's a word, is the one who was already in touch with the fullness of life and manifest from the fullness of life. And again, Jesus said, there are so many beautiful things there. Find only the kingdom of heaven that is within you, which is, again, the fullness of life, which is the presence, the unconditioned consciousness, and all the things that you need or think you need will be added onto you.

That's an amazing thing. It's so, it's even when you do not specifically attempt or practice manifesting specific things in your life, which some people do and some don't, it's an interesting practice. Even if you did want to manifest specific things, your life will change as a result of being in touch with that dimension within you, the fullness of life, because from there, manifestation happens.

It even happens when you're no longer even want to manifest because you're fine, but

you represent then a different level of consciousness in this world. And the way in which you experience this world changes, and the way in which you affect the world changes. So you cannot help but manifest when you undergo this shift in consciousness.

And even if you don't undergo it fully, you still begin to manifest a different world. First of all, a different world for yourself, because the way in which you experience the world depends on your state of consciousness. The one person may react to the same circumstances very differently from another person, depending on their level of consciousness.

So one person gets encounter a particular form of adversity, a very unconscious person, and reacts in their way. And so they experience a very different world from a person who meets the same adversity from a different, from an awakened state of consciousness, experiencing a different world. And not only that, the way in which the, let's say, whatever event you're experiencing in the present moment, the state of consciousness from which you meet this event determines the subsequent development of that event.

This is a somewhat esoteric thing, but the so-called world and your state of consciousness are a single phenomenon. There is not really a world if nobody experiences it. So the consciousness that you are in the world are a single thing.

When your consciousness changes, the world changes. First of all, the way in which you experience the world changes, it basically means the world changes for you. And if the world changes for a sufficient number of people, then even the so-called outside world changes.

So for the world to change, there needs to be a shift in consciousness. But you begin to experience this in your own life first, and then you begin to inhabit a different world. So you always, you manifest, of course, always, most people manifest, as I'm sure you know, most people manifest unconsciously because they're conditioning, the way in which your mind is conditioned determines how they experience events in their life.

And that becomes their world. So they manifest every moment. So how do you manifest your experience of this moment?

That's another way of looking at manifestation. How do you manifest this moment? It depends on your level of state of consciousness.

You are not dependent, ultimately, on external conditions. And that's when you realize that, that you are not at the mercy of what's happening or not happening around you. This is a wonderful realization, a wonderful freedom, that your consciousness is not dependent on this or that happening or not happening.

That's an incredible realization and sense of liberation.

[Speaker 2] (49:20 - 49:39)

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Eckhart Tolle Releasing The Ego's Grip [652e9ebc-69dd-4d24-b246-ba7b9d7d161b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:07)

Releasing the Ego's Grip. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the pitfalls of the ego and the need to feel superior. He explains we seek an identity through external distinction, like wealth, fame, even our nationality, to dispel the anxiety that we're not enough.

He says the focus on image creates a false sense of self. He shares examples from his own life. He shares it growing up.

His family struggled financially, which left him with low self-esteem. He asked why bad things always seem to happen to him. To bolster his feelings of inadequacy, Eckhart says he pursued intellectual achievements, which came easily, but his sense of superiority soon vanished in the wake of his negative thinking.

Eckhart says for a time he sought refuge in complaining and victimhood. But after he experienced an awakening, the old patterns gave way to something greater, and his self-hate evaporated. He explains he finally understood the meaning of Buddhist teachings about suffering and the end of suffering, and how liberation emerges when we release the ego's grip.

[Speaker 1] (1:09 - 40:01)

A huge part of identity is collective. Let's say you derive your identity from your nationality or your nation, and there's nothing wrong with that. You can be, you can love your country, this is, there's nothing wrong with that.

But what about feeling superior through being a particular nationality? That is, the ego comes in there. We happen to be in America, but it could be in any, any country.

Let's say I'm American. It's obviously superior to everybody else. Implication, it could, I'm just seeing an example here, could, and if we're in another country, I would say that nationality.

Now imagine that the entire planet was American, and everybody's American. You could no longer define your sense of self through being American. It's impossible, because you haven't got the other anymore.

The other has disappeared. The whole thing has become meaningless. I'm American.

The other says, me too. And what about, yeah, me too. In fact, it wouldn't only be that.

The entire term American would not exist in the absence of the other, would disappear. If the entire world were blue, everything is blue, every human is blue, the word blue would

not exist. You need the other.

So the ego needs the other, and it defines itself through the other, and it needs a sense of superiority towards the other. I'm talking about this because some of you may still have remnants of that in your life, and so it's very helpful to know how it operates, so when it surfaces in your life, you can recognize it, and in the act of recognizing it, you become free. It's only when you are in the grip of the ego, then you are a slave.

You are possessed by, ultimately, the egoic mind, without knowing it. You're possessed by the stream of thinking that goes through your head, and if you say, I think, that would not ultimately be true, because people who are completely identified with the stream of thinking, they don't think, because thinking, when you say, I think, it implies volition. It implies that you have some kind of exercise, some kind of control over, but for many people, the thinking happens in their mind, and they have no choice in what thought comes into their mind.

So it's not that they think, the thinking happens to them. They might say, I'm thinking about my problems, and I can't stop thinking about my life. It's just, I can't stop.

You are not thinking. The thinking happens to you. You're not doing it in the same way that you're not beating your heart.

You can't say, I'm beating my heart. The heartbeat happens to you, and even breathing. Breathing, you can stop it for a little while, but not for long.

The breathing happens to you, too. It takes place of its own accord, and in the same way, anybody who is completely identified to the stream of thinking is something that happens to you. It lives in you, pretends to be you, whether the story of the me is predominantly of a personal kind, in which case you feel it's based on the image of possessions, it's based on abilities that you have but that others do not have, something you can do, and there's nothing wrong with that.

It's a wonderful thing to cultivate skills, whatever it may be, to learn to play an instrument, to learn to write, to dance, many, many things. It's a wonderful thing to engage in acquiring new skills and new abilities. It's part of life, but the question is, is that being used unconsciously in the search for an enhanced sense of self, a stronger identity, in which case you always need the other who cannot do what you can do.

If you want to be famous, many egos want to be famous, and then feel, once I'm famous, then everything will be great. Once I just want to be famous. Now, again, in order to be famous, the implication is that there's millions of people who are not famous.

You need millions of people to be not famous, because otherwise fame has no meaning. So when you say, I want to be a celebrity, at the same time you're saying, I want millions of people not to be a celebrity. It's amazing.

Imagine, let's go to some twilight zone place, and suddenly you wake up in a country where everybody is famous. Everybody is equally famous, which just means, of course, that everybody knows each other, and everyone says, oh, you are so great. And whoever you meet says, you are so great.

So are you. You are just wonderful. Now, that may sound quite nice, but to the ego, it's not satisfying at all.

The whole thing would be meaningless to the ego. If everybody is famous, it means nothing anymore. Then you have to look for something else.

So clothes, whatever it may be, some people pay little attention to the way they dress. For others, it's important, not always the case of ego identification. They may just enjoy something lovely, but in other cases, it is unconsciously seeking for more of an identity, differentiates yourself from others.

Some people dress in a weird way, very weird clothes. And of course, your ego is saying, look at me, I'm a non-conformist. Look at you, you are all conformists.

Look the way I, not me, I'm just an example. Look the way I dress, which clearly shows that I'm superior to you because I'm a non-conformist. And so are my friends.

All my friends are non-conformists too. We live together. Again, it's a statement that you said you need, again, you need the other.

The other is inferior. One way or another, if the other is not inferior, the ego cannot survive. It's somewhat insane, but that's how it operates.

Collective egos, collective egos are huge in some countries or in some cultures more than others. In our Western civilization, the ego tends to be a bit more personal, their personal characteristic that you look for to enhance your sense of self. In other cultures, and of course older cultures, it was mainly collective, the collective identification with the tribe.

You are a member of this tribe and all the other tribes are less than human. Only we, we are the ones, whatever you call yourself, we are, the others are nothing. That's early manifestations of collective ego are like that.

And in later times, nationalism and so on are expressions of the same egoic dysfunction. So, it's amazing once you recognize how and where the ego seeks superiority. In the past, in many countries, because we had a kind of, for a long time, we had a Yang civilization, a patriarchal society that only started to change around the 60s for Western civilization.

And in some places, it's still very much Yang, where the man has more power than the

woman. So, any male that comes into this world, a significant part of his identity in those places is, I'm a man. The implication being, no matter how stupid you are, you're automatically superior to 50% of the population who are not a man.

So, that gives you your sense of, a huge chunk of your sense of self is you're a man. Again, a fiction, a fiction in your mind. If everybody were a man, it would be meaningless.

I had a struggle in my early life to find an identity. Well, many youngsters have, but of course, my struggle was much more serious than other people's struggle. Much worse than yours.

Youngsters look for, at an early age, look for an identity. You have to, for example, you see it in impoverished parts of big cities where you have gangs. After you have shelter and food, the next thing that humans look for is an identity.

It's so important. It's a huge psychological need. So, in parts of big cities, you have gangs.

You have tattoos that show what gang you belong to. Then they commit murder and often are murdered just for this identity, just to have an identity. I need to belong to this.

That's something. You desperately need the other who is not part of your gang. The way I see it is, the ego is something that grows until you reach adulthood, and as you go into an ideal world, and as you reach adulthood, you slowly begin to grow out of identification with a false sense of self.

Then you grow into a deeper, and of course, this is where we are going here tonight. We're on the way. You go into a deeper sense of identity that has nothing to do with the surface reality of the egoic sense of self.

So, that's where we are going. But unfortunately, in this world, still the majority of humans are stuck in the egoic consciousness to the end of their lives. But to a greater or lesser degree, the egoic consciousness varies in its intensity or density from person to person.

Not every human has the same huge ego. Some egos are gigantic, and other egos are a little bit smaller with small cracks into something deeper, where a human being can relinquish temporarily their sense of self, their sense of the story of me, and temporarily they go, ah, wow, look at that sky. Or you listen to some music, I mean real music, not the kind of thing they play in restaurants.

You listen to some music, and temporarily it liberates you, it gives you a taste. While you listen, or while you might even play the music, while you play this music, temporarily you have a glimpse of the state of consciousness that we might call self-transcendence.

And so it feels enormously wonderful in that state.

It's not just the sounds that you are either listening to or producing and listening to. Yes, they have something to do with it, but what these sounds do is they temporarily cause the compulsive thinker to recede. A presence arises from within you, so the entire egoic identity temporarily recedes.

You can sometimes see that when people listen to music or play music, and then there's a kind of temporary transformation in them. They go, ah. It's a liberation.

It's a temporary liberation from yourself. But usually it doesn't last. But it's good to have a glimpse of this self-transcendence.

So we have the ego. As I said, I had quite a struggle finding an identity at first. The body couldn't be my identity because I had a not very strong body.

So people made fun of me, and I wasn't very strong, so I didn't move to Miami for that reason. And so my ego couldn't go do very much there, and it would look for something else. Now, my parents didn't have much money, so we didn't have more than anybody else.

In fact, we had less than most people. So where would the ego go there? I can't do anything.

I'm looking, looking. Where is my identity? Well, the first identity I found is a beginning of an unhappy and complaining me.

That was the first beginning where I had a thought form. And whenever something bad happened in my family, which was always, there's always some drama going on, almost every other day something bad happened. So the thought in my mind was, of course, some bad things always happen to me.

For several years, I had this persistent thought, bad things always happen to me. Of course, I knew it. I knew it wouldn't go.

I knew we couldn't go on vacation because there's no money, and here we are stuck at home. And then I had to lie and say, we're back to school. And they said, where did you go on a vacation?

I had to invent some place where we went because we didn't go anywhere. But I couldn't say, you couldn't say, well, we couldn't afford your vacation. Couldn't say that.

It's a desperate struggle for more of an identity. Until finally, when I reached the age of 19, 20, I finally found that I can actually read books. I loved reading books.

And I can acquire knowledge. And I become an intellectual. If I become an intellectual, I'll

be more knowledgeable than most people.

Got it. I got it. I found.

Now, that was the road to unhappiness too, unfortunately, because as acquired more knowledge, and then I showed off my knowledge, feeling very superior to others. And, but strangely enough, together with that came a growing sense of depression and unhappiness. There was a false sense of self.

And there was a continuous fear of not knowing enough, of not being enough, of others knowing more. And finally, I made it to university. And of course, there were always others who knew more than me.

And then became more and more unhappy. So interesting how one looks. There's always dissatisfaction that comes.

Now, for many humans, I'm just in the last stage of explaining egoic identity and its various manifestations. For many humans, they desperately search for more of an identity. And if they can't find it, if you don't have more than others, you don't look better than others, you're not stronger than others, your abilities are not greater than other people's abilities, you don't know more than other people.

So where are you? Where are you superior to others? Where?

What does the ego do? Where does it find its sustenance? One simple thing it can do, it can continuously, either mentally or out aloud, it can complain.

It complains about places. It complains about situations. It complains about other people.

It complains about everything, in your mind or out aloud. Now, what is the implication when you complain? The implication when you complain is, let's say you're complaining about somebody, you know what he did?

You would never ever guess what he did. And then he said this, and then I said that. He would always do that to me.

He always does it. He's completely dishonest. Stories, one story after another.

But in every story you complain about something or somebody, the implication being that you are superior, because you are the judge. You are judging this person as inferior. When you complain about a person, the implication is you are superior.

When you complain about even a situation, you complain about a situation or a place, the implication, the unspoken implication is you're superior to that situation. You're just, this is how it is. I'll tell you how it is.

That's how it is. It's awful. Just look at that.

Great. The ego can live on complaining alone, because you're always, by implication, superior to that which you are complaining about. So people are trapped in that.

They don't know it. And so there may still be remnants in one or two of you of that mindset that loves complaining. And every complaint strengthens the fictitious sense of self.

And then it loves enemies. The ego loves connected, these are connected. The ego loves to make other people into enemies, because you emphasize the otherness of others by treating them as an enemy.

To define your fictitious sense of self, you need the other who is not what you are, who is less than you. The ego loves to emphasize the otherness of others and say, these people are my enemies, whether you call them enemies or not. You do it, the ego does it on a personal level.

You do it on a collective level to other countries. This is a tendency to treat other countries as enemies. I can see it sometimes when I read the news, and so you can see there's an unconscious collective mind pattern.

The people don't even know what they're doing, because they're in the grip of a collective mind pattern. They need to demonize another country. And they did it much more strongly, of course, in the first half of the 20th century.

But even now, this pattern survives. You need to define yourself through the the other. Okay, so we have emphasized the otherness of others by complaining or judging and so on.

Continuously gossiping, being critical about people and situations. Always find something that's wrong. When you find something that's wrong, you are far superior.

You're pronouncing that this is wrong. I know. And if that doesn't work, a great one, and this is the last one I give as an example, if you don't know more than others, you don't have more than others, a great egoic identity is to see yourself as a victim of others.

Wow, that's great. You are the victim or a particular group that you belong to is a victim. Now, I'm not saying there have not been and are certain groups that have been victimized.

That's true. But the question is, are you deriving your sense of identity from something that ultimately is just a fact that happens or has happened? This is a very common one, especially these days, because we have moved from a yang dominated society into a more yin dominated society move, which was a wonderful, necessary thing.

And that means humans have developed an empathy towards others that they didn't have before. An empathy with other human beings, an empathy with other groups of human beings, the disadvantaged, the poor, the marginalized, minorities, because we moved from yang into yin, this compassion and empathy arose was a wonderful, wonderful and necessary thing. But anything can be used by the ego, the ego will get in there, no matter what you do, when you're not conscious enough.

So because there is much more empathy, which is a great thing, but you take it so much further, and more and more humans unconsciously realize that, oh, either I can derive very satisfying, well, not really no, no egoic sense of identity is ultimately satisfying. But I can derive a strong sense of identity from considering myself being a victim. You have to be very careful with that, that you don't fall into that trap.

It's very easy to fall into. So any victim identity, which can also rise through an illness, by the way, you can, if you have contracted a serious illness, in your mind, you form a mental image of me, the sufferer of this illness, I am, and that can become the main part of your fictitious identity, I'm the sufferer of this illness. Or if something bad has happened to you in the past, which bad things have happened to many of you.

But are you deriving your identity from that? So basically, we've been talking about the bad news, which is the ego. And so where's the good news?

The good news is that there is in you, in every human, but in most humans, it's still majority of humans, it's still dormant, so to speak, there is the possibility of realizing a deeper dimension of consciousness than the egoic consciousness. That possibility is in every human, but it's not realized in every human. But we could almost look at it as a seed that has not yet sprouted in many, many humans, and they are still stuck with it.

In most of you, the seed of this new consciousness, or the transcendent consciousness, which is presence, has sprouted with one or two exceptions. Some people didn't come here by their own free will. They were dragged here by somebody, and they're sitting there longing to get away.

I shouldn't have, why did I, couldn't I say no? I should have said no. This man is insane, I don't want to...

All the ancient teachings really point to this awakening, whether they call it, as the Buddha called it, this is the end of suffering, which really means it's the end of unhappiness, which is self-generated in your mind. Buddha defined his teaching as, he said, I show you suffering and the end of suffering. By saying that, he meant, I show you how suffering arises, and I show you how it can end.

Suffering is the unhappiness in whatever form it manifests, and if unhappiness manifests in you in whatever form, you spread it. If you make yourself unhappy, you make others

around you unhappy, without even knowing it, because you make yourself unhappy without knowing it, you make others unhappy without knowing it, it becomes your reality. And it used to be the case that you make others unhappy in your immediate environment, but nowadays, because of the wonderful advantages of technology, you can make others unhappy on the other part of the world too.

And they read your comments and say, oh yeah. So, through the miracle of technology, the unconscious unhappiness can spread very, very quickly, and the toxicity of the egoic state of consciousness can very quickly engulf the entire planet. Wow, great achievement.

So, the Buddha said, I show you suffering and the end of suffering. Jesus talked about a strange term called salvation. Salvation is something, again, as I see it, it's the same thing, different word for the same thing.

Jesus also talked about the kingdom of heaven being misinterpreted for 2,000 years, because people think kingdom of heaven is where you go to when you die, or kingdom of heaven is something that eventually comes here, and we just need to wait for it. Although Jesus clearly said, literally, I usually don't keep quotes in my mind, but I happen to remember this one. He clearly said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived.

You cannot say, oh, it's over there, or it's over there, for I tell you, the kingdom of heaven is within you. So, it's not an external thing that you can say, there it is, because the kingdom of heaven is a state of consciousness that is possible for humans to realize. And I would like to change the way this term has been written about.

Kingdom of heaven belongs to the terminology, belongs to previous ages. In our modern world, it becomes more understandable if we rephrase the kingdom of heaven and call it, or kingdom, I suggest, dimension. It's the realm, it's the dimension.

Heaven, what's heaven? Heaven is the vast sky. Heaven is the vastness.

In many languages, sky and heaven are the same word. It's the vastness of the sky. So, he talked about the dimension, and this heaven, I translate as spaciousness, because the closest thing in this sense-perceived world that you can get to spaciousness, what is it?

I mean, how do you find an analogy for spaciousness, the vast spaciousness of the sky? The dimension of spaciousness, the kingdom of heaven that is within you. So, within you, there is a dimension of consciousness that is spacious.

It is not cluttered. It is not full of the clutter of one thought after another. Continuous mental noise.

That's not what it is. It is a dimension of inner spaciousness. So, this is what he was

pointing to.

Another term the Buddha used, of course, is the term emptiness, which again, sunyata is one term in Sanskrit. Sunyata, emptiness. Again, I don't like that translation very much.

Sunyata is spaciousness. Spaciousness. One of the main things the Buddha taught is spaciousness, inner spaciousness.

So, what is inner spaciousness? Inner spaciousness is here and now, in this moment, right here and now, you don't remember anything about your past or anything about your so-called future. Let's say, what is left of you, here and now, if you make no reference to the past, if you make no reference to the future, in fact, if you pretend that past and future don't exist.

Is there anything left of you if you do not remember your past? Not even your name, not even your email address. You don't remember your past and there's no future.

Let's say you have no past and no future. What is left of you? And you have to be very alert to find the answer to that.

You have to be very alert. There's no past. There's only this moment.

And what is it? Are you still there? If you do not remember your past, in other words, if you don't think, are you still there?

Is it possible for just a moment to not think without falling asleep? It is. It only needs to be maybe just a few seconds at first, not thinking, just a sense of inner spaciousness, a moment without thought.

What remains when you relinquish thinking? An alertness remains, an awareness remains, a sense of beingness or presence remains that you cannot define in any way. A sense of I am, but you can't add anything to the I am.

You just know your beingness. You know that you are. You can sense the beingness that you are.

Perhaps you can even sense it with your entire body. Every cell of the body sense the beingness of you. That is the entry point in something, a deeper sense of beingness.

I am. I call it, this is a term I didn't write in the books because it hadn't come to me at that point yet. This is a term that I now call the deep I.

You have the surface I when you say I need, I want, I love you, I hate you, I love myself, I hate myself, I don't like, I like. It's the surface I, the mind created. The deep I is the spacious I.

The deep I is the realization of beingness, the realization that you are. But that you is very different from the surface you, the surface I that has no history. That dimension of consciousness has no history.

It has no time to it. It is what is called in spiritual literature, eternity. Eternity meaning not endless time, but timelessness.

Eternity is timeless. There is a deeper dimension of consciousness in every human. It is not yours.

I might sometimes call it your dimension, but it's not yours. When you enter this, the deeper dimension of consciousness in which you are not thinking, but you remain alert with no tension in it. There's no tension, just an alert presence.

Maybe a little bit like the bird that goes, just alert. That's the deep I that connects you, that is one with something very profound that goes far beyond who you are as this temporary little entity, because you've come out of that temporarily as this being, the being of you, the being that incarnates temporarily and takes form as a human being with a name and a history, very short-lived. That being comes from a very deep transcendent place, and it is ultimately the light of consciousness.

All you know when you are not thinking about your past and your future, and in fact when you are not thinking, all that remains for you to know is that you are conscious. If you were not conscious, you wouldn't perceive all this. It's only in the light of consciousness that this is being perceived, and that's an amazing realization, because it could well be that you are dreaming this moment.

There have been philosophers asking themselves over the centuries, is life ultimately a kind of dream? You could look upon it as a dream. So let's say you're dreaming, and you're dreaming that somebody is sitting up here on this stage on a chair, and he's saying, you may be dreaming.

Now, you can doubt everything. You can doubt everything except one thing, that you are conscious. Even if you are dreaming, there must be a consciousness in which the dream appears.

That is the space for it, in the same way that what we perceive as external space allows everything to be. The most important thing about this room is not the things that are in the room, nor is it the floor, the ceilings, and the walls. That's not the essence of this room.

The essence of this room is the spaciousness, the space, but you can't actually see it. You can't really say, show me where the space is, and then you go, oh no, it's here, or it's everywhere. You can't even point at it, in the same way that you cannot point to the inner spaciousness.

That's why Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven, which is a dimension of spaciousness, does not come with signs to be perceived. You cannot perceive it. Now, what is that consciousness signs will tell you if they ever even mention the word consciousness?

In most cases, they don't, because they don't know what to do with it, because you cannot find it under the microscope, and you cannot find it by cutting open somebody's head and examining the brain. They will not find consciousness, and they will not find you. They will not find a single thought through, no matter how powerful the microscope is, so there is something in you that far transcends anything in the physical realm, and of course, yes, signs will still tell you consciousness is a byproduct of the physical brain.

It's not. The physical brain is, yes, it can be compared to a transmitter of consciousness. It could be compared to a radio receiver that receives, let's say, beautiful music, but the radio doesn't produce the music, but it's necessary for the music to express itself in this dimension, and at some point, the radio will break down.

It doesn't mean it's the end of the music. This is just an analogy, so there's undoubtedly a connection between the human brain and consciousness, but the human brain is not the physical brain. The chemical soup of the brain does not produce the miracle of this world, even the miracles that humans have produced.

Yes, they've been pretty insane in many ways, but they were also wonderful creations that happened through humans.

[Speaker 2] (40:03 - 40:22)

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Eckhart Tolle Releasing Unconsciousness [26d21115-83eb-44c5-9bcb-d5ffc6dea4ef]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

Releasing unconsciousness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience and he says, sometimes we experience a gravitational force that seems to push us back into unconsciousness. We may feel overwhelmed by watching the news or experience a painful loss.

In those moments, we return to the practice of presence. That's the best thing we can do for ourselves. Eckhart says there's a higher purpose at work and awakening is deeper than our suffering.

[Speaker 1] (0:35 - 32:25)

Consciousness, the greatest mystery of the universe and the essence of who you are, undoubtedly. So the reason why you are here, on one level, there's a personal reason why you have come here. On a deeper level, you're here because the universe wants to and is in the process of becoming more conscious.

There is an arising of consciousness here. And there are, it seems, two factors at work. There is the impulse that pushes consciousness into this dimension.

And there is something else that wants to hold it back. There is a gravitational force that sometimes makes it appear that the universe is designed to keep you from becoming conscious. It's designed to sabotage your attempts of being conscious.

That is the gravitational force, the unconsciousness, a certain heaviness. When you listen or watch the news, most of the things that are presented to you as the most important things that have happened on any given day are a reflection of the gravitational force. So it can be very misleading if you actually believe that the things that you watch and listen to through the media on a daily basis, that those are the most important things that are happening on the planet at the moment.

Now, it's very, very easy to be seduced into believing that because the entire culture seems to support that view. So when you listen to the news, when you watch the news or read about it, a lot of it, maybe not all of it, occasionally you get a few interesting things that almost get in there by mistake. Most of it is about the unconsciousness and the effects of unconsciousness in humanity.

And a lot of it is about those humans who are the most unconscious. Unconscious, I believe most of you probably know what I'm talking about. Most of you will know that I'm not referring to those humans when I describe them as unconscious, that they are actually...

That is not the meaning of unconscious in the way I'm using it. And it's not the meaning of unconscious when you speak, when we use the term in a spiritual sense. So just for those few of you who may be relatively new to this or to this kind of language, the way we use unconscious here refers to complete identification with the stream of conditioned thinking that continuously occupies, goes through people's minds, plus the emotions that correspond to that stream of thinking.

There is absolutely, in an unconscious person, there is zero awareness beyond the stream of thinking, which is determined by the way in which this person has been conditioned by the surrounding culture, both the collective culture a person grows up in and the personal influences. In other words, they believe in every thought that arises in their head. There's not a slightest space between them and the thought.

There is, in an unconscious person, a complete lack of inner spaciousness. There is no awareness. There's only thinking.

And spiritual awakening, of course, is the awakening of awareness, which is a dimension of consciousness. That is, we can use either one of two words, that is deeper than thinking, or we could use another word, which I perhaps tend to use more often. None of these words is absolutely correct.

Higher than thinking. There is the possibility in every human for the arising of a dimension of consciousness that transcends thinking. Now, in many humans, that possibility is a latent one.

It's dormant. It's a seed that has not sprouted whatsoever. But any human, no matter how unconscious, can, if certain things happen to this human being, there's the possibility that even the most unconscious human can suddenly, or through a series of experiences, which are mainly experiences of extreme suffering, can become conscious.

Suddenly, this little seed begins to sprout, and there's suddenly a minimum of awareness arising. Now, for a very unconscious human, in other words, now we know what unconscious is, totally identified with the conditioned mind, so that you inhabit a conceptual reality, mostly, and you judge whatever you perceive around you, every other human being, you judge them through the veil of your conceptual reality. So all you ever see is a completely distorted view of what things are like, or what another human being is like.

And you have a totally distorted view of yourself, too. A conceptual sense of identity, only conceptual, meaning it consists of thought structures, thought forms. And so when that happens, for example, it's easy to condemn a large section of humanity for certain reasons which are conceptual, because, for example, they don't believe the same things that you believe.

Therefore, they are less than human. Therefore, I need to kill them. That sounds crazy.

Of course, it is insane. But it is the reality of many humans, and has been for a long time. Now, a certain percentage of humanity are awakening out of that complete identification with conditioned thinking, and this is why you are here.

You would not be here if the transcendent consciousness that is beyond thinking were not already arising in you. That has brought you here. And it sometimes happens that people book a place to come to a retreat, or a conference, or a talk, and a day before, or on the day that they're supposed to come, the mind takes them over and says, what's the point?

Why should you go to that retreat? Why did I book that? It just doesn't make sense.

Why should I waste my time with that? And then they believe in the thoughts that arise, and the gravitational pull of the unobserved mind takes over, and then they stay home and don't come, and are miserable there. And the next day, the unobserved mind says, why didn't you go to that conference you had booked?

You always do that. You never, never stick to anything. You're no good.

And so you can be miserable that way, and you're still trapped in the conceptual world of only thought, no awareness of thought. And then in those humans, there's no stillness. The stillness is the space between two thoughts where awareness shines through, where awareness arises.

And in many humans, that has not happened yet. In others, it happens sporadically. And there are many, including many of you who are here, you are going through the awakening process, which means sometimes you're awake and conscious, and sometimes you're not.

And you know the difference when you get trapped in your thoughts, and they are telling a whole story about life, about yourself, about other people, about what they did and didn't do, and should have done, and what you should have done but didn't do, could have done, and might still do, but probably won't. And then you get trapped in there, and you inhabit a world of misery. You create your own personal misery, and occasionally you have little moments when you say, oh, isn't that great?

This great thing has just happened to me. And then you put this on Facebook, look, this has happened to me. Nowadays, you're not confined to your head for your conceptual reality.

You put it out there, this mental construct, and you very carefully choose the things that you put out there. And it's a mental construct, supported by pictures of yourself. Or look at me, this is where I am.

It's a mental construct. And then those people who read it, they believe that that is your reality, and they feel bad. And then to make up for that, they create their own mental construct.

And so the clever human mind has come up with countless inventions to avoid stillness, more now than ever, as it come up with things that constantly demand your attention, and stimulate the identification with thinking, that greatly increase the clutter. Clutter is the word I use for useless thinking, the clutter of your mind. It is fed daily by a continuous stream of incoming text messages that you need to think about and reply to.

Many of them say nothing significant, most occasionally. And then many other things, social media, you think you're having a relationship with other human beings, but it's a very superficial relationship. A lot of it is conceptual.

I have met people who have fallen in love with people they've never met. They met them online, and they fell in love. What do they fall in love with?

A mental image that they have formed. Somebody who came to me when I was still doing counseling years ago, fell in love with a man. He fell in love with a woman, and he talked to her.

That was, I think, in times even before Facebook and things like that happened. He fell in love, and maybe she fell in love with him. For several months, they talked every day.

And I said, you have to meet. You don't make plans for getting married before you meet her. And finally they met, and that was the end of it.

So the unconsciousness is something that in many of you still arises occasionally. You get taken over by mind streams. You again believe that every thought that arises is the truth.

You do not question your thoughts. You forget about Byron Katie, who says, is that true? When a thought arises, is that true?

Is that really true? So most of you are here because you are engaged in this awakening process. The awakening process is happening in you.

You may not be conscious all the time, present all the time, but it's there enough for you to bring you here, and it has began to transform your life. And then there may be a few people here in whom this has not happened, and the only reason why they're here is to please their spouse. Or they couldn't say no.

Or a friend who says, you have to come to this. You really need it. I want you to understand what he's talking about.

And your friend says, maybe he talked for two hours and he didn't say anything. Now

we're at a peculiar time on the planet that makes it even more important for us to be here at this time when there is an intensification, seemingly, of unconsciousness. Although what you hear in the news is not the whole story by any means.

This event here, for example, is of greater importance, although it only involves maybe a thousand people, is of greater importance than almost anything you will read or watch in the news tonight, because it involves humanity reaching a new level of consciousness where they no longer generate insanity and suffering for themselves and each other. But is it going to be on the news tonight? I don't think so.

Unless one person goes totally crazy in here. Now this is funny because it's absolutely true. And when you look at it like that, you can see that that also is insane.

That if one person becomes crazy out of thousands, then that's the news. But a thousand people becoming conscious and not being crazy is not the news. Despite the fact that what we hear and listen in the news is distorted and one-sided, it is true that there is a certain intensification of unconsciousness on one level on the planet.

And at the same time, there is also an intensification of the arising of new consciousness. So there's an acceleration or intensification of both the gravitational pull that creates senseless suffering and the arising of the new. So as I said, in the mainstream media, it's mostly the gravitational pull is the news mostly.

But then there's an underground movement of which we are almost underground. Not totally underground anymore since Oprah, but so it's gone a little bit overground. She helped a lot with that.

That's there. But what is happening here is still dismissed by the, a lot of the mainstream media. They have a certain way of reporting on it if they ever, if the rare cases when they do report on it.

And that applies even to the so-called the high level media. It would be rare to find a objective report. And if the New York Times wrote about this, there would be an element of irony of creeping in and dismissing it as a fad.

Mindfulness is a fad. It's a passing phase for humans who haven't made it. It's a substitute for whatever.

So on one level, things are getting worse. Seems that is true. But on another level, things are getting better.

You sometimes read people saying it's never been as bad as it is now. The world situation is so critical now. It's never been as bad as it is now.

Well, people have short memories or haven't read any history books. All you need to do

is go back to the first half of the 20th century if you think it's never been as bad as now. You're fortunate.

Your karma is, must be relatively good that not only that you're here, but you are not living through the first half of the 20th century. It was the height of insanity and senseless suffering. Not only the two world wars, but all the other conflicts in between and including governments killing their own people by the millions in Russia, Germany, China, Cambodia, and so on.

So anybody who doubts that the human mind does not have a strong element of insanity, which is the gravitational pull of the unconsciousness, should really read some history, history book, just a short account. And then you, and then you read the details. This is unbelievable.

In the same way that even now, when you read certain things that happened today and yesterday in certain parts of the planet, see, this is totally crazy. And yet the unconscious beings in the West, it's not as much on the surface is not as the unconsciousness is not so immediately apparent in the West, Western countries, but it's connected to the extreme forms of violence that's happening on other parts of the planet. It is connected.

I don't want to get into politics. So our task is primarily to embody the new consciousness, which I sometimes call presence. And this is why we're here.

So that this presence can arise more fully in us. That's the reason why we are here. There's nothing you can do ultimately about changing the world out there.

Although if you will feel called upon to help in certain areas, that's a wonderful thing. The most vital thing is to tackle the roots of human unconsciousness. The human unconscious tackling human suffering on the level of cause that is vital.

Then you can help alleviate suffering on the level of effect. If that is what you feel you need to do, you can help humans, or you can travel to places where there's turmoil and suffering. If you feel called upon to do that, knowing that you may not survive, that's fine.

And you can help there. But knowing also what matters is your state of consciousness, because that creates the world. The world is a reflection of your state of consciousness, what you experience as the world as your reality.

There's a strong correlation between your predominant state of consciousness and how you experience reality. There is a saying, which may not be a politically correct statement, but I'm not too concerned about political correctness. Political correctness, by the way, is a wonderful thing because, I'll just mention this briefly, even to talk about political correctness may not be politically correct.

I don't know. Political correctness starts with, this is how through the, when there's lack of awareness, there's also lack of balance. Because only awareness can bring in the balance between the yin and the yang, for example.

So when humans suddenly become aware that if I make certain statements about certain groups of humans that is insensitive, and when I make those statements, those humans are affected by it and they suffer. And this is a wonderful realization. It means there's empathy in you.

There's an awareness of how your words impact another human being. There's an awareness that your judgments of a whole race, of a whole group of people, a nation or a tribe or whatever, impact these people. And so you are more careful with what you say.

And this is how political correctness arises, what is now called political correctness. It arises from something good, the ability to empathize with another human being and to see that your judgments are just judgments. So there's some awareness there.

And then if you take something to an extreme and then awareness gets obscured again, and then that in itself originally was a good thing, becomes completely unbalanced. And then suddenly you say, there's something dreadfully wrong with you if you call a group of people that includes women, you guys. Apparently the latest thing, that's not politically correct because they are women, they're not guys.

This is just one example of many, if you can read about it for hours on the internet and you can get upset about it either one way or the other. Now you take something to an extreme. Why do people say you guys?

Because of the inadequacy of the English language, which does not have a second person plural, does not have a you that means all of you. It only has you, which means you can mean one person or you can mean many people. So they came up spontaneous with this you guys and many women use it to address other women and say you guys.

And I think unless we eliminate that expression, which is possible, otherwise in 50 years time it'll be in the dictionary. It will have become the second person plural, which means you, which other languages have a different word for it. In Spanish it's vosotros, in German it's ihr.

So there are extremes of political correctness when it becomes insane also. And whenever awareness disappears, whatever the mind does, sooner or later becomes a form of insanity in the absence of awareness. Communism was a wonderful thing to start with.

Communism was, you could see the dreadful inequality between how people, certain groups of people were exploiting all the millions of workers and somebody saw that, we need to change that. Look, these people are exploiting all these workers. We need to

remove power from these capitalists and the state will run things.

It's all wonderful. So they wanted to create a better world. It's a great idea.

But what they had not thought about is their own state of consciousness. And the ego, the ego, that ego by the way is the unconsciousness of identifying with your mind completely. So they had looked at the, how do we need to change the world?

But what they forgot is how, what about my state of consciousness? And then the same evils that they wanted to eliminate, they recreated in another way. And you find it in all the countries, in many third world countries where every few years the government gets overthrown and a new government comes in.

And of course, very often the people who want to overthrow the government, they have good intentions. They say these people are corrupt. We need to get rid of them.

Look, they're exploiting the people. True, true, true. So vote me in or whether you want me or not, I will, I will remove this government, this corrupt government and I will create a better government for you people.

And the moment they achieve power, the latent ego in them suddenly grows. Give power to a seemingly meek person who has no worldly power and seems, oh, this person is relatively egoless. He's so, this is a person who has, has a job.

He's told what to do and he does it. Or she seems, the ego is always in these, the politicians, they have the big egos. And look, this, this man has no, virtually no ego.

And this is because the ego has not many opportunities to enhance itself. The only place where his ego functions is at home when he relates to his wife and his children. That's where the ego can have a little bit of strengthening.

But give this person real power and the ego will suddenly, the latent ego will suddenly grow to a monstrous size. And this has even happened in spiritual communities. There was a spiritual community in Oregon last century where some of you may know it.

Osho, the spiritual teacher at the community in Oregon. A few people were given power in that community and they were very, very meek and mild people, especially one woman was given all power. The woman was before very, very almost subservient and seemed to have no ego whatsoever.

And the moment she was given power, it only took a few weeks, a few months, and suddenly in ego inflation happened very quickly. And suddenly you have a monster there. And suddenly people started walking around with machine guns in the spiritual ashram.

She said, we need to protect ourselves from these evil people outside. Ego, the ego loves

its enemies. It needs its enemies to, in order to enhance its own fictitious sense of self.

So it creates the enemies, totally unconscious. And that's how many politicians do it. When other countries are demonized, the media do it.

All forms of unconsciousness, lack of awareness, when ego takes over and runs the show. And the suffering that humans are enduring, the collective suffering, most of it is not due to, at least not in the past two or 300 years, is not due to natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods and volcanic eruptions and tidal waves and so on. A larger part of it is human created.

And that's an amazing fact. Millions of people going through, living through hell in the 20th century alone, but the hell is created by other humans. That is the state of consciousness that has been prevalent for a very long time on the planet.

I do not usually predict the future because it's, I believe you cannot really predict it because there are many factors that are involved here. I am absolutely certain of the awakening of humanity, that it will happen. And the fact that we are here is a sign, of course, that it is happening already on a certain scale, on a certain level.

What I am not certain of is whether the awakening that's arising in a certain percentage of humanity now, the spiritual awakening, whether that is sufficient to prevent the gravitational pull of the old consciousness, to call it that, from creating enormous havoc, thereby producing suffering for millions of people on a collective scale, which in turn will eventually bring about an arising of the new. So the only question is here, is the new consciousness of humanity going to arise out of where we are now, or are we going to experience before there is a large scale awakening of humanity?

Because this is not yet large scale, it's large scale in certain small areas of the planet. Does humanity, is the unconsciousness so heavy that humans need to go through a period of intense suffering before there is a collective awakening? And the intense suffering will be self-created.

And that question applies to any individual also. Is this human being capable of spiritual awakening, or does he need, or he or she need to go through more suffering before it can happen? It's a simple thing that applies on all levels, both personal and collective, for the individual and the collective.

[Speaker 2] (32:26 - 32:46)

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listening.

Eckhart Tolle Right Action Follows Awakened Consciousness [8c82cac7-073e-4862-9fd9-016d046c756d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:54)

Right action follows awakened consciousness. In this episode, Eckhart explains to a live audience that a deeper movement has brought them together and the goal is to help them awaken. He says many ancient spiritual teachings point to this timeless idea of metamorphosis, including the parables of Jesus and others.

He explains that the root of the word Buddha means to be awake in Sanskrit. Eckhart explains when we shift to higher consciousness, we have access to wisdom, which is far deeper than intelligence. Ironically, he says more knowledge will not save us.

In fact, intelligence often works in service of madness, technology, war and weapons of mass destruction. He believes only wisdom together with right action will help our ailing world and these can only spring from awakened consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:57 - 51:01)

Wonderful to be here after such a long time in this beautiful place. Thank you for your welcome. Let's come into the present moment.

It might be a good idea, which simply means to start with to acknowledge the present moment, what is. If you have encountered any kind of irritation on your way here, which is quite possible because one encounters many sources of irritation every day. Then I suggest to that you look at it, feel it.

And instead of saying, I am irritated, you say, there's irritation in me and I can feel it. This is a big difference. It's not just a play with words.

The difference between saying I am irritated or angry or sad or whatever the condition may be and saying, this is what I feel or that that is what is in me at the moment. By saying that you have taken a step back. You're not in the grip of the irritation.

You're the awareness behind the irritation. And that's the beginning of an awakening to be the awareness behind whatever arises. And if one starts with any, whatever has arisen in the past hour or in the past two and a half years, many people carry all kinds of stuff that has accumulated during that time, particularly when we all had to face the same collective challenges.

It could be fear. It could be anger. You are beyond that, but most humans don't know that yet.

The term we use is awakening. We are talking about the possibility of a awakening. This

is why we're here.

Our evening, this gathering here is an event that should be seen in the context of the awakening of human consciousness. And almost all of you are here because you are already awakening. If you were not already awakening, you would perhaps never have heard of this or would see no point whatsoever in listening to me.

And I welcome particularly those a few people here. I'm sure there are some who were dragged here by a friend or relative and said you really must come and listen to this guy. And if that is the case, if somebody told you that, I think I'm sure he or she is right.

The question is though whether this evening will be meaningful to you. It may be, in which case it could bring about the beginning of an awakening. Or it could be that you're not quite ready for awakening yet, which is fine, in which case you would find this evening at best boring and possibly even irritating.

And that's fine too. If you absolutely cannot stand it anymore, feel free to remove yourself. Nobody will judge you because most people here are sufficiently enlightened not to judge anybody else.

And if you're not ready, then as I said, it's absolutely fine. All it means is you need a little bit more suffering. And the universe, or whatever you want to call the greater intelligence that lies behind all phenomenal existence, will make sure that you get what you need for your awakening.

So that's all very well. Now it may well be that awakening is not necessarily something, even though it may be happening to you, it may not necessarily be a term that you would have applied to what you experience as perhaps as some shift in consciousness, some improvement in your mental emotional state, a greater ability to harmonize with the present moment. But perhaps you would not have called it awakening, or you may not be quite sure why we call it awakening.

And if you are totally new to this, you say, I'm already awake, what is he talking about? But if you look at traditions, spiritual traditions, it's a very ancient term, the term of awakening. It goes back thousands of years to the time of the Buddha and perhaps even beyond.

The Buddha is not a name. The term arose when 2,500 years ago there was a man, Gautama, who later became known as the Buddha. People asked him, he was giving spiritual teaching, probably about living in the present moment.

And they asked him, who are you? What is you? Who are you?

And instead of giving his name, he said, I am Buddha. At that time, it wasn't a recognized title. But the root of the word Buddha in Sanskrit is to be awake.

So all he said is, I'm awake. That's who or what I am. Well, that's interesting.

So the Buddha is the one who is awake. Now, and you might look at this hidden teachings in Jesus in the Gospels that are not usually understood by conventional Christianity. They have a superficial interpretation of it.

We could call that exoteric Christianity instead of esoteric Christianity. Jesus says, for example, in, now I'm going to impress you with my knowledge, chapter 13, verse 37, Gospel of Mark, he says, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. Oh, stay awake.

And many, there are various parables about staying awake. So the, his disciples, he was, his function was to awaken his disciples to bring about at least the beginning of the awakening process. And then now the challenge is to stay awake.

We start to awaken, but now you have to stay awake. So quite a few times in various places, Jesus talks about the importance of staying awake, staying alert. All ancient teachings, all true deep teachings point to that.

It's a timeless message. And one more thing, if you go back and look at spiritual traditions in ancient Indian spiritual philosophy, there is a term which in Sanskrit is Turiya. Turiya means the fourth, first, second, third, fourth.

Turiya means the fourth. Now what that refers to is the fourth state of consciousness. First state of consciousness is deep sleep.

Second state of consciousness is the dream state. The third state of consciousness is conventional wakefulness. And the fourth state of consciousness, Turiya, is the state of, well, the awakened state, the aware state.

So it points to that as ultimately the next stage in human evolution. And this is why we are here. The wider context for being here goes far beyond the individual personalities that are here, including this personality.

There is a deeper movement happening here that has brought us here together. And that is the movement of the awakening of consciousness. That's why we are here.

And this evening is designed, one could say, or intended to deepen or accelerate that awakening, and also to point out possible or likely obstacles that probably will arise in your life to prevent the awakening. Because there are certain patterns in you that do not want you to awaken. The patterns that make up the egoic self, the egoic sense of self, which is the state of consciousness of normal wakefulness.

But compared to the awakened state, normal wakefulness is a dreamlike state. Now, of course, I don't just want to talk about it. I would like this gathering to be experiential, so that it's not just words or concepts, although it operates, of course, also on that level,

but something deeper arising, something deeper that is touched in you, and that perhaps by being here accelerates, comes forth more easily and more quickly.

All spiritual teachings are really ultimately here to save time. Ultimately, you get enough suffering and you awaken eventually. And that is the strange thing.

The awakening into this new aware consciousness, another word we could use, to be present, another word we could use to point to it, it strangely, and I must say, unfortunately, it doesn't happen while you are in your comfort zone. It hasn't happened to anybody in their comfort zone, although everybody's longing for a comfort zone. Ah, I can finally, everything is fine.

I've sorted out my life. My relationships are great. Not that you should not strive to have a great life, to live well, to achieve things, to have good relationships is a wonderful thing.

Okay, that is true. But it's also true that quite often, relationships are not that good. And it's also true that for many people, the main source of suffering is their relationships.

And that's only one, one source of suffering. So many things make up your life situation. Your relationships are very important, your health situation, your professional situation, your living situation, where you live, what your status in society, whether could you consider yourself to be a success or failure, weird terms.

And certainly, if you listen to this world to tell you whether your life is a success or failure, that is very misleading because this world is, to a large extent, let's say, to put it mildly, a little bit insane. And if you allow the world to tell you your worth, that you're listening to a somewhat insane person to tell you who or what you are. So what awakens us is the difficulties of life where you get a shock here and there.

One word we could use is adversity. So we encounter many different kinds of adversity that begins in childhood. There's no child that does not encounter already at an early age adversity, difficulties, challenges of one kind or another, some far greater than others.

That is true. But no child is free of suffering. And even if you are a very conscious parent and a very careful parent, if you want to, you do all your best to prevent the child from suffering.

You do everything in your power to prevent the child from suffering. And then if you succeed for several years in preventing your child from suffering on all levels, then unfortunately the fact that the child has never encountered adversity will become the child's greatest suffering. So you can't win.

And of course adversity comes. It can come as a personal challenge. It comes into your

life large and small.

And usually people complain when challenges happen. Challenge is a term that is a kind of euphemism for something, but usually it's bad. But if you're spiritual, then we call it, it's a challenge.

Well, that's good. Okay. If you're not spiritual, it's dreadful stuff.

Awful, awful. Oh, it's a challenge. It's easy to tell somebody else it's a challenge, but when it happens to you, it might be different.

So challenges will come. Every day small challenges come. And then periodically, from time to time, bigger forms of adversity come into your life.

It's inevitable. And that is always the possibility of awakening out of the egoic state. The possibility arises.

It does not necessarily happen yet. As one first, second, third challenge comes into your life, the possibility is there. So there are not many things you need to remember from this evening because it's not memory-based, concept-based.

But if you don't remember, one thing is when unexpected things happen that your mind says, this shouldn't be happening. Why is this to me? Why does he behave like that?

He shouldn't do that. He shouldn't have said that. That shouldn't be happening.

Why am I here? Can't they do something about it? They really shouldn't.

All kinds of narratives in your mind that make you unhappy. Not the situation. The narrative makes you unhappy.

Oh, that's an interesting thing, by the way. When you find irritation arising or some kind of suffering, the Buddha calls it dukkha, which is, he says, wherever you go, you'll find it unless you awaken. Dukkha, usually translated as suffering, can also be translated as unsatisfactoriness, misery, unhappiness.

Wherever you go, any situation, relationships, sooner or later, often sooner rather than later, something goes not quite right. Have a look at your relationships. You fall in love.

Oh, that's the end of my suffering. And so at this early stage, before you move in together, you can always tell when you're in a restaurant with a couple sitting and having dinner, you can tell whether they've been married for a while or it's their first or second date. It's their first or second date.

It's a totally different way they look at each other. They look at the other as a kind of god or goddess. They are not living together yet.

And then they start living together and then, oh, I forgot to mention the married couple or the one they've been living together for a while. They relate to each other in a different way. They may both be on their phones.

And I sometimes wonder, are they texting each other or is one or both of them already looking at the app that they forgot to delete that brought them together in the first place? I want to see what else is out there. So you begin to live with somebody and then one day something arises in that person that you didn't know was there.

Who is that person? Some weird, some kind of transformation. They're probably this nasty creature.

And suddenly you have to, and then you really begin to doubt, have I made a terrible mistake? Maybe you've already signed a piece of paper that's, to promise you're going to be together forever, then it's even more problematic. But no matter where you go, whatever situation you go into, you will encounter, something doesn't quite work out the way it is expected.

So humans have this vision that it is possible to achieve, to have your life work out on all levels and for very brief moments in time that is possible. My health is great, fantastic relationships, great income, wonderful place to live, beautiful children, they're all doing well. Everything is absolutely fine.

Everything on every level. Well, if that is the case with you at this moment, then just wait a little. And sooner rather than later, somewhere, somewhere, something is no longer right.

And life continues like that. But humans, they always believe there's something drastically wrong if they meet these unexpected challenges. There's something drastically wrong.

Because they believe that the world or life is here to make them happy. And that is a huge misperception. And if that your belief is here, the world is here to make you happy, then you will become very frustrated because it can't do that.

And so if you have this discrepancy, your expectation, and the reality that life is always problematic, it always brings up something, no matter how much positive thinking you do, which is a wonderful thing to do, how careful you are in arranging your life, you do your best everywhere, even then, and you should do your best. And positive thinking is good, far better than negative thinking. So I recommend positive thinking, but it will bring good things into your life.

But nevertheless, adversity will still happen. It is designed to be so. So humans have this expectation there's something wrong with their lives.

That's how life works. A reflection of life is a movie. If you watch a movie, it's a reflection of life.

Now, one could almost say the plot in every movie, if you want to simplify it to its simplest denominator, I can describe the plot in almost virtually every movie that you see in the following way. Very early on in the movie, something goes wrong. Something has to happen to the characters.

They have to be challenged in one way or another, unless it's an absolute comedy and just everything goes wrong and you're supposed to laugh about it. So something needs to go wrong, otherwise you will fall asleep in the movie, or you'll walk out. So what keeps you awake in the movie is adversity that the characters encounter of one kind or another.

Wow. So in the movie you demand it, but in your personal life you resent it. So the things of the world are not here obviously to make you happy because if that were the case, the world would be failing you.

And of course, some people have this underlying belief that the world is somehow withholding something from them, that the world is being unfair to them. Or they call it God, and then they stop believing in God, because if there were gods, wouldn't that mean that only good things happen to me? If I go to church every Sunday and pray, doesn't that mean that only good things will happen to me?

And no, it doesn't. So they blame God, they blame the world, they blame certain sections of society, etc., for their unhappiness. But it's in the nature of things.

Of course we should improve our lives and improve society also. And there can be improvements, but to pursue a utopia, either in your personal life, a utopia of everything absolutely great, or to pursue a utopia collectively, which was the case for example with communism, there were perhaps some good ideas behind it. We must achieve equality, we must achieve to make life better for everybody.

That was a good idea. What they neglected to consider is that it was only a good idea, but the awakening had not happened in any of them. So the egoic state just had a good idea.

And then it tried to implement that idea with disastrous results. Disastrous, millions and millions dead, killed. Disastrous results starting with a good idea, good intention.

Isn't there a proverb about intention? The road to hell is paved with good intentions. So good intentions are good, but in the absence of awareness, which is another word for the awakened state, in the absence of awareness, good intention is not enough.

It often brings about the opposite. And awareness is inseparable from wisdom. What we

call wisdom arises out of awareness.

And so without wisdom, we cannot bring about a better world, and every avenue we pursue and any action we take to bring about a better world very often is counterproductive and actually makes things worse. Do you want to attack a problem without knowing all the repercussions and consequences? Because intelligence is something that is different from wisdom.

Wisdom is something far deeper. Wisdom arises out of the awakened state. Intelligence is usually in the use of the ego.

So an increase of intelligence is not going to save us. An increase in knowledge is not going to save us. We already are drowning in knowledge.

It's all in your phone. You can get all the knowledge you want in your phone and it can drive you crazy. So intelligence is often in the service of madness.

You build weapons of mass destruction. You need great intelligence to build these things, and yet it's intelligence in the service of madness. So what the world needs is wisdom.

Wisdom is able to see the totality of a situation, and it doesn't attack one problem. It sees the totality. Then right action, which is a Buddhist term that's frequently used, right action arises out of a right awakened consciousness, and right action cannot arise out of the egoic consciousness.

So this is the context. This is the awakening. Now let's go more deeply into the actual realization of the awakened state, and what is the unawakened state.

To put it in the most simple terms, the unawakened state is you are run by the thinking mind. There's a continuous stream of thinking that goes through your mind, and it absorbs your intention almost completely. You're completely in the conceptual mind, and you can look at a person quite often.

You can see how absent rather than present a person is. They're completely in their thinking mind. You go, they're not really here.

They just have enough consciousness so that not to stumble, to trip over some furniture, or to stumble into something. Just enough awareness of their surroundings, and even then maybe not even enough until an accident happens because they're totally in their minds. So there's the voice in the head for many people.

It never stops talking. It's a continuous little man or woman or maybe a transgender person, who knows, and it is talking, commenting on things, interpreting, judging according to its conditioning. That's how it is.

I wonder what he's doing there. What is this? What am I going to do tomorrow?

Yesterday, tomorrow, yesterday, tomorrow, next moment, last moment, never this moment. Always previous moments or next moments. So you live almost exclusively in past and future.

There is the burden of the past, which often for many humans, yes, there are some good memories, but even good memories bring up nostalgia because you feel bad because the good things are no longer here. So even the good memories can make you unhappy. But then there are many bad memories.

Bad. There are grievances. There's all kinds of feelings of guilt.

What you did, and you now know it was bad. You shouldn't have done it, but it was 20 years ago. Guilt or grievance, something that somebody or the world did to you.

Oh, and you carry it like a burden. For many people, they have this veil. They look at the world through the veil of mental, emotional conditioning.

And more often than not, the veil is not a pleasant one. There are many people who carry a huge amount of grievances in their mental, emotional field. And then if a person lives with a grievance or many grievances, they become a walking grievance.

And there are people, many who are, one could say there are grievances looking for cause. The slightest thing that goes wrong will add fuel to the underlying accumulated emotion, pain body, I call it. And it will feed that.

It will look for the things that are wrong. It will look for things to be unhappy about. It will look for things to criticize in others.

So the egoic state is a state of complete identification with the thinking mind. And so then you live with the burden of past and future. The future often is anxiety, because who knows what's going to happen to me.

The future, of course, also promises hope. Maybe things will get better. And of course, sometimes they do get better until they don't anymore.

So you have hope, you live with hope. Everybody looks for the future for some kind of relief or liberation. I look to the future because I hope that my life is eventually going to work out, out there somewhere.

It's going to work out. I still have that hope. I'm going to make it.

That's a weird expression. Are you going to make what? I'm going to make it.

Yes, you can make it. What am I going to make? It means to arrive at some point of completion.

And sometimes you do achieve things, which is wonderful, but ultimately what you were looking for through that achievement, it cannot give you. What you are looking for is something deeper. What every human is looking for is something deeper than the world can give you.

The world can only challenge you, give you challenges and adversity so that you awaken. The world cannot, as I said, it cannot make you happy because it's not here to make you happy, but it has another purpose. It is here to make you conscious.

That's how it operates. Also, that means whatever arises in the present moment is just right for this moment, for you at this moment. But if you are stuck in the mind, the egoic mind, then you will completely ignore or even continuously dislike the present moment.

And that is an amazing way to live. It is dreadful, but millions still live like that without knowing it unconsciously. They live for the next moment until they get very old.

Then they know there's not much time left. Then the past becomes more and more important. The happiness of the past.

So living for the next moment is for most people unconscious and quite normal. They live hoping that at some point they are going to achieve fulfillment. And little fulfillments come here and then.

There's nothing wrong with it. It's wonderful when you achieve things. It's even wonderful when you fall in love.

Enjoy it. It's not going to last, but enjoy it. I've met, fortunately, been able to meet over the years quite a few people who are, in the eyes of the world, highly successful.

They've got everything. They've got fame. They've got money.

They've got everything. They have got their private jets. They can go anywhere at any moment, can have anything, any pleasure.

And they've told me that after they achieved fame and fortune, there was an initial time period when there was elation and they were on a continuous high. But then gradually, more and more, they experienced a very deep low in their mental emotional state, including depression and not wanting to live anymore. They had everything.

And some had to go to drugs to make life bearable. Had everything. It wasn't enough.

It wasn't enough. And then you can't fool yourself anymore. When you have everything, you can't fool yourself.

When I achieve that, I'll be happy. No, you have achieved everything, but you're not happy. So the worst thing would be for you to achieve to get everything that you want.

And then you can't fool yourself anymore and look to the future for some fulfillment. And that's really dreadful. So that is the human condition.

And it all is connected to who you sense yourself to be. Your identity. Your identity as who you are.

Your sense of self. That is the foundation for your life. Your sense of self.

And everybody is concerned with identity from childhood onward. The identity becomes very important. Of course, every human needs shelter and food, sustenance, shelter.

And one could say almost the next thing, well, the next thing is, as a human grows up, needs some kind of love or affection. But that's already bound up with identity. Because if you don't get love and affection, then you already have a deficient sense of self that's developed in early age.

So identity refers to your sense of self. And where does your sense of self come from? What does it mean to be you?

And usually, most humans, especially those who are not awakening yet, they look to their sense of identity through a narrative that is connected to their past. So I call that sometimes the story of me. So everybody has the story of me.

I call that, well, it's a narrative. And people call it, this is an interesting expression, they call it my life. So you think about my life.

Let me think about that. Well, it's a mixture of good and bad. It's been all kinds of weird things in the past.

And certainly, almost everybody says it didn't quite go the way I had imagined it to be when I was 18 or 17. And many people have a feeling something went wrong somewhere. Strangely, many people have the feeling they haven't started to live yet.

It's almost like I'm still, I'm hoping at some point I'm going to start living. Soon. I just need to meet the right person.

I just need to get that job. I just need to find this or that possession. Or if people would only recognize my worth, or one recognition of one kind.

It's an unconscious process. The longing, my life hasn't actually started yet. And some people have that throughout their life until finally they are surprised that they reach retirement.

And they still, maybe a few years before retirement, you can look to your retirement as the liberation. Then I can start living. Now I know when I retire, then I can start living.

Okay, two more years. One more year. Six months.

And then the moment comes. You sit in your office and the clock reaches five o'clock. It's my last day.

And then off you go. And the first few days and weeks are great because you go to the golf course and then sit around. If you have sufficient funds, you can have your cocktails.

You may not have sufficient funds these days, so that's another problem. So a few weeks pass and you sit there and you take a trip and you come back. And then you move to a better climate because you don't, let's move to Florida, okay.

And then you sit in Florida, just looking at the sun and then you play another game of golf. And then a kind of fatigue sets in. And then the mind says, and now what?

And nothing. Who am I now? I had this title.

I had a job description. I was the vice, the vice president of this company or whatever. And now I'm no longer a vice president.

And a great part of my identity was derived from the concept of vice president of the company. And suddenly the concept has dissolved. And who am I now without that?

Well, that's weird. I get this weird feeling of not being nobody anymore. It's, you're retired.

And it's a strange thing that it is not uncommon for people to die just two or three years after retiring because there's nothing there anymore to live for. They were looking towards retirement for some kind of solution, but that's not it. Everybody's looking where it cannot be found.

It cannot be found in the future. That what you're looking for cannot be found in the future because, don't tell anybody, but there is no future. There is no future.

There just seems to be a future. How can you say that there is no future? Obviously there's a future because I'm going to have dinner later.

And tomorrow I'm faced with, I'm going to have to meet that awful person again. Yes. How can you say there's no future?

Okay. In your immediate experience of life, have you ever experienced the future? Let me think about that.

Actually, no. But haven't you always thought the future was more important than the present moment? And do you treat it, do you treat the present moment as only a stepping stone towards a future?

Continuously, you are on your way somewhere, which is on a practical level, future worked quite well, but on a deeper level, future is very misleading. So I could say we are here for one and a half to two hours. I don't know how long, but do you actually experience the one and a half or two hours except as a thought in your mind?

Ultimately, you experience this event as a present moment experience, not a future. There is no, you cannot experience the future. So what we call future, although necessary here to function in this dimension, it's a necessary and very helpful thing.

Sometimes people look at me and they say, oh, you wear a watch? Why do you wear a watch? I thought you teach the now.

And in fact, quite a few people have given me watches that they have specially made. They say now, now, now, now. And somebody else gave me a watch with a totally blank face.

It has no mechanism in it at all. So when you look at it, you say, oh, it's present moment. No.

No, the reason why I wear a watch is there are two reasons. I don't like to be late and keep people waiting. I like to be on time.

And on a practical level, future works quite well. We met here because we use future for practical purposes. Otherwise, we meeting here, we would have waited a long, long time to meet here accidentally at some point.

One day, accidentally, we will all come together here. It could be maybe half a million years. And then finally, here we are.

So there is a paradox. On one level, you cannot deny the existence of time, certainly. In fact, on that level, where you cannot deny the existence of time, you also find that time, first of all, it gives you the possibility of growth and development, which is wonderful.

It gives you that possibility on this horizontal level, I call it. On the horizontal level, time gives you a child grows, gets stronger, learns things, etc. And even spiritually speaking, on the perspective of the horizontal dimension, the spiritual awakening seems to take time.

So time, on the one hand, seems like a good thing up to a point in a human being's life. And then time becomes your enemy, so to speak, because it is like an illness that you caught at the time of birth, and it certainly is going to kill you. There is no doubt that time is going to kill you and me.

And sometimes it does it in a cruel way. It begins to erode your body, which looked so great when you were young. Like, look at a fresh apple, put it on your windowsill.

It just exudes energy, and it's shiny, even without applying any substances to it. It's shiny on your windowsill, and there it is in its full splendor. And then you come back two weeks later, you left it on your windowsill, and it's a little bit less shiny.

Something is beginning to happen to it. And then you come back three, four, five weeks later, and it's beginning to kind of shrink, and it looks wrinkly. And if you leave it for long enough, it goes...

And the same happens to your body. You derive a significant part of your sense of self from identification with body image. And then this gives you, for perhaps 20 years of your adult life, it gives you a sense of who you are.

If you're a very beautiful... In addition to having a beautiful body, you might be so lucky that even your face is beautiful. They don't necessarily go together.

So the body becomes important for everybody. And even if your body is not beautiful, to some extent you identify, which means you derive your sense of self from the appearance of your body. So if it's beautiful, it gives you an enhanced sense of self.

And that sustains you for quite a while. If you're really strong and beautiful, then that can become the main part of your identity, is that, because you impress everybody you meet, either with your strengths or your beauty or both. The ego seeks always some kind of, through comparison, it seeks some kind of superiority, and it fears inferiority.

It seeks superiority. So the egoic sense of self is then derived from this image-making in your mind, a conceptual identity. And it's never happy for long.

It's rarely really at ease, except when it's taking a few drinks or drugs. Then you achieve some kind of self-transcendence, which is a spiritual term. Self-transcendence is to become free of yourself in the sense of egoic self, limited self.

Self-transcendence, everybody is ultimately longing for self-transcendence. They don't know that. They are longing for it.

And then all they can think of often is the need for some kind of substance to take in, for example, alcohol or some kind of smoke or other things that are quite destructive. When you have a little smoke, you may notice a change happening. Your mind slows down.

The mind which fuels your sense of self, the narrative of me and my life, slows down. You can't think that much anymore about your problems. I wanted to listen to this talk.

You can't listen. Your mind slows down. And after a few more puffs, you feel better.

But why do you feel better? Because you have achieved a small degree of self-transcendence. Ah, you're not thinking about your problems anymore.

You're kind of a bit more present. And then you go, you suddenly feel like a weight lifted off your shoulders. And some people, again, they laugh kind of crazily when they smoke that stuff.

And an outsider might think you've suddenly become enlightened. But you haven't. But you had a little glimpse, a little glimpse of self-transcendence.

However, it is not a direction of true awakening. Because the way I put it, you are falling below the thinking level. You think less and less.

And that's why you feel happier. You feel, perhaps, feel a little bit more your sense of being in the background a little bit. But you are moving in the direction of back to sleep, to unconsciousness, instead of rising above thinking to a state of relaxed alertness, which is presence.

So freedom from thinking is self-transcendence. It doesn't mean you don't think anymore, but you are no longer trapped in the dimension of thought, which before gave you your identity. That is the identity where you mentally construct an image consisting of words and images that becomes you.

You call it my life. And it's always problematic. There's no life that is not problematic.

And people spend a lot of time thinking and talking about their lives. They carry a burden and they call it my life. Does that sound familiar to some of you?

They walk with a burden, which is their life. But where is that life? What is that?

Well, it's not your life. You call it your life. But the truth is, that's your life situation, which has a past and future.

But your life is inseparable from the present moment. It can only ever occur, be experienced, happen in the present moment. That's where life is.

In fact, life and now are inseparable. There is no life apart from now.

[Speaker 2] (51:02 - 51:22)

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Eckhart Tolle Rising Above Life's Challenges [e68af1ef-fc97-4b85-8ef4-b5ad9c124fb2]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:26)

Rising above life's challenges. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience. He asks when life's challenges strike, how do we respond?

Do we rise above worn-out patterns with new awareness or do we spiral into the old unconsciousness? He says we shouldn't blame ourselves when we relapse. Suffering and setbacks are necessary and vital part of the awakening.

[Speaker 1] (0:28 - 39:36)

How reactive are you still? And don't condemn yourself. Whenever you discover some kind of reactivity in yourself, whenever you discover you've fallen back into complete identification with arising thoughts, it's good.

That discovery is the decisive moment. Oh, you lost it for a few hours, you lost it for a day or two. Challenges particularly.

And so wherever a problem arises in your life, a challenge arises in your life, there's the test. Are you a reactive person? Does the challenge draw you back into your reactive personality with its old conditioned patterns?

Or are you able to rise above conditioned thinking and then deal with the challenge? And you begin with little challenges. There are more little challenges in your life than big challenges.

You have both and then you have medium challenges. But the small challenges in your daily life probably come several times a day. And that's already a beginning of practice.

And you yourself can just think back on a day what were the small challenges. Now the challenges are of two kinds. External challenges and challenges that arise purely out of your mind.

There's no external situation that's challenging, but your mind is telling you that you are finding yourself in a challenging situation. At three o'clock in the morning, in bed, in a retreat, everything is quiet and fine, but suddenly your life is very challenging. And it's called my life.

Oh my God, my life. It's my entire life is just, what's the expression? I have so much on my plate.

Nice English expression. I have a lot on my plate. I have so much on my plate.

How am I going to deal with all this? How is it going to work out? You could even carry that your life, quotation marks, you can carry the burden of your life around with you, even as you walk around the lake.

You're walking with the burden of my life and you'd see the enormous discrepancy between the beauty of nature and my life. And you feel even worse about my life because nature is so beautiful, but you don't, you don't get, it's just, you feel so heavy and that's the unconscious state. And that's a huge challenge, but you don't even know it's a challenge for you.

It's, that's the reality of my life. And you never realize that the entire phenomenon that you call my life is ultimately a mental abstraction. And this mental abstraction is what gives you your sense of self.

It's amazing. And this is a burden, an enormous weight that you carry with you. I can often see it, not so much here, although I can't see every one of you, but I don't see that the heaviness that people carry in ordinary existence.

I sometimes, when I look at people, I feel that compassion because I can see what a heavy weight they are to themselves. And they don't, they don't know it. I can sense, I can feel the heaviness of their person, of their personality.

And for years, it has accumulated more and more. Very strange. This is just a little anecdote, but it's connected to this.

I'm often recognized in the street or wherever I am. That's just how it is. But quite often, I recognize the person who is going to recognize me three times later.

Before they look at me, I know that they are awakening. And that it is much more likely that the moment they look at me, they're going to recognize me. But not necessarily.

Of course, they have, might have awakened through other avenues of awakening. But the likelihood of being recognized, I often see that in people. He or she is, I don't think it like that.

It's just a knowing that without concepts, and I can sense any second now, they're going, oh, my God. Or not. But very often, I can be absolutely sure that they have never heard of me, or anybody else, anything to do with spiritual, because there is such a dense veil that they carry around, such a heavy weight.

There has not been even a glimpse of the transcendent dimension. There are still millions who live like that. And so, they carry that heaviness, and that heaviness is their personality.

And there's suffering in that. And they may not even know that they are suffering, that

the entire entity is a suffering entity. They don't know it because suffering has become so habitual to them that they no longer know they are suffering.

It's like a noise in the background that never stops. And after a while, you don't hear it anymore, until suddenly, this noise, which is quite disturbing, suddenly it stops. And you go, oh, what was that?

Well, that was a noise that had been going on for years, and you didn't even know it because it had become habitual. So, there's the suffering entity. The egoic self actually is invested in its suffering.

It grows through the suffering, through the resistance, through the complaining, through the drama, through the whatever it is. It loves it. It thinks it's it.

So, the heaviness of the personality here begins to recede, and it doesn't disappear completely. Of course, you remain a person with certain characteristics. But as the awakened consciousness that's emerging gradually becomes integrated, certain aspects of your personality also begin to change, especially the very dysfunctional ones that are creating suffering for yourself and others.

And there may be some that just don't change, but that's not a big deal. You may have certain limitations in this or that area, and it doesn't change. There was a spiritual teacher, a very powerful teacher in India, Nisargadatta, who was a chain smoker before awakening and remained a chain smoker after awakening.

He actually sold cigarettes before he awakened. He was a cigarette seller. You might have said, well, that's not very good karma.

But of course, when he awakened, he transcended karma. And finally, he died of throat cancer. It didn't matter to him anymore.

And some people judge him and say, if you were awakened, you would not be smoking anymore. That makes sense, doesn't it? But it didn't.

It was a limitation. So, give it some time, this integration, and apply the presence to every arising challenge in your life. And challenge, the greater part of challenges, well, a large part of challenges comes through other people, you might have noticed.

People can cause lots of challenges because they're so difficult to deal with. It could come through your health situation, the body, and it could come through your work situation, which is related to your financial situation. Those are the challenges that have certain external causes.

So you have, on the one hand, challenges that arise just through your mind, the unobserved mind, and then others, actual challenges in your external life. But the

question is, what is the state of consciousness with which you meet the arising challenges in your life? And ultimately, your entire life is not determined by what happens to you, but by how you respond to what happens.

That is your freedom, how you respond to any event that happens to you. And your response determines further events. The important thing is that you gradually begin to realize, oh, the sound is making a strange sound.

And you gradually begin to realize that what until recently you called my life is ultimately something relatively insubstantial. It's a story in your mind. And then that becomes less of a burden.

The entire narrative of me, of me and my life, is then gradually, and that is part of the integration, is gradually no longer perceived as a burden. And you no longer derive your sense of who you are from the story of your life, the narrative. So who you are is the presence now, and that's timeless, and it's unconditioned.

And all that remains then is memories. Of course you remember your past, but you have now at all completely different relationship with your past. What is that when we talk of your past?

Thoughts in your head is your past. And what's your future? Thoughts in your head is the future.

So both past and future are experienced and cannot be experienced in any other way as thoughts in your mind. The rest is just the immediate experience of this moment. And even whenever you label whatever you experience in this moment mentally by judging it this way or that, that's also the past that is coloring the way in which you're experiencing this moment.

So you have a certain relationship to whatever is arising in this moment, and you call it this or call it that, but there's another way of experiencing this moment, and that is accepting it as it is without the compulsive need to label it. And that's an amazing liberation. And then you are living as the deep eye more and more, and you no longer get the sense that you are this huge ball of problems that needs to be solved, a bit like the Gordian knot that's in Greek, I believe, in ancient Greek mythology.

I don't think it was even mythology, I think it's an actual historical fact. There was a Gordian knot, K-N-O-T. There was this huge thing, a rope that was tied into a huge knot.

I don't know how big it was. And the challenge was to disentangle this Gordian knot, and nobody could do it. Oh my God.

And they said, whoever can disentangle it will conquer the world. That's the story. And then a young man came, his name was Alexander, I think.

And he looked at it, and he drew his sword and cut through it. And so he became Alexander the Great, who conquered the known world at the time. And so the Gordian knot, I'm using this story as an analogy.

For the egoic self, it means you have tied yourself into a Gordian knot, me and my problems. And then you attempt to disentangle one thing after another. But while you solve one problem here, another one pops up there.

And then you go there. And then, okay, I've dealt with this now. That work problem is solved, finances are working again, that's great.

And then suddenly, your spouse goes off with someone else. Or suddenly you have a pain here to go. Life never leaves you alone for very long.

But the main thing is that this entity that the Buddha calls the self, it doesn't take time to transcend it. Because you would have to, to some extent, psychoanalysis tries to solve the problem of you. Although there is something to be said for occasionally looking at certain things in your past, but your main area, your main focus needs to remain the present moment, except ways when you might suddenly discover why it is that every time somebody makes you wait, you become extremely upset and angry, far beyond what would be warranted by this particular situation.

And suddenly you may remember, as you become more conscious of your emotions, that perhaps when you were a child, who knows, your dad abandoned you and the family when you were very young. And this sense of abandonment comes over you, even when you're waiting for somebody and somebody arrives late, you overreact totally because there's a heavy pain body associated with the idea of abandonment. And this has been unconscious.

And suddenly, as you bring more presence, you become more aware of that emotion that arises, instead of being it, you are the awareness that sees the arising of the emotion. And then it sometimes happens that when you clearly see the arising of an emotion, you may suddenly also remember where it started. You may, or you may not.

It could be helpful if you remember where it started. It's not an absolute necessity because it could have started in another lifetime. It could have started 30 million years ago when you were a sea creature crawling along and then you got eaten up by another one.

And that was the beginning of your pain. But the Gordian knot of yourself, the sword that Alexander used to cut the Gordian knot is what I sometimes call, I haven't used that expression in a while, is the sword of presence. And the sword of presence cuts through the accumulations of time in your mind.

Time is in your mind. The sword of presence cuts through all that. And that is the, the

image of the sword is a helpful one here.

And that is the entire teaching of Zen is based on that approach. It is a cutting through the BS. The unobserved mind creates that.

Or as Fritz Perls, the founder of gestalt therapy, I believe said, there are three types of garbage that the mind can create when it's not being observed. And that is chicken shit, bullshit, and elephant shit. If you can access this sword in any situation, especially when you feel the arising of unhappiness in whatever form, access the sword.

It is not suppression. It has nothing to do with suppressing a feeling. Suppressing a feeling requires willpower and requires you to go tense and you go, I'm not going to feel that.

I'm too present to feel that. I'm spiritual. I don't feel things like that anymore.

Sometimes you get, especially Westerners, but maybe also some Japanese who practice, who are Zen practitioners, they look extremely stern and, but there's something vital missing. They're mistaking willpower for realization, for presence. The true Zen master may look also stern, but they're behind that sternness, there is something else.

The high quality drawings of ancient Zen masters, you can see both dimensions. You can see the sternness in their facial expression, but a softness behind it. So that's the Zen master might look at you and go, but there's something else behind it.

This is not willpower. It's the sword of presence that cuts through time. So whenever you feel any kind of dysfunction arising in your life externally, any form of unhappiness, and I'm using this generic term, could mean all kinds of things, any form of suffering or unhappiness.

First of course, you need to recognize that it's suffering, that it already implies there's some awareness there. To get irritated somewhere is already a mild form of suffering, to get irritated by somebody or by some situation. The ego loves the irritation because the irritation makes something or somebody wrong.

The thing that irritates you is wrong. The person that irritates you is wrong. Oh, he's so irritating.

What does it mean? It means I get irritated when I look at him. He's not irritating.

I irritate myself when I listen to him. And when I look at him, I irritate myself. That's more true to say than he is irritating.

That's a ridiculous protection. So you do it to yourself. And as awareness grows, you realize that, that these are inner states that you do to yourself.

And then whenever any irrit, upset, or unhappiness in whatever form arises, you go, okay, I lost the present moment. Where is the present moment? Oh, it's here.

And the first thing, then quick two steps. First thing, sense perceptions. Suddenly you come to your senses.

That's part of being present. And then you go deeper. You become aware of yourself as the presence.

That's the sword. And there can be no, unhappiness can survive in the state of presence. No problem can survive when you're totally present.

A challenge? Yes, but not a problem. Do you have a problem?

I ask that in the power of now. Do you have a problem at this moment? Even if you have a toothache, it's a toothache.

It's not a problem. Yeah, but I need to go to the bathroom and I'm sitting here in the middle. I can't get up.

It's not a problem. No matter what happens, it's not a problem. I can't pay my mortgage on my house at the end of this month.

I asked, do you have a problem now? Yeah, I have a problem now. I can't pay the mortgage at the end of the month.

Now means now. So you have to come into the now. At this moment, there is no mortgage anywhere.

I can't see it. There's neither mortgage nor missing payment or anything of that kind. There's none of that at this moment.

The time may come when I sit down at a table and a piece of paper and I focus attention on the situation that may require action. And then I apply focused thinking. Money, where is it coming from?

What action can I do? Then you become still for three, four, five seconds and alert. So you're still present.

Even while you're thinking about how to solve the problem of how you're going to pay the mortgage at the end of the month, you're still. You go into stillness, alertness. Then you think again.

Then you come to the end. What else is there that I can do? I don't know.

You go back and you might have another thought and you write down the possible causes of action. And in the meantime, you don't complain about the situation and feel

sorry for yourself. Mental image of poor me, victim identity.

Why is this happening to me? What have I done wrong? Why is this always happening to me?

If that hadn't happened, this wouldn't have happened. Why did I allow that to happen? I should not have allowed that to happen.

Then I would be able to pay the mortgage. Why am I so stupid? Why am I always so stupid?

It goes on. It goes on and on. It's all mental constructions.

And then the amazing thing is something almost magical happens when you become aligned with the is-ness of things and live more and more in the present. First, not only are you able to apply focused thought much more powerfully, which you might need to solve what that particular situation, which is no longer a problem, it's a situation to be solved. Problem means your mind is thinking about it without any possibility of action right now.

And it's wild thinking, wild imagining even worse things. What happens if I can't pay it? I have to move out.

I'll be in the street or I'll be in some crummy little place or I have to buy a tent and I'll be living in a tent and I'll get winter will come and I'll be really cold and I'll catch a cold and I'll be ill and I can't pay the hospital bills. You apply focused thought to a situation and there's no longer a complaining entity, somebody who feels sorry for themselves. There's no victim anymore.

You're not a victim of life or anybody, not even a victim of yourself, of your dysfunctional behavior in the past. Many people have considered themselves victims of their own dysfunctional behavior. I should never have done that.

Why did I do that? I wouldn't be in this mess now if I, all that falls away when you approach the now with, you have this sort of presence it brings. But not only that, some magic comes in when you're aligned with the isness of things instead of internally resisting the isness of what is. Circumstances, I've experienced it many times in my life and other people have confirmed it.

Circumstances have a tendency of becoming more helpful, even though there may not be a direct correlation between an action that you take and a particular circumstance that is arising. In other words, it could be considered as a synchronistic event that suddenly arises that is helpful in your situation, but you don't know how it arose because there seemed to be no connection between anything that you did. And suddenly that thing arising, it could be a person you suddenly meet or some information that you

suddenly receive that opens a new way forward for you, an event, whatever it is.

This is why it does not seem to be, Carl Jung called it an acausal, which means a non-causal connecting principle, which means under the surface of this external sense-perceived reality, there's a deep connectedness of all things and all people. And when you align yourself with life, which is now, then the channel into the underlying invisible dimension where all is connected, the channel opens up. And then the totality tends to work for you rather than against you, which does not mean that life will be completely free of challenges.

It does mean, however, that you no longer perceive life as antagonistic. You no longer perceive it as hostile. The universe is no longer perceived as hostile.

And that's a huge shift. Millions of people still consider the universe hostile. And when this shift comes, when you align yourself with life, which is now, and that now has a depth to it, and that now is more than what's happening in the now, that now is the essence of who you are, that now is consciousness, that now is the space in which everything happens.

It's the underlying intelligence behind the manifestation of phenomenal existence. There's an underlying field of intelligence that connects everything, and you are only an aspect of that. And so it is much more likely that helpful circumstances will arise and solve your problems than if you are resisting what is, then you really have to struggle.

And if it is an external problem, not just an external challenge, not mind-created, a true external challenge also has the capacity of dolting you into awakening. It can give you a shock. It can destroy huge chunks of ego that had been there before.

And suddenly you're faced with this huge challenge. And people have gone through spiritual awakening only sometimes, even without ever having come into contact with any spiritual teaching, purely because the ego got burned up through enormous suffering in the face of challenge. And then the next stage was suffering drove them into surrender, total acceptance, no more complaining, no complaining entity.

It burned up the ego in them. Content suffering can burn up the ego. There are some people in prisons, a few, I don't know how many.

Of course, there are some people who are in prison falsely accused and condemned, but others have done very bad things in states of complete unconsciousness. And there are some people in prison who are in for life or even on death row. And through the suffering, ultimately self-inflicted, the karmic retribution that came to them, the suffering of either knowing I'm never going to get out of here or death is awaiting.

That suffering, for example, imagine I'm never going to get out of this prison. That's what they tell me. I'm never going to never.

So you project yourself into this unending dreadful future. And it's dreadful suffering. Your entire life is total, a total failure and totally messed up.

And I messed up completely. I did that. It's so painful.

And every day I have to think about that. What could be more awful? And then after dreadful suffering, something inside happens and and suddenly there's just intense presence.

You don't even go to the future anymore because it's been taken away from you. And there you are, the egoic identity completely burned away through suffering. So suffering is one way and entering presence voluntarily is a little easier, but you ready to do that now because you have had the suffering that you have had.

It has taken you to this point where you realize the possibility of voluntarily entering by choice, a different state of consciousness. This possibility has arisen in you, which is an enormous thing in human evolution. In the past, evolution has happened very, very slowly, a gradual increase in consciousness through multiple life forms over millions of years.

And now for the first time, a life form can consciously cooperate in entering a new stage, a new evolutionary stage, a new state of consciousness. But you needed the suffering to, it has had to function. And many of you know that you would not be here if you had not gone through states of unhappiness and varying degrees of suffering.

So let's be really thankful. You need suffering until you don't. And you have reached a point of realization where you don't need more suffering for your further, the evolution of your consciousness.

But in case you do, life will give it to you. You will continue. I'm not promising, I'm not telling you, you will not experience further challenges in life.

The difference, however, is as presence arises more and more, you're not transforming the challenges of life into unhappiness and into an unhappy identity. You're not transforming the challenges of life into an unhappy self, a victim self, an angry self, a complaining self, a heavy self, a very dense self, a self that if you were conscious, you would never want to live with. Unawakened people in many cases live with an entity, this mind made self that is so unpleasant, they would have left it long ago if that were a person that they live with.

They would have said, no way, I'm out of here. I'm not living with you. I don't want to live with you.

You make me unhappy all the time. And in a way, many of you have reached that point where you realized something else is possible. There is another way.

And so that was the beginning of your awakening. So as your practice, choose, they don't have to be long, brief moments of either when you're contemplating or when you're doing things, pure aware presence. So the person recedes, presence arises, and you begin to do little things in presence, and then you do bigger things in presence.

And that's how the integration happens. But choosing presence is vital. This is how the consciousness arises.

Now the question that may have popped up in one or two of you, I can almost hear it, is who chooses presence? Well, it's certainly not me as the ego doesn't choose presence. I'm now suggesting an alternative perspective on it that might be more helpful.

We could also say that presence chooses you. And then the next question arises, well, why did presence choose me? Well, you got out of the way.

For a moment, you stopped thinking and presence was there. But why was I able to stop thinking? Because presence was pushing up.

It wanted to emerge. Now, as you might have noticed, there's no question to the why questions. There can always be another why.

Children sometimes do that. The new state of consciousness wants to arise in humans. It's pushing.

And if you're totally close to it, millions, unfortunately, still are. Just watch the news tonight or don't. If you're totally close to it, the ego is so dense and heavy that there's not the slightest crack.

Then, of course, life knows the only thing that works is suffering. That's not fair. Yes, it is.

That's how it works. And ultimately, there are different levels of truth. They're all true on their own level.

Suffering is dreadful on its own level. From a higher level, human suffering is like a nightmare that you wake up from, from a higher perspective. And ultimately, no human being is an autonomous entity.

Every human being is an aspect of the totality of human consciousness. And the totality of human consciousness is an aspect of universal consciousness. So what looks to us on one level as a suffering entity from another level is an inevitable part of the awakening out of the dream of unconsciousness that the universe is dreaming.

You can know this even in your own life. You can look back on your suffering, as I can, and see how necessary and vital it was for the awakening. So if that's true in my life, it must be true everywhere else.

And it is even true when it seems totally senseless for the individual who is suffering. Because quite often, this particular individual may not awaken through the suffering. There's millions are suffering and die without experience and awakening of consciousness as this individual entity.

But the individual entity ultimately is only one aspect of the totality. And the essence of that individual entity is a timeless essence of consciousness itself that is never lost and cannot die. So ultimately, what is suffering is not truly the essence of who you are.

And from a higher perspective, all human suffering is the nightmare of humanity that is bringing about an awakening. If you had a nightmare, your desire to awaken, which would be much greater to awaken from that sleep, that dream, than if you were engaged in a relatively pleasant dream. Okay, let's have another drink.

And now another sensory experience. And it's, oh, it's not that bad. Let's dream a bit more.

Do you want to awaken? No, I don't think so. I'm not ready.

But suddenly, the door opens, and this incredible monster comes in through the door. Oh, my God. Do you want to awaken now?

Yes, please. Don't forget your sword of presence.

[Speaker 2] (39:37 - 40:00)

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Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Rising Above Our Limited Sense of Self [01af0a39-d2ac-4fd7-b6bc-b2da69e93ec6]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:54)

Rising above our limited sense of self. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions from a virtual audience around the world, including a young woman struggling with very low self-esteem. He explains intense self-criticism often originates in childhood and he says affirmations can help, like I am one with the power of all creation.

He explains it's important to be grateful for the opportunity to heal because it pushes us to grow beyond our limited sense of self. A young man asks when to stop connecting with dysfunctional family members in his life who are pushing him to the brink. Eckhart explains very unconscious people have no freedom of choice because they are totally controlled by their unconscious conditioning.

Eckhart encourages the man to think of visits with his family as a spiritual practice. He says all of life's difficulties can be a powerful force in our journey to awakening.

[Speaker 2] (0:56 - 0:58)

Hello Eckhart, how are you everyone?

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 1:02)

You are in, where in Ireland are you?

[Speaker 2] (1:02 - 1:08)

In Kilkenny, so south of Ireland around, yeah, yeah, so it's raining here now.

[Speaker 1] (1:10 - 1:14)

The green Ireland, the green, it's why it's green.

[Speaker 2] (1:15 - 2:07)

Yeah, that's it. Just my question Eckhart, I wanted to ask you how I can overcome my constant belief that I am not good enough or stupid as I feel this thought filters through my life in so many situations. I started a job in the last couple of months and every day I go in and I am afraid of getting in trouble for making mistakes and usually I do because I carry this belief and end up feeling worse because of it.

It's like a vicious pattern. In my relationships I can see it too as a belief of not being good enough gives me low self-confidence and I act and behave in this way. Because of this many times I don't get respected.

I would love to be able to hold my head up and be able to speak for myself and not feel worthless, an image I carried with myself for many years. Can you give me any advice on this and thanks so much and I love your teachings.

[Speaker 1] (2:08 - 18:01)

Thank you. Quite a few people have similar belief and it often goes back to childhood. I don't know whether in your case it originates in childhood relationship or your parents related to you, whether they often criticized you or these can often be the cause.

But whatever the cause may be, what you're faced with is the situation right now. There's already, let's be grateful, that one thing has already happened and that is that you are aware that that is a form of conditioning within yourself. That's already a gain in consciousness because without the awareness you would completely believe that.

You don't 100% believe it anymore because there is an awareness you know that is a form of conditioning in you and the awareness is a beginning of the ability to go beyond it. In practical terms, I would say there's one intermediate step you can take and then there's a more fundamental thing that you need to realize. The intermediate step is you could use certain affirmations, you can choose them yourself, to affirm that you are capable and powerful and intelligent and that you are connected to the power of consciousness itself.

You are an expression. By intermediate step I mean you can use words to point you somewhere that is beyond words. And what they point to you is that your identity needs to go deep enough into consciousness itself where this is where true self-confidence lies.

I've often had questions by people about self-confidence and that's connected also one could say to you it's a there's a lack of self-confidence that's part of what you're describing although you didn't use the term self-confidence but that's an aspect of it I'm sure right is not you don't have self-confidence because you think you might be making mistakes, you may not be good enough. So, the confidence is lacking and of course in the in New Age teachings you have many approaches you can take to self-confidence. They also use sometimes affirmations that you use and they're not necessarily bad affirmations can be good but then no no more than intermediate step so that you can connect to the power of the power of life itself the power of consciousness itself that is in you.

You can for example say I am one I am one with the power of all creations it is within me it is one and I am one with it the power of creation is within me and I am one with all power behind all creation I am one with the intelligent with universal intelligence the consciousness that you are is the light of God shining through you the consciousness that I am is the light of God shining through me I am filled with the power of consciousness why not repeat that and then so that you can sense within yourself the

power of consciousness itself the the true self-confidence is not confidence in the in the limitations of your personality there's something in you that transcends the personality and that is where true power lies true self-confidence is faith you know there's a it's a religious or spiritual term the term faith do you have faith Jesus said if you have faith you can do anything you can tell a mountain move from here to there and it will move now what is faith it doesn't mean you believe in a certain story that people tell you or something like that that true faith is the awareness of power the power that is inseparable from who or what you are and true faith is you can sense that power that lies beyond your the personality beyond the person so awareness of the power is faith and the true self-confidence is not the you don't become you're not confident in your whatever abilities you may have because in some in some ways you will be better than other people in certain ways and not as good as other in other ways that's quite quite normal that cannot be otherwise but the awareness of the power of i call it there's a book called the power of now it refers to that it's um if you can in ordinary situations in your daily life if you can sense that predominantly you are a presence rather than a person when you're when you're with somebody you can can you sense the presence that you are rather than who you are as a person and that is awareness of power the power of presence in you if you want occasionally to use affirmations as a signpost you can say i can sense the power of presence in me i can sense the power of presence in me you can say all the power of creation is mine to draw upon for i am one with it all the power of creation is mine to draw upon for i am one with it i am one with all the power of creation these are just words of course but they they point you to to a dimension that is beyond words so that you can feel that incredible power of life itself in you that far transcends who or what you are as a person and then you can go into a situation and feel totally confident not so much as a person but because you you embody consciousness itself you embody that you are the light of the world as Jesus said you embody consciousness itself and that is true self-confidence so you have to in order to have true self-confidence you need to transcend the limited sense of self so and then you have real self-confidence the other self-confidence is always it's not the real thing i mean you you find in this world some people have huge egos and some of these huge egos seem incredibly self-confident but if you if you could look into their inner states you can see that there's always fear underneath it even in the biggest ego there's an underlying sense of fear and insufficiency that's why they need to compensate and have power over others and compare themselves with others continuously the ego is always comparing itself with others and it fears inferiority and it seeks superiority even if it's hidden the ego seeks superiority but it's very much afraid of inferiority of being less than another so it it fears that this constantly comparing yourself to others is inseparable from egoic consciousness every ego does that the ego is always am i better or knows where do i fit in here and that is something that is transcended as you go beyond ego find other affirmations that confirm but not affirmations that affirm the power of you as a person but the power that is beyond the person the the transcendent power and when you become still you can sense that within yourself there is a a presence in you that is life

itself that is that is consciousness itself you can feel that you can sense that if you can be rooted in that then for example if you are hesitant and what to say or not to say in a social situation if you can be present the self-consciousness disappears and you most spontaneously say or do the right thing so that which is right what is right for that particular situation in that particular moment i remember when i was in my 20s very much trapped in egoic consciousness i was very self-conscious as the word and shy even going into a room let's say into were visiting visiting some people there were five or six people sitting in a room i knew one or two of them the others i didn't know there's always an enormous sense of contraction and didn't know what to say and how to speak to them and they're always hesitant i might say the wrong thing or this person is much better looking than me this person knows more than me this person says how do i fit in it was horrible every situation i went into there was a sense of unease and anxiety and fear and perhaps you that anxiety you perhaps you also feel still in certain social situations and that is part of the egoic consciousness but you are you are on the spiritual path and you're already on your way beyond that you have had i can see that you have had already moments or periods where you are connected with the transcendent dimension within yourself now it's only a question of bringing that out even when you're engaged in the outer world when you're engaged with people in situations in the outer world that's the next step in your evolution but the most fundamental thing has already happened the connectedness with source you have already connected conscious connection with source that has already happened now you that that awareness of that connectedness with force you you tend to lose it when you go about in social situations and work situations then you tend to lose that sense of connectedness that you can have when when you're alone in your room or in nature then you have it and when you go out then the old forms of conditioning take you over again when you're when you're relating to people and so on and part of the your particular conditioning is to say i'm not good enough i'm going to make a mistake i always make mistakes and you can recognize that this might even come as certain thoughts in your mind that i'm not good enough if the thoughts like that arise it's important to recognize them as thoughts that are not true they are conditioned thoughts in your mind recognize and again the ability to observe your inner states includes the ability to observe what particular thoughts arise in your mind and to realize that many of those thoughts are actually not true they are conditioned thoughts that go back most probably to childhood they are conditioned thoughts they are not true they are just conditioned thoughts that still survive in you so you don't have to believe anymore if thoughts tell you you are not good enough or that you are going to make a mistake again whatever the thoughts say you recognize them as just thoughts in your mind but they're not true i don't know have you heard of byron katie the spiritual teacher her main practice is to challenge or question your thoughts especially thoughts that create suffering and so you look at a thought and you ask is that true and in in most cases you have to say well how do i know this to be true no it's not it's not true so you no longer believe in every thought that comes into your mind that's an enormous gain in consciousness you no longer believe in every thought that comes

into your mind especially those negative thoughts that seem to diminish you they are all lies they are not true and so you just recognize them so you separate the thoughts you have about yourself from who or what you are increasingly you become the awareness that is aware of those thoughts and then gradually those thoughts will no longer have power over you and then they will gradually dissolve so that's a shift and then you can be extremely effective in whatever bug situation you are because this is an the obstacle is no longer there so the true power can flow through you true power can flow into your speaking into your actions and then real self-confidence is there that is not confidence in the limited abilities of you as a person but you as a manifestation of consciousness itself the power of creation is in you and one with you and then you can sense it at all times so the limitation that you find in your life at the moment still is part of your spiritual path overcoming this form of mental emotional conditioning in you is part of your spiritual path and as such it's very important so be grateful for it because it is a motivating factor on your spiritual journey it is important for you to go beyond that and I can see when I look at you I can see the the essence of who you are and I can see how loving and powerful and clear that essence is and the rest is just fogs in your mind or thoughts in your mind so awareness will dispel this mental fog and then you can be who you truly are I hope that helps a little bit yeah it does thanks very much

[Speaker 2] (18:01 - 18:10)

for that it's very helpful thank you I go by now and I can work on it yes yes that's your

[Speaker 1] (18:10 - 18:16)

practice so that is perhaps could be your main spiritual practice work on that those situations

[Speaker 2] (18:17 - 18:23)

yeah because a motivator for me anyway to overcome it yeah yeah thanks time to answer

[Speaker 4] (18:23 - 18:59)

it anyway yeah thanks thanks thank you hi akar first I just want to say that you've really saved my life and brought me out of some really dark places and I'm very grateful oh good thank you my question is how do you know if it's time to stop communicating with the troubling person in your life whenever I interact with my parents my pain body is triggered I try to use it as a spiritual practice but I'm starting to wonder if healing can take place when my wounds keep

[Speaker 1] (18:59 - 19:08)

getting reopened right just one or two questions for you I assume you are you're not

living with

[Speaker 4] (19:08 - 19:31)

your parents anymore my parents are divorced so I'm living with my mom and stepdad but I'm not the parents I'm talking about are my dad and stepmom right so your dad and stepmother you visit them occasionally I'm no longer speaking to them but I did used to visit them

[Speaker 1] (19:32 - 34:50)

right well many people have similar dilemmas of the question is to what extent is it possible for you to practice presence when you are with people with whom you share a lot of past and who trigger certain emotional reactions in you the question is should you continue to consider this a spiritual practice or is the situation so toxic or are the people so unconscious and toxic that you need to remove yourself and no longer engage and perhaps reconnect with them when you feel more deeply rooted in presence or awareness it requires wisdom to know whether to pursue to continue to pursue the relationship in many cases it can be very helpful to regard it as a spiritual practice and when you go when you meet with parents or other family members when many people get together around the table and it can be a very joyful occasion but for others it is the old conflicts arise again the old personal negative interactions arise pain bodies get triggered and so on it's always good to try as much as you can if there's a person with whom you share or parents or one parent or parent enter another they might have remarried again which is always a more difficult situation often the more difficult situation anybody who asks themselves this question I would recommend that you maybe you have already done that I recommend that you experiment with are you able to regard your interaction when you go there visit them are you able to regard this interaction as a spiritual practice and to what extent to what extent are you able to stay present present while you're interacting you may not need to want to go very frequently if it's very difficult but only when whenever the occasion arises when certain thanksgiving or whatever the occasion may be or you go from time to time you visit them and you realize before you go this is my spiritual practice now you may be able to stay present it may be a struggle or each time you go you may lose presence because there's so much past that gets triggered in you that it obscures the arising presence in you so if you find that that every time you go no matter how hard you try you lose presence then it would be better not to go there at least for a while until you become more deeply rooted in that state of consciousness and even then it could be that those people are so unconscious and toxic maybe there has been physical violence or whatever it may be it could be that even when you become more deeply rooted you may still not want to reconnect that is possible but internally what happens internally is very important so that you do not carry residues of resentment within yourself about them that is part of your spiritual evolution that ultimately accumulated resentment that you

have towards these people in your life with whom you share a lot of past that needs to and will dissolve in the arising of presence even if the people are very very toxic and very extremely unconscious to the point of physical violence or abuse then in that case you may not want to reconnect even unless you become really present but what needs to arise is the recognition that what they did they acted according to their level of unconsciousness because no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness very unconscious people have no freedom of choice because they are totally run by their unconscious conditioning Jesus used the expression when Jesus said to his followers he promised them freedom you were the truth will make you free you'll become free and the disciples said but we are nobody's slave why why are you saying we will become free we are nobody's slave no and he said no you are the slaves of sin now sin if a deep understanding of sin is dysfunctional behavior due to unconsciousness so sin is deep unconsciousness the original meaning of the word as it's used in the bible in the new testament is missing the mark you miss the mark of human existence to miss the like an archer you misses the target you miss the mark which means the purpose of human existence is to become conscious and to awakening consciousness to meaning of sin is you miss the mark which means there is the purpose of human life you remain unconscious so you are the slaves of unconsciousness that's really what Jesus was saying so these very unconscious people who perhaps perpetrated violence or other transgressions upon other people or you as you become more and more more present you recognize that they were the slaves of their own unconsciousness and they did it because they were they were not there was not sufficient consciousness in them and when you recognize that you may not return and reconnect with them but internally something happens which we could call forgiveness because then you realize they couldn't help it and then forgiveness happens internally so that you don't carry inside you a sense of grievance any grievance that you carry within yourself would become an obstacle to the full arising of presence any grievance you carry towards another human being is a is an obstacle that is still in you that's why and forgiveness isn't something that you actually kind of need to do it's something that happens as presence arises forgiveness becomes easier and easier and eventually it happens by the last bit goes away by itself one could even say that there's nothing ultimately there's nothing to forgive but you can only say that when you're really present not something to believe in when you're really present you see there is nothing to forgive they did because they couldn't do otherwise sometimes people ask me does it mean people are not responsible for what they do yes that's what it means very unconscious people are not responsible for what they do and then people say well so that doesn't sound right if we if we do not hold people responsible for their their transgressions and their whatever they perpetrated but that that doesn't seem to be right well on the one hand they are not responsible for what they do on the other hand it is a universal law of human evolution that every human being has to suffer the consequences of their own unconsciousness you could call that karma what you want to they have to suffer the consequences of their own unconsciousness and usually that whatever they do to others eventually they suffer

and by experiencing the consequences of their in some people people may go to prison because they maybe they killed somebody or they perpetrated abuse and violence or whatever they did because they couldn't help it and then they suffer the consequences but it's not just prison but it could be present they suffer the consequences of their own unconsciousness and when that happens the possibility arises for awakening because the suffering that ultimately you create potentially becomes the motivating force forces you into an awakening and that applies to humanity as a whole also because virtually all the problems that humanity is facing in this world now are due to human unconsciousness all the whatever on whatever level you look actions are done in a state of unconsciousness and so on a collective level the suffering that humans are creating collectively also potentially will bring about yes it will bring about suffering on a collective level and potentially it will bring about an awakening the suffering awakens people and the suffering was created by the human ego ego is unconsciousness so ego creates suffering and suffering ultimately awakens you so the ego has built into itself a self-destruct mechanism the ego creates dysfunction dysfunction creates the suffering and the suffering brings about the end of the ego and an awakening so the the ego has there's a self-destruct mechanism built into the human ego on an individual level and a collective level so if you take a higher viewpoint no matter whether you look at it on individual or collective level if you take a higher viewpoint you see the suffering that is now being experienced increasingly on collectively on the planet is also part of the awakening of human consciousness on its own level it looks bad but there are different levels of of looking at things what is bad on one level may be perfectly fine on a higher level for example i've met many people who've said if i hadn't suffered this or that in some people it was a serious illness it was an accident it was great loss something bad so they came to me and said if i had not suffered this i would never have understood what you're talking about and i would not have awakened if i had not faced death in that situation or lost everything i had if i hadn't experienced this bad situation i would not have awakened at all i've heard that many times from people so this works individually and collectively it doesn't mean we do not we do not say that a situation that is conventionally called bad we do not suddenly say oh it's not really bad it's good no on its own level it's bad from a higher perspective it's part of the evolution of human consciousness so we don't need to mix up the levels we still need to recognize something bad as bad violence perpetrated by humans on other humans genocide although things are pretty bad really bad you could say evil on this level can't deny that but then if you look from a higher level even that is part of the evolution of human consciousness and ultimately the essence of each human being is immortal and so that suddenly you say oh but it's not if it's just a belief it doesn't really work you need to realize deeply within yourself that which transcends all that happens in this dimension here but it's part of the evolution so coming back to the individual relating to humans that are difficult with whom you share a lot of past try to make it into spiritual practice is if it's impossible after a few quite a few tries and you find every time you get triggered you get unconscious you want to then it may be good for a while to remove yourself and

become more deeply rooted in presence and then you will know whether it's time to reconnect or whether you may not want to reconnect and yet internally letting go happens so there's no accumulation of resentment anymore and when there's no accumulation of resentment anymore it may even be possible to go into very toxic environment it has i've met people who are able to do that they went back to their abuser and were able to be to just interact with them perhaps visiting them in prison one or two cases visit the perpetrator in prison and speak and listen and in exceptional cases this has happened and it's wonderful when it does happen but only you can know whether that is something that is right for you to do and only the presence in you through the presence in you we will know what is right wisdom is what is needed for you to realize what is right for you in any given situation so you are telling me that at the moment you are not you're not visiting them anymore and that may be the right thing for you to do at the moment and as you become more deeply rooted in presence see how you feel in the little whenever that may be and then you reconsider the situation and you may feel now i'm strong enough to go back in or not only time will show what is right for you so normally i don't give specific advice to people about what to do in a particular situation but i've basically just given you a choice a choice of things of what you might do so thank you thank you i'm oprah winfrey and you've been

[Speaker 3] (34:50 - 35:08)

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Eckhart Tolle Rising Above Thought [5d92072f-220e-4679-86dc-bf4646aa1c8c]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:40)

Rising above the thought. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience. He says, sometimes in our efforts to become present, we fall below thought.

It happens when we're consumed by negativity. We reach for something to take away the pain, perhaps alcohol or drugs or food. We may feel relief for a short time, but eventually that discomfort always comes back.

What we need to do is resist the pull toward unconsciousness. To awaken spiritually, we must rise above thought to reach a state of alert presence.

[Speaker 1] (0:44 - 52:21)

It's good to be back here after a few years. And surprisingly, it's still the present moment. It's very strange.

We are surrendered to the present moment. We are not complaining about anything. And if we stop complaining mentally, that's already the beginning of the end of the ego.

The ego thrives on complaining. And as a spiritual practice, before we get into the talk, while people are still looking for their seats, as a spiritual practice, I highly recommend catching yourself in the moment when your mind is complaining about something. And you may be surprised that it happens quite often.

It can complain about where you are, or the claim that you're not where you want to be, who you are with, what people do or fail to do, or have done or should have done but didn't do, and many other things. Let's say there may be four reasons why you've come here. The majority of you, most probably, have come because you are going through a shift in consciousness, even though you might not have interpreted as such, an awakening.

And I will be talking probably a lot about that tonight. So if the term awakening is not entirely clear to you, although you may be awakening, then it will become clear in the course of the evening, not just conceptually, but also experientially. So you're awakening, you're going through a shift in consciousness, and you're here because you know this event, our gathering here, can be a deepening of that, or an acceleration of that awakening process.

Second reason why you may be here is you are ready to awaken, but not quite realize what stepped over this line of where you suddenly dis-identify a little bit from your thinking mind, which is awakening. So you're ready, and you've come here because you

have a feeling that this guy may have something important to say, but you're not quite sure what. I have a feeling there's something there, but I'm going to check him out.

Okay, so it may work for you, or it may not. If you're not ready, it means you have to suffer a little bit more, and then you'll be ready. A third group of people, a relatively small number, are here against their will, because they couldn't say no to somebody who said you must come to this and listen to him.

I'm sorry that you're here, but you may be surprised. You may suddenly be surprised, or it may be excruciating. You have to wait and see.

And now we come to the fourth category of people who are here. They have come here mistakenly because they really wanted to go to the beer fest, and somehow they had too many beers even before coming and drifted in here. It's significant that next door I'm told there is a beer fest happening tonight, and that's interesting because that is two venues next to each other, and both are concerned with going beyond thought.

The one is becoming free of the torture of your mind by consuming a few liquids, beer usually in this case, and thereby gradually falling below thought. And that can be a kind of relief for somebody who is tortured by their own thought processes without knowing it. They think they're tortured by life, but they're tortured by their own mind.

And there can be a temporary relief, but I call that falling below thought. And if you go on with that, then eventually you fall off the chair or you fall physically. And spiritual awakening is quite simply rising above thought into a state of alert presence.

And that is why we're here. This is perhaps the most essential part of the evening together here. We are here to enter that state.

And mostly what I'm talking about, I assume what I will be talking about, I say assume because of course I have no idea what exactly is going to come out of this mouth, is coming out of the present moment. I assume I'll be talking about that state of presence, pointing to it, but most importantly, helping you to go more deeply into it. And also helping you to understand possibly the obstacles that are rising in you habitually to that state that we call presence, that we could also call awareness.

There may be some other names we could use to describe it. So here we are in this moment. You are listening to me and you might have noticed now that most people have taken their seats.

I'm going to just for a little while, talk a little bit more slowly. They'll probably speed up again after that. I'm talking a little bit more slowly because I'd like you to be aware of the spaces between the words also, not just the words.

You can also be aware of some music in the background, which undoubtedly is the beer

fest. And that's okay. Doesn't interfere too much unless your mind says it does.

It doesn't. So as I speak, become aware of the silent spaces between the words. Just notice them.

Notice that in addition to the words, there are silent spaces, very brief. And a strange thing happens. If you observe yourself closely, you may discover that when you're aware of the silent spaces, you're not actually thinking.

In the moment of noticing a space between two words, two sentences, two sentences, in the moment of noticing, you're not thinking because you cannot notice a silent space and think at the same time. There needs to be something in you that corresponds to that silent space. And that is the inner space of awareness.

And amazingly, that is also a way of realizing who you are at the most essential, the most fundamental level, because you are essentially that silent presence, that awareness, that consciousness. That is the essence of who you are. It's the essence of each person in this room.

And that's an amazing realization. It transforms the way in which you perceive your identity, your sense of self, because that is perhaps one of the most important questions in life, in your life, is the question of identity. And that's why the ancient Greeks, in ancient Greek philosophy, probably going back to Pythagoras, one of the most important sayings they had, which is actually inscribed at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, know thyself, know thyself.

That is one of the most important things in your life, to know who you are. Now, most people think they know who they are because they identify with, first of all, of course, you have a physical body. And on the level of form, that physical body is, of course, a part of who you are.

I call that, this is the level one of form identity. So the most important realization, this is so essential. I don't know why they don't teach that at school or university.

The most important realization is that there are two dimensions to your identity. Whereas most humans on the planet, which is all those who are not yet awakening, only know themselves through one identity, one dimension. And that's the dimension of form, form identity.

Form identity begins with the physical form. And that is the first thing, of course, when you meet somebody else, the first thing, of course, you notice is the physical identity of that person, a man or woman with a body and an external appearance. And that's the first thing you notice.

And with yourself, many people who are unawakened are very, very strongly identified

with their physical form. And that's only level one of their form identity. They are very strongly identified with their physical form, either in a positive or a negative sense.

Meaning some people are proud of their body and appearance. Look at me and compare themselves mentally to other bodies who are not as beautiful, strong, whatever it may be. Very strongly identified with body and with appearance.

And that's all negatively identified. I'm very unhappy about my body. It looks so awful.

That again is a negative identification with body. And of course, that's amplified these days through the clever technology that humans have developed. Selfies are very popular these days.

And usually they show aspects of your body, I suppose, your appearance. So you go. And then you send it out to as many people as possible.

And then everybody, all your friends, including hundreds of people you've never met, they look at your body or your external appearance and feel bad because you look so happy. And that makes them feel even more unhappy than they were already. And to compensate for this, they also get out their phone and take a selfie.

A selfie looking extremely happy. And perhaps you can find a background that makes people feel envious. Or you show yourself in a restaurant having this incredible meal.

And for a while that can keep people, well, not never happy for very long, but busy and you feel relatively okay in that dimension. Of course, sooner or later, a time comes when the body changes, strangely changes its appearance. And you may think that the mirrors are no longer as good as they used to be because you don't look quite the same as before.

And so there are many options open to you. But you begin to be then a little bit unhappy more because you identified with something that doesn't last. And particularly people who had a very strong body identification become very unhappy as they grow old.

Very unhappy. And nobody has told them that such an identity is extremely limited. Extremely limited identity, but they don't know that.

That's all they have. And then suddenly the body that made them feel superior now becomes a source of great unhappiness. And that is the fate of all those who do not go deeper within in order to discover deeper levels of who they are.

So I never particularly was tempted to identify, even when I was young with my body because it wasn't particularly strong or good looking. So what do I do? I felt inadequate.

It was a source of suffering. However, I realized I am more than my body. I'm also my mind.

If I can't look stronger and more beautiful than the person next to me, I can be more intelligent. I can be more knowledgeable. So my sense of identity shifted instead of physical, although there was some negative identification, but my sense of identity shifted to my mind.

It shifted to that, which of course is the next level down for your form identity is your mind. Your mind is all the accumulated knowledge and memories and so on that are kept alive by thought processes. So to compensate for my inadequate body, I read as much as possible so that I could make other people feel inferior to me because they didn't know as much as me.

So I was still very uneasy, but whenever I was in a group of people, I would immediately start talking about knowledgeable things and show how much I knew to make other people feel less than me. That's a very normal egoic strategy. Was that the ego saying, don't talk about me so much?

Of course, I wasn't happy. I was continuously in a state of unease because there were always people who knew more than me. What do you do with them?

And then there were others who didn't know more than me, but they had something else to identify with. They had high social standing. Went to university.

I met a few lords and ladies. They didn't do anything to deserve those titles. They were born with them.

So the baby comes out of the mother's womb and say, well, this is lady so-and-so. And many of those people, they derived a very significant part of their identity from their social background, upper class. Basically, it means family history.

So they identified very strongly with that and it could give them a sense of superiority towards most others. And even if the others were more intelligent, you had so much more class, so much more influence, background, whatever you call it. Even the way you speak in English language in England, even the way you speak, you will immediately show others, well, not a little bit less these days, but when I was young and lived in England, the moment you opened your mouth, people would judge you, what social class you were.

Working class, middle class, upper class, upper middle class, upper class, or many, of course, pretending, trying to sound very upper class in an exaggerated way. It's very embarrassing, but they thought it worked. Again, people are looking for an identity and the sense of identity is never ultimately satisfying.

They're always looking for more. They're looking for something to strengthen their sense of identity, to strengthen their sense of who they are. And the ego, basically, that's what the ego is, to have a sense of identity that is based on the conditioned mind plus the

emotions that reflect the conditioned mind.

Usually, people think when one speaks of a big ego, that ego is people who are bigger than life. They have a huge ego. They think they are the greatest and the most wonderful and superior to everybody.

That can be one aspect of ego. There's also another ego. If you don't have enough stuff to identify with, you don't have more knowledge than most people, you don't have a great body or appearance, you don't have social class background, you don't have possessions, what do you do then?

What do you identify with then? Oh my God, who am I? All of them, the ego work very cleverly shaped to a kind of victim identity.

I am so, I've been treated so unfairly by life. My parents, it started when I was born, dreadful background, life always been at a disadvantage, always been a victim, either you personally or you can identify with the whole social group and say we have always been victims and we still are victims. Of course, there are individuals who have been, born into very dreadful circumstances.

There are also, there have been on our entire groups of people who are born into bad circumstances. That is undoubtedly true. The danger is making that into your sense of identity that keeps you trapped very much in a kind of prison, very seductive.

There's a big tendency these days for people to have a collective victim identity, very seductive for the ego. You can read about it on the internet very quickly how it becomes more and more fashionable almost these days to have a collective victim identity. And that again, there are men who feel they are the victims of women, we men, there are women who feel they are the victim of men, that all men are basically bad.

And then there's a smaller group of men who think all women are out to get them, don't want anything more to do with women. And that's 50% of humanity dismissed. It gives you a sense of identity.

So be careful with also political viewpoints in your mind, mental positions that you share with groups of others. Of course, everybody has certain mental positions concerning politics or whatever it may be. The danger is that that becomes the most significant part of your sense of self.

Then you are trapped in this, what I call form identity. You may have gone beyond the physical form of the body, but you are still trapped in a mental form identity. And if you are trapped in a mental form identity, you need others, other people or groups of people to totally disagree with you so that you can make them into your enemies.

That is a very common strategy of the mind-made fictitious, ultimately fictitious sense of

self that is the ego. And you have to be very careful with that too. Very seductive, especially if you start going on the internet these days and social, social, whatever it's called.

You go on the internet these days and see a lot of unconscious mind activity and attacking other people, attacking groups of people, attacking individuals in the most vile way. People who are so deeply trapped in their form identity that this ego has to, it loves making others into enemies, other groups. It's an unconscious process.

Don't allow yourself to be drawn into that through social media and all those things that people use these days. The unconscious need to make either individuals or other groups of people into your enemies, even in very unconscious people at the point of you want to kill them. So those are the most unconscious.

And if you're a bit still unconscious, but not extreme of unconsciousness, and you shout at them and you say they are the most dreadful human beings that ever lived on the planet. You are identified with your mental positions. You're identified with your mind.

And the more you emphasize the otherness of others, the more you feel that your sense of identity gets stronger and enhanced. It's a delusion. Really, you are more deluded than before.

The more you strengthen the ego identity, the more deluded you actually are as to your true identity. And the more trapped you become in this mental, ultimately conceptual prison and think that is who you are. But it's an unconscious process.

The ego needs enemies in order to feel the boundary around itself more strongly. Religions, some religions do it. So you have the disbelievers, the unbelievers, disbelievers, they are less than human in some extreme forms of religion.

Or those who do not share your particular belief, even within your religion, in some cases are less than human. These are extreme forms of egoic unconsciousness, but the egoic unconsciousness also manifests in less extreme forms. There's a whole scale in which this egoic unconsciousness manifests.

And it's all based on identity. It's not ultimately knowing who you are. Now, this does not mean that you do not have a form identity because obviously every human being has a form identity.

And needs to some extent honor their form identity. We're not saying you're not a body, don't think about your body, just don't, no. And we're not saying don't have any political viewpoint, it's dangerous.

No, we're not saying that. Even I have political viewpoints. I don't talk about them because I don't want to lose 50% of the audience.

And the other 50% would go, yes, yes. It's much more important that you awaken, that I reach as many people as possible so they awaken so that wisdom can manifest in their life. And then you are no longer trapped in your mental positions.

You may still have them, but you no longer, and this is the key, you no longer derive your sense of who you are from your mental positions. Therefore, you are no longer threatened when somebody questions your mental positions. Whatever the mind has identified with, when somebody questions your political viewpoints, questions your religion, questions your beliefs, questions even insignificant things, that the car that you drive is actually not very good.

You didn't, you know that. What? My car, this identification, honoring who you are on the level of form is fine, not only accepting, but also honoring this body.

Of course, you look after the body. You do your best, exercise, nutrition, and so on. You do your best to look after the body so that it lasts, if possible, for as long as possible, or at least until you become enlightened, and then it doesn't matter anymore.

Because then you don't need time anymore. But until you're enlightened, you need time, or you think you need time. The greatest error is that, of course, that you think you need time to be enlightened.

You don't, but you may need time until you fully realize that you don't need time. We'll be going into that more deeply in time. So there is an identity that, yes, you have a form identity, and it is to be honored.

You have a form identity as, for example, perhaps most of you are Irish. That is part of your form identity. That is part of what you inherit it, and that is part of the culture into which you were born.

It is not something to be totally dismissed and to say, oh, this is worthless. I'm just into, this is part of who you are on the level of form. It is not who you are on the deepest level.

It is not who you are in the essence of your being, but it is who you are, part of who you are on the level of form. And it's good to acknowledge that. You can love your cultural background, why not?

But if you identify with it completely, then the danger is that the ego misuses it, uses it, ultimately misuses it, and it will make other cultures that are not yours, has this tendency of making other cultures into either less or enemies. It strengthened itself through that. So for example, to recognize your own culture is fine, but to dismiss or to attack other cultures, then you realize ego has come in.

The ego always attempts superiority of others. Always its attempt is, it's an unconscious

process. Its attempt is superiority.

And it loves its enemies collectively and individually. So there's a difference between loving your culture, but not needing it ultimately to tell you who you are, just realizing it's part of your form identity. Same thing, accepting your viewpoints and perspectives on politics or whatever it may be, but realizing that is not who you are essentially.

Then when you come into contact with another culture, you can have a friendly exchange. It's lovely. And you can learn from other cultures and be interested in other cultures and still value yours.

You can also share a conversation with somebody who has a different persuasion politically. And this person may question your beliefs and you can defend. Yes, you can defend your mental position without the feeling that you are defending your life, without the feeling that you're being attacked by somebody if somebody questions your mental position.

That is the difference between having a mental position, a perspective, a viewpoint, or being identified with your mental position, which means you derive your sense of self from it. That is the danger. That is the delusion.

That is the egoic unconsciousness. And that is something we need to grow out of. And we are growing out of it because if we don't grow out of it, we create more and more havoc on the planet because the egoic delusion, the ego is basically insane or it has degrees of insanity.

So identification is the identification with form identity is egoic delusion, but accepting form identity and valuing form identity is fine. Now, the only way you can not be identified with your form identity, which is your body, whether you're a man or a woman, that's for many people is a big identification already, country, nationality, culture, family background, education, knowledge, all abilities, all the things that people, the only way you can not be identified is using it as the source for your sense of self is to discover in yourself a more essential, deeper sense of who you are.

And this is why we're here. And that is the spiritual awakening. So you have the two dimensions.

We're going more deeply into that now. We have the two dimensions of who you are. You are here as a form identity with a body and with a cultural, a mental cultural background, knowledge, education, mental conditioning, the personality that you are also on a level of who you see yourself as a person is an essential part of the ego too.

You have that, which is your story. And again, we need to add this one to form identity. It is also a danger to identify with your personal history and derive your sense of self exclusively from your personal history with all to do with your form identity.

Your personal history is what makes you the person, the personality that you are now. That you, the personality that goes through life manifesting your particular type of conditioning because everybody here has been conditioned. Their minds, your mind has been conditioned in a certain way.

Obviously, since you were born, you were born into a particular family. So you already start to get conditioned by that family background. You're born into a particular country and this conditions you in that way.

You're born into particular, perhaps a religion that conditions you in that way. You are born into particular circumstances, financial and otherwise, whether your parents are educated, not educated, what kind of school you go to, all those things gradually come together and they form certain mind forms which are ultimately thought forms. And these thought forms, they come together and these thought forms that are most frequently activated in your mind form this personality that you are.

That's another aspect of your form identity. And for most people, that's all they know. They only know themselves as that.

They only know themselves as this person that they are. And they identify with their form identity. And all the other things I mentioned before are part of that, their political views and all this forms the personality of the person.

And everybody has conditioning, of course. You can't not be conditioned. Your mind is conditioned by the surrounding culture.

If you had been born in some country away from here, you would not be the same person that you are now. If you had been born in Saudi Arabia, you had been born somewhere in Africa, you had been born somewhere in South America, you would not be the person you are now because your mind, your mental conditioning would be different. The one thing that would not change is in the absence of awakening, you would be completely identified with your conditioning.

And so that is something important to recognize that you have a personal history. Some of it you know, you remember. Many things you remember about that makes up who you are.

Some things you don't even remember. They are unconscious forms of conditioning. You may have to go to a psychoanalyst or someone like that to uncover hidden memories and that has certain usefulness, but it does not awaken you.

It has a certain usefulness. So the strange thing is though that on the level of the personality and your personal history, for most people, that story of who they think they are is not terribly happy. There are many people who go through life feeling miserable a lot of the time and they're being made miserable by something that they call my life.

My life. My life is making me unhappy. This is a very common way of living and suffering.

My life is making me unhappy. There may be a few of you still here who have that notion that their life is almost a burden to them and that so many things went wrong. So many things that happened should not have happened and other things that should have happened didn't happen.

So many people live with that and there are many regrets. There are grievances. There are mental accusations of myself.

How could I have been so stupid of other people? Look what they did to me. All kinds of things that you carry around which are...

Now, what are those things that you carry around? The guilt, the regret, the grievances and so on all to do with your past. What are those things?

Those things, it really all boils down to they are thoughts in your head plus emotion that reflects the thoughts. So it's an emotional, a mental emotional entity in you. These are thoughts about you, about your life and these thoughts you call your life but all it is, is thoughts.

So here we again, we come to the point of identification which is always ego, unconscious identification. When you identify with every thought that arises in your head and in the case of your personal history, it's a narrative. The personal history is basically a story.

A story you tell yourself and others of what happened to me and the story has even an unconscious part to it. It might just be there, certain emotions but basically there's a narrative in everybody's mind and people call it my life. Not realizing that ultimately what they call my life are concepts that they keep alive in their mind.

So it is a mental, a mind made sense of identity and this is the most normal way for people to live. Everybody who is not awakened and has not even touched that dimension within them, they are totally trapped in that. They don't know that they are trapped and millions of people on the planet are made miserably unhappy by the narrative in their heads.

The narrative that says my life that went wrong here and there and there are so many regrets and also I've missed out on life, it's too late now. What's the point of it anyway? Oh, it's so awful and you tell yourself the story.

You can tell it to others too. They may be, perhaps they'll listen. Let me tell you about my, you think you've had it bad?

I'm just, let me just laugh. You, you can't complain. Let me tell you my story.

It all started when I came out of my mother's womb. I cried, I couldn't stop crying. It was so, so awful.

I knew I didn't want to be here and then it went downhill from there. Now, if that's not your life, where is your life? If that's only concepts in your head, ultimately thought forms that you mistake for who you are if those are thought forms.

So if those thought forms are ultimately not your life, they are the story of you. They may be your life situation. That's because who you, what your life situation is now is connected to the so-called past.

The so-called past has brought you here. You're in a particular life situation, in a particular location where you live, particular work that you do, family, relationships or none. And all that is your life situation and your life.

And it's not who you are ultimately. And to look for yourself in the realm of the mind, which ultimately the realm of concepts, mental concepts, which is really what it is, the story. It's a collection of mental concepts is very limiting and is a source of unhappiness because no mind made self, no conceptual identity, which is what the ego is, no conceptual identity is really a very happy one.

Most conceptual identities live in a state of almost continuous sense of not enough. There's a sense of lack. There's something that hasn't happened yet.

In my life, something hasn't happened yet. I hope it's going to happen. I don't even know exactly what it is, but I have this strange feeling that I haven't started living yet.

I have this strange feeling that it hasn't started yet. Weird. I'm waiting for my life to start because so far that can't be my life.

That wasn't good enough. That's not it. And then suddenly you're surprised you're 75.

It still hasn't started. Before you're 75, you can still have the delusion that when I retire, when I finally retire, I'll start living. Then, or before you had a few other delusions, before you had other delusions which turned out to be delusions, for example, when I finally find the ideal partner, then I'll be happy for the rest of my life.

That was one of the big delusions because obviously you married the wrong person. Because when you started living with that person, you realized that that wasn't the person you married. Suddenly you say, who is this guy?

Who is this person? Oh my God. Big mistake.

And then you had a few other delusions that suddenly you had arrived because finally you got the promotion or whatever it was. And then, yes, okay. But then you went into that situation.

There was something wrong there. There was a big downside to it. All the people around you were out to get you and there were intrigues and the energy field in that company was dreadful.

Yes, the salary was good, but you were miserable every day. And then you find every situation you go into has a huge downside or turns around and becomes the opposite. The person who makes you happy today makes you unhappy two years time.

Same person, weird. So that sense of self that has this sense of something lacking. It's always a sense of insufficiency, of not enough.

That is the conceptual sense of self. That is my life that either hasn't started yet or hasn't worked out yet. Or then you have hope.

I'm going to make it. Interesting expression. I'm going to make it, whatever that is.

The world tells you, you have to make it. I am going to make it, I hope. And then on the other side, you have the fear.

I may not make it. And then you wake up in the middle of the night. I'm not going to make it.

Oh my God. I'm going to be just as insignificant as I'm right now. I'm not going to be recognized by everybody as extraordinary.

If somebody when I was in my 20s had told me I had a big ego, more on the unhappy side, this is the victim ego side, but anyway, big. If somebody had told me, let's say, if I had gone to a psychic and that psychic said, you will be one day a great spiritual teacher, my ego would have gone, wow, yeah. I'm going to be significant.

Now, if the psychic had been a good one, he would have added, but you have to die first. And it's not going to give you any personal satisfaction. What?

That sucks. What do you mean I have to die first? Well, perhaps he would have explained, your entire conceptual identity has to go.

So when you become a spiritual teacher, you're not going to be proud of being a spiritual teacher. So on that level, it's not satisfying. And so I probably would have said, I don't know if I still want it.

So we have my life and it's a conceptual identity in the head and it's a huge limitation to be trapped in it. Again, you can honor your history. It's coming back to accepting and honoring who you are.

That's part of who you are on the level of form. It's fine. You can remember your past.

You can look at the photos. You remember stories, what happened, but there's no longer a sense of getting your sense of self from that. So how do you not identify?

Now we come to the core of it. How do you not identify with your form identity, your conceptual self? Well, here we come to the ancient Greek dictum again, know thyself.

Know thyself at the deepest level. Now, interesting fact is at the temple of Apollo in ancient Greece, there was that inscription, know thyself. But of course, most people didn't know what to do with that.

Okay. Well, they went to the Oracle at Delphi and ask questions about, am I going to meet the right person? And then the Oracle would say, so I said, I lost this ring, where did I leave it?

And then the Oracle would say something, please tell me where I'm going to be in 20 years time. Okay. These are all very superficial things that people were seeking.

And this is why there was this inscription, know thyself. But nobody knew, but they had put a key there, a secret key on this building in order to show people how to know themselves. And that secret key for several hundred years, nobody knew what it meant.

The secret key in ancient Greek, it was the letter E, E, E, E in Greek. And just one letter on the building. And you, what does that mean?

And several hundred years later, the philosopher Plutarch explained it in one of his writings, it's the second person, quite simply, it's the second person singular, and it means you are, you are. And that is the secret key to the saying, know thyself. What does that mean?

You are. So when somebody reads that, somebody reads that, you are. So how would you, when you say to yourself, of course you say, oh, I am?

Yes, you are. I am? I am what?

Now, the interesting thing is nothing was added to it. It just said, you are. It doesn't say you are Greek, you are a man or a woman, or you are this or that, or you are a Democrat or Republican.

It just said, or you're rich or poor, or old or young or whatever. It said, you are. This is a pointer.

It's a pointer, not an explanation or anything. It's a pointer. So when you read you are, you translate it as I am.

I am what? Now, this pointer is very significant. It points to the essence of who you are that is deeper or higher, one could say, than your form identity.

[Speaker 2] (52:38 - 52:42)

for more Enlightened Teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Rooted In the Being Dimension [85a51464-f619-4186-9187-c7e82a2eb20b]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:45)

Rooted in the being dimension. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions like, is it possible to remain in a permanent state of acceptance? And how do we deal with our fears about what others think of us?

Eckhart says it's not realistic to expect that we will be consistently peaceful and harmonious. The challenges of our lives will affect us, but not at the core of who we are. We remain rooted in what Eckhart calls the being dimension.

He explains we go beyond the duality of happiness and unhappiness to find peace. Eckhart says the degree to which we are free from the opinions of others depends on our connectedness to the deeper dimension of who we are.

[Speaker 5] (0:46 - 1:11)

Hello, thank you so much for teaching. My question is, is it possible to be permanently in that state of profound peace, love and happiness and deal with the challenge from there? Or we will always be pulled into and out of that state through the challenge?

[Speaker 1] (1:12 - 1:18)

Right. Is it possible to be always in the state of, what did you say? A state of?

[Speaker 5] (1:18 - 1:23)

A profound peace where you are the peace and the love and the happiness.

[Speaker 1] (1:24 - 12:20)

Thank you. Thank you. It would not be advisable to have a certain expectation that you need to arrive at a place where you are always at peace and whatever word you want to use it, always the same peaceful state.

I can only talk from my own experience or realization and what I have observed in others who have gone through the awakening process or are going through the awakening process, it's inevitable that there will be certain fluctuations in your life. There may be fluctuations on the physical level. There may be times when you have less physical energy than at other times when you have more physical energy.

Then there may be certain events in your life that happen that you could be on a beautiful vacation somewhere or in a beautiful natural setting and feeling very peaceful, or you could just have achieved something that you have desired, you achieved

professional success or whatever, and then you feel very happy. And then there may be other times when you lose something big, something is taken away, somebody dies close to you. These are external things.

These fluctuations will affect you to some extent, but never at the core of who you are. So what remains in the background is that field of peace. So if somebody dies next to close to you, your parent or even a child dies, of course you feel sad.

You feel, you weep, you cry, and the sadness will linger for some time and come in waves, come and go. And yet what does not happen, despite the sadness, you do not become devastated. It does not devastate you to the core of your being.

There remains in the background a substratum, to use a term from geology, there remains a substratum of peace. Even there may be some turmoil on the surface, but you're never totally caught up in that. There's always that you can step back and you're aware of that background of peace.

It's always that's there. On the surface, you may weep and cry if you're standing at the grave of a loved one, and yet you are not devastated, as to use that term. There is still a peace in the background.

The opposite is also true. When something wonderful happens to you, let's say you suddenly, well, some people think something wonderful would be to win the lottery, or you get the big promotion, or you suddenly become famous. Many people want that.

They think that would be the greatest. They've asked many youngsters, what do you really want to become in life? In the past, the youngsters used to say, I want to become whatever, a fireman, or I want to become a footballer, I want to become whatever.

But now, significant section of people, youngsters that they ask, they say, I want to become famous. This is the effect of things like Instagram and so on. Some say, I want to become an influencer.

Instagram, influencer has relatively little meaning. But so famous is something that many people think that's the greatest thing that could happen to you. So let's, then the other extreme, something that's great happens to you and you feel, wow, wonderful, great.

Yes. But even that, you don't completely lose yourself in that. It doesn't take you over to an absurd degree, but you overvalue an external circumstance to an absurd degree.

The overvaluing of an external circumstance that happens to you, you say, that's it, that's it. No, it's not. So you can be pleasant.

So it's great, you're happy. Yes, you're happy. But you're not lost in your happiness.

There's still the same background of peace. And because if something makes you happy, some circumstance makes you happy, very often, the same circumstance at a later point will make you unhappy. So I have met quite a few so-called famous people, and they've told all the same story.

At first, they were elated. And then they became actually more unhappy than they were before. Because they could no longer project some future state that's going to make them happy because they had already achieved all the things that they could have projected in conventional terms.

They could have projected that could make them happy, lots of money, a private jet, fame, and fortune. Got all that, what now? So you don't lose yourself neither in the so-called negative things that happen, nor in the so-called positive things that happen.

So you remain rooted in the being dimension. What happens on the level of the person? Yes, you can be happy.

Unhappiness, deep unhappiness does not happen anymore. You can be kind of, feel sorry about something that happened, but it's not really unhappiness. Some spiritual teachers use the term happiness, but I believe it's not, maybe it's a mistranslation.

Some people say, some teachers say, your true nature is happiness. I wouldn't use the term to describe this, the deeper state of connectedness with being. I would not describe that as happiness, because happiness is, wow, isn't it great?

Yeah, great, so wonderful. Oh, and then the next day, oh my God, oh no, you got, that's unhappiness, happiness, unhappiness. I believe in the power of now, I wrote a chapter that's, the title of the chapter is, Beyond Happiness and Unhappiness, There is Peace.

Beyond happiness and unhappiness, there is peace. And so that means neither the happiness nor the unhappiness are that pronounced anymore. It doesn't mean that you haven't lost anything.

The enjoyment of life, you might think, oh, I can't enjoy the good things anymore. No, you still enjoy them, but you don't overvalue circumstances. And so the feeling of goodness comes from a deeper place.

It does not come from the circumstances of your life. That's where you're going, where you're moving towards. So don't expect to be totally free of the fluctuating, somehow superficial reaction to the circumstances of your life.

They're a little bit there, a little bit, but not at the deepest core, you're rooted in being. So you become no longer at the mercy of circumstances in your life. You welcome the good things and you accept the not good things.

There's surrender, acceptance, unless you can change something, you accept, you welcome. And in a strange way, you'll find that you're less likely to awaken than in the bad times. That's universally true.

In your comfort zone, you are less likely to awaken because who would want to awaken from a pleasant dream? Oh, it's so nice. But when the pleasant dream turns into a nightmare, then the incentive to awaken is really there.

I can't stand this anymore. So it's only when you're out of your comfort zone that spiritual awakening becomes possible. So welcome whatever arises, still be pleased when it's good.

And when it's not good, or it doesn't look good, then practice acceptance. And if you cannot accept at first, and you feel angry or sad, then you practice secondary acceptance. First acceptance is what the circumstance or the event.

Secondary acceptance is, you might feel angry or sad about something, and you simply accept that you feel angry or sad right now. So if you miss the first chance of acceptance, then you react, and then you become aware of the reaction. And then you say, okay, I feel sad or angry.

That's what is right now. So you always get another chance of acceptance. And the acceptance is a doorway that always connects you or reconnects you with the dimension of being.

That's the opening into being through the acceptance. Acceptance of what is, this moment, acceptance of what is, connects you with the being dimension. When you accept what is, you're no longer, as far as your inner state is concerned, you're no longer at the mercy of what is out there.

So you realize your inner state is no longer dependent on external conditions. And that's a wonderful liberation, because external conditions are extremely unstable. Nothing lasts for very long.

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (12:21 - 14:02)

Hello. My question, Eckhart, thank you for giving me this opportunity, is in regards to know which is your views in regards to coronavirus and these past two years and the approach that has been taken. I'm very aware of the suffering, and my heart goes with people that have suffered and still are suffering.

Myself, I am not vaccinated. I'm 43, not vaccinated. I have decided not to.

And I have, most of the time, I feel peace within that decision. But at times, I also feel

like judged by others. Sometimes my family, my husband, he's vaccinating himself, but he's very supportive.

And also, I feel at times also isolated, because everyone I know has taken a different path. And although I don't want to convince anybody to do something different, it saddens me a little bit that thinking that we made taking a choice due to fear. So my question is really, I don't fear the virus.

And I say this with the greatest respect. But I sometimes feel like I fear what others can think of me. So is this fear ego?

Also, how long can someone be strong enough to recognize the inner voice and despise being perceived as careless to continue following the inner voice? Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (14:03 - 41:26)

Thank you. Thank you. Well, the question is, what others think of you?

To what extent does it affect me? Does it affect you? What others think of you?

Well, the more you are identified with an image of who you are, which is ego, the more important it will be to you what image of you other people have. So the degree to which you are free from being affected by other people's opinion of you, it depends on your connectedness with the deeper dimension of who you are beyond the person, the being dimension. When you're rooted in being, then whatever opinion somebody may have of you is not terribly important anymore.

Yes, it's nicer for other people to think you're a great person than for other people to think you're a bad person. Again, this connects with what we said in the previous question. It may affect you a little bit if somebody thinks badly of you and you feel a little bit happy when some other people think well of you, that's fine.

But it doesn't affect you at the deepest level. The main work is to awaken to who you are beyond the person. Then yes, you still get affected a little bit by what other people think of you, but not at a deep level anymore.

And then you can tolerate even not being liked by others. When you become well-known, then obviously anybody who does something in this world to make a difference, no matter what you do, will also generate a lot of opposition and dislike. So anybody, no matter what you do, when you create something, you put yourself out there.

Many people may love you and others may hate you. I realized that many years ago when the first book came out and then the internet started happening and I started reading comments on whether people thought of the power of now. And at first they were all wonderful.

And I said, oh, I think that's very nice. I feel good. And then as it became more widespread and reached other people, people in the mainstream, then certain segments were very negative.

And I could feel a little bit of, oh, reading a negative comment doesn't not feel as good as reading a positive comment. And then later on, as I became more well-known, then there were many, many positive comments, just wonderful. And like 5%, 10%, very negative comments about this dreadful guy.

Who does he think he is? Terrible charlatan, the Antichrist, all kinds of, of course, Antichrist must be true because I'm helping people find inner peace. So it must be the Antichrist.

But I found the strange thing is the negative comments are more memorable than the positive ones. That's just how the human mind works. So I could read 30 positive comments and three negative comments.

And the next day I would forget all the positive comments. I still remember the negative ones. This is how all human minds operate.

Negative things are more memorable than, than positive things, it seems. I call that stickiness. They have a stickiness, they get sticky thoughts in your mind.

Anyway, I decided then at some point not to read any comment. And for the past years, I haven't read hardly any comment about what anybody says. It's, it's doesn't matter.

It's I don't want the stickiness of the negative ones or the good ones. It's fine. I let go of that completely.

And that's very liberating. But in the greater context of the virus, now you might have noticed that there's an enormous amount of emotion around it in human beings. There's an enormous amount of animosity towards other, one group against another group.

There's an enormous amount of fear around it. And fear, of course, as we know, diminishes your ability to think rationally. I could tell you now what my position is about the virus and the vaccine and so on, but I'm not going to because who cares what my position is.

And if I told you what my position is, if I either said, you, those who refuse the vaccine are really irresponsible and selfish, and they're not thinking of others, and it's just dreadful. Or if I said, those who take the vaccines, they are, and they, and who love the mandates, they are really sheep. They're just being, allowing themselves to be manipulated by these irrational, crazy politicians.

And they're total sheep. They don't know what they're doing. Whatever I said, I would

lose one third of my audience in whatever direction, because there would be a reaction.

He's against the vaccine, or he wants us to be sheep or whatever it is. It doesn't really matter. The important thing, my job is to help you birth the awareness.

When the awareness is there, you will know what is right for you to do, because that's wisdom arises with the awareness. I'm not here to convince you of this or that, or, or whatever it may be political or whatever it may be. It's all secondary.

It's all secondary. The main work is, my purpose, and for some of you, it's arising as your purpose also, is to be the bringer of awareness to this world. Your contribution to this world is awareness, consciousness.

Then humans, when the awareness is there, whatever humans decide to do will come from a place of wisdom. Wisdom, a word that's not used a lot nowadays, but it's extremely important. That any decision you make comes from the deeper place of wisdom.

Whatever it is, be very alert, so that you don't get taken over by a fear reaction. On top of fear, often anger arises. Anger, in most cases, there's fear underneath anger.

There's fear, and then comes anger. If you're angry with a group of humans who have the opposite views from your views, then it's something to be aware of, to observe in yourself, and to observe your thoughts, and to observe the emotion. Bring awareness to whatever it is that you feel.

Anger is a good thing to be aware of when you notice it. Where does it come from? What thoughts are creating the anger?

What thoughts in your mind? What is the fear beyond it? Our society has been very reluctant to deal with death, or the possibility of death.

To some extent, the virus, although the likelihood that an individual, unless the individual is old or has certain preconditions, the likelihood may be relatively small that you die of the virus, unless you are careless, or you're old, or already ill. The possibility is there, and so it's a wonderful opportunity to look death in the face, the inevitability of death, because don't wait until death is actually very close to you, but we'd never know how close it is, but become aware of the inevitability of death, and the fact that human life, the life of form, is short-lived, and become aware of that in you that is beyond death, which means it is the invisible you, which is almost all of you is an invisible being, and die to the image of who you are, the person, so there's no longer total identification with the person. The being is eternal.

The being beyond the person is eternal. The Buddhists use the term the deathless, Amara, deathless, no death. It is a dimension in yourself that you can become aware of.

In fact, it is the awareness itself. Jesus called it eternal life, which is the same thing. Eternal means timeless, eternal life, so die, the famous saying, die before you die, die to who you think you are, die to the egoic image of who you are, and you die in the every moment when the stream of thinking stops, and a space of awareness arises, you have died for a few seconds.

The person has died, and then the person becomes revived. The person, this consciousness, a person is consciousness incarnating into form, you could say, the consciousness assuming a form, that's the incarnation, which to become form, and so when you identify, consciousness is identified with form, consciousness is asleep, it is dreaming the dream of form. Every person is consciousness dreaming the dream of form, and in that collective dream, there comes a moment where the possibility of awakening from this dream arises, and most of you have reached that point, the possibility of awakening from the dream of form, then consciousness detaches from identification with form, primarily form is mental form, thought forms, because everything that you perceive in the so-called external environment, you experience it as thought forms. If I look at the table here, I experience this table as a thought form in my mind.

Is there really a table there? I don't know, but I know that there's a thought form in my mind that is the table, I experience it as the table. Philosophers, many philosophers asked, is there such a thing as the thing in itself, beyond our perception of the thing?

We don't know it, it doesn't matter. These are all forms that arise, so identification, consciousness identifies with form, why, I don't know why it, that's part of the evolution of this universe, in this dimension, it's, there is a dream, consciousness actually wanted to dream, I assume, and then consciousness wants to awaken out of the dream, and that's a decisive thing, is the awakening out of identification with form. Buddhists talk about the end of reincarnation, but the aim of Buddhists is no longer having to reincarnate from one lifetime to another, they think that's a dreadful thing, so the Buddhist practice is, has the purpose of coming to the end of having to reincarnate, and finally you're free of this compulsion to reincarnate, and Buddhists ask, well, how many more lifetimes do I need before I reach the end of having to reincarnate? And well, maybe some teacher might tell you, if the teacher is not very enlightened, he might tell you, well, you need another, I would say, 25 lifetimes, but it won't happen unless you, unless at least 10 of those are really miserable, and then perhaps you will awaken, okay, well, thank you, at least I have some hope, only 25 lifetimes, okay, it's not that much, I suppose, then you have time, time to suffer more, or a teacher might tell you, you can stop the cycle of reincarnation now, not when you die or after death, but now, well, how can I do that?

Simply by not reincarnating into the next thought that arises, because thought is primordial form, not reincarnating into every thought that arises, what does it mean to

reincarnate into a thought? It means to completely identify with the thought, to be in the grip of the thought, then you become the thought or the emotion, you reincarnate in it, you become it, so the end of the cycle of reincarnation, if you're able to step out of thought, the compulsion to have to identify with every thought that arises, and you find the space of no thought, which is awareness, you have already reached the end of reincarnation, so if you do not have to reincarnate into every thought that arises anymore in this lifetime, then you have already died, and you do not need the compulsion to reincarnate after death as this conscious entity that's still there beyond the body, but still has certain characteristics and needs for another dream, it needs another dream of form, and this need for another dream of form, which is another lifetime, is no longer there, and whatever it does then is a matter we don't need to talk about now, there are other dimensions it can go to, but the important thing is, or you might choose to reincarnate to help others, that's what, again, the Buddhist teachings say, if you are a bodhisattva, the bodhisattva is the being who has become free of the need to reincarnate, but chooses to reincarnate in order to awaken others, so maybe you will do that, who knows, or you might say, no thanks, I've had enough, so the important thing then is to die now, which is quite simply step out of thought, step out of identification with thought into awareness, and then it becomes not that, it's no longer that important what other people think of you, it's very much a surface phenomenon, and then you'll know what is right for you to do in this world also, it's wisdom only arises, the person has no wisdom, the person may have kind of intelligence, intelligence is part of the human mind, it's borrowed, it's consciousness too, but consciousness that has taken on form, so the person may be intelligent, but completely unwise, you cannot equate wisdom with intelligence, there are people that are very intellectual, or have two or three PhDs, and in their field, they are very intelligent, but in actuality, they are really stupid, and they take decisions that are extremely unwise, so it always comes down to the same to the same thing as find who you are beyond the conditioned entity, and use the situation of the virus also, and so instead of making you unconscious, this challenge, as it has done to many people, it can make you more conscious, allow the challenge to make you more present, and this is, I've said that before on various occasions, but it's important to repeat, because people tend to forget, there's a line that humans reach, below this line, whenever they are confronted with adversity, difficulties, challenges of major kind, humans are beyond this line, they tend to lose consciousness when faced with adversity or challenges, they become more unconscious, they're more reactive, more angry, more irrational, then other humans are above that line, when they encounter also adversity, challenges, big problems, something going wrong, if you're above that line, the challenges that you encounter, whether of a personal kind or collective kind, actually help to make you more conscious, you become more alert, more conscious, acceptance, you practice acceptance of present moment, you go within, and if a situation becomes difficult, you become more alert, it's like a dimmer switch, the dimmer switch on the light, when things go wrong, the light goes up, so there's this dividing line, when you reach that, you're above this line, then the bad things that

happen to you will help to make you more conscious, as long as you are below this line, there's not sufficient awareness yet for this to happen, then the bad things that happen to you will make you more unconscious, for most of you, the bad things that happen now will help to make you more conscious, and the bad things, just to use a generic term, bad, the bad things that happen are extraordinarily important for the total evolution of humanity and consciousness, the bad things are what propel the evolution of consciousness, that's the weird thing, that your purpose is the transmutation of suffering into consciousness, and so the bad things that happen are vitally important, otherwise consciousness would not evolve, because the bad things are the dream turning into a nightmare, and then you want to awaken, and so people ask strange things, like why, the usual argument for the non-existence of God is, if there were a God, why would he allow all these terrible things to happen, that's a simple argument for the non-existence of God, that you hear all the time, and it sounds quite convincing, they say, well, if there were a God, I mean, this is the terrible suffering that's happening on the planet, I wouldn't allow that to happen, if I were a God, people say, I wouldn't allow that, therefore, if I am morally superior to a God, obviously, then there is no God, that's the argument, the departure point for this argument is the image of a controlling figure somewhere, this controlling figure could intervene and do things, a controlling father, for most people, it's still a father, that is, of course, a complete misperception of what God means, God is, first of all, it is impossible to define what God is, it's the source of all life, transcendent source of all life, God has no location in space or time, you can never say, there is God, but God, the light of God emanates into this dimension gradually, and the light of God is consciousness, and the consciousness that you can sense in yourself as yourself is the light of God, and so there's a gradual evolution in this dimension, and every form of suffering, at some point, you will realize that it was all part of the birth pangs, this is actually a term used by St. Paul in the New Testament, the birth pangs of the awakening universe is the suffering, it's a nightmare, it's a bad dream, but it's part of the awakening, out of that comes consciousness, the caterpillar experiences a very unpleasant death, before it becomes a butterfly, and you couldn't explain to the caterpillar what's going to happen to him, he wouldn't understand, so it's a process of transformation, suffering has its place, and then it can be transcended and overcome, but suffering is vitally important up to where you reach that line, after we go above that line, suffering still happens, but is continuously transmuted into consciousness, suffering is transmuted into consciousness, suffering arises because of the bad things, then transmuted into consciousness, and then suffering is no longer suffering, it becomes presence, suffering becomes presence, so both in Buddhism and in Christianity, the essential teaching is about the purpose of suffering, in Buddhism, one of the main things Buddha said is, I teach suffering and the end of suffering, there are many things in Buddhism that you read that were added later, scriptures that were written later attributed to the Buddha, but there are some things that are absolutely so powerful that you knew that's what he actually said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering, which means I show you how suffering arises, and I show you how suffering can be

transcended, and what about Christianity? The central image of Christianity is a human being nailed to the cross in suffering, the central image of Christianity is one of suffering, now many people say, if you're a Christian, you may still interpret it in one way, non-Christians often say, isn't that dreadful, I don't want to see cross, there is a deep meaning behind it that could perhaps be intuitively grasped by humans who would not be able to understand it conceptually, so if you identify with the archetype of suffering on the cross, the archetypal human, if you identify it, whenever you encounter your suffering, you can participate in the suffering of Christ, in the past humans have done that and have achieved some degree of surrender and awakening by identifying with the archetypal human, let you see, he stands for all humans, that's how I see it, and for the possibility of rebirth, the possibility of resurrection, which is a transformation, which is the shift in consciousness, a new caterpillar becomes a butterfly, so we have come a long way from your question, but it's all connected, so let's, I trust it makes sense to you and let's just repeat one more time, the importance of adversity, bad things happening, use them, use whatever happening, whatever happens in your life when it does happen and accept, surrender, become more present through any challenge, difficult situations, difficult people, emotion, people in deep pain, body, emotion and so on, be very, very present, there's a saying in the Latin language from Roman times, which it's a Latin proverb, it goes, which could be translated through adversity to the stars, is translated as adversity, but literally it means the rough things of life, the unpleasantness, the unpleasant things, but it's adversity, anything bad, through adversity to the stars, that points, there's a lot of wisdom in that saying, to the stars is a symbol for rising, rising above being merely human, rising to a higher level, let's say another question.

[Speaker 2] (41:27 - 43:09)

Yes, my question is, it was actually my experience during my meditation, six days meditation retreat, so prior to the retreat, some stressful event happened, so the first two days, I was thinking heavily of that event and I know, okay, I should stop thinking, however, I couldn't because I was suffering and on day three, because I think after talking to counselors and now also kind of sitting in my meditation, I was like, I don't want to think about it anymore, my brain is like so hurting by thinking intensively all day long for two days, so suddenly my brain, the voice in my head, quiet and I heard an inner voice rising and it was a very like soft, loving, wise, like wisdom voice and talking to me and answering all the questions I ask, so I was like, okay, I experienced spiritual awakening, however, the next day, my brain was trying to make sense of it, I was like, how did that just happen and I was going crazy, I was like, did my mind just make that up, did my mind just pretended a spiritual awakening, I still don't know the answer, but I'm just learning to surrender, however, I still want to know what's your thought of the experience I just experienced, I experienced.

[Speaker 1] (43:09 - 55:15)

Right, well, thank you, very wonderful experience, now the mind when it takes over, will always question and doubt, it likes questioning and doubting, it does that a lot and the mind cannot understand, it cannot understand wisdom, the mind itself can understand wisdom, but you can, so if you look back, was that experience real, the peace that you felt, was that real, yes, what is the quality of the thoughts that came to you, you have to, this is the same thing when sometimes when inspiration happens, you connect with the deeper level of who you are, the unconditioned consciousness and when you connect with that, it sometimes rises into your mind and uses your mind as an instrument and then you can speak wisdom or you can think thoughts that may be profound or of significance, you can always, you look at what arises, if you're in a state of, seems like a state of deep peace and then something comes, what's the quality when you speak, what is it that arises out of that state, that's, that will tell you what is the, you recognize them by the fruit, the fruit that comes if the, that comes from the New Testament that's saying, wisdom arises out of that state, with you that state was a temporary emergence and then it got obscured again, when it got obscured again, you lost touch with it and doubt came in and questions were asked and so on, you can recognize that this is what the mind does when doubt comes in, you don't have to believe in every thought that then comes in and so if you continue to observe the thoughts about it instead of finding out something significant by thinking about it, then that brings awareness back, some awareness comes back by observing your thoughts, so that you're not completely trapped in the thoughts again, also the egoic mind does not like your awakening because that means it loses its grip on you, the egoic mind could be seen as a little entity made up of emotional mental formations is an entity that does not want to give up its hold on you, it thinks it's you, so it likes to interfere with the awakening, it likes to bring up thoughts, for example, I often recommend that people have little short meditations during their daily life, when they just take a few conscious breaths as much as they can observe, take a few conscious breaths and then I often point out, often the mind will tell you, I can't do it now, I don't have the time now, I have so many things to deal with, it's a thought, now do you believe in that thought, when it says I can't do it now, I said I don't have the time, it's obviously not true because everybody has one minute time, unless you're involved in an emergency situation, everybody has one minute time to take a few, two or three conscious breaths, everybody, no matter even a busy, very busy person, you have a minute, well, you have a minute to go to the toilet, then you can have a minute to do a little mini meditation, everybody has, but the mind will tell you, no, no, I can't do it now, I'll meditate when I'm a bit more peace, I have too much on my plate now, I can't do it now, many thoughts can take you away from awakening, thoughts that are actually designed to keep you asleep, thoughts that are designed to keep you identified with thoughts, this is why fearful thoughts are particularly strong, if fear arises, fearful thoughts can really prevent you from awakening for a long, long time, because they're empowered by the emotion of fear, so the important thing is don't believe in every thought that comes into your head, become aware of the kinds of thoughts that arise at any time, this awareness is, that's the

beginning of the state that you had during that time, so it's more likely to come back and then remain in the background, so that you have a background to your thoughts, that's more important than the thoughts, that's perhaps the vital thing here, to be aware of this background to your thoughts, which is the aware space, space of awareness, more important than whatever the thoughts are saying, and that's the practice then, is to not to fight the thoughts, but to observe them, to become aware of them, so that you are the space and not the thought, the thoughts will succeed many times probably in drawing you in again, but and then at some point you notice it, usually when you begin to get very unhappy, you become anxious or fearful or you become whatever the thoughts are doing to you, that can be a great awakener, say I'm unhappy, why am I unhappy, and then you look and then you might say, okay, for the past hour I've had unhappy self-talk, self-talk, narrative, an unhappy narrative, I'm unhappy because my thoughts are making me unhappy, unhappy is a generic term, there may be mild forms of unhappiness, when you're just kind of anxious or irritated or other more extreme forms of unhappiness, but the greater part of unhappiness is produced by your thoughts, and so if your thoughts are making you unhappy, then become aware of your thoughts, so that they lose the power of making you unhappy, and then they gradually dissolve into something else, it's amazing how much unhappiness arises for human beings, simply out of their mind, yes, there are difficult situations that may arise quite often, but the greater part of the real unhappiness arises out of identification with narratives, unhappy narratives, because the unhappy narrative becomes an unhappy me, an unhappy self, an unhappy entity, the person, an unhappy person, repeated unhappy narratives, identification with unhappy narratives bring about an unhappy identity, and this identity is a self, the Buddhists call it a self, it's a delusional entity, and humans, many humans carry the burden of a very unhappy self, their entire life is a bundle of unhappiness, they don't know it, this is part of, this is an aspect of what we described as the dream, the nightmare, it's a very heavy unpleasant dream, but humans, they carry the burden of an unhappy self, and the unhappy self consists of repetitive narratives that is called my life, my dreadful life, my problematic life, my awful life, me and my life, sometimes I call it me and my life, and then you have to start thinking about it even more, because how can I solve this problem of me and my life, and the more you think about it, the more problematic it becomes, but so it's what people call my life, they carry as a burden, not realizing it is a mind-made entity, a mental emotional entity that they identify with, consciousness identifies with, and one quick way of getting out of that is present moment awareness, and this is why I sometimes say, what is your problem now, and then you have to admit, well, right now, I don't have a problem, right now, this is just what is, what is right now is this moment, is there a problem, no, well, maybe you have a toothache or could be, but it's a toothache is not a problem, but this moment is no problem, so the more you step into the now, the more you get out of the narrative, and as I described in a book somewhere, very important, your life is not the narrative, the narrative is, might be your life situation or interpretation of your life situation, your life situation is different from your life, your life is now and always, and only always now, my life is only this now, consciousness now,

my consciousness now, this is, my life is inseparable from now, my life situation involves time, it involves past and future, entire stuff that I need to think about for it to exist, I need to think about it, if I don't think about the past, it doesn't exist, if I don't think about the future, there is no future, future does not exist, nobody has ever encountered it, it only exists in the mind, we need it for practical purposes, that's fine, no doubt about it, but otherwise, we don't need it, other than practical purposes, because it doesn't ultimately exist, there's only now, your life is now, become more concerned with your life now, give more attention to your life than your life situation, if you don't give more attention to your life now, then the funny thing is, even your life situation improves, your life is now, life situation is past and future, and it's a mental creation, so that's the importance of, that's all part of awakening life, and then you experience the fullness of life in the present moment, regardless of what's happening, the fullness of life is a fullness of being, the being that you are, beyond the conditioned entity, the person, so that's the answer, I wish you well and continue to observe your mind, be the observing space, observe it from the space of awareness, and rather than being the thought, don't believe in every thought that comes into your mind, thank you, so let's just, again, as we, same as we started, alpha and omega, the beginning and the end is awareness, stillness, eyes open or closed, doesn't matter,

[Speaker 4] (55:19 - 55:43)

thank you, thank you, thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts, if you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast, join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle, thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Self Transcendence and the Evolution of Humanity [223ff334-126b-4f88-afba-833f94c80106]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:52)

Self-transcendence and the evolution of humanity. In this episode Eckhart talks with an audience explaining the primary reason for this gathering is to become more aware of our transcendent consciousness, the part of us that is beyond the limits of our personality. He says we can do that through stillness because when we practice stillness we counteract what Eckhart calls possession by the mind.

He explains most of us are completely absorbed by thinking without realizing it. The good news he says is we can change that. Eckhart believes we should resist the thought I am angry and instead say anger is in me.

With this we don't become the emotion. It's a subtle shift. Can you feel that?

Eckhart says eventually these small steps lead to greater awakening.

[Speaker 1] (0:54 - 31:31)

I like to start quite often with a moment of stillness because stillness is of vital importance in your life. If you don't have access to inner stillness then your life will be unsatisfying and not very enjoyable. However in a huge place like LA or New York it is sometimes problematic to begin with stillness because on your way here in LA you traveled probably in the car like most people here and you might have experienced small forms of unexpected events.

Well I don't know if traffic jam in LA is unexpected but you found perhaps irritation arising because we're going to be late. I told you you should have left earlier. No it was you.

You did that etc. There are all kinds of stories probably associated with it but irritation may have arisen perhaps even a little bit of anger and that might still be lingering in your energy field right now or some of you possibly and if that is the case I suggest the following little practice instead of saying I am irritated which is already better than not even realizing that you are irritated and allow the irritation to control your thinking. That is the deep unconsciousness. So you don't even know you're irritated because you're in the grip of it.

It has become you temporarily. It has taken possession of you and the thoughts associated with it. Interesting.

Then the next thing is you let's say you know you're irritated and then you say I'm irritated. Okay now as a practice I would suggest to say there is irritation in me. Now it

might you might think it's just a play with words but it's more than that.

To say I am irritated or I am angry yes it's better than being so angry that you have become the anger totally. However you are still equating I identity with the emotion that has arisen when you say I am angry. I because I refers to your identity.

You have to be very careful with whenever you say I am what you add to that because that becomes your identity. Your mind made identity. So instead of saying I am irritated or I am angry there is irritation in me.

There is anger in me. It might seem insignificant to you at first. The shift is that the I has taken a step back and the I is no longer identified with the anger.

There is an awareness that the irritation or the anger is there. This is a little very subtle shift in consciousness and this is a small example but this is very profound really this little seemingly little shift in consciousness. You take a step back instead of identifying yourself with the anger you become the awareness for the anger.

The space of awareness in which the anger arises. The identification is no longer there. You're not denying it.

It's there. It's an energy. You can feel it in the body and it attempts to use your thought processes in order to renew itself continuously.

And sometimes it succeeds and for an hour you think angry thoughts or you can't even listen to this talk here because there's so much lingering irritation. What am I even doing here? Because it it goes into all kinds of it creates new associated thoughts of similar vibrational frequency.

You don't know it but you are ultimately possessed by the mind. So with this little exercise there's anger that is irritation in me. Okay.

Is that so bad? Not really. It's temporary.

It comes and it goes. Now the big thing is if you are aware that it is there you are the awareness. You are not that which arises.

You are the space for what arises. That's an amazing shift. And this is the all essence of awakening.

I'm jumping in at the very beginning of the talk already to the very essence of it. Just in case somebody's in a hurry and needs to leave early then at least you get the essence of it. Okay I'll give 40 minutes to spiritual enlightenment and or spiritual awakening and then I have other things to do.

So this little shift, the stepping back, you become the knowing of whatever arises in your

inner space instead of becoming it. That's awakening. That is spiritual awakening.

And that we can practice here and now. So whatever you feel in your energy field, that's what is. And you're aware of it.

You are aware of it. The awareness is also stillness. When you become aware of that dimension within yourself, stillness has arisen in the background.

And that's an amazing thing. The word stillness of course is limited. One could use other words.

To point to it. And I probably will use in the course of this evening, I probably will use other pointers. Because some pointers work better for certain people.

Depends on your inclination. So now perhaps we are ready to be aware of stillness and to have a moment of stillness. Without thinking I have to do a meditation now.

Let's do a meditation. I'm not even saying that. Just be aware of stillness.

Be alert. The alertness is the stillness. The alertness is the awareness.

And that is the essence of our gathering here. Which is, operates on two levels. The conceptual level.

Every talk operates on the conceptual level. Because words come. You hear the words.

You decipher the words. It's concepts. Mental concepts.

Most talks are exclusively mental concepts. Spiritual talks, if they are true, have an added dimension that is more important than the concepts. Although the concepts point to it continuously.

And this dimension is, we could call it stillness. We could also call it the transcendent consciousness. Where you become aware of yourself.

Not as a person. You are also a person, certainly. But deeper than that, you are a space of consciousness.

I sometimes use human being. This is a concept. You are a human being.

I am a human being. I love it that we have to use two words in the English language. To say that in some languages, like German, you have one word that means both man and woman.

But in English, you don't have one word that means both man and woman. You have to say human being. And unfortunately, the man is still in the human somewhere.

The you man. Some people get angry with that. The you man is the personality, is your mind, your mental emotional field, the conditioned entity as which you exist here with a personality.

Habitually, what usually you refer to when you say I, you refer to that, the you man, the person, the personality. You and your history, which makes up the person. And that's what people refer to when they use everybody's favorite pronoun, I.

What are your pronouns? I. That's my favorite one.

And that's what people, if you listen how many times a day you say I. Many, many times. And what does the I refer to?

It refers to the human you, obviously. It refers to you and your personal history, the accumulation of thoughts and accumulation of residuals of emotions that you have accumulated in previous past years. All kinds of things make up the you man, the I, the person, the personality.

Most people go through life never going beyond that identity that is based on human conditioning of the mind and the emotions. Me and my story. When people say my life, they talk about my life.

They say, what do they refer to? They refer to, ultimately, a narrative that you remind yourself of and tell yourself. All the things that make up the I.

Do you want to hear my story? I would love to tell you my story. Please listen.

And then you will confirm that my life is very, very hard. And it's been very problematic. I've certainly suffered more than you.

That's the narrative. What people say, talk about my life, the I refers to my life. It's a narrative of me.

Okay, everybody has one. The narrative of me, this mind-made identity, is never happy for very long. It is in a state of neediness and always there's some insufficiency hiding there.

There's something missing. That's an interesting way of putting it. If you're exclusively trapped in that level of existence, there is this nagging feeling that there's always something, with rare exceptions, except you have a great meal, or you've just drank some alcohol, but we'll come to that later.

But there's a residual sense of you haven't quite arrived yet, or it hasn't happened yet. Something big that was supposed to happen hasn't happened yet, or there's something missing. I'm not in the right place.

I'm not with the right person. I thought I was when I got married, but now I'm not so sure. And then, now most people these days meet online, so then you finally establish a relationship, and you fall in love, suddenly you feel fulfilled, and then you start living together.

And the I that was saying, now I have found the person that's going to complete me totally and fulfill me, and you are him or her. You are my love. I need you.

Don't you dare leave me. And then when you start living together, a moment comes, sooner or later, and usually sooner, when something happens in the other, this wonderful, magnificent, faultless being that you married, suddenly changes, if only for a few minutes, and a little monster comes through, and then suddenly doubt arises, and then you go to the bathroom, and while you sit on the throne, you get out your phone, because nobody goes to the throne anymore without their phone, and you suddenly remember that the Tinder app is still on there, and you start, maybe I could do better than this. And again, the sense of something not quite right, very quickly, comes back.

Oh dear. And it's, it's always there, except in moments of brief fulfillment, when you just achieved something that you were longing for. You passed the exam, you got the promotion, you win the lottery.

There's a moment of, ah, I got it now, I got it. And it doesn't last very long, you might have noticed. A few days, if you're lucky.

And again, the old residue, this, the old, the unease comes back, something's still missing. People say, sometimes say they're unhappy with themselves, and other people are predominantly unhappy with other people. You know, you might have noticed that one of the most frequent ways in which you encounter suffering in this life is through other people.

Of course, there are other causes of suffering too, it could be your body and so on, but other people are really something. And that's why the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre realized that at some point he had a big ego, and he wrote in one of his books, Hell is Other People. So there's an, this unsatisfactoriness that people have to live with.

Brief moments of relief, yes, I just mentioned an achievement for a moment, yes, falling in love, fall in love, then you fall out of love. And then other brief moments of liberation from this undercurrent of dissatisfaction or neediness, non-completion, whatever it is, brief moments of relief come sometimes, if you're lucky, you get them, if you go out into nature, and you walk, and if you're really able to be present and take in with all your senses what the sky, the light, the trees, whatever they may be, the ocean, whatever, wherever you are, the grasses, the smells of, you're in nature, surrounded by nature. If you can really be there, and not many people who go into nature are actually there, they're still so trapped in their mind that they're not really there, but if you can be really

there for a while, then you experience temporary self-transcendence. Temporary self-transcendence through that.

For a moment, the self, which is you, your personal history, your story, what you identify with as you, the personality, the troublemaker, subsides. And there is a consciousness there, but the I, this habitual I, subsides. And so this is what I mean by self-transcendence.

This is what humanity needs, is. The next step in the evolution of humanity is self-transcendence, which is going beyond egoic consciousness, and that's why we're here. Our gathering here, we are here to either deepen the self-transcendence that has already begun to arise in you, or to even give you a glimpse of what self-transcendence is as an actual experience in this moment, not just something you think about.

Self-transcendence, you let go of the I, you're out in nature, and you go, wow, wow. Wow is an interesting, I don't know if it's a word or just a sound when you say, wow, wow. Wow means your mind has briefly stopped, and there's a sense of wonder and awe.

By the way, Socrates, the great philosopher, said, all philosophy starts in wonder. You wonder. You are at the miracle of existence.

Temporarily, you are free of the burden of yourself. You're surrounded by the sense of nature, the sounds, the sights of nature. Oh, it's beautiful.

So nature can offer that to you. It can temporarily free you from yourself if you are really fully there, but you have to be there with all your senses. That's wonderful.

So other moments of self-transcendence can be very, very short. You look into the eyes of a baby, one year old. There was one baby on the plane in the aisle opposite.

This baby must have been maybe just a few months old, maybe four months, five months. If you look into the eyes of a baby for a moment, you may be able to experience self-transcendence because when you look into the eyes of the baby, the conceptual mind has not begun to form yet. The conceptual mind is still undeveloped.

So they are not burdened by any ego or any concepts. So what looks at you is just pure consciousness looking through the eyes of the baby at you. And often you see humans respond often by saying, wow, what a beautiful baby.

But in the moment when you say, wow, for a few seconds, you again, you are free of yourself. When you don't want anything from the baby, you're just happy experiencing being with this incredible creature. Wow, wow.

And so the wow means the mind has temporarily stopped, the thinking mind. And that's the key, the stopping of the thinking mind. The thinking mind itself is fine.

The problem is identification with the thinking mind, deriving your identity, your sense of who you are from the thinking mind and the story that the thinking mind tells you continuously. I often also suggest to you that animals, just to relate to an animal, if you don't want anything from the animal, just able to just contemplate the animal. Similar if you look into the eyes of a dog.

And some people, it's the only time when they can feel a little bit of joy when they look into the eyes of a dog. For a moment, self-transcendence has happened. And because the dog again has no concepts, it is not imposing any judgments on you.

It is not stimulating your thinking mind because the dog does not have a thinking mind. There's consciousness, but not conceptual consciousness. In other words, the dog has no opinion about you.

That's a relief. And the dog thinks you're wonderful. The famous prayer, of course, is, please God, make me into the person that my dog thinks I am.

Now, of course, the dog doesn't think, but the dog just responds. Some people are kept sane by their pet. Otherwise they would be totally absorbed in their egoic identity that is derived from the thinking mind.

So there are moments when they can relate to, oh, they're kept sane by their pets. It's amazing. There's a little book that I produced together with a cartoonist, and the title is Guardians of Being.

I call dogs and cats guardians of being. If you lose touch with being, because humans have lost touch with being, because they're only humans, then the dog is the guardian of being. So I've been speaking about the human level, the human you.

But you're not just human, you are also a human being. And being, in the way I use this term, the being of you is the transcendent, which the Buddha calls the non-self, and which in traditional Indian spirituality is called the Atman, the self, with a capital S, which is not the person. They seem to be talking about different things, but they're talking about the same thing.

They just use different concepts to point to it. So your life purpose is not fulfilled until or unless you realize the being dimension in you. It's not enough to be a human.

You have to become a human being. Now, of course, the being is already there underneath the person. Underneath the person, there is this vast consciousness.

The analogy I often use is of the ocean, and the surface of the ocean. The person as which you appear in this brief lifetime or few years, you are somebody, somebody. Interesting word.

You are somebody for a brief few years, and then suddenly you are nobody, because the body is gone. One day you're somebody, and the next day you are nobody. The strange thing is they still refer to you when you're dead.

They refer to your body as there he is. So the body is part of the human, of course. Now, the amazing thing is, when you really look into yourself, then you realize that the part of you that is visible to the senses, which is the physical body, is the relatively minor part of who you are.

The moment you move to thoughts, what nobody knows, scientists don't really know, what a thought is. What is a thought? Where does it live in you?

Where does it live in you? Mainstream science is still largely totally materialistic, which means it says that matter is all that exists, and everything is matter. And it says that consciousness is a byproduct, or they say epiphenomenon, other words a byproduct, of the human brain in some way.

This is a long, one could talk about this for a long time. I don't want to go this way and entertain you in that direction. I want this to be an experiential gathering rather than intellectual gathering.

But ask yourself the question, what is a thought? Where does it live? All your memories.

I suggest, for example, the memory of your deceased grandmother, or the memory of you when you were a child. When you were a child, you lived in a particular place, maybe you had your own room, and you can suddenly recollect many details of the room that you had when you were a child, even how the doorknob felt when you opened the door, the carpet, the furniture. And you can remember your grandmother or your first teacher when you first started school, the teacher you had then.

And you can remember, okay, now you haven't perhaps thought of your first great teacher in several years, but now that I mention it, suddenly the he or she pops up. Where and in what form did this first teacher of yours, or your grandmother, or the memory of the room that you lived in when you were six years old, and of course there are hundreds of thousands of memories like that, but where did this live in you? In what form?

Was it molecules and atoms in your brain that somehow certain atoms represent your grandmother, and other things represent other molecules, represent other things? The weird thing is, if a surgeon opens up your brain, he will not find any of your memories. He will not find you.

That's a strange thing. He cannot find things, but not you. Because you do not exist on a physical level ultimately, only as a physical body, but the depth of you as who you are, even who you are as a person, which is still limited, you don't exist in the physical realm

really.

I don't know where you exist, perhaps in the cloud. The cloud that you... and then you download the memory from the cloud.

So every thought is invisible, but it can, of course, it uses the brain in order to express itself. Emotion too, the emotion itself is not visible, but it can manifest, of course, with physical symptoms in the body, but in itself it's an energy field, a non-physical energy field. So the entire structure of the psychic structure of you is essentially invisible.

This is why in the famous little book, *The Little Prince*, I think it was, famous classic, it says, what is essential is invisible to the eye. That means all the other senses too. What is essential is not visible to the senses.

So you are essentially invisible. The way I see it, is thought does not even exist in this dimension. That's all.

You are multi-dimensional. You exist as a thought-made entity. It's associated with a physical realm, but it is not confined to the physical realm.

Your thoughts are invisible. Your whole sense of who you are is invisible. Nobody could find it by looking for you in the physical realm.

You're not there. And that's, it's an amazing realization that who you essentially are is, you're invisible. All the thoughts that go through your head, they are not visible to the senses.

Interesting. And that's only the surface part of you, even there.

[Speaker 2] (31:32 - 31:52)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, *Essential Teachings*, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle Sensing Presence in Another [99916929-40e6-490f-b8f2-b9b8d6a48083]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:29)

Sensing presence in another. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions on a variety of topics. What is the soul?

Is it possible to awaken when we are depressed? And how do we sense presence in another? Eckhart says we experience the presence of others when we release our conceptual thinking about them.

He says when we let all that go, a space opens up and we are free then to experience what is sacred in others and in ourselves.

[Speaker 5] (0:31 - 0:46)

Hi. Hi. So my question is whether there's an exercise or a practice that can help us sense the presence in a tree or another person or really in anything.

[Speaker 1] (0:47 - 11:17)

Right. Thank you. Well, it's not so much a practice or an exercise, but it's a way of being with, let's say, something natural, a flower, a tree.

People are more difficult. It's easier very often to be present with something natural than a human, especially initially as you become familiar with this state of consciousness. The secret is to, first of all, give yourself some time just to be with it, to be.

The secret is giving it attention, which means mostly you look at it. You look at it and you give yourself time to just be with it. You look at it.

You could be outside the tree. It could be a potted plant or even just one flower. But trees are wonderful, wonderful things, wonderful beings.

So you look at a tree, give it attention, give it attention. Look most at the details of the tree, like leaves or little branches, and then look at the totality of the tree. Give it attention so that you don't think about it.

The secret is not thinking about it. Then even the notion of tree goes away because if you don't have the concept of tree in your mind, then who knows what it is you're looking at. The concept of tree limits it because when you have the concept of tree or the name of the tree, that limits it because then you think you know what it is.

But the amazing thing is you don't know what it is. Just because you call it something, you still don't know what it is. It's a mystery.

But you lose awareness of the fact that this is a deep mystery. The moment you name it and you completely believe that's what it is, now I know. You don't know.

You just attach a concept or mental sound to it. Well, this happens. I know what this is called.

It's the Norfolk Island Pine from the Norfolk Island in the South Pacific. That's where it was first seen by a European, but as you other humans saw it before, he called it Norfolk Island Pine. But then you have to forget that this is not a Norfolk Island Pine.

Forget about it. It's not a tree. Don't impose any concept on it.

Just look at it silently. Both the details and the totality. Sometimes you switch to the totality of it.

And then occasionally you look at the little details. And then again the totality of it. And then you remain with the totality of it.

And then as you continue to be alert and still and look at it, there's not only the tree, there's also be aware of yourself as the consciousness in which the tree is being perceived. You can sense the presence, your own presence. You sense it.

So there's the tree and there's you as the perceiving consciousness. And then there is a realization that there's also a presence in the tree, but you can only sense it through your presence, the presence that is in you. There's a shared presence.

And you know that tree beyond conceptualization. You know it non-conceptually. You know it's being non-conceptually, but only because you've gone to that dimension within yourself.

And from there, you can know the tree. Conceptually, you don't know anything. But non-conceptually, you can sense its being or its presence.

In the past times, humans had that naturally because the thinking mind were not quite as developed yet. And they were not yet completely, totally in the grip of their thinking mind. There were still spaces left.

So humans in some parts of the world, they may still have it. Humans had the ability to perceive the sacredness of nature because that's what it is. They did not dismiss it through conceptualization.

They knew there was something mysterious there. Mysterious means you don't really don't know there's something, there's a depth to it. There's more to it than meets the eye.

That's really what it is. Just as there's more to you than meets the eye, infinitely more.

And so, you can sense the beingness of the tree.

And then the tree, if you have a tree nearby, or in your backyard, or somewhere nearby, you can choose one tree and go back to it occasionally and commune with it in that way. You don't have to become a tree hugger. I mean, it's nice to hug a tree, but people make fun of tree huggers.

You can hug a tree, but you don't have to. That's not an essential part of it. But the same can be with the pebble.

With a human, you have to penetrate through the mental stuff. The personality can be in the way before you can go deep enough and sense the depths of another human, especially a human that you've known for a long time. So, give it attention.

Be with it. And it always teaches you stillness. Everything in nature, except perhaps a noisy monkey or something.

This is why in Buddhism, or in Zen Buddhism, they use the expression, the monkey mind. Because there are some species of monkeys that make a lot of noise. And Zen Buddhists, I believe, referring to the human mind, they call it the monkey mind, because it never stops talking and making noise.

But a lot of nature is very still. The trees are wonderfully still. The trees can teach you stillness.

You just tune in, give it attention. The tree can teach you how to be rooted in being. Wow.

The tree is not in a state of anxiety. It's not in a hurry to grow. It just is rooted, not just rooted in the earth physically, but it's rooted in being.

So in nature can teach you stillness, which is wonderful. Flowers can teach you stillness, but you have to give it attention. Let go of concepts.

And then we regain something that we lost, that is sensing the sacredness of nature. That's really what is needed if you really want to change our relationship with the environment and with nature. Yes, we can logically.

We realize that we cannot go on destroying nature and using it as a commodity and so on. But the important part is to regain our sense of sacredness of nature. And the strange thing is, it's not just regaining.

When you regain something that you lost, you regain it at a deeper level. So a human who's becoming conscious and then communes with nature, in a way, yes, thousands of years ago, humans were also able to do that. But there's an added element when somebody has gone through the whole egoic phase and come out the other end, and

then awakened there.

There is a yes, regaining, but with an added dimension of added consciousness. Before it was a natural state, it was natural to regard nature as sacred, to have this reverence for nature. That was a natural state.

They didn't know anything, any other that was known. But now we've gone, we lost it. Now there is a possibility of regaining it.

And that's always an added dimension. That's the evolutionary development. And even when you look out of the window, wherever you are, there may be some nature there.

Even if it's just the sky. The sky is also a wonderful thing to contemplate. Give it attention.

Don't think about it. Don't call it anything. Just give it attention.

Like innocent perception. Ah, wow. And the sky, of course, is a great analogy for the consciousness, the vast spaciousness of the sky.

Heaven, sky. So the secret is in, be with it, let go of any concepts, realize that you don't know what it is. Realize whenever you attach a label to something, it gives you the illusion that you know, but you don't.

Be comfortable with a state of not knowing what this tree is. And then you know it at a deeper level. So let's see if there's another question.

[Speaker 3] (11:18 - 11:19)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (11:19 - 11:20)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (11:21 - 12:11)

Eckhart, thank you for your teachings, your wisdom, and your wonderful sense of humor. My question is around the concept of soul. You have in your teachings this wonderful way of illuminating the deeper meaning behind many different philosophies and signposts.

And that's really helped me to make a more meaningful connection that supports my process of awakening, even though that's intellectual when it's like, oh, it clicked. But depending on how it's being referenced, soul seems to have both individual and universal qualities, depending on the cultural reference or the religious reference. And I'd really welcome your thoughts on what is soul?

How does that relate to consciousness?

[Speaker 1] (12:12 - 22:19)

Thank you. Thank you. Great.

Wonderful. Now, to some extent, of course, when we talk about words, it's semantics means the meaning of words. So how do we choose to use a word?

Often, people use the same word and mean different things. Sometimes when, for example, when I use the word ego, people sometimes misunderstand because what they mean by ego is very different from what I mean by ego. So often I have to explain, this is what I mean when I use the word ego.

So what do we mean when you use the word soul? But in the first instance, one could say it is the invisible part of you. It is the hidden 90% of the iceberg, so to speak, that which is not physical, the invisible you that obviously is who you are.

The most important thing probably is to understand that you don't have a soul. It would be truer to say that you are a soul. You are a soul.

Now, what that means is, in essence, you are an invisible being. Now, if you move from the physicality where I can see you, you move one step down to your thoughts. Already there in the realm of thoughts, which is not the deepest realm, which is still the realm of form, but they're non-physical forms.

Already there, there is invisibility because you cannot physically, even with the strongest microscope or analytical scientific analysis, whatever, you cannot actually find a thought. You can have certain correlations in the physical realm that may correlate to certain thoughts in the neurons of the brain, but what are the thoughts themselves? You cannot find them.

You have millions of memories, probably, they're all invisible, and no scientist would ever be able to identify, no matter what instrument they use, even if they can't open your brain, would not be able to identify that invisible realm of thought that's just beneath the surface. It's still form, yes, but it's invisible. And all that is, where does that actually, what does it actually mean?

I sometimes give examples to make, illustrations can sometimes help people to actually see and feel what I'm saying more clearly. Think of any memory, any of your thousands and hundreds of thousands of memories, you can just ask a question like, do you remember your grandmother when you were such and such an age? And at that moment, you can retrieve the memory and there's suddenly, there's your grandmother.

Do you remember when you were 10 years old in where you lived? What did it, the front

door, what did it feel like to open the front door, the handle? What did the kitchen look like?

Or your room? You can go there. Now, where was all that?

Where did that live? All those memories? Where is, are there atoms in your brain that represent the kitchen that when you were six years old, where you lived, are there atoms or molecules or subatomic particles in your brain that stand for your grandmother that you knew when you were 10 years old?

Where does all that live? It doesn't live in the physical realm, but no one could find it. Although there is a correlation, of course, between the brain and consciousness, in the same way that there's a correlation between the radio and the music the radio plays.

So, this is the realm, the invisible realm of we are begins already there. Then you go into the emotional, emotional realm, where do emotions live? What are they exactly?

Even that we don't know that because they're also, yes, there is a physical counterpart, there's correlation in the body, and what you feel in the body are connected, obviously, and even thoughts and the body are connected. You can think a thought can create changes in your physical body, but the thought itself is not physical. Imagine biting into a lemon, you cut open a lemon, and now you're biting into the lemon, and you're tasting it.

So, if you imagine it, you can feel saliva responding, accumulating in your mouth. Although nothing has happened, thought has created a reaction in the body. And then you move further into invisibility, then you go into all the subconscious, all the memories, and the subconscious, or we don't know where that lives.

Now, to some people, the soul is the person that people are in this lifetime, the invisible part of that person that goes from lifetime to lifetime. But that's a very limited view of who you are, that obviously, for some people that they call that the soul, and then they say, okay, when I die, I'm going to meet my grandmother again, maybe, who knows, maybe you will. But will your grandmother eternally remain your grandmother in some other realm?

Is she not going to evolve into something else? Are you going to spend the rest of your life after death in a family reunion? Because people say when they die, they meet family members, and then what?

Okay, then you go on, and you're with your family, maybe you don't even like them, I don't know. So, you spend eternity with your family members, and nobody ever evolves any further. This can't be right.

So, the personalities, they may, this part of what some people call soul is the personality with all its memories and so on, but then there's nothing deeper. And they believe that

remains intact. Either it remains in the realm where the deceased people go, which some people call heaven, or whatever it is, or some call it the astral dimension.

Either it was there intact, and then it remains intact until, who knows. But that can't be right, because then there will be no further. And you just imagine the very limited personalities that then you'd be stuck with an extremely limited personality for the rest of your existence in some other realm, dreadful.

So, the continuation of just this person in some invisible form, which some people believe is the soul, that can't be right. But if you go deeper, and realize that you are not actually an entirely autonomous entity that lives here as itself. You are an aspect of the totality, and you are connected to the totality.

And if you go deep enough beyond the conditioned entity into presence itself, the unconditioned consciousness, there you and that transcendent dimension merge into one. You're only an emanation of that. You don't actually exist as an independent entity there.

You are eternally an emanation, eternally connected to source. You are an emanation of source, of like the sunlight is an emanation of the sun. You are an emanation of God, actually, to use that word, eternally.

And that is a deeper meaning of soul, is to realize that in essence, you are a transcendent being that does not have a life of its own. There's no such thing a life of its own. You're an expression of the one consciousness, the one life, and you're eternally connected to that.

So, there's not ultimately, there's only the one soul of the universe, the one being, and you are a strand or whatever you want to call it in that, the one soul, you are a strand in that, or is a cell in, to use an analogy from the physical realm, you're a cell in that universal being, and always in one, an essential cell of that. So, soul is deeper than common assumptions of people. They're very, they actually are very limited.

So, and again, these are not the very ultimate explanations, but they're approximations just to watch the truth of who you are. Thanks.

[Speaker 2] (22:21 - 24:25)

Hi, Edgar. Nice to be here with you. Thank you for taking my question.

I have a history with suicidal depression from a very young age. I am 32, and this began in my early teens. I have been to therapy, taken antidepressants, and even worked through the 12 steps of recovery.

I no longer take drugs, medicinal or recreational, and I have made great advances in my

spiritual journey. I have a sense of deep I, and I make it a daily practice to connect and live from deep I. I still have work to do to dissolve pain bodies, but I can honestly say that I'm not afraid to die.

I often think to myself, I won't go looking for my own death, but if the universe decides that it's my, that my time has come, I will be at peace with it. I am at peace with it. Is it possible to be friendly with death, even though I have a suicidal past, or is this just another form of suicidal ideation that I need to be aware of?

And I want to add that as I read it out loud, I know that it is possible to be friendly with death, but I'm at a point where I have a lot of purpose in my life, and everything I do from parenting to entrepreneurship comes from deep I. So I feel like I'm living a purpose, but once that's over, like, it's kind of like, it's over. So that's kind of where I'm coming from.

Like, is that healthy to have, or is that something that I need to be aware of? Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (24:25 - 32:34)

Thank you. Thank you. Well, it's very good to have acute self observation as you have, because it's very easy to fool oneself.

But in this case, I don't think you're fooling yourself. As you say, it could be to say that I'm not afraid of death could be a hidden form of actually longing for death, which you don't, but to be actually to become no longer afraid of death and say, if or when it comes, I'll be fine with it. That is a, it seems to be the case with you.

That is a clear sign of spiritual deepening, where you have realized that the essence of who you are is beyond death. And you're not afraid to die, which I'm not either. Although I'm not inviting deaths necessarily.

But this is one of the most important parts on the spiritual path is to first of all, to become aware acutely of death, of mortality, to face death, and be aware that you are going to die. You already have faced death because there was a time in your life, as you say, when you felt you were drawn to suicide. I had the same in my early life.

Suicide was always a very often a great temptation. Even as a child, when I was 10 years old, I remember often thinking about it. And I remember things like, we lived in a four-story house in one apartment on the ground floor.

And one day, they built scaffolding to paint the house. And you could climb up as you wanted. There were ladders going up the scaffolding to the top floor.

And I thought, I was very, very happy. I said, well, while this scaffolding is here, if I have to, I can climb up and jump down and I can commit suicide. That would be my way out.

So lucky that as long as the scaffolding is here, there's no problem. I can kill myself anytime I want to. That was quite a relief.

And that was childhood. So perhaps it's for some people, it can be a good thing to have gone through that and have transcended that. And to become free of the fear of death is a clear sign of spiritual deepening and awakening.

And ultimately, that becomes the end of all kinds of fear. Because the primordial fear for most humans is a fear of death. And many other kinds of fear are subsidiary fears.

And they also tend to drop away. And as fear drops away, also other negative emotions that are associated with fear, like anger. Anger often is underneath the fear.

People who get angry easily are actually, the anger is hiding the fear that's underneath it. So to go beyond fear is the primordial fear is the fear of death is a very important milestone in one's spiritual evolution. One of the great shortcomings of our civilization is that it's the denial of death.

Death is something that absolutely is regarded as a virtually taboo subject. And it leads to overreactions in many situations. Even now that humans are being challenged by the COVID virus, the fear of death can easily lead and has in many cases lead to diminishment of the ability to think rationally.

Because once fear invades your mind, your ability to make rational decisions diminishes. So it fears kind of a toxic emotion that once it invades your mind, you cannot think clearly anymore, no matter how intelligent you are. Once it invades your mind, you cannot think clearly.

It's like a virus. Fear itself is a more dangerous virus than the actual physical virus that we are facing. So and the ultimate fear is the fear of death.

And many people get very angry with other people for various reasons, in our situation with COVID, for example, because they are in a state of great fear. And then when somebody comes across somebody who is not doing what you think we should be doing, or is doing something that you think we should not be doing, get angry, they get very upset, very angry. Why?

Because they're very fearful. Why are they fearful? Because we don't know what to do with death.

We don't, we haven't, we've never faced it. In ancient cultures, when human beings reach adolescence, they often had to go through initiation rituals, sometimes very dangerous ones. And some of them died.

We had to face a dangerous situation like going out into the wilderness or face

dangerous animals, or going into a cave and being left alone, or even being injured physically. Nowadays, you would think this is horrible, horrible. How can they do things like that?

But there was a certain wisdom there, a natural wisdom, that if you don't face death at some point in your life, you can never go beyond the fear of death. And you will never deepen as a human being. So these initiation rituals, they mark the passage from childhood to adulthood.

The adolescents had to face, came face to face with death, the possibility of death. And that brings about a deepening. And then once you immerse from the ritual, you were an adult.

You were not enlightened, but you had faced death and there was a deepening that happened in you. So you've, you came also face to face with the death, with the possibility of death. You were even looked at death as I did, as a possible way out, a possible solution.

And then went beyond that, and it brought about a deepening. But now to be in a state where you don't fear death is a clear sign that you've come a long way. And deepening has happened.

And I don't believe it is a disguised form of wishing for death. It is not from what I can tell by listening to you. It is a genuine, it is the genuine thing.

You have gone beyond the fear of death because the deepening has happened. So that's, I'd like to tell you that to reassure you. And I'm glad you asked the question, but it's good to be very observant because as I said at the beginning of the answer, it's sometimes easy to fool oneself.

So I'm glad that you are alert enough and looked into yourself to ask that question.

[Speaker 2] (32:35 - 33:48)

I appreciate that. Thank you. I want to just say that the looking in seems a bit crazy making sometimes.

You know, like when you were saying that a lot of the fear is afraid of dying, I can say that as you were saying that, it kind of clicked as to the way I live my life with my son and the way I am in business and relating to people. There is no fear. There's a ton of uncertainty all around me, but I'm just confident in what I'm doing.

And sometimes that same confidence seems crazy making it's like, am I crazy or am I just that comfortable taking this step? So I appreciate what you say that, you know, a lot of it is a fear of death because then it makes sense that that confidence is coming from a

place of abundance, wholeness, stillness, not false ideations.

[Speaker 1] (33:48 - 38:11)

Yes, exactly. Yes. Yeah.

Occasionally the mind may come in and can question anything mentally. You can sometimes question yourself. Well, is that the real thing?

Am I really at peace? This is what the mind does. So you don't need to necessarily give it too much attention because the mind likes to doubt things and so on.

So that's just fine. But I believe you've already, you know, you're rooted in something deeper than that. You're rooted in the being and the rest of your life, of course, challenges will continue to come.

And once you reach a certain point, a challenge instead of making you more unconscious will make you more conscious. And so that's universally true. Any challenge that you meet, either as an individual or as society meeting a collective challenge, either it makes you more unconscious, or it makes you more conscious.

This is just a goes beyond my answer to your question, just a general remark. The COVID situation has had this effect on many humans, millions of humans. It has made many, many people more unconscious than they were before.

And it has made others a smaller number, but others more conscious than they were before. And this is the case with any challenge that you meet, whether it's personal or collective challenge, it'll either push you push you down or pull you up. Many people say they're more aware now they've grown in stillness and awareness.

Many others, because of so much fear, and fear is associated with unconsciousness. So it has triggered so much fear in millions of humans, that this fear has become quite toxic, and has invaded many human's minds. And you can see how even the media, they all they love, not just to present the facts, they love the fear.

They themselves are in the grip of the fear. Most of you have probably become more conscious to this collective challenge. Now, what about all those people who have become less conscious, even becoming irrational, attacking others because they're angry with other people and so on?

Well, their past just takes a little longer. Because this means you suffer, you're suffering, you begin to suffer more. And suffering is also a great awakener, eventually just takes a bit more time.

So as you suffer more, and you create suffering unconsciously. And eventually suffering, suffering reaches a certain point, where awakening becomes a possibility. And that's the

past for many humans.

For many of you who are here with us, suffering as a teacher has fulfilled its function, or it's close to fulfilling its function. That's a decisive milestone of transition from needing suffering, because otherwise you wouldn't evolve, to no longer needing suffering and continue with your evolution, without needing the teacher of suffering. Once you go beyond that threshold, evolution also speeds up, you grow deeper more quickly.

Suffering is a long drawn out process, it takes time, it goes on and on. So that's, that's, I believe, is the case for many of you. Either you don't need it anymore, you've already reached that point, or you're close to it.

And it's just a little bit more. Thank you. Thank you, everybody for being here.

Let's have a moment of stillness.

[Speaker 4] (38:18 - 38:38)

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Eckhart Tolle Spiritual Awakening Is A Realization Not An Achievement [d1cec235-9d6e-4cb7-9e5b-2a3133776af0]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:38)

Spiritual awakening is a realization, not an achievement. In this episode, Eckhart addresses concerns about using conscious manifestation for both practical as well as spiritual purposes. Eckhart cautions listeners that awakening should not be something we put on our to-do list.

He says it's not another goal that we attain. He believes when we define enlightenment in those terms, it becomes an obstacle. Eckhart says awakening is not an achievement.

It's a realization, which really means it's already here.

[Speaker 1] (0:40 - 4:22)

Thank you and welcome everybody. Become aware of the present moment. Become aware of the present moment, not only the manifested form of the present moment, but also the unmanifested essence of the present moment.

Those are the two dimensions. The manifested, what you can see and hear and so on, sense perception, thoughts, emotions, and underlying that, the present moment itself, which is the unmanifested essence. And that unmanifested that we call here the present moment is actually timeless and is inseparable from who you are.

So at the deepest level, one could say that you are the present moment. And what that means, of course, is that you are the consciousness, the timeless space or consciousness within which all manifestations of life unfold. It gives rise to all manifestations.

So when we manifest, the manifestations arise out of the unmanifested. It's important not to lose touch with the unmanifested, which is the stillness, the conscious awareness or presence. Because if you don't, if you're not rooted in that, you're lost in the world of manifestation.

And then no, nothing that you manifest can free you or make you happy or liberate you or tell you who you are. So that's always important to bear in mind when we talk about manifesting. The Buddha actually said, I'm not able to quote it verbatim, but it's a famous sutra.

The Buddha said, there is the unborn, the uncreated, the unmanifested. If there were not the unborn, the uncreated, and the unmanifested, there would be no escape from the born, the created, and the manifested. In other words, you would be lost completely in the world.

Wonderful sutra saying of the Buddha. I'm sure more or less literally, he said that. So something to remember.

[Speaker 3] (4:27 - 4:35)

Hello. Thank you for having me. It's an honor, Eckhart, you have shined such a light on my path.

Thank you so much.

[Speaker 1] (4:36 - 4:38)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 3] (4:39 - 5:23)

So my question is, if I'm honest, what I really want to manifest is of a spiritual nature. And I find this is the same for many on this path. But these spiritual intentions are not so easy to simulate in terms of feeling like we have already received or to visualize.

Can you address how manifestation can be applied to spiritual yearnings? Or is manifestation only to be applied to practical purposes while we work on our spiritual practice?

[Speaker 1] (5:24 - 32:51)

Thank you. Thank you. Good question.

One important thing to be aware of is that you don't make the mistake of regarding spiritual realization, or being enlightened or being egoless or being in permanent conscious connectedness with source, whatever you want to call it, not to regard that as a state to be achieved. It's very easy to fall into that error of wanting to become fully awakened, for example. And then you might say, this is part of the question.

Is there something I can do perhaps to manifest this awakened version of myself? So if you have this intention, or this image in your mind, you want to arrive at a fully awakened state, whatever else you want to call it, that will become a great obstacle. Because spiritual awakening, or the egoless state, or whatever it is, cannot be achieved in the future, you would be creating an image that you then pursue, wanting to reach or achieve.

And you won't achieve it, as long as you have an image of yourself that you want to achieve. You're striving towards that. In other words, you make it into a goal, like everything else, the things that you want to achieve in this world.

But the one thing that you will not achieve by making it into a goal is this state of

awakening or being fully yourself is another way of putting it being, realizing the essence of who you are. So you will be striving away from the only place where it is accessible to you. And that's in the vertical dimension of the present moment.

So for everything else, manifestation practices can be helpful, but not for realizing who you are. Because there's no, you don't achieve anything. You don't attain anything by spiritual awakening.

That it's not an achievement, it's not an attainment, it's a realization. That means it's already here. So if you look to the future for it, you miss the fact that it's already here.

And you don't realize that that's the place where you haven't been looking. Because there is, you're looking to the future. And this is why I'm saying it becomes a great obstacle.

If you look to the future for enlightenment, fulfillment, whatever it may be, that becomes the obstacle and you won't find it and you will be striving. Even you might be engaged in arduous spiritual practices, very determined to awaken, but you have in your mind a future goal that you want to achieve without, you might not call it that, but underlying it, underlying your practice is this assumption of arriving at a future goal. And that is the greatest obstacle to that realization.

Because what is future? Future is basically inseparable from thought. Because the future exists only in your mind as a thought form.

I'd be very happy to listen to anybody who wants to prove me wrong. Because then he would probably would come to me and say, here's a future. I have discovered it.

So far, nobody has come to me and said, here's a future, you are wrong. The future is more than just a thought form. And I don't think anybody will come.

And now that means if you're looking to the future, you have a thought form that you are pursuing of yourself as the fully awakened one or whatever term you use. So you're pursuing a thought form in the future, which the inseparable future in thought. And then you reach the end of this incarnation and you become frustrated because you haven't found it.

Why not? Because the thought form or the future, the future self prevented you from discovering what's already here, discovering who or what you already are. So it's a reversal of normal practice is yes, you need time for everything in this world in order to do this.

Any action unfolds in time. For anything you pursue, you want to acquire something, achieve something, become good at something. All these things require time.

Yes. But the one thing that does not only not require time, but the one thing to which time is the obstacle is that self-realization. For everything else, you need time and that's fine.

But to find yourself, you don't need time. That is an amazing realization. The Buddha also had to learn that he didn't know that when he started off.

When the Buddha started off, he realized the unsatisfactory nature of normal human existence. He saw there's so much suffering, you die. So he saw the unsatisfactory nature and said, there must be a transcendent dimension, there must be something beyond.

So for many years, he practiced seeking to find enlightenment, transcendence. And he practiced the most arduous disciplines with great teachers. He almost killed himself with the spiritual practice.

And after several years of spiritual practice, he still wasn't any further to his goal of enlightenment. And then he said, well, I've had enough of that. That, by the way, is not a literal quote from the scriptures.

This is my free translation. He said, I've had enough. And he stopped his spiritual practice and he sat under a tree.

And then that was the big moment. He sat under a tree. And suddenly, the realization happened, enlightenment.

What does that mean? All doing came to a stop, he realized through the doing, you cannot achieve being. Being needs to be discovered, but not achieved.

So no matter what he did, he didn't achieve it, because you cannot achieve it. You cannot achieve enlightenment. You can discover it.

It's already here. And when he sat under the tree, all doing came to a stop, all future came to a halt, there was no more future. All seeking stopped, seeking for an enlightened version of myself, basically.

That stopped. And then it happened, the realization came to him. And that was the moment of enlightenment.

So there's a deep lesson in that. Now, of course, some people say that the Buddha's search through spiritual practice was unnecessary. You could say that.

If he had realized before he started his arduous spiritual practice, if he had realized that that was unnecessary, and not only unnecessary, that it was ultimately misleading, then he could have sat under the tree immediately. Okay, that's an interesting perspective on it. But one could also say that he needed to go through that in order to realize the futility

of it, and then give up.

The surrender only happened as a result of being frustrated with spiritual practice. So who knows whether one could say it wasn't necessary at all, or he had to go through it. I have a way of putting this.

And that is, the question is my answer to the question, do you need time for spiritual realization? Do you need time to wake up spiritually? And my answer is, you need time until you realize that you don't need time.

So you come to a point of the vertical dimension suddenly opens up. So one cannot really start. Some spiritual teachers do that.

They tell people, there's nothing you can do. There's nothing you need to do about waking up. You either wake up or not, or discover who you are.

Very often it's not very helpful. And so I think the doing, it's helpful to do, to want to achieve this or that. Every human being needs to arrive at a point where the doing is realized as ultimately not leading to the ultimate goal or realization.

But you may have to become frustrated several times, quite a few times before you realize that no amount of doing will ultimately lead to the realization of who you are. In fact, the doing is the obstacle. But sometimes you need to go through that state of doing to fully realize that.

So to pursue a state that you want to achieve is not to be encouraged, but to realize that there's nothing to achieve. And who you are in your essence is already complete, full, perfect. In your essence, there's nothing that you could add to who you are.

You're already one with God, to use that term, one with source, the source of all life. You're already one with that. On the level of manifestation, there are many things where you could improve your life as this manifested being that you are temporarily.

You can learn new things, explore new things, achieve, get, obtain. And then of course, it leaves you again. Nothing stays with you in the world of manifestation.

It comes and then it goes. So there's nothing wrong with doing and achieving and obtaining, but for realization, it's not helpful. It's a hindrance.

So we come to the point of where doing and being are reconciled in yourself. To reconcile in yourself the dimension of being with the dimension of doing. And that is the ultimate art of living, we could call it, that we need to learn or master, is a reconciliation of these two dimensions in yourself.

If you let go of all doing, then an important dimension is missing in your life. It has happened to some people, some people who have had sudden realization. So they just

lost all interest in doing anything.

To some extent, it happened to me too. For a few years, I lost interest in doing. And then I realized I'm still here and the universe requires me to do certain things.

It requires me to do certain things. I could feel it and there was a pull. And finally, I had to do.

Now, the last part of my answer perhaps is, is there anything, any kind of affirmation could possibly be helpful in realizing this essence of who you are? Could there be any affirmation that could be used as a pointer into the vertical dimension? And yes, you could use certain affirmations.

They don't express the truth, but they can be a pointer. For example, there was an Indian spiritual teacher, Nisargadatta Maharaj. He had a little store where he sold cigarettes.

Not karmically the most beneficial job, but that's what he did. And he went to a spiritual teacher and the spiritual teacher said to him, you are not a person, you are consciousness. Sorry, he wasn't highly educated, but he listened carefully.

And then for quite a long, don't remember for how long, several months or a year or two, often in his mind, the thought would come, I am consciousness. I am consciousness. And this little thing brought about his awakening.

Not the words, but the words were pointers. The important thing is what the words point to. So the words, I am consciousness, what comes after the words is the realization.

It's not in the words. So I am consciousness. And then you stop, the thought comes to an end.

And when this thought, I am consciousness comes to an end, the realization that I am consciousness is suddenly there. And in that sense, a verbal pointer can for a little while, if you don't overdo it, be useful. I am consciousness.

Or you could say, if you want to have a little bit of link with creativity, the infinite creative power of the universe is within me and one with me, because that is the unconditioned consciousness. The infinite creative power of the universe is in me and one with me. But then you have to stop the thought.

Don't carry on continuously. You can say it a few times, but the important thing is to stop the thought. Then the thought is used as a pointer, not as some kind of explanation to believe in.

There's no point in, I believe that the infinite creative power of the universe is within me and I'm one with it, doesn't help you, unless it becomes a deeper realization. The

realization comes when the thought stops. You need to leave the pointer behind after you have used a pointer.

You go beyond the pointer and then comes a moment of just silence, but it's alive, stillness, alive, spacious stillness. And then there's the realization. And then you can sense it, the truth of the point, what the pointer said, you realize the truth of it and then you don't need it anymore.

So that's a little bit like one could say, spiritual practice can also have that function. You need to know all spiritual practice needs to take you to the end of the spiritual practice. It needs to take you to the end of thought.

And at the end of thought, you don't fall below thought, you rise above thought. At the end of thought, there's awareness. So that sense, the Buddha said he compared his teaching to a raft.

There's a river. How do you cross the river? You build a raft, the boat.

And this boat or this raft, you step in and it takes you to the other shore of the river. When you've reached the other shore of the river, you leave the raft or the boat behind. You don't need to carry the boat around with you after you've reached.

Now, in this teaching of the Buddha, the other shore, the other side of the river, of course, means the dimension of being the transcendent dimension, the realization of the essence of who you are. That's the other, the other. This shore is the manifested in this analogy or in this parable.

This shore is the world of the manifested. The other shore of the river is the world of the transcendent. So the raft is something that you may use, and then you leave it behind.

You don't carry a raft around with you. And so if you use certain pointers, yes, you can. It's best to find your own that are simple expressions of who you are, who or what you are in your essence.

So certain affirmations, simple affirmations, even, I just mentioned, I am consciousness, Nisargadatta used for a while. You could even drop consciousness. If you want the simplest affirmation that points to the vertical dimension, you just say, I am.

You don't even need to add consciousness. Might be even better. I am.

And after you've said I am, sense what that means. But you've left the words behind. I am.

Sense the deep meaning of those words. So in that sense, it can work if you use it for a limited time. And so you could say, it's a manifestation practice that you could use, very simple, to discover the unmanifested.

An unmanifestation practice. But you don't have to. Some people, for some people it's helpful.

To use pointers and others don't need to do that. Another simple one, of course, is there's only this moment, for example. There's only this moment.

This moment is all there is. The now. And then realize deeply what that means.

And that's beyond concepts. There's only now. It's when your mind is taking you to all kinds of unpleasant places.

You can always, you come back to there's only this moment. There's only this. That's a, and the now, of course, is the opening into the vertical dimension.

So you become aware of the present. Whenever suffering arises, you don't want to manifest suffering, but millions of people on a daily basis continuously manifest suffering. But you don't want to.

And so when you, the beginning of an awakening is the realization that you are manifesting suffering. Of course, that's already an awakening there, because if you're very unconscious, the blame for all your suffering is always elsewhere. It's never in your own mind.

When you're very unconscious, other people, the world situation, fate, God, destiny, your karma, your parents, the unjust system, whatever, all kinds of things, they're all to blame. They cause your suffering, and you haven't realized that you are manifesting, your mind ultimately is manifesting. And in fact, if you tell this to a person who is not ready to hear that, they will get very angry, very angry.

But that realization, your mind, the unconscious mind, manifests suffering. And when you discover that ultimately the suffering arises in your mind, because your mind reacts to things, your mind creates a narrative that makes you unhappy. Not the situation, but the narrative that your mind creates around the situation makes you unhappy.

When you discover that, that's the first stage of the awakening is, oh, and at that moment, that's an amazing discovery that virtually all your suffering is created by your mind. Amazing. And then you realize you don't want to manifest that anymore.

And then you want to manifest something else. But first, before you manifest something else, you need to stop manifesting suffering. And a good way is bringing your attention into the present moment.

What is my problem now? Nothing. What's wrong with this moment?

This moment is as it is. What's the problem? So bring your attention to now.

Whenever you feel unhappiness arising, look at your mind and bring attention to the present moment, which always means the externals of the present moment. That's a manifested dimension of the present moment. And then the essence of the now, which is consciousness, awareness, presence.

So that's how you stop manifesting suffering. And then you can, if you want to manifest other things from once you have the foundation, which is the being, then you begin to work on the two levels. So you reconcile the two, the being and the doing in your life.

And that's your purpose. And you will not always succeed, it's you fall back into, usually you fall back into losing yourself in doing, and then you suffer. And this unhappiness that arises, you can then use as a very helpful way of telling you, you've lost yourself, you've lost the present moment.

And once you know that, you can come back. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (32:51 - 32:52)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (32:52 - 33:14)

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Eckhart Tolle Stopping The Madness [d2d053c6-348a-49e4-80be-f42f1f62d625]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:45)

Stopping the Madness. In this podcast, Eckhart explains that humanity is at a pivotal point. He says the most urgent task of our lives is to connect more deeply with the transcendent part of ourselves.

Eckhart explains the possibility is always there, just waiting to be discovered. He uses an ancient Greek term called metanoia, which means a profound spiritual awakening brought about by a dramatic shift in consciousness. In certain mystical traditions, it's called Buddha nature or Christ consciousness.

Eckhart says once we realize we're indeed the light of the world, we do not have to be a part of the craziness anymore. He says we can stop the madness by learning to dissolve it in ourselves first.

[Speaker 1] (0:47 - 28:54)

It's vital for humans, especially now we are moving into a critical time period for the totality of humanity, which is also an incredible opportunity for disidentifying from the unconsciousness that otherwise governs the world. So how do you do it? In a way you don't even do it.

It's just a cessation of, one could almost say the cessation of doing and the realization of being. And doing on a primordial level is thinking. Humans are thinking all the time except in dreamless sleep.

They're thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking. It's no cessation. And then life gets more and more difficult.

Then you watch more and more in the news on TV and whatever it's called the news is not the news anymore. It's just opinions. It's just stupid manipulation.

And you watch him and you get drawn into that. And you think it's also real. And then you see anxiety arises, anger arises, suffering arises.

And as humans, as the suffering increases, as I said before, the motivation to awaken in many humans also increases. So we are here to realize this and to actually welcome the challenges we are confronted with externally, because they are a great opportunity for the awakening of consciousness. Humans don't awaken except through difficulties, obstacles, problems, challenges.

And then your state of consciousness, the state of consciousness with which you meet

the external situation changes, which means how the way in which you experience an external situation changes. And now this sounds a little mystical. What subsequently happens on an external level is also to a large extent determined by your state of consciousness in the present moment.

What subsequently happens in the so-called future, which never comes, because you can only experience the future as the present moment. So you can never experience the future except as a thought form. Interesting to realize this, the only reality the future has is as a thought form.

You cannot actually say, oh, there it is, because the moment you say there it is, it's the present. So how things evolve in the so-called future are linked in very fundamental way to your state of conscience in the present. So if you meet a difficult situation or a difficult person in a state of consciousness that is not reactive, but in an awakened state of consciousness, which means present, alert, then it changes also the situation, the external situation, how it develops from there onward.

Or you can, if you're unconscious, you face an external situation and you amplify the problem of the external situation that you're facing by your unconscious reactivity of the ego itself. It feels threatened in the situation and all the things that you do in order to remove the situation or make it better actually makes it worse. So it amplifies when you're unconsciously reacting all the time, you can observe it even just meeting a single human being, a difficult human being.

And many human beings are very difficult, you might've noticed. So you meet a difficult human being, how you react if this difficult human being triggers the same in you, an angry human being triggers anger in you, then you amplify his or her anger. And then it grows and grows and grows, might become violence.

And this applies to any situation. If you are in a reactive, unconscious, the unconscious state of reactivity, then you amplify the problem. And this is what happens a lot on every level here.

This is an unconscious way of dealing with things. Whenever you're motivated by fear or anger, this is what happens. You think you're resolving the situation, but you're amplifying it.

And so the key is then to realize this dimension within yourself that is beyond the thinking mind and all the mental, emotional turbulence. And this happens very easily in a moment, like now, when your mind, your thinking mind subsides, comes to a stop. Now, what remains?

You can't say what remains, but you know what remains directly. The sense of presence cannot be defined, the sense of beingness. This is the most beautiful thing.

These moments without thought, but it's not loss of consciousness. It's loss of thinking when it's not needed because thinking is useful for many things and destructive for many other things. And so you discover when it's useful and you let go of it when it's destructive, when it destroys your enjoyment of life, your enjoyment of the present moment, your ability to just be, to acknowledge the aliveness of things around you, to acknowledge the present moment, to have some gratitude for the richness of life and all life forms around you.

All this you lose when you're continuously absorbed only in thinking. What remains then when thinking subsides, awareness remains or presence, whatever you want to call it. In religious traditions, in mystical Christianity, it's called the Christ within.

In some Buddhist schools, it is called your Buddha nature. These are just names to talk about it. That's what remains when thinking subsides and there's only a sense of spacious presence like now.

And in that spacious presence, strange thing is you don't know anything anymore, of course, because there's no concepts anymore in your mind. You don't know anything on the level of concepts and yet that is the essence of who you are, this beingness or presence. So you don't know yourself anymore as an object, which is when you live through the ego, then you become an object to yourself and your consciousness and you have a relationship with yourself.

You can say, I love myself, which is better than hating yourself, but you still have a relationship with yourself. You're not yourself. You have a relationship with yourself.

It's better to love yourself than to hate yourself. True. But you still have a relationship with yourself.

There's two. I love myself. I'm two.

But with the realization of being, you are yourself. And so you cannot know yourself as an object of knowledge, but you can know yourself as the eternal subject of all knowing. And that's where wisdom arises.

This is the source of all real knowing and the source of all true intelligence is in this non-conceptual vast intelligence, which is the intelligence of consciousness itself, which is one with who you are. And then when you can link into that, you become inspired. It can inspire your mind.

Your mind can create when it's linked into that. You have creative thoughts, you have creative input, ideas. You take action that is wise rather than, or as the Buddhists skillful, skillful, wise action, rather than unconscious action that produces more suffering for yourself and others.

Perpetuates karma. So this realm of true intelligence is the non-conceptual realm. Yes, you need concepts and you can use concepts, but don't lose yourself in concepts.

Don't look for yourself in concepts and then have a narrative in your mind that says, this is who I am. It's just a story of one concept linked with others concepts. The story of yourself is not essentially who you are.

It's a story versus this limited entity of the person. It's a surface phenomenon. It's not who you are, but it's the realization of who you are.

That's the awakening, but it's not conceptual. So look for the cessation of thought. Look for it in little moments like now.

Whenever you look at something natural, the sky, a tree, the ocean, any plant or flower or animal, don't label it. Just be alert and present and perceive it. And as I said before, when you go into anything natural, when you go into nature, you can then sense something that is almost awe-inspiring.

I'm not romanticizing nature. Of course, nature can also kill you, but there is something there that is holy or sacred. And humans have to find that urgently because then they are not going to destroy nature anymore.

Ultimately, humans have been destroying nature for some time because they have lost the ability to sense what's there. There are old forests. Some are still here in Canada and other parts of the world.

There are forests that have been there with gigantic trees that have been there for thousands of years, thousands of years. They are sacred spaces. But if humans cannot sense it anymore, then all they see is possible profit.

What can we do with it? What can we do with it? They look at the whole world in terms of doing.

What can I do with it? Because they have lost sense of being. It's a terrible loss.

But you've also lost it with reference to yourself. You can't sense your own being. That's why you cannot sense the forest.

You can't sense your own holiness. And that's why you cannot sense the holiness of the forest or the sky or the ocean. It's not impossibly difficult what I am suggesting is the most important task in your life, which has become particularly almost, one could say, urgent at the present time.

This is a task of realizing the transcendent dimension to who you are. Very simply by realizing that you do not have to think all the time. That there's always a possibility in yourself.

It's just waiting to be discovered. You are waiting to be discovered, so to speak. That dimension is always there.

The moment thinking subsides, you feel that stillness. It's another word you can use. There's a stillness.

I wrote a little book called Stillness Speaks. It's a small book designed for meditative reading, not consecutive reading, just little entries. The first sentence in the book, if I remember correctly, is, you are never more essentially yourself than when you are still.

So when you're, this is the same thing. It's just another term pointer to describe it. You're still when the mind subsides, but awareness is not lost.

In fact, awareness has grown. Consciousness, awareness. This is the light of consciousness that Jesus said, you are the light of the world.

It's in one of the gospels. In another gospel, he also said, I am the light of the world. Both statements.

What is he talking about? You are the light of the world. You are the consciousness of the universe.

That's what he said. You are the consciousness without which there wouldn't even be a universe. You are essentially not a person.

You are the consciousness of the universe disguised briefly as a person. But the consciousness of the universe wants to realize itself through you. This is very strange.

So in other words, the universe is in the process of an awakening. It's an awakening of consciousness. One could almost say the universe has led a dream like existence for a very long time.

When forms were identified with just the form and gradually loss of realization of the essence. With humans, that has become very extreme. A tree is still rooted deeply, not only in the soil, but in the beingness of life.

When you look at a tree, you can sense it is one with itself. You have to be still to be able to sense that there is something there that beyond sense perceptions, the presence of the tree. It's a manifestation of consciousness too.

Or even an animal. You can look at an animal without always having to label it. And you just look or touch or listen.

And it also is a manifestation of the one consciousness. And it's still more rooted in being than a human, even your dog. And the dog is already kind of becoming humanized in many cases.

But even the dog or the cat, they are still more deeply rooted in the beingness of themselves than humans. Humans have gone out a long way, lost themselves in mental abstractions, but it's all fine. It all was meant that way.

So it was all necessary. But what's necessary now is the next step, the shift in consciousness. Jesus called that the repent, which has been mistranslated.

Metanoia is repentance. It's a Greek term used in the Old Testament. Repentance, an important concept in the teaching of Jesus.

Repentance is a shift, a turnaround of consciousness, which is not, they translate it as repentance. And then they thought it means you say, oh, I'm such a miserable sinner, which, well, you probably are because your mind is dysfunctional. But then if you create an image of yourself as a miserable sinner, you're stuck again in delusion.

So metanoia is the Greek, ancient Greek term, traditionally translated as repentance, but really means an inner shift in consciousness. And that's what it's all about. And it's great opportunity now, especially if you want to first avoid further suffering for yourself and avoid contributing to the suffering of the world or humanity.

They go together. If you don't want to contribute to the madness, because there is at the present time, an increasing craziness in the energy field, you can either become part of it and contribute to it, or you begin to dissolve it in yourself. So the key is become aware of yourself as a conscious presence, consciousness, become aware that you are conscious.

For example, one could say that there's no doubt, even if your entire life is a dream, including this moment, there's no doubt that in order for the dream to happen, there needs to be a consciousness, the light of consciousness in which the dream appears. And you are that, whether you call it a dream or reality, it doesn't matter. You are the light of consciousness in which this appears.

So everything can be doubted, except consciousness. You can doubt everything about yourself, except that you are conscious right now. And even that, when you use language, we distort things.

Even to say you are conscious is not quite correct, because that would imply that there's two of you. There's a you that is conscious, or even to say I am conscious, it's not quite correct. Because language so easily creates duality.

I am conscious means there's an I and there's a consciousness, but that's not right. I am consciousness is the most accurate way of saying it, instead of I am conscious, because you are not separate from consciousness, you are consciousness. There's no you without consciousness.

You are the light of the world. And a person, by the way, you're also a person. But if you're a person that is rooted in the realization that you are the light of the world at all times, then you become, by the way, a much better person too.

It's the icing on the cake. It's a side product. It's a side effect of awakening.

You're no longer a totally crazy person. You're not part of the craziness anymore. Well, that's a wonderful thing, not being part of the craziness of the world.

That's your task, especially now as the craziness is increasing, your task is not to be part of the craziness. So the key is awareness, presence. And that is, be aware of yourself as a conscious presence.

And then recognize that conscious presence in everywhere else, every other human, every life form, you can sense there too is the same conscious presence in a different, one could say different vibrational frequency. But you have to become still. Thinking needs to subside if only for a moment.

And awareness remains. Become still. Take a breath.

One conscious in breath, one conscious out breath. If you observe, this is a lovely mini meditation. Observe the breath going into your body and coming out of your body during that time you're not thinking.

And so that's the way if you can use, you can use your breathing by being aware of that you're breathing and you can, that becomes part of being aware that you're aware. As you know, I also recommend to feel your inner body. The energy that pervades your entire body, which is consciousness.

And so you become aware of this inner energy field of aliveness. It pervades your hands, your arms, your legs, your feet, entire body, but it's not the body anymore. It's the unseen.

You can't find that when you could cut open the body and you can't find that. It's beyond what can be perceived. It actually exists in another dimension.

That invisible presence that you are, that you cannot find when you cut open the body and look for it. The invisible presence that is the essence of who you are does not actually exist in this dimension. It exists in another dimension.

Even that you can say that the dog, what you love in the dog, yes, the dog may look nice or the cat may look nice, lovely to look at, but you can sense there is an inside to the dog. The dog has an inner being, but you cannot cut open that dog. Let's say the dog dies or does you cut open and you look for that inner being.

You can't find it because all you find is bones and blood and flesh. Where's the dog? It's

not in the bones and the blood and the flesh.

It doesn't actually exist in this dimension. It is in another. You are a being and every is from another dimension.

And only the outer part comes into this dimension. You are, as you know, you're essentially invisible. You are invisible.

The essence of who you are is invisible. Even just thought is already invisible. You can't find a thought by looking for it with instruments, let alone the deeper consciousness of who you are.

You're invisible. And this presence is not subject to decay or time or death. But when you only know yourself as a person, then you continuously have the fear of death.

And ultimately all fear comes down to the fear of death. So the, if you want to lose the fear of death, know yourself as this invisible presence that actually doesn't even exist in this dimension. That's already in another dimension.

And you realize if you have to talk about it, but you don't have to say it, that ultimately there is no death. And to know that it's a direct knowing, that means all fear goes, because if the fear of death goes, then ultimately, because that's the root of all fear, the ultimate loss. So that's the secret of awakening, of bringing about a shift in consciousness in yourself and bringing about an end of the craziness and restore or restore sanity hasn't been here for on the collective.

Sporadically, there has been some sanity, but a lot of insanity in the collective energy field. And there are times when the insanity increases as it did in the first half of the 20th century, it was to the two world wars and other dreadful conflicts, huge amount of collective insanity. And then it got in the Western world, at least got better for quite a few decades.

And now we're entering another period of insanity, but we are more ready for it. Now, many humans are more ready to awaken now than before. And of course, you are one of them.

Otherwise you wouldn't be here, unless somebody dragged you here and you can't stand it anymore. So meditation ultimately is, yes, it's very helpful. What we are talking about is the meditative state as your normal state of consciousness.

So you're all, there's always a background of awareness in your life. And then you return to just aware presence and you look around. And then it means more and more present moment living.

The present moment is actually usually not bad at all.

[Speaker 2] (29:01 - 29:22)

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Eckhart Tolle Suffering As Spiritual Teacher [b976cdfd-8554-479f-9427-dfee78c245f8]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:39)

Suffering, a spiritual teacher. In this episode, Eckhart leads a short meditation and then answers a question about our fear of suffering. Eckhart says suffering plays an important role in the evolution of our consciousness.

Without it, we would not grow in awareness. He says for many people, suffering is their primary spiritual teacher and much of our pain is self-created through dysfunctional thoughts and behaviors. Eckhart believes the pain can also be a catalyst for spiritual growth.

He explains, if we focus on the power of the present moment, our difficulties diminish, and once we awaken, we no longer need to suffer.

[Speaker 1] (0:42 - 6:29)

Thank you, welcome everybody joining us here, wherever you are, whatever time it is, where you are, it's certainly the present moment. Let's take a moment to just become aware of ourselves and let's, for a moment, connect with our audience and become aware that each being is a point of consciousness, assuming a particular temporary form, and you yourself are a point of consciousness or a ray of consciousness, the one consciousness, assuming a temporary disguise as a person. And it may be possible for you to get a sense of non-separation or one-on-one, oneness by realizing that what you see externally as different beings at a deeper level is the one being, the one consciousness, taking on different appearances, persons, personalities, and become aware of yourself without figuring anything out mentally through thinking, but just being aware.

So in essence, you are that awareness. And ultimately, there's only one I. When you say I, it can either refer to the temporary person or when you say I, it can refer to the, your deeper identity as conscious awareness.

And there's only one I at that level. And that realization transforms everything. It transforms how you perceive the world, how you interpret the world, transforms the way you do things.

It even transforms your thinking when you do think, because then thinking is no longer self-serving and you're not looking for yourself anymore in the realm of thinking, identifying with thinking. So such a wonderful, simple realization. It's the realization of being, that's the foundation.

But you still exist here as a person in this dimension, and inevitably you become

involved in doing as a person. And that includes manifesting. Sometimes you may consciously want to manifest this or that, not necessarily all the time, and not necessarily everybody will want to live in that way.

We may be going into that, but you cannot escape the challenges of life in the realm of doing. But that's okay if you don't lose connectedness with being, that transforms the way you experience the world of doing, of phenomena. So we may be going into this more as we look at the questions, but this, our starting point, that's the foundation for your whole life, whatever you manifest in this play of forms.

On the level of form, everything is temporary, and that's just how it is. And whatever you manifest in the world of form also is fine for a while, but it's all temporary. And that's fine, that's a temporary realm that you also inhabit, but it's not terribly, terribly serious anymore when you're connected with being.

You honor it, very different. You give it attention, you honor it. You are thankful, the important part of manifesting, to being thankful for whatever is here in the present moment, to appreciate all the forms of life around you, animate or inanimate, and realizing that the essence of it all is inseparable from who you are in your essence.

So let's move on to the first question.

[Speaker 3] (6:32 - 7:30)

Thank you, thank you. Well, I've realized that surrendering to source, surrendering to what source wants to create through me is important, and I sometimes get fearful when I approach that place. My thoughts sometimes wonder, well, what if the universe wants me to get sick?

Or what if the universe wants a loved one of mine to pass away? And when I go there, of course, I feel this restriction. And so I think I have a fear of suffering.

I'm just afraid to suffer. So does the universe want us to suffer? It's one of my questions.

And then how should I approach overcoming this? It's almost automatic restriction that I get when I get fearful.

[Speaker 1] (7:32 - 24:33)

Thank you, thank you for your question. It's a very profound question, the role of suffering. And suffering is an essential part of the evolution of consciousness.

But it's also a sign, of course, that the awakening hasn't happened yet. And a lot of suffering is generated by unconsciousness. And paradoxically, the very thing that's generated by unconsciousness will eventually awaken you.

So this unconsciousness is the egoic sense of self. And one could say the egoic sense of self has built into it a self-destruct mechanism. It was designed like that, let's put it like that.

And eventually it will create its own dissolution through suffering. Now, if you live consciously, if you, and this is an enormous step forward for a human being, to become aware that it is possible to no longer be completely in the grip of the conditioned mind, which is the ego, and then to make the main purpose of your life, your inner state of consciousness, and to realize that the important thing in any situation is to be present, when you make that the main priority in your life, then you don't really need, neither do you create a lot of suffering anymore, because a lot of human suffering is self-created both on an individual level and on a collective level. If you look at humans, all the humans that died violently, the past 100 years, 200 years, the past millennium, whatever, the greater part of humans that died violent death, they were killed by other humans.

Yes, there were also humans killed by epidemics and earthquakes and so on, but the greater part of humans killed in the 20th century, for example, because that's the closest to us, were killed or murdered, you could honestly, by other humans through warfare, internal strife, genocide, and so on. So a lot of that suffering is, of course, obviously human created, and on an individual level also, a lot of the suffering, I could almost say all the suffering, I don't want to say anything that people find difficult to accept, so let's say a lot of suffering, is the greater part of your suffering is self-created through dysfunctional thought processes, through old forms of conditioning, through which you perceive reality and misinterpret and distort reality completely and react to events, thus amplifying the unconsciousness of others, thus creating more drama. And so that's the, the unconscious state creates a lot of suffering. But strangely, it's that suffering eventually, wakes you up, maybe not always in this lifetime, but there's always the potential for it to wake you up.

When you begin to live consciously, however, you become aware of the conditioning of your mind, the element of freedom comes in for the first time, you are free to choose something different. There is another way, you realize there is another way rather than the old unconscious reactivity and so on. But when you're always at the mercy of other people and external conditions, as far as your inner state of consciousness is concerned, when you're in a reactive, in other words, unconscious mode, you're always at the mercy of external conditions, you are reactive to external conditions.

So the world is, you ultimately see yourself as weak, although maybe perhaps not consciously, and the world is there as a threatening thing that you perceive as something outside of you, always waiting to sabotage your plans and so on. That's how it sometimes seems. So when you begin to live consciously, then yes, the element of freedom comes in, but also you no longer need the suffering to awaken you.

When you suffer, that's an involuntary awakening. Ultimately, the universe is moving towards the awakening of consciousness. You are part of the awakening universe.

And so the universe awakens. When you are unconscious, there's the universe, ultimately through the suffering generated by the egoic consciousness or unconsciousness, forces you eventually into awakening. But when you voluntarily begin to make presence the main purpose of your life, the universe does not need to force you into awakening.

It doesn't need to knock you on the head and to show you in order to shake you to wake up. You are less likely to encounter disasters and huge drama in your life, much less likely, suffering in other words. When you consciously participate in where the universe is going, which is awake, when you consciously participate in the awakening process, you no longer need to be forced through suffering to awaken.

It doesn't mean that challenges do not come into your life anymore. Challenges continue to come, but increasingly the challenges of life no longer create suffering in you. They make you more conscious.

Once you have embarked on that journey of awakening, the journey of awakening, there's an expression in Buddhism that says you become a stream enterer. You begin to enter the stream of awakening. You are a stream enterer.

Once you're a stream enterer, you are voluntarily aligning yourself with the purpose of the whole, the purpose of the universe. And by voluntarily aligning yourself, you no longer need the violence of suffering. You no longer need the universe to shake you awake, to create enormous suffering.

And that means it implies you don't create it for yourself anymore in how you meet events, circumstances, people, no longer in a reactive way. This means you no longer amplify other people's unconsciousness because you're in a state of presence when you meet others who are unconscious, big egos, difficult situations, challenges, the collective challenges like now, you meet them consciously in a different, in a non-reactive way. So already the amount of suffering gets reduced.

The more present you are, the more the amount of suffering is reduced. You don't need it anymore. Challenges, yes, you still need challenges because the challenges deepen your presence.

And there's always a possibility when challenges happen that you may fall back into a reactivity that's also possible. And then you begin to suffer against and then you encounter suddenly intensified suffering again and then you wake up again and you move out of that. So inevitably, of course, everybody here will encounter loss and ultimately your body will eventually dissolve.

And everybody is moving in that direction, obviously, but that is no longer a source of suffering. If you're, for example, if you're completely identified with your body, as the body then gets older, no longer looks that good, becomes weak, you lose abilities, can't do this anymore, can't do that anymore. And we're all moving in that direction.

If you are completely identified with it, it's very enormous suffering involved in that. Let's say you were identified with your good looks and then the years pass, go by, and then there's no denying anymore that your good looks have completely disappeared. But for decades, you derived your sense of identity from your good looks, better than others eagerly seek superiority.

Then you suffer enormously because your very sense of self crumbles. That is much more painful than the gradual dissolution of your physical body, that psychological pain, that psychological suffering. So on many, many levels, the less conscious you are, the more you suffer.

And the more conscious you are, the more you begin to transcend suffering. So your fear is unfounded. You will continue to encounter challenges, but it is not the case that when you voluntarily embrace presence and make that the main purpose of your life, then suffering is no longer your main spiritual teacher.

I sometimes say, everybody, every human on this planet has a spiritual teacher. For most humans still, the majority, their spiritual teacher is their suffering. And eventually their suffering would bring about an awakening, but perhaps not in this lifetime, but there's always a potential.

And then you may encounter, suddenly as you begin to awaken, you might awaken to encountering an actual spiritual teacher that's not suffering. It could be a teaching, it could be something you read in a book, something somebody says, and then suddenly the awakening process begins. At that point, the need for you to have suffering as a spiritual teacher decreases as the awakening process begins.

And it's a wonderful process. And if some great disaster should come into your life and you've already begun the awakening process, then there's a good chance, probably you will then, that will be the one thing that brings out a total flowering of consciousness. And I've seen that a few times with people who had already been practicing presence for many years and then something went wrong with their body.

And that was the final realization, the final awakening suddenly came and complete transcendence of not only of suffering, transcendence of complete transcendence of ego and so on. So in a word, the more present you are, the less the need for suffering as a spiritual teacher. Because when you're present, that presence becomes your teacher.

The unconsciousness creates the suffering and that suffering becomes a teacher. There's

a deep, suffering is a very, both in Christianity and Buddhism, suffering is a key concept. In Christianity, the archetypal image is Jesus on the cross, the archetypal image of human suffering.

In Buddhism, the Buddha said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. Many things that you read in Buddhist scriptures were written much later after the Buddha, but there are some that I feel, I have no doubt that the Buddha actually, virtually literally said 2,500 years ago. And I have no doubt that he did say, I teach suffering and the end of suffering.

The Buddha said, wherever you go, whatever you do, you will find suffering, dukkha, suffering. But he was talking about the unconscious state. And then I teach suffering and the end of suffering, means I'd show you how suffering arises and I'll show you how suffering can be transcended.

That's the teaching of the Buddha. It's just, that is ultimately all spiritual teaching. The image of Jesus on the cross shows the function of suffering.

So there's intense suffering, then the state of surrender, and then there's a transmutation and the rebirth and the cross, the torture instrument becomes a portal into awakening and is inseparable from the divine. So the suffering has a purpose until you don't need it anymore. So one could say suffering is necessary until you don't need it anymore.

And many of you, if not most of you, maybe all of you have reached the point where you really, you don't need suffering anymore as a spiritual teacher. So I trust my answer has given you some relief, but I didn't say to give you relief. I said it because that's just how it is.

[Speaker 2] (24:34 - 24:56)

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Eckhart Tolle Suffering Consciously : Confronting Illness and Addiction [4de96610-7f7c-4371-9908-01d0f35e376a]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:38)

Suffering Consciously, Confronting Illness and Addiction. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about addiction and facing illness consciously. A woman who had cancer fears its return and the possibility of an early death.

While difficult, Eckhart encourages her to practice presence by staying in the moment, this moment. He believes this is what allows for less opportunity to play out scenarios where death seems imminent. He urges her to release the mental gymnastics that plague all of us.

He says it's imperative that we work with life's challenges and allow them to push us into awakening.

[Speaker 4] (0:40 - 1:31)

Hi, Eckhart. My question has to do with a couple of years ago, I was diagnosed with cancer. And every six months, they scan my body to see if it's returned.

And my poor little ego starts suffering and becomes terrified. And I don't know how to stay in the present. I'm not suffering right at this moment with pain or with death imminent.

But I veer into that panic quite often. And yeah, I get really scared that I will have a bad death in the sense that I won't be aware. I'll just be screaming, Mommy, and my ego will take over.

And even though it's all future concepts, I know. But yeah, so how do I have a good death?

[Speaker 1] (1:32 - 14:03)

Right. Well, thank you. That's a very relevant question, what we've been talking about.

So you are at the moment you are free of cancer. But in your mind, there is a possibility that it may return. And all the things that could happen as a consequence of that leading to death.

That means, of course, you are more aware of mortality than you would otherwise be. If this were not happening, you are much more aware now because you've been through one cancer episode. And you got cured.

But you are now much more acutely aware of the proximity of death, the possibility of

death than a normal person would be. And that can be a bad thing because it can take over your mind and lead to all kinds of very fearful thoughts, creating very fearful emotions. And it could consume the rest of your days, even if the cancer never disappears.

In fact, it could be just almost worse than the actual condition. So here we need to look at that. My recommendation is that you accept or you use this situation and allow it to force you more into the present moment.

Because you will notice that when you leave the present moment, you begin to suffer. In your mind, you leave the present moment. You create a future scenario where the cancer has reappeared.

You suffer much more than in an ordinary life, a person who does not face this situation that you are facing. It is also true that when they leave the present moment, they tend to suffer more. But much more true in your case.

So life has created a situation for you that makes it abundantly clear that leaving the present moment is the beginning of suffering. So if you want to end the suffering, you can use this situation and allow it. I use the term force to force you into the present moment.

And then in the present moment, here you are. Less thinking happens in the present moment. You will notice the more present you become, the less you are burdened by unnecessary mind activity.

And there are lots of spaces of just awareness. In nature, you look at the sky. This alertness can fill your entire body, one could almost say.

You are alert with every cell of your body. And here you are. Every moment is precious because ultimately there isn't every moment.

There is only ever this one moment. It takes on different forms. There is only ever this one moment.

And then you notice every time you leave the present moment, suffering arises again. That's an alarm clock. This is the alarm signal for you.

It says, come back to the present moment. And so use the situation. It can be enormously helpful like a very strict, stern, spiritual teacher forcing you to be present.

Of course, if you don't want to be present, then it means you want to suffer. That's fine. You are allowed to suffer.

But you realize where suffering arises. The most powerful motivator for spiritual awakening, more powerful than wanting to achieve enlightenment. It can be deceptive.

Well, I want to achieve enlightenment. This is the highest version of me that I can think of. That can be an illusion.

Probably is. But the motivation to be free of suffering, that can be a very powerful thing. I want to be free of suffering.

And that entails and implies many other things. A shift, a change in your consciousness where suffering arises. This is the reason why, again, coming back to the Buddha and Jesus.

This is why the Buddha, the essence of the Buddha's teaching. The essence was actually not enlightenment. The essence of the Buddha's teaching was the end of suffering.

That's the very essence of the original teaching of the Buddha. The end of suffering. I believe enlightenment was added later by followers of the Buddha.

Which is not totally untrue, but it can be very misleading. The Buddha himself, I'm sure, the emphasis of his teaching was the end of suffering. As he said, sometimes with these teachers, Buddha goes back 2,500 years.

Sometimes you don't actually get what they said. You get what later the disciples wrote, sometimes centuries later. But there are a few terms that are so powerfully true that I'm sure Buddha almost literally said it.

And so he said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. Which means I show you how suffering arises, and I show you how it can end. I've just explained the essence of Buddhism.

So Christianity, or rather Jesus' teaching is the kingdom of heaven or the fullness of life. Another term Jesus uses. I want you to have the fullness of life.

Or I want you to show the kingdom of heaven that is within you here and now. Same thing. You can't have the fullness of life when you're suffering.

So Jesus talks about what is there when suffering comes to an end. Buddha does not talk about what is there when suffering comes to an end. He says you don't need to talk about it.

It arises naturally. When suffering comes to an end, the essence of who you are arises naturally. There's no need to talk about it.

That's why Buddha didn't talk about the God that is within you or anything like that. No need to talk about it. Just bring about the end of suffering.

Then we have the fullness of life. Yes, same thing expressed in positive terms. The kingdom of heaven.

Which is, as you probably know, in my translation, what is translated in the Bible as the kingdom of heaven. I have re-translated it into modern terminology. Kingdom is no longer a term that modern humans relate to.

Well, there's still the United Kingdom, but normally there are not that many kingdoms anymore. Kingdom was a big thing at the time. So I let go of the term kingdom.

What really he's talking about when he says kingdom is dimension. The dimension. The dimension of what?

Of heaven. Now what is heaven? Again, heaven is an analogy he used.

It means the sky. Because heaven and sky are the same word in many languages. And probably also in Jesus' language, Aramaic.

In French, in Spanish, in German. The heaven is the same word as the sky. Cielo, sky.

The dimension of the sky. Sky is an analogy. Means he's using a term from the sense perceived world.

In order to point to something that is beyond the sense perceived world. And the closest term he could find in the sense perceived world is the vastness of the sky. The empty spaciousness of the sky.

Because the sky is spaciousness itself. So he very, that was actually very wise and clever to use that term. The closest that you can get to the formless consciousness in the sense perceived world is to point to the vast spaciousness of the sky.

Because we're talking here about the spaciousness of awareness. Of consciousness without objects. Just consciousness.

I call it sometimes space consciousness. As opposed to object consciousness. Object consciousness is the world of things.

Including thoughts. Space consciousness is awareness. Presence.

Awareness of awareness. So the dimension of spaciousness. That's my translation of the kingdom of heaven.

The dimension of spaciousness which is within you. Which is a dimension of consciousness that is in every human being. Does not need to be achieved because it's already there.

So it's not an achievement. It's a discovery. Now that's good news because if it's an achievement then you might never, how long is it going to take me to find it?

You bring in time. If you think in terms of achievement, you have to bring in time. One

day you will achieve enlightenment.

Okay, how many lifetimes? Well, I'll give you about 25. Oh dear, it's a long time to wait.

When you think in terms of achievement, but it's not an achievement. It's a realization of what's already there. The essence of who you are is already there in every human being.

It's just not recognized. You haven't found it. Well, you have, but many humans haven't found it.

They don't know it's there. And when they don't know it's there, it is as if it weren't there. And they live and act as if it weren't there.

And that brings in the craziness into this world. They are deluded. They are acting from a basis of a deluded sense of identity.

A deluded sense of self, which is the ego, personal and collective. It's often a mixture of the two. Collective ego, us against them.

Personal ego, me against him or her, whatever it may be. So your practice then is awareness practice continuously. The escape from suffering.

And you have a strong motivation now to escape from suffering. So it can be the most wonderful thing, actually, that's happened to you. And the same can be practiced even I have known people who are very close to actual death.

They knew I only have a few more, two more months or something. And even then it didn't matter how much time was left. They were still able to go suddenly very deep.

And some people experienced a miraculous transformation where their personality dissolved almost completely. And there was just a luminous being there. And then a few weeks later they died.

Which means that their life was totally fulfilled because the flowering of consciousness happened through them. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (14:07 - 15:20)

Hi, Edgar. Hi. An honor and a pleasure for you to have some time to answer my question.

So my question is related about addictions. One of the biggest challenges for humans in the path of awakening and spirituality in general are addictions. Some of them can be very destructive and dysfunctional.

Thinking itself can be one of the greatest addictions some of us can have. Others directly affect the health, relationships, self-care, and whole families and communities. So how can one deal with this type of addictions like alcohol, drugs, porn, eating, et cetera?

How can one keep on the path of the change when sometimes it's very discouraging when you feel powerless, when you feel that your willpower is not there anymore, that something else inside of you is governing your life and taking the wrong decisions for you when you know it. It's very, very discouraging. How can one avoid the pain of falling back into the darkness of this world?

How can one stay awake in the moment of temptations and weakness? Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (15:21 - 40:51)

Very good question. Thank you. So now, as you know, there are many degrees of addiction.

Some are such a grip on you that, for example, addicted to a drug like heroin, which is very destructive, or some alcohol addictions to maybe some others. They have such a grip on you that you cannot get out without some help, some external help. With some, you may need some external help, like a structure.

Many, many thousands of people have been helped through Alcoholics Anonymous, AA, what they have devised. For heroin, too, or similar things, this thing has such power over you. It's like a form of possession that you need some help.

Even if you get help in a structured setting, helping to free you, when you come out again, the danger after a while arises again. Although then, there's a possibility of doing something about it. Let's look at other addictions that arise, like overeating or drinking, but not perhaps the most destructive form of alcoholism.

But nevertheless, not being able to live without consuming large, fairly large amounts every day. Still functioning, perhaps, but not being able to stop it. Addiction always means it is stronger than you.

We can call it addiction. Sometimes people lie to themselves. They say, oh, I could stop, but I just don't want to.

But that very often is a lie. They lie to themselves because they confuse can with being able to and not wanting to. But they say, I don't want to, but they can't.

This is why an alcoholic is anonymous. Although I have no personal experience with it, but I've heard accounts from people. One of the first things you have to do there is to say, I am an alcoholic.

I can see why they do that. I would change the way it's phrased. Because if you say, I am an alcoholic, you make being an alcoholic into your identity.

Once you've made it into your identity, it's harder to become free of it. But to say, I am

addicted to alcohol, that is the truth. I cannot, I've tried, but I cannot stop.

That is the truth. That's fine. Although I would not recommend to say, I am an alcoholic.

And even to say, I am an addict, which might look honest, but it's ultimately not the case. This is not who you are. You are not an alcoholic.

You are not an addict. It is something that has taken possession of you, but it is not you. So let's say you can still function.

There's maybe overeating. There's alcohol every day. And often people need to reach a certain discomfort, a certain amount of suffering, so they realize what's happening to them.

They reach a certain point where it's beginning to create some form of suffering in their lives. Affect the physical body, whatever it may be, whatever form. Affect the way in which the mind functions and they realize it no longer functions.

So you have to reach the point where you're beginning to realize there's something wrong. It's affecting how I function in this world. Until you reach that point, you're probably happy with your addiction and you're actually enjoying it.

But every person who is addicted to something will reach sooner or later, will reach the point where they realize it's affecting their life in one way or another. And they have to do something. And then there comes the possibility of the question, is there awareness, enough awareness in you so that you can bring some awareness into the compulsive behavior?

For example, a person who overeats habitually, and again, why are they doing this? Before I carry on, I just wanted to mention this thing. Why are they doing this?

Why do they have the compulsion to overeat? Why do they have the compulsion to have these drinks every day? In many cases, there's something they don't want to look at within themselves.

There's certain emotional mental states that are painful. And in order to escape from this pain of certain emotional mental states, they would rather ingest some substance in order to dull the pain to some extent. And temporarily, it works.

Temporarily only. Inevitably, when you use a substance to dull some form of pain that you don't want to face, eventually, the pain will get worse. And eventually, the substance will no longer work for you, except in larger and larger doses.

And in larger and larger doses, it affects the body and the mind more and more adversely. So this is the cycle of suffering that happens. So it often begins with an unwillingness to endure suffering, mental emotional suffering, an escape from suffering.

And suffering can even be, let's say, some teenagers start to take drugs. It's overt. They start taking a drug.

Why do they take it? Well, they might say they want to experience the excitement of this high. They want some high.

Why do they want a high? Perhaps they don't feel any high, any deep sense of aliveness in their ordinary life. Perhaps there's a lot of frustration already building up in their ordinary life, a lot of unhappiness building up in their ordinary life.

And if they want to experience a high, the reason already could be their normal state is not all that pleasant, which is undoubtedly the case for many youngsters. Their normal state is not pleasant, probably these days less pleasant than in the past. So the beginning of it is always a sense of there's something not quite right, but I don't want to face it.

I'm verbalizing it. It's not consciously expressed, usually. And adults do it, too.

They come to some suffering, emotional, mental suffering through a life situation. And they don't want to feel this suffering anymore, so they go. There's also the drugs that are prescription drugs, which are huge, huge, huge, even for children, many.

And again, are they all in extreme cases? They may do some temporary good, but in many, many other cases, they don't. They remove the possibility for you to use the suffering as a way of becoming more conscious.

So a very vital thing, and this could be taught to youngsters, too, when there's an unsatisfying mental emotional state and you begin to suffer anger, irritation. Anxiety is a very big one. Or some depressive state, deep sadness.

Nihilistic state. Nihilism is a very common disease these days. Nihilism means it's all purposeless.

What's the point of it all? Nothing makes sense. Why even do anything?

Why even make an effort? It's nihilism. The world is pointless, meaningless.

Nihilism started very strongly when Darwin, I would say, with Darwin, because really what Darwin was implying, even though he wasn't saying it, he was implying that the entire universe is an accident. It's arbitrary. These life forms have accidentally come into being.

It's random formations. There's nothing, no meaning behind it. There's no intelligence behind it.

These are random, accidental formations. That's the theory of evolution. Undoubtedly,

there is evolution, but humans believe that there's no intelligence behind it.

That's the essence, really, of Darwin's theory of evolution is these are random formations over millions of years, but no intelligence that is guiding the evolution. He never looked at that. He had some abstract, in a different compartment in his mind, Darwin still talked about God, but that different compartment in his mind had nothing to do with his theory anymore.

So there was a draw in his mind in which he put the concept God, and then he went on with his theory of evolution. It took quite a while before that seeped into the collective consciousness of humanity, because even people who have never even heard of Darwin are now affected by it. The universe is basically pointless.

Now, there's always been humans around that experienced that state of consciousness that we call nihilism. There have been isolated humans throughout history, but nowadays we have a large section of humanity is affected by the disease of nihilism, and for many, drugs are the solution. By the way, if you want to read the Bible in the book of Ecclesiastes, which is a wonderful work of literature, which really shouldn't be in the Bible, but it's a great literature.

It starts with the famous sentence, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. That's the beginning of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. Now, vanity in modern terms means pointlessness.

Vanity of vanity, everything is utterly pointless. This person who wrote this book of Ecclesiastes wrote about whatever you do in your life is ultimately meaningless because you're going to die anyway. So, I assume that was an old man who had come close to the end of his life and said, what's this all about?

It's nothing. And then he wrote a literary masterpiece, but it's not a spiritual book at all. It's not even religious, but it found its way into the Bible miraculously, but it's worth reading.

So, it shows the state of nihilism, Ecclesiastes. Now, humans miss a great opportunity when they immediately run away from unsatisfying states of whatever their mental emotional state is. If they're able to endure the suffering for a while, as suffering, instead of immediately wanting to run away from it.

And the suffering that comes, there's a very important term here in spirituality, very, very important to do with suffering, and that is suffer consciously. When suffering arises, don't run away from it. Look at it, feel it, see perhaps how it arises.

Does it arise from some situation outside? Does it arise in your mind? But don't run away from it.

So, you don't make it bigger than you. It's not bigger than you. And as you face

suffering, it's of course not comfortable at first to face suffering and to endure it, to suffer consciously, but it brings about an evolution in consciousness, a deepening in yourself.

If you give yourself this opportunity as suffering arises, then suffer. So, now let's give you a simple, very simple example from everyday life. Let's say your addiction is overeating.

Many people who overeat say that often they find themselves munching on something and they don't even know when they started. It's just so unconscious. I had a friend who had a very big problem many years ago with overeating.

And he said to me often he would find himself at night sitting at the kitchen table and biting into some cookies or cream cake or donuts and eating it. And he couldn't even remember how it got into his mouth. He went to the fridge unconsciously.

He reached into the fridge and went back to the kitchen table and started munching and suddenly thought, oh, I'm munching a donut again. And then he said, and this is symptomatic for many of these cases, almost every time his mind found, now he was telling me this because he was already becoming conscious of it. So, his mind then, every time he discovered that he was engaged in this addictive behavior, his mind would find an excuse.

And it would formulate something like, you've had a rough day. You really deserve a treat. It's been such a rough day.

Or it would say something like, well, why don't you? It's the only pleasure you've got in your life, the only one that's left. Everything has been taken away from you.

So, you might as well do it. You've got nothing left. And for many years, he believed in these thoughts.

And as awareness rose, he could suddenly look at that thought and see how deceptive it was, justifying it was an egoic thought, ultimately self-destructive. It's an enormous realization that he was just, his mind was justifying his addictive behavior. And then I had conversations with him that gradually he was able to become conscious, more conscious.

And I suggested to him, I suggested to anybody, not just overeating, but also drinking, for example, or other forms of addiction, or even the cell phone addictions. When you feel the addictive urge coming, to be able to feel the addictive urge already implies that there's some awareness there. So, you're not immediately completely taken over.

You can feel the desire to have a drink. And then you're already looking, where is the, the whiskey is over there. So, you have to go there and get a glass out of the cupboard.

So, the desire rises. If there's not awareness, create a gap between, I'm not immediately saying you must no longer engage in this addictive behavior. That's too much to ask.

But to initially create a gap between the realization that this desire is now arisen and fulfilling the desire. So, if you feel the desire to have a drink or to go to the fridge, because there's a cream cake waiting for you there, and you've had a rough day. So, bring about a gap between doing it and observe the urge to do it.

And the urge to do it is not pleasant. It's a form of suffering, because you're not giving it what it wants. So, the urge to do it is there, but you shine the light of your awareness on it.

And you can do that for five minutes every time before you indulge in whatever behavior it is. And in some cases, you may find that the urge diminishes and disappears temporarily. Then, of course, yes, it will reappear again.

And another opportunity arises for you to create a gap. Give yourself five minutes. Don't say to yourself, I must not drink and I will not drink.

That may not work. Or I must not eat this cream cake. No, may not work.

But five minutes. Give yourself five minutes. What does it feel like, this urge in you?

Is it pleasant? No. But it is.

There it is. Feel it. Give yourself space.

So, the urge itself, the addiction in you, can bring about more consciousness. While you are not fulfilling the addiction, yes, you are suffering in some way. But that's conscious suffering.

And conscious suffering is enormously helpful in the evolution of your consciousness. Conscious suffering. So, I recommend that to anybody if they feel tempted.

People are, especially in present times, many people are experiencing restrictions on their life. Even now, still going on in many places. When the pandemic is still locked down, some places still happening.

And leading to a lot of suffering in many humans. Children too, many, many children suffering. As suffering arises, don't try to dull it or remove it or try to run away from it.

Be with it for a while. And you begin to realize that it is not stronger than you. Conscious suffering.

You consciously endure it. And then you may also find, because there's an awareness there, you may also find that a lot of the suffering might have been created by certain

thoughts in your head. You had certain unpleasant thoughts that created this.

The thoughts that were telling you, for example, I can't take anymore of this. This is all dreadful. My life, what's my life come to is totally pointless.

Why am I even here? Totally, utterly pointless. Suddenly you observe these thoughts.

These thoughts make you suffer. Yes. But you've brought in awareness.

So conscious suffering is a key for many people to spiritual realization and awakening is instead of running away from states of suffering, bring awareness to them. Accept them. Bring in time limits if you like, as I suggested.

Similar to this, you need to have compulsively grasping this every five minutes. There must be something new here. And this is a terrible thing.

I mean, it's a wonderful technology. It's miraculous. It's incredible, but it's also terrible.

If it's misused and if it takes hold, possession of you, it's terrible. And again, if you feel the urge to, let's say you're waiting somewhere, you're at the elevator or in a waiting room or there's a lineup. And everybody's on there while they're waiting.

Almost everybody you can see is on. And you can feel your hand reaching into your pocket or your back to get out yours, too, because everybody else is doing it. There must be something here to look at.

And at that moment, observe the urge, but don't do it. Just stay with the urge. Feel it.

Observe it. There it is. And after a few minutes, two or three, you may find it temporarily subsides.

And then you're free for a little while of the urge. And then it may come back. And then you do it again.

You feel the urge rising, but don't do anything about it. There it is. And then it may happen that you forget yourself.

And it may happen that suddenly you find, oh, I've been five minutes I've been on this already. I didn't even know how it got into my hand. It just appeared in my hand.

This happens, too. That's fine. You can't succeed every time yet.

That's fine. But again, even this for people, especially youngsters, unfortunately, to deprive a person of this thing for a day would lead to enormous suffering in many people. It's amazing, isn't it?

I mean, not long ago nobody had it. And now to deprive a person of this for one day

would lead to suffering. But it also would be a wonderful opportunity for awakening if you can face the suffering and suffer consciously.

And perhaps at the end of the day, you would taste a certain amount of freedom. And you'd suddenly be able to engage again with other human beings and with nature instead of the virtual world, which for many people, especially young people, the virtual world is more real than the real world. It's dreadful.

Dreadful addiction. So addiction is the escape from suffering, but it doesn't work. And this escape from suffering eventually leads to even more suffering.

But even then, you can still suffer consciously. Let's say you have been addicted. It leads to more suffering.

The opportunity there again is to suffer consciously. It's a very deep secret for spiritual realization. And it's why suffering is an important part of the illusion of human consciousness as expressed by the Buddha.

I teach suffering and the end of suffering. It's an essential part of the teaching. Without suffering, there wouldn't be awakening, of course.

It's also expressed in the image of a person with dreadful suffering on a cross. No, he is certainly suffering. It's a central image of Christianity is the image of suffering.

And the central teaching of the Buddha is the teaching of suffering. And in the case of Christianity, Jesus is the archetypal human. And the archetypal human is the human who goes through this dreadful suffering and then dies and then reemerges.

And so that contains a deep wisdom, not through words, but it's embodied in that. So we'll leave it at that. Thank you for your question.

It was great. Thank you. I hope that's helpful.

So let's stop here. And a moment of stillness. Don't need to call it meditation.

Just a moment of just awareness. Just aware of what is here now. And aware of yourself.

Aware of yourself as the presence, not the person. I am. That's the deepest knowing I am.

And it certainly is not complicated. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (40:52 - 41:12)

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Eckhart Tolle Suffering and Awakening [ab739859-0607-4a80-b698-dcde59efcb04]

[Speaker 5] (0:00 - 0:24)

Suffering and awakening. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience, including one about how suffering can lead to awakening. He says we need challenges in order to evolve.

The great paradox is we are liberated when we surrender to life's difficulties. Eckhart says eventually we can become grateful for our suffering because it pushes us to become more.

[Speaker 4] (0:28 - 0:30)

Hi, Eckhart. Thank you for taking my question.

[Speaker 6] (0:31 - 0:31)

Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (0:32 - 1:28)

So it has to do a little bit with suffering and awakening. And I'm just going to read it. I have lived an incredibly traumatic and violent life for most of my life.

And I'm still unsure how to use the suffering and pain and trauma to help bring myself into awareness and awakening. So can you elaborate more on how that's done? And there is a second part to the question that relates to it.

You've said that the purpose of the life of life is to sort of go into the, to become awakened. So I'm kind of taking it like if this, why aren't we just born awakened? But why is there the need for this suffering to bring us there?

And do we choose this suffering or does it just happen?

[Speaker 1] (1:29 - 19:30)

Well, thank you. They're big questions. The first question you asked, how can I use the suffering?

That question is unnecessary because you are already here for a reason. Without the suffering, you would not be here asking this question. And the fact that you are here means there is awareness arising in you.

So suffering has already fulfilled its purpose in you. You don't have to, there's nothing additional that you have to do. It is happening organically.

So that's one thing. So it's good to acknowledge that you have already come a long way. How do I know that?

You are here. And you've had a very difficult past, a difficult karma, perhaps one could say. And there's been a lot of suffering.

And now the next part of the question, or the other question is the, why do we need to suffer? And can we go beyond suffering? Perhaps that was part of your question too.

So interesting if you look at two of the big religions of the world, in one of them, the central image of that religion, the absolutely central image, is a man who is being tortured and killed unfairly. And he is nailed to a cross. That is the central image of Christianity.

Now, some people would say that is just awful. So how can people, some people have negative associations with church Christianity and say it's a terrible thing. Well, it depends how you look at it.

There's also deep wisdom embedded in that because it is the archetypal human, archetypal means stands for all humans, the archetypal human, the significance of suffering in the evolution of humanity, because that man on the cross also, he dies and is reborn, as the story goes. So if he didn't, if he hadn't died on the cross, he would not have been reborn. Buddha has it in more conceptual terms.

Buddha describes his own teaching in the following words, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. That's a literal quote from the Buddha. A lot of Buddhist texts were actually written at a much later time.

It doesn't matter. But there are some utterances that I feel, I don't think, that I feel are actually true utterances of the Buddha. And this is one of them.

I teach suffering, which means I show you how suffering arises in your mind. I teach suffering and the end of suffering, and I show you how suffering can come to an end. So in the Christian image, you have the crucifixion and the resurrection.

So you have suffering and the end of suffering. In Buddhism also, Buddha says it is inevitable that you will find suffering until you awaken out of identification with form, identification with the psychological form of you, which the Buddha calls the self. If you don't recognize that who you think you are is ultimately an illusion, the self, the mind made self, you suffer as long as that happens.

When you recognize it as an illusion, you transcend suffering. That's the end of suffering. The evolution for humanity and for every human being is to suffer and then reach the end of suffering.

And the end of suffering is the awakening. So the power behind that makes awakening possible is suffering, until you reach the point where you realize that you don't need it anymore. You need it until you reach this point, the brink of awakening, that you don't need to suffer anymore.

Now the suffering is the encounter of extreme disruption in your life, extreme limitation in your life, the infliction of violence on your body and on your mind. All those things are extreme forms of limitation and disruption. Some children are born already into a terrible environment where the, I don't know whether that is also your case, but where the parents are very unconscious and they cannot help but perpetuate their unconsciousness and inflict it on their children also, and so on.

So some are born already into that and others encounter suffering at a somewhat later stage when suddenly they're confronted with accident, illness, serious loss in their lives, approaching death or the death of people close to you, suddenly ending up with nothing anymore, you're nobody, you're put into prison, whatever it may be. In other words, your life becomes very painful. Who you are as a form identity, as the self, becomes unbearable.

So I, for example, I've seen people, spoken to people who have awakened in prison cells after years in prison, very dreadful conditions. And you could say, of course, they're suffering there because there's extreme limitation and unpleasantness and dreadful possibility of violence every day. And suddenly something in them happened, which one could describe as they couldn't stand it anymore.

And there was no solution on the outer level. In prison, not much you can do. Well, you can try to escape, but you may not succeed.

So there's no solution on the outer level, your external situation. The only possibility is transcendence. And transcendence is achieved through surrender.

Surrender means everything that resisted the conditions of your life drops away. Everything that has resisted any situation, especially the present moment in your life, it drops away. So you're forced into presence by suffering.

It's happened to some people without any help of spiritual teachings or books. Some people did it organically. And suddenly they find deep inner peace in the same situation, because they're not complaining anymore on any level, neither mental nor emotional.

There's a deep surrender that's expressed in Christianity, when Jesus was supposed to have said, not my will, but thy will be done. And also the gesture on the cross is one of surrender too. I have a cross.

I bought a little image of it. We were in Assisi, which is in Italy, where St. Francis lived, after whom, by the way, a big city in the United States is named. Not everybody knows

that San Francisco is based on St. Francis, but named after St. Francis. There's a cross that somebody painted of Jesus, even on the cross, very old. And this cross is supposed to have spoken to St. Francis. And anyway, long story short, there you have a Jesus who is not suffering anymore.

He's still on the cross, but he's totally at peace. He's not in agony. It's just complete surrender.

He's not smiling, but he's not in agony at all. And he's like voluntarily, virtually. It doesn't even look as if he's nailed to it anymore.

It's just voluntarily, just in that, just is there. I love that cross. He has already transcended, even on the cross, already transcended.

These are deep wisdom teachings, not conveyed through words or concepts, but conveyed in a different way through images and so on. So it's not only human beings. There's a radical life for every life form is precarious.

And there is suffering. Every life form experiences suffering. And some of them, every animal will experience suffering.

Of course, then the less consciousness there is, the less the suffering actually experienced, like a tree in certain conditions probably also suffers, but not as consciously. The more conscious you are, the more acute the suffering becomes. And the humans are those who suffer the most, I could say.

Without obstacles in your life, without hindrances, without limitations, you would not evolve as a human being at all. It's the limitation. And on every level, I sometimes give an example, even on a physical level, what do you do if you want your body to get stronger?

What do you do? Well, you do, you have to exercise, you have to weight lift, you whatever you do, you go jogging, whatever you do. Now, I put it differently.

What are you really doing when you're doing that? Now, I'm putting this in slightly peculiar terms. In order to make your body stronger, you have to make life difficult for your body.

Because lifting a heavy weight, you're not making life easier for your body. Your body would probably rather lie on a sofa and be a couch potato. You have to lift the weight, or you're jogging.

Oh my god. I mean, you're making demands on your body. Life gets very difficult for your body.

And at some point, now when things get difficult, there is a demand for more energy, on

whatever level. Ultimately, it's all consciousness in different vibrational frequencies. On the physical level, making your life difficult for the body is a demand for more energy.

Because for the body to cope with these difficulties, more energy is called for, and the body calls for more energy. And then at some point, as you exercise, there is an influx of renewed energy. And at that point, it's not difficult anymore, the body actually enjoys this influx of energy.

And suddenly, you enjoy the running, or the jogging, or the weightlifting. Because if life had not become difficult for the body, the influx of energy would not have happened. Similarly, in a good work of literature, a novel, or even in a good movie, something needs to go wrong for the characters in order for the movie to exist.

Because otherwise, nobody is interested. If the character is not confronted with any problems, nobody would want to watch that movie. I mean, imagine a beautiful cruise from Southampton to New York, where nothing goes wrong, but everybody's having a wonderful time on this big ship called the Titanic.

That movie would never have happened. It would not be very interesting. Watch two and a half hours of people cruising on the Titanic from England to New York.

Every character needs to be confronted with limitation, challenges, and difficulties. The character, or the main character, that is the beginning of the plot of the movie. It has to start with something going wrong.

If nothing goes wrong, there's no evolution, there's no development, nothing. In a good movie, as the character is confronted with problems, he or she eventually begins to change. Sometimes the character is very dysfunctional or has a huge ego.

And then things happen to him or her. And then life gets more and more difficult. And then the character has to generate energies of whatever level in order to overcome or transcend the difficulties, the limitations that arise.

And that becomes the movie. And then at the end of the movie, or the novel, the character has changed, has deepened through the suffering, is no longer dominated by ego, has had deep insights into life. And this is how literature and good movies can also help the viewer or the reader to participate, to some extent, in the transformation of the character.

Because to some extent, when you read a really good novel, or you see a good movie or theater, to some extent, you will identify with the character. And if the character goes through a shift, first the character suffers. Often the character suffers because of his or her dysfunctional conditioning.

The character creates his own suffering. And then if you have identified with the

character, you can participate a little bit in the shift in consciousness that's happening to the character. And that is the transformative power of great literature, because it gives you a deepened insight into the human condition and the possibilities of the human condition.

And so, wherever you look, if a gardener plants a, whatever it may be, a bulb of a flower in the soil, quite often the gardener puts extra soil on top to make it more difficult when the bulb sprouts, to make it more difficult to push through the soil for the stalk to come up. Another example, if you plant a plant in a greenhouse, where conditions are perfect, it will grow very quickly. And then you take it outside, it'll die very easily, because it hasn't developed the necessary resistance.

It doesn't have the necessary energy, which could only have come with experiencing limitation and difficulty. And then even the tree and the plant will then demand more energy, not consciously, but there is a certain consciousness embedded in every plant. All life forms are manifestations in different degrees of the one consciousness.

So, every life form experiences, even being born is the first difficulty, so precarious. I mean, every animal that's being born, every human being born, in the past, childbirth was the most common form of death, was death of the baby or the mother giving birth to the baby. Everything is precarious, and the evolution is dependent on challenges, which for quite a while I experienced as suffering, until the breakthrough happens, and then the suffering has fulfilled its purpose.

And then, yes, you continue to evolve, but you are a conscious participant in the evolution now, as you are, because you are here. You know that you can evolve without needing more suffering. You will get challenges, of course, there's no end to challenges, but there's no longer a need to transform the challenges into suffering.

That is the difference. So, obviously, it's already working in your case, as I said, because you're here. So, the transcendence is already happening.

And be grateful, maybe, I don't know whether you've already reached that point, but you will if you haven't reached it yet, where you can be grateful for your suffering retrospectively, as I am for my suffering. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (19:32 - 20:07)

Yeah, I got a question, maybe a kind of a non-typical question. So, let me read it to you. Can you compare the awakenings between, one, the awakening you attained through grace, and two, our no-mind awakening that we get when we do your awakening practices?

And will our practices in attaining the no-mind state lead some of us to the level of your realization?

[Speaker 1] (20:09 - 20:16)

So, can you read again the last couple of sentences?

[Speaker 2] (20:17 - 21:54)

Sure. Basically, it's, can you compare the awakening that you got, which you've said a few times, as a result of grace, which comes out of no activity of your own in attaining this state, and compare that with the kinds of experience that we're experiencing when we're in this state of no-mind, and feeling this state of, as you say, non-manifestation, things of that nature. And the second part is, basically, it's down to, if we're practicing the exercise that you are giving us, and Adyashanti, or Gangaji, or Muji, or all these other guys, is that going to lead us or give us a higher probability that we will attend the fundamental shift in consciousness that has occurred in you, as opposed to the kind of thing that we're all experiencing?

I get the impression, for example, that a switch went on in the enlightened people who continue to remain enlightened, and we're like a dimmer switch, and you're like a ten, and we're like a dimmer switch on like one. And I was wondering, is there any chance that anything we can do can get us to move over into being deeply realized, continuously, like the awakened people that I've studied with and know about?

[Speaker 1] (21:55 - 28:13)

Thank you. Thank you. It's fine.

Yes. Well, the best advice I can give you, although you may not find it very satisfying when I say it, is not to look for some state to be achieved, but to be focused on the present moment. The great hindrance for spiritual seekers, especially, is wanting to achieve some state that is described as awakened, enlightened, whatever it may be, that they might have seen in teachers, wanting to also achieve that state.

Remember how the Buddha achieved, so to speak, his enlightenment. First of all, as I'm sure you know, for several years, he practiced very hard, all kinds of difficult spiritual practices, including extreme forms of fasting and so on. And after several years of practicing, he realized, I'm still not there, because he wanted to find Amara, the deathless realm.

He wanted to get there. And then he gave up. He said, that's it.

Then he already had disciples at that point. And the story goes that the disciples thought, okay, he's lost it. They left him.

And the Buddha, the significant moment is, then the Buddha sat down under a tree. And in that sitting down under a tree, he was no longer looking for anything or any state

whatsoever. All movements to the future had come to cessation.

There was no longer movement into any image, needing or wanting to achieve anything. The sitting by the tree symbolizes total surrender to the present moment and complete, virtually, the complete collapse of psychological future, not wanting anything anymore. The wanting, the wanting is an important subject in Buddhism.

He said, letting go of desires, which, of course, desire, another word for desire is wanting. And for some spiritual seekers, as for the Buddha, the Buddha gave up all desires, but one big desire remains, the desire for enlightenment. So, and that was his desire for enlightenment was the greatest obstacle for him.

But he didn't know that until he became so frustrated and experienced suffering through his spiritual practice. But more so, the suffering that he experienced was the non-fulfillment of that desire. Because the desire for awakening, all other desires that human have become that one desire.

And that was the greatest obstacle to his realization. And when he dropped that, that was it. The realization of being happened when he let go of any idea of becoming, becoming anything.

So, thoughts of becoming, when these thoughts are surrendered, then the realization of being is here already. And this is why some teachers, as you probably know, I personally don't put it like that. But, well, maybe I do sometimes.

Some teachers have said, you're already enlightened, you just don't know it. Now, for many people, that doesn't make sense, because they know full well, they're not enlightened. They say, well, how can this be true?

Of course, the unconditioned consciousness that you are, is already there in every human being, it is covered up by mind movement. So, the being, on the level of being, you are already complete. There's nothing to be added or to be realized, you're already complete.

On the level of becoming, which operates on this horizontal plane of time, on the level of becoming, there's a lot that you can still achieve. You can learn things, you can have new experiences, you can acquire things, and all kinds of things can, on the level of becoming, that's fine. That level is here in the horizontal dimension.

But the mistake that people make is that what they used to deal with the horizontal dimension, they apply to the being dimension, where it's no longer helpful. In fact, it's the greatest hindrance. The idea of becoming is the greatest hindrance in realization and awakening.

So, when that is dropped, you are already who you are, timelessly, and then you realize,

ah, and there was nowhere to go. There was nothing. I didn't have to become anything.

This is why it's called the realization of being. It's not the realization of becoming. And so, that is the simple answer, and I believe that you understand that.

It makes sense. So, all that is needed is that it's not even a doing. It's just the letting go, just letting go of the becoming, the stream of becoming, and that's it.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (28:14 - 28:44)

Hello. Thank you. I wanted to ask you about the experience of being in a marriage or in a relationship with someone who is in a different spiritual place than yourself.

I'm really struggling, and sometimes I feel like I entered a nightmare that's not mine, and it feels like a trap, and I feel trapped, too.

[Speaker 1] (28:46 - 34:30)

Yes. So, again, we could describe this as a form of extreme limitation in your life. Your life is kind of being limited by this.

I assume you live with someone who is perhaps ego-controlled. Yes. So, limitations, there's two ways you can go when you encounter a limitation of that kind, something that limits your life.

You can overcome it by taking action, and if action is possible, then you take action to change the situation or to remove yourself from it. If it becomes unbearable, it's the possibility of removing yourself, you remove yourself from it. If you're in a situation, if you, let's say, not necessarily in your case, if you repeatedly find yourself in a situation, this is just a general remark, it probably doesn't apply to you, there are quite a few people who move from one unsatisfying relationship to another.

They always think after a while you live with a person, okay, that was the wrong woman again, that was the wrong man again, I did it again, why do I always choose the wrong, and then this thing repeats itself, and repeats itself. And then to take action in order to overcome, just by removing yourself is no longer the best strategy, because obviously, there's something within you that recreates the same situation again and again. And then you need to look at yourself and see whether there are certain patterns in your mental-emotional field that draw you to certain people.

This isn't, I'm saying this in general terms, because it applies to so many people, but this may not be applied to you, in this particular case. If something becomes unbearable, almost, yes, removing yourself, you cannot change another person who is ego-dominated just by trying to change him, that doesn't work, as you may know, you can

remove yourself, and then accept the consequences. The same would apply to a job that you cannot stand, you're in a job situation that makes you unhappy every day, and simply for the security to remain in that job situation is not helpful, it's an egoic desire not to face uncertainty, you're condemned to be unhappy for the sake of security, whether it's a job, if for some people it's marriage, you can overcome by taking action, which often means removing yourself, or another way is you can transcend a situation where you give up your inner resistance, in certain situations are better dealt with by overcoming, which is taking action, which might mean removing yourself, or if the situation can be changed, you do something, some situations are better dealt with in that way, other situations are better dealt with through total acceptance of the surrender to the present moment, then internally you are free of the situation, this is particularly helpful in situations where there are reasons why you cannot remove yourself, or you cannot take action to change it, some situations are like that. Some people feel, there are many people who feel trapped in a marriage, and again, you cannot continue, you're not taking responsibility for your life, if you remain in a situation that continues to make you unhappy, that is like a weight that you carry every day in your life, either you overcome it by removing yourself or changing the situation, or if that is for some reason not possible, and I'm not saying that fear of uncertainty is not a good reason for not taking action, but there may be other reasons why something is not possible, and then you simply practice surrender, you then internally transcend the situation, and you find deep inner peace even in a situation that does not look ideal in any way, that still has a lot of limitation. I don't want to ask too many personal questions, because you may not want to, I don't know if you want to talk about it, for how long have you been in this, maybe I can ask that, for how long have you been in this situation? In this situation, maybe about a year, right, you didn't start this way, and you are living together with someone, I'm married, right, and are you uncertain whether you want to carry on in that marriage, or how do you feel about this for you?

[Speaker 3] (34:32 - 35:00)

I don't know about the future, the near future, I think yes, and if in the further away future this won't work, I kind of don't want to try again, I don't believe there will be someone really suitable for me, and if there isn't, I just don't want to do this again.

[Speaker 1] (35:01 - 39:31)

Yes, well, I cannot give you specific advice, I never tell anybody what to do, except on an inner level, but what the right course of action is, must arise from within you, I just pointed out the possibilities, be careful with tolerating a situation that is continuously making you unhappy, either you transcend it, which means the same situation no longer makes you unhappy, because you have totally surrendered continuously to the present moment, or you take action to remove yourself or change the situation, whether it's a marriage, or a job situation, or any place where people live together, you have to choose

between the two possibilities, because otherwise you perpetuate your unhappiness, and your pain body will grow, it does not help you towards awakening, so at some point, sooner better than later, you have to decide between the two courses of action, or transcendence, if you want to call it action, overcome the situation by doing something about it, or removing yourself, which is doing, or total surrender of including the limitations and dysfunctions of the other person, no longer any demands that this person should behave differently, if that is possible, it may not be possible for you to surrender to that, certainly if physical violence is involved, I believe it is not, would not be a good thing to surrender, but otherwise become still, become aware, take responsibility for your life, see which course of action is the one that you choose, overcoming through taking positive action, or transcending through surrender, those are the two choices, this is the only advice I can give you, and it is my wish and hope that you will be able to have the strength, sufficient awareness, to take the correct action, once you've done it, if surrendered, you could practice surrender, maybe say, okay, I'm going to surrender for the next three months, and not complain about anything, see if I can totally accept this other, totally accept, maybe you can't, you may have to find out whether you can surrender for a certain period of time, and then you see, no, I can't, then you remove yourself, this dilemma is not uncommon, there are millions of people who are trapped in this similar dilemma, so that's what's my advice, life is difficult, let's see, life is difficult for everyone, and it's erroneous to demand that it shouldn't be difficult, and as it says at the beginning of that book, I think it's called *The Road Less Travelled*, a kind of classic, the first sentence, one of the best sentences in any book, life is difficult, but if you completely accept that life is difficult, it's no longer difficult, this is the one book that I never never read, because the first three lines were so good, I don't need to read the rest of that book, this is so good, thank you, thank you, thank you everybody, thank you so much for being here with us and with yourself, I wish you well, be present, be at peace, be here now, there's only this moment, the moment of stillness, thank you, thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 5] (39:33 - 39:52)

I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, *Essential Teachings*, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts, if you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast, join us next week for enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle, thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Surrendering the Ego [d545ad1c-1367-4844-92b0-08c5a23f7183]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:36)

Surrendering the ego. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience. He addresses topics like surrendering the ego, what to do with anger and how to confront our fears.

Eckhart says fear arises when we become drawn into negative thinking and project it into the future. He goes on to say that most of the time fear has no basis in reality because when the future finally arrives, it's actually the present moment again. And in the present moment, there is usually nothing to fear.

[Speaker 4] (0:43 - 1:05)

Eckhart, my question is around surrender. I'm curious. Once the egoic shell has, has cracked open and the light of consciousness is peeking through, can the ego surrender itself to that light of consciousness or ultimately must it be surrendered?

[Speaker 1] (1:06 - 2:37)

I often talk of the ego as if it were an entity. It's not really an entity. It acts as if it were an entity.

It seems to be an entity that has taken possession of you. But ultimately what it is, it's only a particular way of your mind to function, an identification with the mind. So the ego itself is that dysfunctional way in which the mind works.

And when that comes to an end, the dysfunctional way cannot put an end to its own dysfunction. It can only dissolve when awareness arises. Awareness is not thought.

Awareness is consciousness prior to thought. And you realize that you are that. And whatever the mind produces and says are thoughts.

But the thoughts are then no longer endowed with a sense of self. And that's the end of the ego. When you no longer identify with every thought that comes, that's the end of the ego.

So that's what happens. So I don't know in the way you formulate the question, the ego cannot dissolve itself, but in the light of awareness, it dissolves.

[Speaker 4] (2:37 - 2:39)

Then what is that willingness?

[Speaker 1] (2:40 - 2:41)

That willingness?

[Speaker 4] (2:41 - 2:43)

To allow it to be seen?

[Speaker 1] (2:43 - 5:17)

That willingness is the evolutionary impulse of the universe, which created the ego in the first place in order to transcend it now. It was an evolutionary step for mankind. The ego was an enormous step for mankind, a great thing.

And then it came, or is coming now, to the end of its lifespan. That particular evolutionary movement or manifestation that we call ego, it had a lifespan. It has outlived its usefulness now.

We have learned a lot through it. And now it needs to go. And that's always a critical stage.

The transition from one state of consciousness to another is always critical. There could be a falling back. We're at this transitional stage where the ego now needs to dissolve.

The caterpillar has come to the end of its useful life as a caterpillar. It's been fine. The caterpillar was happy for a while, crawling up the tree and eating the leaves.

Now there are no leaves left on the tree. And it's time for the caterpillar to cease being a caterpillar and turn into something incredible. That little slimy thing, suddenly it doesn't know what's happening to it.

The caterpillar doesn't say, I must become a butterfly, or I'm trying to become a butterfly. But the caterpillar suddenly notices that crawling is becoming more and more difficult. And it's looking for leaves.

It's eaten all the leaves of the tree, so there's nothing else to eat anyway. If it doesn't change now into a butterfly, it'll die. So that's what's happening to humans.

The shift to a different evolutionary level or dimension. Us being here, that's all part of it. It's part of the shift.

The butterfly is emerging right here. The caterpillar is not totally gone yet. It's the transitional period.

Even you can notice in every one of you, sometimes you're still a caterpillar. And at other times, you're already a butterfly. Present, aware, non-reactive, aligned with the present moment.

Thanks.

[Speaker 2] (5:23 - 6:18)

Hi, Eckhart. Thanks very much for having me. When my pain body becomes activated, how do I lessen its grip on me?

It seems that when it is activated, I can be aware of it, maybe not continuously, but at least intermittently. And I can watch it act out. But despite this awareness, I continue to feel agitated and almost controlled by it, or at its mercy anyway, for several hours, often in the middle of the night, when my awareness would rather be sleeping.

So I often think about your description, about your observation about when ducks fight, and how they are able to flap their wings after the fight is over, and release all this negative energy, and then they're able to float along peacefully. So I guess my question is, how do I, metaphorically speaking, flap my wings?

[Speaker 1] (6:20 - 6:22)

What is it that usually triggers it?

[Speaker 2] (6:23 - 6:36)

I don't know that there's a usual thing. You know, it could be something minor that happened at work, and it's in the middle of the night, and I'm thinking, you know, oh, if I had done this differently, or here's what I would say, you know, and things are going over in my head.

[Speaker 1] (6:37 - 6:42)

And so there's... So what triggers it is certain thoughts in your head.

[Speaker 2] (6:42 - 6:50)

Yeah, absolutely. And I'm aware of it at the time, you know, when I'm aware, geez, these are just thoughts, you know, why can't I just turn this off? But it doesn't seem to happen.

[Speaker 1] (6:51 - 7:03)

So sometimes the emotional pain-body reaction comes when you think about something that happened the previous day, and not necessarily in the moment when it happened. It happened when you started thinking about it.

[Speaker 2] (7:03 - 7:03)

Correct.

[Speaker 1] (7:04 - 13:36)

Yeah. It's important to observe the relationship or the link between thought processes and emotion, and it's important to cut the link between emotions and thoughts. Otherwise, the thoughts are what keeps the emotions alive and feeds.

In fact, the pain-body feeds on certain types of thinking, because thought is energy. And if you're not observant enough, you don't realize that by feeding the pain-body with your thoughts, you amplify it, and you keep it going in that way. That doesn't happen to the duck, because the duck has not arrived yet at the level of thinking.

There's consciousness there, of course, but the duck does not think to itself, what this other duck did to me a few hours ago. It was so terrible. When that happens again, what am I going to do?

And then relive the situation in the mind and feel the emotion even more. You're really in the grip of the pain-body when the pain-body is totally linked into your thought processes. And when you're thinking through the pain-body, all your thoughts are then determined by the emotion, which could be fear, it could be anger.

And so your thinking becomes totally contaminated by the old emotion inside you. And that means whatever you're thinking about, whatever situation you're thinking about, whatever person you're thinking about, whether it's yourself or somebody else, is going to be total distortion of reality, because your thoughts will be controlled by the pain-body. So you're looking at the world and at yourself and at other people through the emotion.

And so you're thinking, and then sometimes you can either listen to yourself in the mind, or you can listen, it's easier to listen to somebody else who is in the grip of the pain-body talking about how they perceive the world at that moment. And you can see then how deluded they are. But they don't know that.

They think that's the only way of seeing it. And that is absolutely correct the way I judge this person or the way I judge the situation. There is no other way.

That's how it is. He betrayed me. He deceived.

He did that to me. There's no separation then from emotion and thought. So to see how it arises, and if you can catch it at an early stage when the thought comes, and if you feel the corresponding emotion arise, you can then see, ah, I just did it.

I just woke up the pain-body. And then there's an awareness there. At that moment, perhaps the emotion is already there and will linger for a while.

But if you don't continue to think about it, but continue to be the awareness, then it will

subside more quickly. And then you're not in the grip of it. You cannot perhaps immediately get rid of the emotion, nor is it necessary.

But you can be, in fact, allow it to be there as it is, is actually quite powerful rather than feeling I shouldn't be feeling it. Because in the spaciousness, it can actually dissolve when you allow it, not resisting it. But being careful that it does not link into your mind, and then feed on your thoughts.

And then you have the vicious circle, emotion generating thought, thought amplifying the emotion, emotion generating more thought, and so on. So it requires alertness. So if it's particularly at night when you experience that, then when you wake up in the middle of the night and the process begins, then you have to be alert at that time.

I also recommend when you wake up in the middle of the night to immediately go into the feeling of the inner body so that your attention moves away from the mind into the energy field of the body and feel the aliveness within the inner body as you lie there at night. And that is actually becomes part of being present. You're present with your entire being there.

And you feel that, that presence inside you and the need to think then lessens. If you are not able to do that, then be careful to catch the first thought and see how it generates the emotion. It's also possible that the emotion has been lingering there has not perhaps been able to come out during the day, and it's waiting now to feed on your mind.

So it's been waiting there. And it uses then that moment when perhaps you're still a little bit sleepy and just waking up to creep into your mind. Alertness is required.

It's not the emotion that you need to get rid of. It's the link between the emotion and your thought processes. If you can cut that, but you can only cut that by being aware, by being alert.

And the stronger the emotion is, the more alert you need to be. So you require what I sometimes call the sword of presence so that you cut the link between the emotion and thinking. You pull the sword and you become the warrior.

So the duck is fine, it just doesn't think. So it's easy to go like that. And if you have observed ducks, how when they return after the fight, flap their wings, and there's not a trace left of the, if you can even call it emotion, the energy of the fight that was there, the agitation that was there.

And then you go, flap their wings and go. Nothing, it's all just gone. But humans can't do that except perhaps the Zen master, but the Zen master didn't have the emotion in the first place.

So.

[Speaker 2] (13:38 - 13:39)

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (13:45 - 14:02)

So my question is fear. What is fear? It seems like there's many forms of fear.

I woke up this morning, I had fear to get up and ask this question. There's fear of not getting your teachings directly, absolutely, you know, clear as day. So if you could just talk about fear, what is it?

[Speaker 1] (14:02 - 19:36)

If you direct attention inside yourself in the moment of experiencing fear, you can find out the answer for yourself. However, I will continue to speak. Thank you.

Just to give you a little bit of direction in that process of finding the answer for yourself, because only that's the true answer. It has to be there in your experience. With a certain alertness when fear arises, you say, oh, how did that come?

What was the process leading to it? And inevitably you find, I'm sure you will find, certain thought processes about not what's happening now, but what might happen in some future moment, as this did this morning when it arose. And at this very moment, if you do not leave this moment mentally in your mind and think, am I going to get it, what he says?

Am I really going to get it? Or if you think, what clever thing can I say next? Then more fear may arise.

But in this moment, as you stand here, look at me, there's nothing to fear, is there? Where's the fear now? The fear is only before it happens.

But before it happens, so it's the fear of the future. It's not the fear of the present. Now, since the future doesn't actually exist, only the present exists, it's the fear of nothing.

It has no basis in reality, because when the future comes, it's the present again, there is only the present. And in the present moment, there is nothing to fear. So the fear arises when you become drawn into certain thoughts in your mind, you identify with the thoughts, and then you project yourself mentally away from the now.

And that's the origin of fear. I'm talking about psychological fear. There is something else that is sometimes called fear that happens when there is true and immediate real danger.

So if there's true and immediate real danger, a wild animal suddenly appearing here, or

if I point a gun at you, you may, I won't, you may experience, there's a contraction happens, or your heart starts beating fast. Something is going to happen, so you may have to remove yourself, or you may have to fight, whatever. That is not really fear, it's the instinctive response of the organism, because some action may or will be required.

And so you may run away. So your heart, the energy is already building up. And that is also called fear, but that is not the fear that we are talking about.

And it's fairly rare that you're actually faced with actual situations where this kind of fear would arise. So 99.9% of your fear is psychological fear, and that applies to virtually everybody. And for those people to whom that not, if they live in very dangerous place, please ask me another question and we'll address that, because there's also a spiritual teaching in that.

If you lived in a place where there's absolute chaos every day, wherever that happens to be on the planet at this time, if you lived in Afghanistan or Somalia, and you never know, am I going to reach the end of the day, or is some gunman going to burst in here, could happen at any moment. There's a wonderful teaching in there too, but we won't talk about that here, because that's not your reality. Your reality is psychological fear.

How do you then remove psychological fear? Well, you observe how it arises, and you observe where your mind is taking you all the time, and where you follow the mind with your attention. And once you notice that this is happening, and fear is arising, you can say, okay, what is the reality of the ways, what is there to fear in this moment, because that's all there is.

Then you stop following your thoughts, and you take attention into this moment, and you realize nothing. In other words, presence. You become present to this, more and more your life becomes present moment centered, rather than future centered.

You're a young person, so a young person's life tends to be more future centered, if you were 70 or 80 years old, you would probably be more past centered, but both are dysfunctional states. Thanks. Nothing personal in that.

It's a collective dysfunction.

[Speaker 5] (19:37 - 19:38)

Sure, I know, I see it.

[Speaker 1] (19:39 - 33:36)

So the shift in consciousness is your life becomes present moment centered, rather than past or future centered. And with that comes an enormous shift, that is the shift in consciousness, which means you can still deal with the future, the so-called future,

preparing things, taking steps, making plans. Of course you do those things.

You can refer to the past, because sometimes you may need to remember things from the past. You can even learn from mistakes you made in the past. Oh, yesterday, the other day, I did that.

I'm not going to do that again, because it hurts when I do that. So that's good. But you don't live there anymore.

You don't live in the past, and you don't live in the future. And it would be amazing to see how many people live in past or future. They live there.

And it's insane, but it's normal. It's normal. Normal insanity is not recognized as insanity, because it's normal.

So your practice then is the focus of your attention increasingly on the present moment. What is the next step that I need to take now? Do you deal with this now?

Not tonight, not tomorrow, now. It doesn't mean you never think about future or past. No, of course you still sometimes do.

But you don't live there anymore. You live in the now. And so it's a reversal, because in the normal dysfunctional state, you live in past and future, and occasionally you visit the now.

And when occasionally you visit the now, suddenly you feel so good. You feel, oh, life is good. You feel joyful.

You feel intense sense of aliveness. You see beauty, even in little things. You can relate to another human being with loving kindness without wanting anything from him or her.

You can do an act of kindness and help another without any secondary thoughts of what you want to achieve by helping this person, which means you bring in future again. You experience the joy, for example, of helping not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. And all that you experience, and people who usually live in past and future, many of them occasionally visit the present.

Otherwise they would be totally unhappy. Now they're only 90% unhappy. So occasionally they visit the present, and then that's when they feel particularly alive and particularly joyful, or they have a creative insight.

Why? Because for a moment, the mind stopped, and there was that openness. But this can be reversed from being an occasional visitor to the now and living in past and future.

You reverse it. You become an occasional visitor to past and future, but you live in the now. So that's the only way to become free of fear.

Now you may also occasionally experience fear rising. Normally it's associated with the thought process or triggered by a thought process. There can also be an accumulation of past fear in a human being, because if you have lived in fear over many years, then that energy field has built up inside you, and this would then be part of what I call the pain body inside you, the fear lives in you then as an emotional energy field.

So many pain bodies are made up to a large extent of fear. And sometimes when you look at certain humans who are possessed by their pain bodies, what you see when you look into their eyes is the fearful pain body. What does he want from me?

Why are you smiling at me? You want something. There are many countries where the collective pain body is very strong, and if you go to those countries and you smile at people in the street, they might even run away or call the police.

So this is a wonderful shift. Then you move from never feeling at home really, or very rarely feeling at home in this world, that means you live in past and future. And only if you inhabit the now, you actually begin to feel at home in where you are in the world.

There are many humans who wherever they go they feel there's something wrong here. Of course they're not at home within themselves. That's the practice.

And if fear arises from your pain body, well, it's not produced, perhaps it was triggered by one little thought about what might happen next week. But sometimes one little thought of what might happen next week can trigger an enormous influx of fear suddenly, out of proportion to the triggering thought. And that means it's the pain body.

And when that happens, you have to just be present with that and observe what it feels like as an energy field. If you don't observe it, in other words, you are the witnessing presence, it can take over your mind and make you think more fearful thoughts, because it loves that. That's all it knows.

So if you should experience accumulation of old fear triggered by certain thoughts, some people have panic attacks, that can be extreme manifestations of fear in the middle of the night. Okay, presence. It helps if you invite presence into your life when you're not invaded by fear.

So when the fear comes, the old fear, then there's enough presence power in you to be able to observe it. But if you don't invite presence into your life in neutral situations, then of course, there won't be enough presence when the fear comes, which is very challenging. So it's very simple, really be at home in the now.

And that means you connect to who you truly are beyond mind activity. Surrender to anger question. I'm an angry woman.

I expect too much from people and I'm always disappointed. Is there any help for me?

Well, the good news as I see it is that there is already some degree of awareness in you.

If there were not, you would be angry at me because I disappointed you in some way. Or whoever, somebody else, or the politicians, or whoever. So there is already a degree of awareness, you've discovered an habitual emotion in you, which is anger, and you have discovered a habitual mind pattern, which is that you expect too much from people, which always leads to the same result, which is disappointment.

Now all that needs to happen is for the awareness to grow, and then you will find that the anger diminishes. And this is probably already happening. The degree of old emotion that people carry varies from person to person.

With some people, the patterns that they carry are very deep and carry an enormous amount of energy behind them. And for those people, even as the awareness arises and they're already aware of the patterns, perhaps not as fast as they happen, but always just afterwards, after an episode. And the episodes, of course, are frequent.

And then at some point there's an awareness even as the pattern happens. And that's a good, it doesn't mean the awareness necessarily can stop the pattern, the old reactive pattern from arising, but it's there. And then it's there again and again, and then at some point the pattern is weaker, still arises, but is weaker.

But there are, as I said, in some humans, the patterns are very deep-seated. They have been there for generations, if you're in that level. Genetically, you can see perhaps the same pattern in your siblings.

You can perhaps see the same pattern in your parents and your grandparents. And if you look back further down the line, you could see the same patterns in a village in Italy or wherever your descendants came from, or London in 1500, or wherever. And you could trace it back a long, long way.

And it's been renewing itself, even perhaps adding to itself when there were upheavals like dreadful, the Thirty Years' War, the suffering of the Middle Ages, the World Wars, the atrocities, and perhaps there was some involvement with that. So some humans carry an enormous amount of heaviness inside them. And for those, even as the awareness is there, there can still be a considerable time lap before those things actually dissolve.

And the more heaviness you carry, also, the more intense the light of consciousness, or you could call it even the fire of consciousness, the more intense it needs to be to transmute, to burn up or transmute. It's probably a better way of looking at it. It doesn't get destroyed.

This is just stuck energy to transmute those patterns. So if the patterns in you are relatively light, just a little bit of presence coming into your life will make a substantial difference to your life. If your patterns are very heavy, it can take a little longer.

But also your motivation should be stronger because you will experience more suffering than others. So the motivation to awaken would also be stronger in those people who have a heavy, really what I'm talking about, a heavy pain body. So to this question, I would like to add then, is it possible for you, or perhaps has it already happened, that when you are expecting too much from people, as you put it, which is a mind pattern, have you been able to, as this pattern arises in the form of certain thoughts, have you been able to, or are you able to, from now on, to notice that the pattern operates again?

Or as anger arises in you again, so many years of anger, and that is again, are you able to be there as an observing presence, to sense it, to feel it, and there's, oh, there it is again. And the more you are, then the pattern does get weakened, and the awareness grows. And that's all there is to it.

So I would say perhaps you are more conscious than perhaps you yourself realize already of the unconsciousness in you, of the unconscious patterns in you. I'm an angry woman is the beginning of the question. You remember in AA, Alcoholics Anonymous, I believe the first thing people have to do is to admit that they are alcoholics, because as long as they deny it, the pattern will continue.

And so you're doing it, you're facing it. Now, don't make the mistake of believing that being an angry woman is part of your identity. And the same way I would tell the alcoholic not to believe that being an alcoholic is their identity.

It's fine at that point to say, I'm an alcoholic, there's a relative truth to that. There's also relative truth. When you say, I'm an angry woman, it is not the absolute truth.

It is nobody's identity to be an alcoholic. And it is nobody's identity to be an angry person. Those are patterns that operate in you.

But temporarily to say that can be helpful. It's relatively true. It's temporarily true.

It is not absolutely true. As long as you know that it's fine. So facing something that has been unconscious and make it bring it into the light of consciousness, it's wonderful just to see it.

It's an enormous gain to say, I'm an angry woman, from just being an angry woman, and perhaps even denying that you're an angry woman. I'm not angry. How dare you?

You are angry. Look at what you said yesterday. You always accuse others, don't you?

And you can't argue with pain bodies, you might have noticed, because whatever you say is wrong. It'll just fuel the pain body.

[Speaker 3] (33:39 - 33:58)

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Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolley. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The Bare Naked Is-ness of the Present Moment [264a9709-23c6-40af-8d4b-8622873a6066]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:00)

The bare naked isness of the present moment. In this episode, Eckhart laughs with his audience. He exclaims, there's hope for humanity when such a big crowd seeks greater consciousness.

He also explains that inspiration can quickly turn to perspiration when we encounter obstacles, especially with the people in our lives. He quotes existential philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, who famously said, hell is other people. While Eckhart believes that is an ego-based perspective, many of us feel that life is full of experiences we shouldn't have.

We think something is wrong with us or that God has a grudge when misfortune strikes. Eckhart says the greatest part of unhappiness comes from our minds and the stories we tell ourselves. He says the answer to life struggles will never be found in our thinking.

He believes we find freedom when we release our inner baggage, unencumbered, to discover the bare naked isness of the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (1:03 - 35:31)

Wonderful welcome. Thank you so much. And a lovely energy field.

So many humans becoming present. Wonderful to see. There is hope for humanity after all.

It's easy to forget if you look on the internet. So you're all here. Almost all of you are going through a transformation of consciousness, one could say, to a greater or lesser degree, although you may not call it that.

Something has shifted in you or is in the process of shifting. And why we are here is to deepen that shift in consciousness and to anchor it more deeply within yourself so that the state of presence can be sustained in everyday life. And everyday life is, as you might have noticed, continuously challenging.

And the most challenging thing about everyday life, or one of the most challenging things, is other people. Because people are, you might have noticed, extremely challenging. These challenges that continuously appear in your life are often regarded as something that should not be happening.

These problems, why do problems crop up always? No matter where I move to or what I attain, sooner or later, and usually sooner, there's something that goes a little bit wrong. Something happens that's not supposed to happen.

And life is full of these events. And in many people, not you, there is an assumption that there is something wrong with life because life is not meant to be continuously challenging, to bring up, to pit obstacles in my path, so it seems quite often. And you say, well, what is wrong with life?

And some people take it personally. They say, what's wrong with my life? There's something very wrong with me.

Or they take it personally and say, there's some god or god who must dislike me, because I encounter one obstacle after another. So that is an underlying assumption in many people's mind. But that is delusional, because these challenges are meant to be there.

They are an essential part of being here for a little while in this dimension. And if it were not for the challenges of everyday life, big and small, there would be no awakening of consciousness. So through the pressure of challenges, we are being awakened.

And not only humans, every life form experiences life as precarious and fragile and often difficult. Many obstacles have to be overcome, not only for humans, but for all other life forms. Even a blade of grass has to overcome obstacle until it finally comes up out of the soil.

And every animal, every bird can see how alert birds are when you observe a bird. You could say the bird looks really present. And compared to many humans, not you, the bird is actually very present.

When you observe a bird, you see the bird goes like very present. But it's been like that for hundreds of thousands of million years. It has to be alert, because this alertness is there.

It has survived. This has been generated over thousands and hundreds of thousands of years. All the birds that were not alert, they disappeared.

They got eaten up. The survival of each individual bird is continuously precarious, and the bird has to be alert. So the bird is being forced into that state of alertness.

This is just one little example. And I know from my own life, and many of you know from your life, that you have gone through a certain amount of suffering in life. There were challenges, there were problems, you had to confront them.

Unhappiness arose. And at some point, something shifted in you. At some point, there was a deepening, there was an awakening.

And at some point, you realized that the greater part of, to use a generic term, suffering or unhappiness in your life, which unhappiness is huge in the human consciousness, a

huge weight in human consciousness, the greater part of unhappiness actually arises through a dysfunctional use of your mind, and not so much the circumstances of your life. And that's an interesting realization, that the unhappiness that you experience, even if there are big challenges, small or big, the greater part of the unhappiness you experience arises through certain kinds of narrative in your mind, certain stories that you tell yourself about life, other people, or yourself. And that's an interesting realization, which you can verify at any time, tomorrow, if you haven't done it yet, any, the moment slightest irritation arises in a situation, anger arises, discomfort arises, ask yourself, what is causing this?

And the first answer will be, well, obviously, this rude person causes me to be irritated and angry, or this situation that I'm stuck in, the place where I live causes me to be irritated or angry, or a certain condition that my body is experiencing is causing me to be anxious or sad or angry that something has happened to me. And so there's always, the first thing is, you see the cause is there, there, there, that's the cause. And on the surface level, this is perfectly true, but that's only the surface level.

So tomorrow, when you encounter the first little thing that brings about perhaps a minor form of unhappiness in whatever form, be very alert, like the bird, and say, does it come from this situation? And let's say I'm stuck in the, I'm stuck at the airport, my flight's been canceled. This is a small, little situation, not a huge problem, but sometimes you might make it into a huge problem, the mind.

So you're there, you feel anxious, angry, irritated. Ultimately, you're suffering, it's a small form of suffering. Now, ask yourself, if I did not add any narrative to this situation that I'm finding myself in, how would I experience this situation?

Narrative meaning certain thoughts that go through your mind that refer to the situation. Now, if I did not add the, ultimately, since we are using an airport analogy or example, this narrative you could consider to be excess baggage that you carry around, and you carry it around in your life. You don't know it.

And that becomes the burden of me. It becomes a burden of self, a heavy sense of self. And you start discovering it in a little situation, like at the airport.

You start discovering already the burden of yourself. How would I experience this situation without the excess baggage of my narrative with which I judge the situation? Okay, you have plenty of time because your flight has been canceled, so you can experiment.

Say, okay, now I'm here. Now I am letting go of the narrative. Nothing has changed in the situation.

The external situation is still the same. On the board, it says, canceled. Or maybe you're

standing, and there's a huge lineup, 100 people or more, which before, this was a terrible situation.

You're finding yourself absolutely dreadful. This airline is an awful, awful airline. That's all gone because now you're experimenting with experiencing the situation without the narrative.

So you remove the narrative. What remains then is the bare, naked is-ness of that moment. The is-ness, the simple is-ness of the present moment.

Nothing has changed externally, but you have put down or let go of the excess baggage in your mind. And what is it that you're now experiencing? You're experiencing your body standing there.

You experience your sense perceptions. You look around. You listen to whatever sounds may be there, whatever other sense perceptions may be there, and you realize that you're breathing.

Oh, that's interesting. I'm breathing. And then you say, okay, this isn't as bad as I thought it was.

Actually, without the narrative, I feel alive. I feel I'm breathing. I'm even beginning to feel a little bit of aliveness pervading my body in this moment.

I can feel that there's an aliveness in every cell of the body that pervades. I feel alive. I'm breathing.

And you don't even need to tell yourself that. You simply notice it. You notice whatever sense perception is here in the present moment.

And suddenly, you're experiencing the same situation as no longer something that causes you suffering, because you have removed the mental narrative, and you are simply facing the is-ness of this moment. And as you do that, that is a shift in consciousness. You have become present.

And the sense of self that actually thrived on complaining a lot begins to dissolve, or at least recede. This sense of self that, yes, let's admit it, this sense of self that loved complaining about situations, that loved and almost was addicted to complaining about all these people, other people, what they did, and then situations, and then politicians, and all these awful things, awful, just... And it complained about my life, my spouse, my boyfriend, my girlfriend.

The only thing it perhaps didn't complain about was my dog. So, when you become present, the narrative recedes. And instead of experiencing the present moment through the narrative in your mind, which is all conditioned by the past, these are thought

structures, streams of thought that go through your head.

And when you are not present, you are in the grip of these conditioned streams of thought that go through your head. And a lot of the time, the thoughts are negative. They're more negative than positive.

It's a strange fact. When something so-called bad happens to you, a person is rude to you, or insults you, or doesn't acknowledge you, or something during a trip, something goes wrong, something bad, you think about for a long time. This is how the human mind does it.

Oh, well, he insulted me. Now I know what I should have answered when he said that. Why didn't I say that?

Next time, I'm going to say, and you continue to experience the emotion of that moment, and you replay it in your mind, that situation. And there's a continuous self-talk in it. There's the mental dialogue, monologue or dialogue.

Monologue is when you say, I, I, he, I. But for many people, it's a dialogue. They talk to themselves.

Why didn't you say that? Well, I couldn't think of it in the moment. So the mind splits itself in two, and then you have a discussion with yourself.

And one part accuses you, and the other part defends you. And you don't even know what's happening, because this entire thing that's happening in your mind is, at that moment, is your reality. And there is nothing beyond it in that moment.

It constitutes your, this is how you experience the world. This is how you experience life. And you don't even know.

This is what we call unconscious. You don't know that you're unconscious. Unconscious, when we use the term, we're not using it in a conventional sense, because in a conventional sense, when you say, I'm unconscious, it means you, I am, and you can't even say, I'm unconscious, because you're unconscious.

But in spiritual terms, when we use the term unconscious, it means something different. It doesn't mean that you've fallen off the chair. No, it means you're completely identified with this stream of thinking.

Any thought that arises, you're completely in its grasp. Whatever it is, the thought gets hold of you, it lives in, it arises, you've taken it on, perhaps probably in the past, some certain thoughts from the world around you, so you begin to think certain thoughts that reflect, to a large extent, the thoughts that other people think. They're not your thoughts, you just take them on from the world around you, so they live in you, and then

they proliferate, they're like little entities, they're in your mind, and they go, and they're a bit like a virus.

A virus can infect your physical body, but a thought can very often have the same function as a virus on the physical level. It's a mental virus that can take over your mind, and very often it does. Amazing realization.

So you have all these thoughts, and yet there is a self-identification with thought, with the stream of thinking, which means you are not really there. There is a stream of thinking pretending to be you, so to speak. Interesting, very interesting fact.

So this is what in many spiritual traditions is called the illusion of the self, as the Buddha called it. One of the main points of the Buddha's teaching is the self that you think you are is ultimately a fiction. It's ultimately a fiction in your mind.

You live through a fiction in your mind, and this fiction in your mind is continuously sustained by this stream of unconscious thinking, thought activity. And it's not only the Buddha, it's many other spiritual traditions. And even Jesus said, deny thyself, deny thyself.

Those two words, or maybe a three, deny yourself. They're very profound, exactly the same. Why did he say deny thyself?

Because the self is real, and then you should deny it. The implication is you should recognize the self as ultimately not real, and by recognizing it as ultimately not real, it is denied. So you're not fighting it, you're not saying to your real self, go away, I don't want you anymore.

How do you deny? So when Jesus says, deny thyself, it means recognize the unreality of what you so far hitherto consider to be you, your identity, your sense of self. Realize that ultimately it is a mental fiction, and you live through it.

If you don't awaken spiritually, if there's no awakening, then for the rest of your life, you live identified with this mental fiction of yourself, and a lot of that is an unhappy self. Okay, well, you get breaks. You say, oh, life is good.

I just got a promotion. Oh, great. And then six months later, you're ill with stress because the job is so hard.

Or suddenly you say, oh, I feel so great because I've just had this drink, and my problems don't really matter that much anymore. And there's a longing in humans to be free of the burden of their sense of self, which for many humans, it's a very unhappy self. It is amazing the burden that many humans, millions still on this planet, they carry around with themselves without knowing that it is a mental fiction.

You, even some of you, may have remnants of this in your life. You may experience when you start thinking and talking about something that you call my life. My life.

Oh, my God. This is what it has come to. It wasn't meant to be like this.

Something happened on the way to F it all up. Something, I don't know what, but there can't be a God because otherwise he would have done something to help. I had imagined something much, much better when I was 18 and 19.

Oh, I imagined these just lovely things happening. Great marriage, job, all kinds of wonderful things. I was meant to be fulfilled.

Life was here to fulfill me. Why didn't it do that? And then you think about my life.

For some people, it's a very unhappy story. There's an enormous amount of regret, an enormous amount of resentment from past, an enormous amount of grievances, huge baggage they carry around in their mental, emotional field. There's guilt, regret, grievances.

Oh, and then this you take to be you. These are thoughts that go through your head. It's a story, the unhappy story of unhappy me.

Let me tell you about me. Surely it's worse than your story. I'm sure it's worse than your story.

And then the other ones, oh, no, you haven't listened to mine. And then, of course, not every sense of self is totally unhappy. Some are sporadically happy.

Occasionally you have periods of high. Great. Everything is going fine.

Everything is going fine. My health is fantastic. Strong and good looking body.

And get just a great relationship. Just going fantastic. Great job.

Oh, fantastic. Just made my first million dollars. Already thinking about a private jet.

Oh, I need a few more million before that can happen. Children are doing so well that they're all the best at school, at university. They're all great.

They're going to have a fantastic career. Friends, fantastic circle of friends and everything. Very rare.

And if one or two of you are happy to be in that particular life situation right now, I don't want to be negative, but it's not going to last very long. So, identity is the question. Who am I?

Am I that story of me? And the story of me is, of course, based on the past and it looks to

the future for its fulfillment. So, it derives its identity from the past, the things that I have achieved or my failures or my successes or the things that people have done to me or the things that I have done to other people, the things that I have acquired, the things that I have lost.

Those things make up the story of me. And you remember it and that's my life. So, you call it my life.

But what you call my life is a story in your mind. And that's why most people who are not, those people who are not awakened at all to a deeper dimension of consciousness that we call presence, we could also call it awareness. There are other words.

Those who have not awakened to that are trapped in this delusional sense of self. And many humans spend the rest of their life in an increasingly, in many cases, increasingly unhappy sense of self, unless there are little openings into the transcendent dimension, which can sometimes happen through a serious illness that you contract. It can happen to approaching old age and you realize suddenly that at some point you're going to die.

And then the story becomes at first very unhappy or somebody close to you dies. Or you had identified with the, let's say you were lucky enough to have a great looking body, better than others. So, you could derive your mental sense of self identification with the thought form of my body is superior and better looking than most people's bodies.

So, that's a little story in your mind too. It's not ultimate. It's not the body.

It's the thought of my body. So, you had a great sense. And then you moved to Miami because here you can display your body more easily.

If life has given you the gift of a healthy, strong, beautiful body, enjoy this gift that life has given you. But if your sense of self is, for example, primarily, as in some people's cases is, is primarily derived from identification with this body image, then, of course, you're in for suffering in the future. Because a moment comes as years pass and they pass.

The more years in your life, the more quickly they pass. It's a strange fact. So, the years pass and then the years become decades and then two decades pass.

And then one day you stand in front of the mirror and something, you suddenly notice something has happened to my body. And then suffering arises because you had identified with something temporary, something ephemeral, something that ultimately is not you, but you had taken it to be you. And then you say, oh my God.

And then you buy a different mirror just in the hope that it wasn't you that got older, it was the mirror. But it wasn't the mirror, it was you. Then, of course, you can, if you can afford it, you can engage in certain repair mechanist jobs.

You can see if, okay, you can delay the aging process up to a point, but already suffering becomes part of that. And I know some people who were so strongly identified with their body as they grew older, they became very, very unhappy because their entire sense of self got eroded. Of course, humans not only derive their fictitious sense of self from this mental image of my body.

There are many, many ways in which the fictitious sense of self can proliferate, can grow in you. If it's not the body, it could be something that you put on the body. That's something that you wear.

Okay, then you have a new sense of, an additional sense of self. Your clothes, you merge mentally with your clothes. So you say, this is my designer outfit, and it looks great.

I'm not saying there's anything wrong with it. If it's something beautiful, you can enjoy it. We're talking about something else.

We're talking about deriving your sense of identity or part of your sense of identity from something external. So you have clothes and they can show how you... Now this sense of identity that we actually call ego, the fictitious sense of identity is the ego.

The ego lives in an almost continuous state of insufficiency. I'm not enough yet. There's something big still lacking in my life.

That's an underlying sentiment, an underlying feeling, an underlying thought. There's some... I haven't arrived yet.

There's something missing. There's something lacking. I'm not enough, but I'm looking.

I'm looking to acquire more, to be more, to become more, in order to develop a fully satisfying sense of self. But of course, on that level of existence, you can never achieve an ultimately and lastingly satisfying sense of self. But many humans don't know that, so they continue to search.

Now what the fictitious sense of self lives on and looks for continuously, what it needs, it compares itself. It needs to compare itself to others. And so as it compares itself to others, this fiction in your mind, it needs to find some area of superiority to others.

It needs to stand out more, to feel it is a bit more than the other, and that strengthens the sense of self. So it needs the idea, the thought of the other, to compare itself to, and then to feel that it is superior in some way to the other. And that's very interesting, that whatever the ego, the egoic sense of self wants to achieve, it defines itself through the other.

For example, wealth. Wealth is what many people look for, because, yes, it can give you, it can satisfy your sensory desire, it can satisfy your senses. If you are wealthy, you can

eat whatever you like.

But these are secondary things. Yes, you can eat whatever you like. You can probably buy any sensory experience that you want.

You can probably fly to anywhere on the planet at any given moment to experience something new there. And there are wealthy people who do that. They continue to search for more fulfillment.

Let's look there. No, this isn't good enough. No, let's look there.

I knew somebody who said, whenever I feel a bit depressed, I fly to Paris and go to the best restaurant there, and it helps for a couple of days. And then it wears off. Oh, then you're again with the unhappy sense of self.

So the wealth is really there in order to feel I am more myself, more than the other. Imagine the world where everybody is equally wealthy. And then the entire term wealthy would disappear.

There wouldn't be anything. The word wealthy would not even exist. And you could not define your identity through being wealthy because everybody is equally wealthy.

So it means nothing anymore. So it would be totally meaningless to the ego.

[Speaker 2] (35:33 - 35:52)

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Eckhart Tolle The Crack Is How The Light Gets In [c1acc120-f099-4682-86a6-17e707f876a8]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:01)

The crack is how the light gets in. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about suffering and how to transcend it. He says suffering is everyone's spiritual teacher because it drives us to a kind of willingness.

He believes it cracks open the hard shell of the ego, suddenly allowing the light to shine through. Eckhart mentions the legendary singer Leonard Cohen, who wrote a song about this universal experience. He sings, there's a crack, a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in.

Eckhart also uses the example of Buddha, who suffered by becoming obsessed with doing and attaining enlightenment. Eckhart explains how Buddha put himself through extreme practices and nearly died until one day he decided he'd suffered enough. This is the moment, Eckhart says, the Buddha's ego cracked open and fulfilling enlightenment poured in.

Eckhart says we all will suffer until we realize we don't need to anymore to grow spiritually.

[Speaker 1] (1:03 - 41:07)

I won't talk tonight about the general situation of the world. Maybe we'll talk about it one of these days. More importantly is your state of consciousness.

And so don't be afraid of being. And in fact acknowledge being. I believe the French philosopher Pascal, I believe it was Pascal, said all the ills or the troubles of humanity are derived from the inability to sit quietly in a room.

All the problems of humanity can be traced back to their inability to sit quietly in a room. So he's talking about the loss of the being dimension. And that explains all the turmoil in the world.

Disconnectedness from the transcendent. And so here then practice sitting quietly in a room too. But not by saying okay now I'm going to sit quietly for 15 minutes.

This is the trouble with sometimes people who meditate. I'm doing a meditation. Let's do a meditation and then immediately people go okay.

I'm doing it. Why are you doing it? I want to arrive at well enlightenment or at least some bit of peace.

Well ultimately you're doing a meditation for the realization of being. So you're doing

something in order to realize the absence of doing. The true meditation is just is the realization of being.

And time does not help with that. However, now this is a little paradox. You may need time to finally arrive at the realization that you don't need time to awaken.

Some people need time. And finally after years they go oh I didn't need all that. That was what happened to the Buddha.

That was his life. He saw the unsatisfactoriness of human existence even as a young man. Although he was wealthy.

He saw the unsatisfactoriness. He saw that every human life is short. It ends in illness and death.

What's the point of it all? He said as a human. So he went out.

He had lots of spiritual teachers and all kinds of extreme spiritual practices for years. Practiced with many teachers. And the awakening didn't happen.

But he already had even had some disciples already. He hadn't quite awakened himself yet. And one day he said this is my simplification of the story of the Buddha.

One day he said I've had enough. And then he stopped all spiritual practices and he sat under a tree not seeking anything anymore. He had been seeking for years.

Doing them, doing the practices. And then all seeking came to an end. And his disciples when they saw him sit under a tree they left him and said oh he's lost it.

Yeah he did lose. But what he lost was good. He lost the doing.

The obsession with doing. And so under that tree the awakening happened. And so you could say well couldn't he have done that years before the very beginning?

Theoretically yes. But like many humans they need time to arrive at the realization that it is the time does not awaken you. But paradoxically you may need time to realize that.

And also related to that you may need suffering to realize that there is a suffering can be transcended. Suffering can end. I'm talking about psychological suffering.

The suffering entity. And you may need to suffer until you realize that suffering is no longer necessary for you. I've had many accounts of people they've told me that they were given the power of now as a gift from a relative or friend.

And they opened it and they read a page or half a page and they said what is this nonsense? And then they put it away and said why did you give me that book? It makes no sense at all they said to their friend or relative.

Oh and by the way as you might know that also when Time magazine reviewed The Power of Now the reviewer came to the same conclusion. I think the term was mumbo-jumbo. And strangely the magazine went downhill after that.

And now it's no longer in print. And so they put the book aside and then years later several people told me similar stories. Years later they put the book up again they opened it again and said wow suddenly it all made sense.

Now what happened in these intervening years? They suffered a lot. And so the suffering drove them to a point of readiness.

Suffering tends to crack open the hard egoic shell. And then the light suddenly shines through. Yes I thought it Leonard Cohen says there's a crack in everything that's how the light shines through.

A crack in everything whatever you do wherever you go this crack will appear somehow in a wider sense. Something goes wrong. So here you practice being and one of the very helpful practices here in order to avoid adding to the clutter of your mind and in fact letting go of the clutter is practice awareness of the simplicity of the present moment the sense perceptions of the present moment acknowledge the ism of all things give that give it attention and refrain as much as possible from labeling your sense perceptions. That is not impossible. Impossible.

It is of course a deep-seated habit to continuously have to label your sense perception what you're seeing. Oh look at that isn't that nice. Oh I would this was something I saw this last year my aunt had that.

Oh I wish I had that in my book. Where can you buy that? I wonder.

Oh isn't this interesting. I wonder what the tree is called. There's nothing wrong with finding the names of trees but don't lose yourself in that.

There is another way of being in the world that is non-conceptual that awakens the non-conceptual dimension the non-conceptual intelligence in you because there is a vast intelligence waiting to be awakened and I call it non-conceptual intelligence. It cannot be measured in IQ tests. So you might have a high IQ doesn't mean you're closer to awakening.

In fact if you're identified with all the knowledge then you're further away from awakening if you're identified with it. Practicing sense perception without labeling mentally and that's a beautiful and this is part of the beingness of the practice being. Sense perception is visual auditory the birds visual sky amazing things to see vegetation plants even feeling the breeze on your skin the warm air you sometimes the wind gets can we get quite strong here it's a first day I was came here there's a trade winds that sometimes blow across the ocean that can last for hours and days and it's a continuous

and you can feel it on your skin it's not unpleasant and so you can feel that and breathe whatever sense there may be in the air all senses and experience that be there as the awareness for the sense perceptions and that is that awareness is the space so you are the space for whatever arises but knowingly right now here we can practice that we sit here aware of the room the totality of it look around ceiling there's a man sitting on the chair up here who is that the body okay quite pleasant but I'm already labeling it but it's you don't this don't need to label it just let it be so in this moment there are your sense perceptions mostly visual probably because and auditory because this is my voice sense perceptions and yes of course you might feel the weight of your body on the chair all that yes and what else is there that which enables the sense perceptions to be we could call that consciousness but that is the essence of you that is a deep eye so can you be aware of that deep eye at the same time as you perceive through your senses whatever is there so you have there are two dimensions here now one dimension is the world whatever it contains and you take that in through sensory perception and then you're aware of the awareness that makes sensory perception possible you can you feel that you are you can sense the I am and here things happen but in the depths of your being nothing is happening it's beyond any happening because there's no time there there's time here everywhere time is the thing that enables you to do everything that you do time does that and then it takes everything away time gives you all kinds of stuff and it makes you grow and they get stronger and then it starts eroding you and then in the end it kills you oh my god time is killing me some people I already realized that a long time ago that time is killing but the older one gets the more you realize that time is has engaged in killing you and that's scary if all that you know of yourself is the physical body and the personality then that's that's there's great fear that's all you know you've never gone any deeper so the timeless dimension present moment present moment is the portal into that dimension transcendent dimension now this is a beautiful practice sense perceptions without let go of labels when they arise just don't become too interested in the labels they are thoughts just let let go and then you are while you're here especially the practice is to be as present moment centered as possible otherwise your life is usually consists of your past the present moment and your future now for most people either future or past almost completely occupy their attention until you get old it's usually future when you reach a certain age and you realize if you don't have much future left then you become more interested in the past and you start thinking about it oh that was then there oh I remember that yeah but the present moment is rarely fully acknowledged it's always it's just a stepping stone to the next moment which is a future or you actively hate it that's not uncommon too there are people who who live in an antagonistic relationship with the present moment most of their lives and sometimes older some older people they get the cantankerous old man don't talk to me about that I know it all it's all rubbish nonsense so here you practice living in the two dimensions the deep eye and the surface eyes fine it has its place you acknowledge it but practice present moment living the future and the past obviously everybody knows that that they actually don't exist as such don't you know that well they don't exist

present and past and future don't actually exist if anybody can prove to me that they exist then they must have experienced them future for example does it exist yes in my mind as a thought but nobody has ever tasted it touched it been there experienced in the future I'm a would be great explorer I'm going to find the future and when you find it it's the present moment and again the past when it happened it was the present moment and I'm thinking about it now which is the present moment so the past exists still as a thought but we don't need to go there it sounds like philosophy it's more simple all there ever is in your life I think everybody must admit be able to admit that all there ever is is the present moment that's that's how you experience life as the present moment and if you disregard that and reduce it to a means to an end or actively dislike it then your life is dysfunctional and extremely unconscious and you are trouble to yourself you create problems you create conflict continuously it's insane so the the acknowledgement of the the of the present moment is absolutely vital so it begins with acknowledging whatever arises in the present moment not internally resisting whatever arises in the present moment and that's another practice here as you let go of the habits of your personality they gradually recede subside and you no longer argue with the present moment because for many people there's a habit of discontent they're not rooted in being so they're discontent there's a always a discontent somewhere floating around and then they seek explanations for the underlying feeling of discontent easy to find explanations why you're why you're not happy in the external even here various obstacles can arise here to your the deepening of your consciousness one of the obstacle is the patterns of your mind that travel with you that are part of your personality they create a reactivity to things or to people but another obstacle is it's too nice here it's too pleasant how can you awaken in paradise nobody would awaken in paradise you're much more likely to awaken in hell but don't worry even here you will be challenged either by external events seen significant things but they'll bring up some kind of complaint i'm not talking about complaint when something needs to be rectified something can be done about it but the other kind of complaining so watch your mind observe patterns of reactivity and and useless complaining if they arise because complaining is an important part of many egos for many egos complaining is a very important part of their sustenance they thrive on it criticizing complaining finding fault here and there it's all part of the underlying discontent of something always a sense of something not something not being right something not right something is missing don't know what something missing sense of in not enough even this is not enough this wasn't what i was expecting i was expecting something else there are too many people here i was expecting something smaller no i i can't do it here it's just too many like this isn't right it's too touristy i don't like it here it's just the tourists around tourists um but according to the latest research tourists are actually human beings so if you come to a place of living aligned with the isness of the moment this is a beautiful spiritual practice until it becomes second nature being in alignment with the isness of now and that means also the thinking mind slows down the more you are aligned with the isness of now and you acknowledge the now and whatever arises in the now including and especially the

small things in the present moment you begin to enjoy just walking from here to there a few steps conscious of taking one step at a time handling an object putting on your shoes or your sandals making a cup of tea you come to acknowledge the aliveness of everything even so-called inanimate objects because ultimately nothing is inanimate i want to go more deeply into that during this retreat all the ancient cultures ancient civilizations including the polynesian civilization here but going back everywhere they all had the primordial spirituality of all ancient cultures was what is called animism animism means not just the belief but the feeling or the sensing that everything in this world has a spirit is has a soul anima from a soul that internal soul animism underlies all ancient spirituality in everywhere the sensing that the world is intensely alive there is a hidden presence in all things not just alive things but also so-called inanimate things there is a hidden presence and that is we we can we are returning to that realization now at a deeper level sometimes in ancient civilizations interpreted as everything has a little spirit there's this little spirit here and a spirit there but of course this is it's deeper than that everything is a manifestation of consciousness it's all the consciousness is the intelligence that underlies the universe there is a vast intelligence that is the organizing principle behind the manifestation of all life forms there's a vast intelligence at work beyond sense perceptions the romans believed it polynesians believed it every the ancient europeans leave it in africa in everywhere in china in in daoism from all that the in in roman times every house they believed had a they had an energy field that they called this the spirit of the house and of course in china in japan you have feng shui a similar thing you are you still have survived from those times since there is an there's an energy field whereas for contemporary humans the advanced humans the world has become lifeless that started with scientific materialism in the 19th century the world has become it's not really perceived as being alive and even the natural world was regarded as a they began to regard the natural world as a commodity so they lost that i think that sense of the aliveness and ultimately the sacredness of all things that is hiding beyond the appearance and that is a terrible loss and this is why we arrived at such a crisis point now but that is a loss in the within the human because they've through excessive conceptualization the ego has grown and grown and grown and this excessive conceptualization deadens the world around you because everything is filtered through concepts every human that you meet is is called something it's filtered through conceptualization no longer there's no longer the the sense of connectedness neither from young human to another nor from human to nature and even the connectedness within with an object i've had for many years i've had this when i'm mentioning people uh think i'm a little weird well i suppose i am a little weird but um always that sense of that certain objects that i live with they're kind of my friends it's not an attached not an egoic attachment just an acknowledgement i've had a car i bought a car for 16 years ago i still have it it's my friend yes i'd rather get an electric car now but my car can't leave my friend behind when i lived in england it's a funny story but when i lived in england i had a car i didn't have much money so i bought the cheapest car i could find it was a russian made car called lada and i loved it it was wonderful but people laughed at it

because oh lada because it's very slow and they said it often breaks down it never broke down and i loved it only embarrassing thing was going up a hill you have to because very slowly we're holding up all the traffic behind you but other than that so to have a lada you either needed to be very poor or egoless in my case both applied and finally i left i decided to leave england and a friend of mine said oh i'll buy your lada i need a car and said okay can't remember for how much it wasn't too much and two weeks later i had left england i don't know if i received a letter there were no text messages then what they called i received a letter two weeks later the car broke down and never recovered couldn't even get repaired anymore it was terrible much later i gave him back his money but at the time i couldn't but late i did that's a little aside but everything is alive it is quite important to reverse what has happened to us the last few generations and also the the sense of nihilism nihilism or nihilism that afflicts many humans these days young humans perhaps even more so and and sometimes they find the the weirdest causes and things because combat their nihilism but the purposelessness of of well it's a huge disease it's a collective disease afflicting millions of humans a sense of purposelessness of existence it's a it's a terrible thing and uh again i want to go into that more deeply in the next few days point of the purpose of your life beyond the personal purpose which may or may not be present another practical advice is not to indulge in excessive intake of sustenance physical food in other words not eat too much rather words so that um you don't get a sense of heaviness also refrain from alcohol but i'm not not as a if you cannot enjoy a meal without a glass of wine or a beer by all means go ahead it's perfectly fine but if you know that once you've had your first glass you cannot stop if you know that then it's better not to have the first glass if the first glass is never the last then it would be better here to stop because the it could cloud your mind and become a hindrance to the arising of presence the awakening it can cloud your mind or any other kind of drug could do that also one last thing i already mentioned perceiving without labeling as a practice a large sense perception nature especially natural things and they're everywhere here nature is extremely helpful especially in this the world that we live in for sanity even not just here where you go back into your everyday life sanity can easily be found in nature if you go because you can divide the world into the human made world and the natural world and some people live almost exclusively in the human made world especially if you live in a big city but there is always this vision that when i was a child i would i was not happy a lot of the time when i was a child because of dysfunctional family background they couldn't help it they were just in the grip of their ego but i when i was given a bicycle i was able to leave the city and cycle to the outskirts where there was some nature not magnificent nature just ordinary trees in some fields and trees and and there i experienced my moments of happiness and relief in nature and already there i knew the difference between the human made world that was the world of unhappiness for me and the natural world which was the world where i experienced a sense of freedom and the strangest thoughts that always went through my mind when i was on my bicycle cycling in nature and then i sometimes would get off my bike and just sit there and look around and always i had this thought in my head which said this will

always be here this will always be here and i was only 10 11 12 years old that this will always be here this will always be here and i didn't even fully understand what what this meant i could feel but i realized later this is nature and this is the man and the man made the human made world is not actually going to last the natural world is relative to the human made world is almost eternal and the the planet has unbelievable ability for regeneration which we may talk about some other time so that the humans will not destroy they should do all they can to refrain from causing harm to the planet obviously but even if they go totally insane and they don't manage they will not be able to destroy the i will i will talk about that some other time you don't need to believe me now and especially as you go to sleep make sure that the last thing that you are aware of before entering sleep make sure that the last thing is not your device or the tv is still running a good practice is you lie in bed on your back and place attention into the body the inner energy field of your body so you feel the body many times written and spoken about it as a important practice inner body awareness what you're aware of is not the physical body is that which animates the physical body and so it takes your attention away from thinking it's a very easy quick way of stopping your mind without exerting some willpower and saying stop stop stop that won't work anyway but there's attention into your body abdomen hands feet feel them from within feel the liveness that pervades the the the physical body and from there you gradually go to sleep that's a beautiful completely different way of entering sleep and and if you wake at night with certain thoughts fearful thoughts or many people as they awaken at night oh what's going to happen nothing this is the present moment and there's nothing happening yeah but what's going when i get back home but my life is just this all shambles where oh my god where we're going there's nothing there is no crisis now this this is the present moment the present moment and they see you in a in bed it's warm and comfortable so go into the into the body take attention away from that and you can feel if you feel the inner body there's no attention left for thinking and it's beautiful so whenever you have a sleepless night you begin to be plagued by thoughts direct your energy you start with the abdomen breathe into it for example it rises and you feel that as you breathe in for follow the attention with your breath the abdomen rises and falls rises and falls and then you feel the energy spreading out from there or you can start with your hands until you get a sense of global aliveness pervading the body beautiful and when you wake and just one last thing when you wake up and these thoughts begin to tell you how critical your life is and then you say okay i'm going to go into the body and then the thought that will arise most likely is no i can't do it now no this is not the time i can't this i cannot i can't do it i can't i can't are you going to believe that thought or not because don't believe every thought that comes into your head so and if the thought is i can't yes i can here you look i'm doing it so don't get persuaded by a thought that tells you no you can't do it now many people don't say i can't i'm interested in spiritual things but i've there's too much happening in my life now i have to sort that out first and maybe i need less problems in my life so i can dedicate my life to spiritual awakening not with these these people around me i can't do it but that's not actually how it works your present situation

is the most helpful one for spiritual practice whatever your life situation is use that that's the entry point use that no matter how difficult it seems to be use that that's your portal thank you

[Speaker 2] (41:15 - 41:34)

i'm oprah winfrey and you've been listening to eckhart tolle essential teachings the podcast you can follow these essential teachings on spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts if you haven't yet go to spotify and follow this podcast join us next week for more enlightened teachings from eckhart tolle thank you for listening

Eckhart Tolle The Creative Impulse and The Ego [c74c8ea7-bc7a-4e8f-becf-7e17e07db867]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:38)

The creative impulse and the ego. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions on several topics, including how to differentiate between a true creative impulse and the ego. Eckhart refers to his own experience of writing *The Power of Now*.

While living in England, he says he felt called to move to Canada. He says he had to discern if the impulse was coming from a deeper place or just a passing whim. He also cautions against listening to the mind and its toxic narrative.

After waiting several months, Eckhart realized the feeling was not fleeting, but solid intuition. He eventually made the move and his writing began to flow.

[Speaker 2] (0:42 - 0:45)

I'm really glad for being here. Thanks for everything.

[Speaker 1] (0:46 - 0:48)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (0:48 - 1:59)

I've been confusing with identifying creative impulses that comes from the inner being. And differentiating them from ego impulses. Sometimes I have an impulse to do something and I feel a great vibration of peace, love and joy in the background or in the foreground.

And I think, well, this is an impulse that is coming from my inner being. But this impulse is also accompanied by feelings of great enthusiasm and excitement. Then I think, well, maybe this great enthusiasm and excitement come from my ego.

Then I get stuck analyzing from where does such impulse come from. And I don't take any action. So my question is, what is an inner being impulse like?

[Speaker 1] (2:00 - 13:48)

Right. Good question. If there's a kind of excitement that comes with that, you feel excited about something, then you have to be very careful because that may be a temporary, egoic thing and that could disappear very quickly again.

So be very careful of that level of excitement. Enthusiasm, of course, can easily be mistaken, confused with excitement. But enthusiasm is something deeper and it lasts for

much longer.

So there's a difference between the power that comes with enthusiasm when you feel that you want to do something or something wants to happen through you and you feel a strong energy flow. It's often good to give yourself a little bit of time. Don't act immediately on something and see if the same impulse is still there tomorrow, if it's still there next week, if it's still there three weeks later, two months later, and still feel that it remains.

It comes from a deeper place. It's not just a little wave on the surface. So if it's persistent, then it's something that you should really listen to and then take action.

For example, I was living in England for many years. I was living in the countryside and one day I had this strong feeling that I had to leave England and I had to move to the west coast of North America, but I didn't know why. I didn't immediately get on the phone and say, okay, book me a ticket to fly to California or wherever on the west coast of North America.

I wasn't sure why. I had no answer. I just had the impulse.

So I gave it time. So I waited and a few weeks later, it was still there, just as strong as before. And two months later, it was still there, very strong.

And then I said, this comes from a deeper place. And then I took some action. Trust was involved because I could feel that it was coming.

It was not a temporary excitement or it came from a deeper place. Another thing you need to be careful of is things that arise out of irritation or anger with a person or with a situation. You're irritated with a situation.

I can't take any more of this. I'm going to, this may not come from a deeper place either. So you have to be careful and just give it a little bit of time and then see if it's still there to continue my story without, if it's not too boring.

After a few months, I finally said, okay, I have to do it because if I don't obey this impulse, which is not going away, then I'm not obeying the higher purpose. I knew I had spiritual work to do there. I finally got rid of everything and I moved, still not knowing why.

And only after I arrived a few weeks, the power of now started to come through me. And I realized I needed to be in that energy field there, which is very different from European energy field. I realized when I had to come back to England, temporarily, the writing stopped.

So I had to go back to the West Coast. The writing continued. So this is just one example

of listening to an impulse that doesn't go away.

So don't obey a temporary sense of excitement. Be careful with that. But if it remains, then the mind might still come in and doubt you and might still say, well, it may be a mistake.

Maybe it's a mistake. The mind can always come in with doubts and then you become paralyzed. You can't do anything because whatever you feel you could do or you want to do, the mind will doubt it and will react, oh no, this could go wrong or this could happen.

And then you don't do anything. So you need to be careful also with your mind, not to overanalyze and realize one of the most important things in life is making mistakes. It's even more important than succeeding because you learn through making mistakes.

You deepen through making mistakes. And sometimes what you're really meant to do can only arise after you've tried five, six or ten things that you were not meant to do. And suddenly out of one thing, the real thing arises.

But if you had taken no action, nothing would have happened. So don't be afraid that it could be a mistake because if it is a mistake, then you will learn through it and it won't be a mistake. If you learn through something and you deepen as a human being, the deeper dimension arises through mistakes, then it's not a mistake.

Retrospectively, if I look back at my life, I could say all many things that I did were mistakes. But they were not things that I was ultimately meant to do. Why was I at university and trying to do a PhD?

It was totally wrong. I was not meant to do a PhD and eventually I gave it up. So you could say to be engaged in academic work for me was a mistake.

I wasn't meant to do that and yet I had to go through it and I learned what is not in order to know my true path. Usually in order to know your true path, you need to recognize the false paths that are not yours. And sometimes you have to go there to know it.

So you find out more and more about yourself. Don't be afraid of making mistakes. Don't be afraid of failing because the important thing is the doing.

It's never the ultimate outcome. The important thing is the consciousness that you bring to the doing. So don't be afraid of mistakes.

Don't be afraid of failing. But don't act on a form of excitement that suddenly comes into your head. Give it some time.

A different thing would be if there's a situation that requires immediate action, then you need to be present and intuitively you will know what it is you need to do. If you're in an emergency situation, then you need to be very, very alert, very present and then right

action arises. And then there isn't even time for the mind to question you.

Well, should I do this or not? Let's say the ship you're on is sinking. Should I get out of my cabin or not?

You would just take right action. Or a wild animal comes in running into this room, you would take action, whatever action is needed, you take. The mind doesn't have time to question it.

So these things happen when you are in an emergency situation. But here we're talking about something else, which is what to do in your life, what path or action to take in your life. So it's the art of living.

It's not difficult. Once you recognize how things work, then they become easier, then there's a flow to things. Oh, one more thing.

Once you have embarked on a course of action, especially spiritual people, they sometimes, when an obstacle arises, the first obstacle arises, they say, oh, maybe I wasn't meant to do that. Because I say, well, because if I was meant to do that, everything would unfold without any obstacles. But that's not true.

When you create something new, whether it is, no matter what it is, whether you want to build up a business or create something or write a book or do a work of art or learn something, learn something totally new, whatever course of action you embark on, obstacles will arise. It does not mean when you experience the first obstacle, oh, I wasn't meant to do that. But you don't react against the obstacles.

You see how you can either circumvent the obstacle or use the very energy of the obstacle in your favor so that you always cooperate with whatever situation arises. You don't make it into an enemy. So whenever you create something new, whatever it may be, obstacles will arise.

That doesn't mean that you were not meant to do it if the first obstacles come. However, it's possible that after doing something for a year or something or two years, and then you realize, well, maybe it's just not working. But you carry on trying.

It doesn't matter if you enjoy the process. It's vital. It's a mistake to think I need to arrive at this particular point.

The question is, are you enjoying the journey? Let's say you think you might become a great writer. And so you write.

And you spend five years writing. And then you offer it to some publishers and they don't want it. And then you self-publish it.

And that's fine. And maybe suddenly you're very successful. Or you self-publish it and

nobody wants to read it.

We don't know what the outcome will be. When I wrote The Power of Now, I said, I don't know how many people will read it. And it doesn't matter.

Perhaps 10 people will read it and their life will change through it. And if it doesn't work out, it doesn't matter. Because I enjoy this process so much that the outcome doesn't matter so much.

And if it doesn't work and I can't earn any money through it either, then I'll go and sell tomatoes. I said that in my mind. I don't know why I said that.

I'll make a living by selling tomatoes and I'll be happy doing that. Enjoy the process. And that's what success is all about.

Success is to be aligned with the present moment. It's not the last thing that you arrive at. It's already an end.

The ultimate point of success is already an end. I could talk about this for another two hours. But hopefully, the essence of what I've been saying hopefully will help you a little bit.

[Speaker 2] (13:49 - 13:52)

Thank you. Thanks a lot. Very, very helpful.

[Speaker 1] (13:53 - 13:53)

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (13:54 - 14:14)

Our participant writes in, Can I still completely awaken if I'm on an antidepressant? I'm on the lowest possible dose and I feel much better when I take it. Isn't God in science as well?

Isn't God in everything?

[Speaker 1] (14:16 - 21:17)

Well, the answer to this question is that I don't know. In order to give a truthful answer whether what you're taking is a hindrance, only you can know whether you're still able to be present with that. In order to give an informed answer, I would have to take whatever substance it is that you are taking and experience it for myself.

And then I could give you perhaps an answer as to whether it obscures presence or not. I know that once you have a certain degree of presence, then substances don't really

influence your degree of presence that much anymore. Once you have a certain degree of presence, then you could take alcohol.

I know alcohol, I've taken that. I've also tried once to take LSD. I took it once because I wanted to know.

People ask me that question, Can LSD be helpful for awakening? And finally, I thought I have to try one because I won't be able to answer the question otherwise. So I took LSD and I observed myself during the three or four hours.

And there was no loss of presence. So the presence was I experienced certain things in the field of my consciousness. I experienced certain changes in sensory perception.

I experienced like the walls of the room seemed to be pulsating with life. They seemed to everything was kind of going. And there was a continuing witnessing presence there that was not affected by it at all.

I don't recommend, by the way, that you take any kind of drug. But for some people who are very much identified with their mind, it can be a liberating experience to very briefly experience the world around them without interference of continuous excessive thinking. There was a teacher, a spiritual teacher in the early part of the 20th century.

And he would often encourage his students to indulge in excessive intake of alcohol. In other words, encourage his students to get drunk. So that they could find out whether they were able to stay conscious even while their mind was clouded, whether the consciousness behind the mind was still able to be there as a witnessing presence even when the mind was clouded by alcohol.

This is not something that I would recommend. I'm just mentioning it as an interesting true anecdote. So the question is, when the mind is affected by something, can presence remain unaffected?

So as I said before, to really answer your question, I would have to try that substance. But from my own experience with taking only once LSD and I'll give you another very funny anecdote that's similar to this. Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher, when he wrote a famous book in the 60s, he went to India as a young man and he experienced a spiritual awakening in India.

And he found a guru in India, his spiritual teacher. And at that time, he was experimenting. In the 60s, many people began taking LSD and he was experimenting with that himself.

And one day, he gave his teacher in India a dose of LSD. He said, why don't you try this? You might have interesting experiences.

And he gave him about 10 times the normal dosage because he said, okay, I'll have another one, the spiritual teacher, give me one more. So he took, I think they call it hits. He took, normally you would take one or two.

And he took 10, this spiritual teacher, and then Ram Dass sat there watching him to see what was going to happen to him. And absolutely nothing happened to him. He just sat there for a few hours.

Nothing, completely unaffected. He did not say this, I forgot his name, the spiritual teacher did not say whether he experienced any strange things. He probably did.

But it didn't affect his base, his foundational presence. That's a very interesting fact. But this only is the case if a certain degree of presence is reached.

If presence is only just beginning to emerge, then any substance like that can very easily obscure your presence. I know that for a fact, I've seen people to whom this happened. So if presence, if you're not fully established yet in presence, and the substances can easily obscure presence, but maybe not all substances.

So to some extent, the answer will depend on how much presence or the intensity of the presence that is already arising in you. So I cannot give a conclusive answer to this. I just hope that what I'm saying is a little bit helpful.

But I do suspect that at the moment, with a small dosage that you are taking that you will be fine. And observe your life, observe how you whether you're in situations, are you able to be present? Are you reactive?

Has there been a change in your life? Life gives you always, how you deal with people in situations is the best feedback of how present you are. If there has been a change in how you deal with people in situations, if you're no longer as reactive as you used to be, if you're able to be aligned with the present moment, and so on, then presence is obviously working in you, despite the fact that you are taking a daily dosage of this.

So that's, so you can find out yourself by observing yourself and seeing how you deal with people in situations. That's always reflects your degree of consciousness.

[Speaker 3] (21:17 - 21:54)

Thank you. My question relates to the pain body. And over the last while, I've noticed my anxiety or discomfort within the body increase significantly, sometimes.

And my question is, is that pain increasing? Or is my awareness to it increasing? And if so, was it always that discomforting inside without me being aware?

[Speaker 1] (21:55 - 22:07)

Right? What you describe as discomfort? Is that triggered by certain situations?

Or is it triggered by certain thoughts in your mind?

[Speaker 3] (22:08 - 22:23)

Definitely thoughts in my mind, and definitely around starting the workday, being in certain work situations. But it can come, you know, out of nowhere from a thought in my mind as well.

[Speaker 1] (22:23 - 22:30)

Right. And that discomfort, would you describe it as an emotional discomfort?

[Speaker 3] (22:31 - 22:46)

It's not a lot in my, like in my stomach or my gut. I almost feel it in my organs. And yeah, I don't know if that's emotional, or physical or because of the emotion.

[Speaker 1] (22:47 - 22:56)

Do you sometimes practice in a body awareness the way I don't know if you practice in a in a body awareness? You know what I mean by that?

[Speaker 3] (22:56 - 23:05)

Yeah. And I mean, the more the discomfort or pain comes, the more I practice it. So it's having that positive effect.

[Speaker 1] (23:06 - 23:06)

Right?

[Speaker 3] (23:06 - 23:06)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (23:07 - 31:31)

Okay. It seems more than likely that it's because there's much more awareness now in your inner energy fields more than before, that you're becoming aware of certain blockages of one could call it in the in your that are partly emotional and partly physical, they have a they have a physical aspect, and they have an emotional aspect. And they're probably part of the pain body.

And they were there before, but you didn't know it. The light of consciousness is now going into your directed into your inner energy field. And then you become aware of something that has always been there, but you didn't know it.

It just manifested in certain situations as perhaps as a pain body attack, or as obsessive kinds of thinking. And now you're able to just be with it and observe it. So it's not a bad thing at all.

It's actually, it means that whatever it is that you're observing, that the observation itself is a process of gradual dissolution of it, it gradually, it could take time, but it gradually dissolves because you're shining the light of consciousness on it. If you don't react to it, you realize what it is. And then these emotional, physical energy fields blocked energy, that's what it is, can then no longer use your mind, your thought processes, so that your thought processes, you can stay much more present in your thinking, rather than being taken over by emotional thinking by pain, body thinking, negative thinking, and so on.

So it's a good thing. The inner body awareness is such a vital, vital practice. Did you come to our retreat?

Did you come to the last awakening retreat? I watched it. I've been to one, but not the last one.

Yeah, I've spent quite a bit of time with inner body awareness, because it's so important. And even Jesus talked about it. People don't realize that he talked about that your whole body will be full of light.

If your eye is sound or single, your whole body will be full of light. Jesus must have taught inner body awareness, but nobody in the churches realized that. So it's a very vital practice.

Buddhists also have vipassana and so on, inner body awareness practices. So it's all good. Don't be concerned.

It does not mean that these things were not there before. You're just becoming aware of what was living in your energy field. And by becoming aware of it, this is a process of transmutation.

Gradually, the energy becomes freed, because the whole pain body is stuck energy. It can't flow anymore. It's a stuck emotion, which manifests also on the physical level.

And then, as it becomes transmuted, the energy of that becomes part of your presence. So it's like the light or the fire of presence is fueled by the energy that was trapped in the pain body. It assumes a higher vibrational frequency.

And so this is why people often with heavy pain bodies find it almost easier to become present and become more intensely present, and certainly are more motivated to awaken into presence than people with a relatively weak pain body. So also be aware in your dealings with people and so on. And in your mind, do you still experience pain body attacks, when you get suddenly taken over by a very negative energy field?

Yes, that still happens. Right. So there you have to be very, very careful so that you don't suppress it, but know what's happening.

Be there, see awareness, know, oh, there's the pain body, so that it observes you directly, so that it cannot rise into your mind and use your thinking. Because then it renews itself through your thinking. It can also renew itself through other people's reactions.

So there are two ways in which the pain body can acquire new energy fuel, so to speak. It can do it through negative thought processes. It loves negative thinking.

This is emotional negative thinking about yourself, about your life, about other people, no matter what it is about, it doesn't matter. Or it can take fuel through drama in relationships. It loves to trigger somebody else's pain body, whether it's a personal relationship, close relationship, family members, or at work.

So also be careful that other people's pain bodies may want to trigger yours. So you have to be very alert. Alertness is key.

There's nothing wrong with pain. As long as you know it's there, and you're able to observe it, that means you're awakening. So the more you can observe it, the more awake you are.

So it's all wonderful, wonderful practice. And you can actually enjoy it. And then gradually the transmutation happens.

It's just wonderful. Thank you. Thanks.

Thank you. I'm not here as a person, although my mind is being used, obviously, in the service of consciousness and awakening. But I mentioned before gazing, not in this session, but in other sessions.

Gazing is the practice of looking into somebody's eyes, two people gazing into each other's eyes for maybe a minute, two minutes, or three minutes. Ask permission first. And we can do it here now.

Although I'm not here physically, it's still very much the same. Because when you look into my eyes, and you let go of thinking, and just sense your own presence, which isn't your own, but we just call it that, you can sense your presence. And you look into my eyes, and you can sense that your presence and my presence are the same presence.

And while I look at you, I'm not thinking. And so it may be easier for you to also step out of thinking, because when you're looking at me, you're not looking at a thinking person right now. It's a bit like looking at your dog, except that the dog exists below thinking, and I'm above thinking.

So the being that you can sense in yourself is a being that is in me. And as such, we are connected, and we are incarnations of the one being, the one universal consciousness. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (31:33 - 31:53)

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Eckhart Tolle The Danger of Deferring Satisfaction [01c913f1-f215-461f-b813-4c1727ad1529]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:51)

The danger of deferring satisfaction. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about setting goals and deferring satisfaction. He says for many people, the activities they're engaged in are just a means to an end.

He believes they're not present in what they're doing now because they're projecting where they want to be in the future. Eckhart explains this is a self-defeating way to live because while we may need to defer satisfaction to reach a goal, there's also an inherent danger to it. He says after years, the pattern may become so ingrained, we no longer find satisfaction in anything we do because we're so used to deferring it.

Eckhart says we must honor whatever we are doing in the present moment. And if we give it our full attention, then it is possible to feel clarity and joy.

[Speaker 1] (0:53 - 35:46)

As we sit here, check in with yourself. See what is your consciousness as you as we sit here in silence. What is your mind doing?

What is the voice in the head saying or doing, if anything? And perhaps there is stillness, which is wonderful. As you might have guessed, when I sit here, I'm not thinking.

And the invitation is for you to share the space of presence and as much as possible be in that state of awareness instead of absorbed in thought. And thoughts may arise occasionally as we sit here. But you don't have to follow them with your attention.

Just let them go past like a cloud. The essence of all spirituality is this, to realize that inner spaciousness or stillness. In Hindu spiritual philosophy, there's a term called Turiya, which means the fourth.

First, second, third, fourth. A state of consciousness, Turiya, the fourth. It divides human consciousness into dreamless sleep, the dream state, the second, the wakeful state, the third.

And Turiya is the fourth state of consciousness, which is this. And compared to the so-called wakeful state, it's like if you compare the conventional wakeful state to the dream state at night when you're dreaming, then you wake up out of the dream into the ordinary wakefulness, which is usually identification with the stream of thinking. That's the normal state.

So there's a huge shift. You wake up out of the dream state, and then you wake up and

say, ah. And the same thing happens again when you wake up out of the normal wakefulness state, the third, into the fourth, that it is a kind of waking up again.

This is why the term awake and waking up, awaken, has been used in various spiritual traditions for thousands of years. Because you wake up in the same way that you wake up out of the dream state at night into the normal wakefulness state. You wake up out of the normal state of wakefulness into the fourth state of awareness, pure awareness.

And compared to the fourth Turiya, the normal state of wakefulness is also a kind of dream. So you can wake up twice out of it. First you wake up out of the conventional dream state at night into normal wakefulness, which means identification with the stream of thinking.

And then there's the possibility of waking up out of that into the fourth state of presence. And that is, in essence, that's what it's all about. And the fourth state is something that we, once you have had glimpses of it, you know it is very real, not just something to speculate about or hoping that in some other lifetime you will reach the fourth state of consciousness.

If you've had a glimpse of it or at first hand, then it's important to invite it into your life, so to speak, to remember to invite that into your life in ordinary daily existence. And in the same way that there is such a thing as lucid dreaming, which means when you are asleep at night and you're dreaming, lucid dreaming means you suddenly become aware that you are dreaming. So there is an awareness of the fact that you are dreaming, and that's called lucid dreaming.

Sometimes it can happen just accidentally. Suddenly in the middle of the dream you realize, oh, this is a dream. And then you're no longer really trapped in the dream and the thought may come to you, oh, I could make anything happen because it's just a dream.

Usually you wake up very soon after the awareness comes in the not really compatible, the dream state and the state of awareness are not really compatible. So you only have a very short space where occasionally it could happen that lucid dreaming occurs. The awareness, if it appears in the middle of the dream, frees you from being completely trapped in the dream and believing that everything on the dream is absolutely real.

So even if you're dreaming of an unpleasant place that you're trapped in, if suddenly you realize it's a dream, okay, well, it's not that bad. It's just a dream. And then you wake up.

In the same way, in ordinary wakeful state, as awareness comes in, because they're not to be treated separately, when you first experience the state of presence, awareness, for example, as we sit here in stillness and you realize that your mind also becomes still and all that's left is a sense of beingness or presence. It's quite beautiful. At first it may be

very subtle and light and then it deepens and becomes more powerful or you realize it more deeply.

It itself doesn't, but you realize it more deeply. And that's fine. Those are glimpses and they're good.

They're important. This can happen in meditation. If you meditate rightly, then that state of presence, awareness arises and that is good.

But the task is not to lose it in everyday life. That's the real task. Otherwise you might become a good meditator, which is fine.

But the moment you move back into your ordinary life, daily life, it's gone. And you're just as unconscious as everybody else. And then after a few hours of stress and suffering, you say, oh, I need to meditate again.

They need to come together, daily life and the awareness, they need to come together so that you are able to experience not lucid dreaming, but lucid living. And that is conscious living. When there is an awareness always in the background as you do things, you're engaged in activities.

You can practice being present in what you do, which means you're conscious of whatever movement is happening. But you're also conscious of yourself as the underlying awareness. There's a presence.

It's easier to practice when you're alone, not being stimulated by other people's minds. You're alone with yourself and you're not engaged with your devices that stimulates the thinking mind. But you're alone and perhaps you're sitting or you're walking.

Then it's, this is a good place to start to bring in and presence through movement that you practice also is an important teaching that shows you that to incorporate the presence into the movement. So, and then you practice that. And then you move in your daily life.

You're constantly on the go. You're moving from here to there and you bring in that awareness as while the movement happens. And a key thing here is to be present in that movement rather than make that movement into a means to an end.

And that applies to any activity that you're engaged in from the simplest thing, like making a cup of tea or washing your hands or walking across the room or up the stairs and down the stairs. In ordinary non-lucid consciousness, ordinary waking state, most of the movements that people are engaged in are a means to an end. They are not present in the step they are taking now because they are mentally projecting themselves to where they want to get to.

And then movement can become or easily becomes stressful and not enjoyable. And it diminishes the quality of the movement. There's no quality in what you do because it's only you want to get it out of the way as quickly as possible.

Many people spend their whole days wanting to get whatever they are doing out of the way as quickly as possible so that they can get to the next thing. It's a horrible way to live, but it's quite normal. Always, where's the next?

Okay, still doing this. I don't want to be doing it, but I have to. I really want to get there.

And once you're there, then you want to get that out of the way. Often, the stress is connected with that, not being able to enjoy life because life largely consists of doing and movement. And you might have heard the expression to defer satisfaction.

Now, that expression refers to a person who has a goal that the person wants to achieve, which is good. It's good to have goals unless you're 99 years old. It's good to have goals not always in your life.

There may be periods in your life, not just when you're 99. There may be periods in your life when you don't have any particular goal because life is just flowing and unfolding as it is. I don't have any goals anymore.

I haven't had any goals in a long time. It's just unfolding, and that's fine. I'm happy with that.

So there are time periods when goals are something that is an important part of your life as a human. And at other times, you may not need goals. So if you're a young person or relatively young, it's more likely that goals will be an important part of your life.

And I don't know where young finishes these days. I don't know. You can decide for yourself if you're young or not.

So there is the expression to defer satisfaction or to postpone satisfaction, which means you have a goal and you're working hard to achieve your goal. And so according to this recipe for success, you do not demand satisfaction immediately. You can defer satisfaction until you reach your goal, which let's say you are studying to become this or that.

It would take several years. And your friend next door is not practicing to defer satisfaction. He or she is sitting at home drinking, having a good time, going out to bars while you are at your desk studying for your exams.

That is to defer satisfaction. The other guy is continuously being kind of satisfied, being unconscious probably through drinking and having sex and great hedonistic, hedonistic pleasures and not really satisfied for long either because these hedonistic satisfactions

are quite short-lived and there's always discontent arises and then they need another fix to feel satisfied again. And the other guy is working hard to defer satisfaction.

So there is a lot of truth in that. In order to succeed at something, they say, I'm not totally advocating for this. We'll transcend wisdom.

It's conventional wisdom is to say you need to learn to practice to defer satisfaction. Otherwise, you cannot be successful in this life. A musician, for example, a long time ago, I lived in a house in London and two floors down there was a pianist, professional pianist, young woman, and she would practice four to five hours every day.

I could hear the piano. Fortunately, it was quite beautiful, so it didn't bother me. So perhaps that would be called to defer satisfaction.

Eventually, years later, I heard her name came up and she's very well known now. I don't know if she's still active now. She must be old like myself too, but she became quite well-known, famous pianist.

So was she deferring satisfaction? I don't know. We'll come back there in a minute.

There seems to be some truth in this, that you need to defer satisfaction to reach a goal. However, there is a huge danger associated with it. And the danger is that to defer satisfaction becomes a mental habit.

And after several years of deferring satisfaction, a mental habit becomes established in your mind that makes it impossible for you to find satisfaction in anything because for years you have practiced deferring satisfaction. That has become a deep-seated mental habit. And then even when you reach a goal, satisfaction may be there very briefly, but you are now trapped in the mental habit of always looking for satisfaction in the next thing.

And then that is the danger of deferring satisfaction. You may succeed, but the success won't make you happy and will not bring lasting satisfaction. So that is conventional wisdom.

And now transcendent wisdom is you can learn to enjoy what you are doing in the moment without reducing it to a means to an end. You know what the end, the end that you want to achieve is. Yes, you know that is the end.

You want to pass your exam or get good at this or that. Fine. But in the meantime, you honor whatever it is that you engaged in in the present moment and you give it your fullest attention so that you don't reduce it to a means to an end.

In the case of the pianist, for example, I don't know what her inner state was as she was practicing four or five hours every day. Was it a stressful exercise? Because was she

desperately wanting to become a great pianist?

And then I have to get there, just have to. Or perhaps, I don't know, perhaps she was able to enjoy every note, every moment of her practice just as much as performing in the Royal Albert Hall in London. So I don't know what her state was, but it applies to any person who is working towards a goal.

I would say that to defer satisfaction is not the best recipe for success, but to find satisfaction in the doing now rather than reduce it to a means to an end. To honor whatever you're engaged in now, to honor it. And if you absolutely, absolutely cannot enjoy it, then it is very probable that this is not for you.

Let's say you're studying some subject because your parents told you that you have to do that because your dad had the same profession. Now you have to go into it too, whatever it may be. I don't want to mention anything because it could be anything.

Myself, for example, once I was so not in touch yet with my ultimate mission and purpose in life, there was a time when I said, I have to find a job. I have to find, I need an income. I have to find a job.

What can I do? And then I tried several things. One of them was I was beginning to fill in an application form.

You won't believe this. I was beginning to fill in application form to study, to become a chartered accountant. No, there's nothing wrong with being a chartered accountant.

There's some wonderful people who are chartered accountant, but I would have been the worst chartered accountant. I'm almost number dyslexic. Fortunately, for some reason, I didn't fill in the entire form.

It was getting too complicated. But if, let's just imagine if I had filled in this form and submitted it, if they had accepted me, that would have been a huge mistake on their part. If they had accepted me, then I would have been studying this, and I would have found it impossible to enjoy the present moment.

Numbers everywhere. And I can't even, it took me years to even remember my telephone number. And so that would be a clear sign.

After a few days or so, I would know this is not for me. This is impossible. So there I would recommend you to recognize that is something that is not compatible with your inner being or your true life purpose.

And then I applied. Then I applied to become a university lecturer at a university in northern England. They invited me to an interview.

And again, I didn't know that that was not my path at all, at all. There were five or six

professors interviewing me. And I talked, they asked questions, I answered.

I don't, my answers probably were not very good. And at the very last, an old professor asked me a question that brought about a small awakening as my life purpose is concerned. The last question that this professor asked me in this interview was, and what do you really want to do?

So, oh. And I suddenly realized this is not what I really want to do at all. So I was lucky that even before I made these mistakes, I was prevented from making these mistakes at this very early stage, accountancy, university teaching.

And then I had a third interview, and that was before the interview to become a university lecturer. That was a similar mistake to being a chartered accountant. I applied to become a merchant banker in the city of London.

If they had accepted me, the bank would not have done very well. But surprisingly, they invited me for an interview. I had no banking background, but I had to, well, I was from a prestigious university, so they said, okay, we'll interview you.

This is where, at the time, many of these bankers were these bowler hats. This is how I would have ended up. About 10 days before the interview, I started reading the Financial Times to prepare myself, but could not retain much information.

My mind just didn't go that way. And the people were not very impressed by my performance at the interview, and they said, I'm sorry, we don't have a place for you. Oh, thank God for that.

So if you're able to enjoy the doing, then that is the way to achieve your goal, is not to postpone satisfaction, to defer satisfaction. Find satisfaction in the doing. That is also one of the main teachings in the Bhagavad Gita, the ancient Indian scripture, one of the great books of the world.

The teaching is, instead, do not look to the fruit of the action. The fruit of the action is the outcome, the desired outcome. Do not look to the fruit of the action.

But practice is called karma yoga. Karma actually literally means action. Yoga means, yoga here is not meant in the Western sense of yoga.

Something else I wouldn't be good at. The term yoga here is used meaning spiritual practice. So karma yoga is the spiritual practice of action.

And karma yoga is, sometimes it's translated, various translation into English, as consecrated action. You consecrate this action to the divinity or whatever, you give it your complete attention. This is, instead of looking to the fruit of the action, you give your complete attention to the action.

You don't reduce it to a means to an end. You honor it completely, totally. And that is karma yoga.

And then the fruit will look after itself. It's very likely that the fruit will be good, because the journey towards it was good. If the journey towards your goal is stressful and unpleasant, it is very unlikely that the goal will satisfy you.

And so the end does not justify the means if the means is unpleasant. So it is very important to realize that the whatever outcome you wish to achieve depends on your state of consciousness in this moment. That if in this moment you act unconsciously, then it is unlikely that the outcome will be good or enjoyable or make you happy or make other people happy.

We'll have some questions. By the way, there are quite a few people joining us from other parts of the planet. I'm going to say hello to them.

Nice to have you here or there. Wherever you are, whatever time it is, it's the present moment. I know that.

And a few people have already submitted some questions. I'm just going to read two or three questions and then perhaps some questions from you, just in case there are any questions left at this point. We don't know.

Beate from Germany is asking, what reason should there be for the survival of the human race? Oh, let me think. Isn't that emoji for that?

If humanity is aligned with universal purpose, which is the evolution of consciousness, universal consciousness in this dimension, consciousness evolves, then the species will survive. If humanity is an expression, a manifestation of the evolving consciousness, if consciousness is able to use, so to speak, the human form as a vehicle to manifest through, then human life is aligned with the purpose of the universe, which is the entire universe is in the process of awakening, where it's all going. Don't even attempt to understand with the human mind the vastness that is involved here and where it actually is going.

The universe is evolving. Consciousness is growing. We live in an awakening universe.

And if humans are aligned with that and become vehicles for that, then what is the question? Then this will be, oh yes, survival. And then the human race will survive if it's aligned with the transcendent purpose of the universe.

If not, then it would simply collapse and some other form will consciousness, universal consciousness, the countless forms through which it can blossom and express itself. So that's as simple as that. And perhaps this is a critical point in the evolution of humans.

Are we able to reach the next stage in the evolution of human consciousness, which is what this is all about? Is a sufficient number of humans able to reach the next stage of the consciousness? Or are we getting trapped in egoic consciousness, unable to break out of it?

In which case we would destroy ourselves through the unconsciousness that is in the egoic unconsciousness. There's a self-destruct mechanism in the ego. So that's as simple as that.

I still have intuitively a sense that humanity will survive as a species, but even that is not entirely true because everything will evolve even as consciousness continues to flow through us. Even what we now perceive as a physical body is going to go through a metamorphosis. And so eventually you can't even imagine where humans are going as they continue to be aligned with the awakening consciousness.

So it's all good, I feel. Our chances are still good, long term. Short term is a different matter.

Because evolution happens not in a straight upward line. Evolution happens through disruption of order, chaos. Things break down, chaos happens.

Out of the chaos a new higher order arises. And then that prevails for a while. And then a time comes when that higher order also dissolves into chaos.

And out of chaos something new arises on every level that applies. And so we are now moving into a period of disorder and breakdown, which is a great thing. From a transcendent point of view.

And our destiny is to reach the next stage. Humanity as it is now is not as a whole, it seems to me, is not ready to enter as a collective to the other fourth state of consciousness. There are too many humans that are still totally trapped in ego.

Including humans that are running this world. Or especially those, I don't know whether they become especially unconscious when they go into become part of these structures that run the world. Or whether it attracts people who are already unconscious in that way.

Or when they reach their position they become unconscious perhaps. All this is suffering provides the impulse for the awakening of consciousness. Obstacles, suffering, difficulties.

All these things are necessary for the evolution of consciousness. All the things that seem to block the evolution of consciousness are actually necessary.

[Speaker 2] (35:47 - 36:07)

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Eckhart Tolle The Deep I Is Pure Light [15fe52c1-c225-4d88-ab1b-748aa496e491]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 1:03)

The deep eye is pure light. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience, including a father who says he wants to help bring presence into the lives of his active and unconscious teenagers who spend too much time on their devices, computers, and cell phones. A woman in the audience says she's interested in manifesting her purpose, but also wonders if it's necessary to be very specific in the process of manifesting her goals.

Another woman asks about identity at what Eckhart calls the deep eye level, and asks if we are all really the same. Eckhart uses a movie metaphor to explain the deep eye by saying in a movie, as individual images appear on a screen, they all come from the same light pouring through the projector. He says the essence of the deep eye is like that.

It's pure light. With his wisdom and also his humor, Eckhart brings his unique perspective to these questions and many others. Enjoy.

Hi, Eckhart.

[Speaker 5] (1:03 - 1:03)

Hi.

[Speaker 6] (1:04 - 1:05)

Hi, everyone.

[Speaker 5] (1:07 - 1:39)

I want to make sure I'm understanding tonight's teaching correctly. So this was my interpretation. Beyond our form, beyond our thought and our emotions, beyond our past experiences, is the deep eye.

Does that mean at the level of the deep eye, we are all the same? We are all identical? We are all the same light?

And therefore, we're not individual?

[Speaker 1] (1:41 - 11:22)

At the deepest level, you're not an individual. The individuality goes beyond the physical form. It goes a bit deeper than that.

Even beyond your physical form, you're still an individual. Quite a way down, you're still

an individual. Then gradually, as you go deeper, the individuality merges with something vast and all-encompassing.

And this vastness that is the universal consciousness that pervades the universe. So at the deepest level, there is no individuality. What people are afraid of is they say, what does it help me if the consciousness that animates this body survives after my death, but I won't be there anymore?

It's a misunderstanding. Let's say, if I asked you a weird question, what does it feel like to be you? What does it feel like?

And the answer doesn't come through thinking about it. And it doesn't require a verbal answer. What does it feel like to be you?

You have to kind of go within, what does it, without looking to memory to tell you who or what you are, without going to your memory banks, without the memory, let's say you have no past, what does it feel like to be you without the past? Are you still there? I don't want an answer.

It's a pointer. Are you still there? Without remembering anything about you, that feeling of beingness, that's still there.

That's very interesting. That becomes mixed up with form identity. It becomes diluted, so to speak, and it becomes forms.

But when you identify with something at the root of the feeling of individuality, there's actually at the root of it, that's not individuality. That's the transpersonal, the deepest, the essence is there. What looks to you like individuality, the feeling of being you is actually derived from that deeper place and not from the history.

It gets confused with the history of you with thought. Consciousness in its pure form, which is in the deep eye, that's the pure light, you could say, the pure light. Then the light becomes, let's use an analogy of a movie.

If you watch a movie, there's a projector. I suppose that still exists. If you go to a cinema, technologies change, but at least it used to be like that.

I think it still is. There's a screen, and there's a projector, and there's a film that runs through the projector, and there's a powerful light behind that. The light shines through the film, and it animates the figures in the film, the movie.

There's only one light, but this light gets broken up into characters and events and things happening, and that's projected onto the screen. But the essence of every character is the light. The character kind of temporarily obscures some of the light, so that's why he or she appears as a character.

Now imagine to take this analogy almost to a point of absurdity, but it's interesting. What if, let's say, these movie characters on the screen, let's say they have a little bit of beginning of self-awareness, but they're acting out the script, of course. They can't help it.

They have to act out the script, but at some point in the middle of acting out the script, they're questioning something. Who am I, actually? What is the essence of me?

And then if they begin to realize there's a light that shines, and that light animates me, and then perhaps, to take the analogy even further, then the attention, the light is then recognized as the essence, and then they follow the light back to the source. The attention moves back as they connect with the original source of the powerful light in the projector, and suddenly they realize who they are beyond the character, and they continue to act out the script, and this is a good analogy in that sense, because every human being is conditioned by the past, and this conditioning in the absence of awakening determines how they behave, and what they do, and what they think, so there are conditioned entities programmed to behave in certain ways, forced to act out the script that everybody grows up with. They absorb a script, which is a conditioning of their life, and then there's a possibility of awakening in the midst of all that drama, the movie.

Most movies are interesting because things go wrong to the characters experience problems. If the characters don't experience problems, the movie is extremely boring. Imagine a movie where nothing goes wrong.

You fall asleep, and this applies to real life also. When people go to a movie, and nothing happens, or everything functions beautifully, there was a beautiful movie called Titanic. Now, everybody already knew what was going to happen there, unless the director managed to make it so interesting.

Everybody knew it was going to go down, but things go wrong even before the ship sinks. There's already conflict between the characters that makes it. It's not that they have a wonderful time, and then the ship sinks.

There's already conflict between the characters. Now, imagine a movie that's called Titanic, where everything works beautifully, and they arrive in New York, and the boat doesn't sink. Extremely uninteresting.

So, we want to see every movie. We can reduce every script, movie script. Soon after the movie starts, something goes wrong.

It has to. Otherwise, there is no movie, and the same in life. As soon as you come into this life, things start going wrong.

They go right too, but also wrong. The proportion of right and wrong varies from person

to person. If you have bad karma, you're already born into dreadful situation, whatever it may be, either poverty, or it could be wealth, but absolute dysfunction, totally crazy parents.

All these things are possible. Some humans, every human is born into a situation, but even in the best of cases, there will be things that go wrong, and that is how consciousness evolves. Consciousness does not evolve if humans remain in their comfort zone.

There's no awakening in your comfort zone. If there is an awakening, it won't be very deep. It'll be a very pleasant feeling, but the moment you're confronted with a challenging situation, it'll be gone, like a plant that grows in a greenhouse, protected from the environment, from the weather, but the moment you plant it outside, it cannot survive because it has not developed the strength, which only comes when you encounter obstacles.

So the question, and yes, the individuality is there and disappears into the realization of oneness when you go deep enough, but the consciousness from the deep transcendent place, the light of consciousness shines into even your so-called individuality, that which gives life to your so-called, your personal history, the memory of your history, that which gives light to it is the light of consciousness too, but it's not recognized as the light of consciousness.

You don't recognize that not only the pure consciousness, there's also the consciousness that takes on forms, it becomes forms, and that is the dream state where you experience, as a character in the movie, you're acting out the script of your life. Many humans, till the end of their lives, act out the script, they never become free of their conditioning, that's a pity, but hopefully they'll come again and have another go at it. Yes, so that's really how it is.

[Speaker 5] (11:22 - 11:23)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (11:23 - 11:23)

Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (11:32 - 12:47)

Hello, Eckhart. Hello. Thanks for your teachings.

The question is on kids. I have a teenager at home, and like many, most teenagers, they tend to get unconscious. So I think what I've seen is when they are small, I mean, they are the most present, right?

They are in the present and doing everything with the joy. As they grow up, middle school, high school, some stage we give them a cell phone, they have computers to work on homeworks and everything, and obviously they're trying to identify themselves, and they become unconscious. So the question is, and it is a good spiritual practice, even for me, sometimes I can be conscious when they are unconscious, and sometimes you're drawn into the unconsciousness.

So the question is, what can we do to bring in that presence into their lives, or what are, if there's anything that, you know, you are doing or Eckhart's teachings is doing with the schools, in middle schools or high schools, where we can have a course or something where, you know, as a group, they can get some kind of presence teachings.

[Speaker 1] (12:48 - 31:24)

Yes, thank you. That's very important. Thank you.

And the question could also refer to parents, how to approach teenage years, typically are difficult. So the human ego has to, at that point, the human ego has to develop and grow. Unfortunately, the way it is, it is for most humans on the planet so far is the human ego should be a limited time period when it grows in a human being, let's say up to the age of 25, at the most 30, let's say mid-20s.

You cannot prevent the arising of ego in a child and an adolescent, nor should you want to prevent it, it's not possible. They need to develop a sense of separate identity that is part of the evolution. The tragedy is, unfortunately, if people get stuck with that ego for the rest of their lives, they never go beyond it.

So for a parent, to begin with parent, it's to observe the growth of the ego in the child, which already starts with, may start at the age of two or three, when the child begins to, well, the child learns his or her name, and then the child learns that it is possible to possess something. It learns the concept of mine fairly early. And so it possesses a toy, and it learns the concept of my toy, that's the beginning of ego.

Also the beginning of the suffering that comes with ego identification, because if the toy is lost or disappears, or somebody takes it, enormous suffering arises. Oh, oh, my toy, mine. This is the early suffering of egoic consciousness.

The next step would be for the child to assert that it is better in some ways than another. I can jump higher than you. Can you jump this high?

No, you can't, look at me. I can do it. And parents say, you're great, you're doing it.

And that's fine. If you don't overdo the praise, give praise when praise is deserved, but don't just praise anything, because then there comes an inflation of praise, and that can create a narcissistic personality, which is an overblown ego. Many parents these days do

that.

They say, everything you do is so great, you're the greatest, you're wonderful. It feels good for the child, but when you print money, it loses its value. It's called inflation.

I know that, but many politicians these days don't seem to know it. And they probably have degree in economics, but that's on the side. So you are there to gently guide them.

You observe the growth of their ego as it has to gently guide them. And school ideally should prepare children for adulthood, and should also prepare them perhaps for the transcendence of ego. Perhaps they can even, just when I said 25 years old, just a number came to me.

It could already be a 21. Ego is something that needs to be overcome, but something that is necessary for a certain stage of human development. So schools should encourage children not to excessively identify with concepts.

And there are a few alternative schools, I believe, that already to some extent do that. There are perhaps, I don't know, Montessori schools or Rudolf Steiner schools and so on. To some extent, they encourage children not to be excessively drawn into conceptualization at an early age.

That is very dangerous. Also, to be given the devices at a very early age has a very detrimental effect on their development. I know it's an easy thing to do for parents to keep them quiet, but it is not good for the growth of their consciousness.

Children need to remain in touch for as long as possible with nature. Some way, they need to be taken out into nature, even if it's just a park, but preferably out of the city periodically, where they are encouraged to interact with nature, leave all the devices behind. Every school should do that, take them out in groups where they spend time connecting with nature without their devices.

These are all important things. Also, to teach even abstract subjects like mathematics and so on at too early an age is also detrimental for their development. So there are many things that I know.

I have met quite a few teachers over the years who are already bringing that into their classrooms, but so far mostly on an individual basis. It's rare for it to become an already part of the official curriculum. That's still relatively rare, although there are some schools now also, I don't know what schools they are, whether they may be private schools, that teach mindfulness.

I don't often use that term, but basically mindful is to be present in what you do. I don't use that term because it implies that your mind is full, so I'd rather not use that, but they teach mindfulness. So for a parent to encourage the child not to get lost in

conceptualization, to encourage the child to continue to interact with nature.

If you can't have an animal in the house, that is nature too, a cat or a dog. Encourage the child to look after the animal, to relate to the animal. Very important.

Animal presence can be very important in a home, especially for children. So it requires teachers to finally establish the teaching of presence as part of the curriculum, and that implies also, it signifies, help children to become aware of their emotions. That's one of the most vital things.

And if it's not taught at school, the parents have to do it, or the parents will do it anyway. Help the children to become aware of their emotions, because the emotions can wreak havoc with a child's life, and sometimes they get amplified in the teenage years when many adolescents become very hostile, and they're consumed by negative emotions, by self-hatred, by hatred of others, by hatred of everything, very destructive emotions. So the most vital thing that a child already at an age of four or five needs to begin to be taught to observe his or her emotional field, rather than be always taken over by it.

Many children, almost all children, already have pain bodies, some stronger than others, and that's another important point here, where when you observe the tantrum earlier in the previous session today, somebody said their mind sometimes feels like a toddler's tantrum taking place in their mind. Yes, the tantrums of toddlers can be quite violent. They may throw themselves on the floor and scream or throw...

And that is the pain body. So I would highly recommend, and this should be done at schools as part of the curriculum, and there should be children, there are a few children's books that teach that also, teach the child to be aware of their pain body, not while it happens, because nobody will be listening to you. You cannot make even an adult, you cannot make them aware of their pain body in the middle of a pain body attack.

That does not work, because the only person you'll be speaking to is the pain body and the pain body won't like it. But afterwards, the next day, you talk to the child, what happened yesterday when you threw yourself on the floor? What was that?

What was that thing that got into you? Do you remember that? What was that thing?

What did that feel like? If you had to make a drawing of it, what would it look like, that thing that got into you? What would that look like?

What color is it? Encourage the child to place attention on the emotion. In other words, there's a presence there.

Instead of being the emotion, the child can begin to become aware of the emotion. This does not necessarily prevent the next pain body attack, but then you do it again. Next day, you say, that happened again.

Was it the same thing? Did it feel the same as before? Was it the same little grumbling there, if it's child?

But let the child use the terms. And then, yes, it was the same. Okay.

Encourage, perhaps, the child to make a little painting of it. And the next time it happens, then you can say, well, in the middle of it, or at the beginning of it, then you can say, ah, there it is again, isn't it? And that can bring in awareness, even while it's happening.

But you need to prepare the child first, otherwise it won't work. And that may not necessarily stop it. It will probably continue.

But at least a little bit of awareness will have come in. There it is again, isn't it? Yeah.

No, it isn't. It's not. I also remember as a child, there was a time in my early teens, I had very negative emotions, very self-destructive, violent emotions.

I didn't act them out, unfortunately. But they were, I was almost consumed by very destructive emotions. And of course, nobody had any idea of presence or mindfulness at that time, anywhere, would have been unheard of.

And virtually all parents were very unconscious. At least nowadays, there's a certain percentage of parents that are relatively conscious and bring up their children consciously, as much as possible. But even then, you will find the difficulty of dealing with the child's emotions.

So very important at an early age, begin to teach the child to be conscious of their emotions rather than being taken over by the emotions. The worst thing you can do is when the child has a pain body attack, allow it to trigger your pain body, which unfortunately happens quite a lot too. Because the energy of this, of the pain body is so raw and so, there's such aggression in it, that an unconscious parent will be drawn into deeper unconsciousness and then react and start shouting, stop it, stop it.

Of course, it won't stop it. So the pain body has spread even to the parent. So that's, these are all important things to bring presence so that the teenage years and become a little easier.

Another important thing that also should be practiced at school, but it's a home environment is very important. How do the parents live? When you bring up children, the greatest teaching is how the family relates to how the parents relate to each other and so on.

That is, that's what the children absorb rather than what they are being told. There should be presence in the household, in the family environment. And a very important

aspect of that is to listen to the child.

It's amazing that this should be practiced also at schools, but more importantly at home for the parent to listen to the child. And you would be amazed how many cases that doesn't happen at all, because the parents are so lost in doing, they have a busy life, they are lost in doing. And the only way they interact with a child is either telling their child what to do or what not to do.

Don't do that. Have you done this? Now you need to do that.

Have you done your homework? Okay. And they mean well, they want to do the best for their child and to encourage the child to do the right thing.

Don't do that. Have you brushed your teeth? Don't go brush your teeth.

Okay, good night. When I say listen, I mean to give the child attention beyond any doing or not doing. Give the child attention.

What happened today? How are you feeling? What do you have to tell me?

It doesn't matter what the child says, but you direct attention, not attention that involves doing, pure attention. The child wants to be recognized by the parent in its being. And if the parent does not recognize the child in its being, the child can feel unconsciously that there's something missing.

It wants to be recognized in its beingness, not just do the right thing. It's not the doing. And then that is perhaps the main factor that makes teenagers so angry because they know there's something important missing.

And often they're angry at their parents and their parents have done all they thought they could do, all the best. They brushed their teeth every night and make sure that they do their homework. And now have you done that?

And you said, no, it wasn't enough. Doing your best is not enough because what's missing is being. So no matter how much you do, it's not enough.

You have to bring in the dimension of being in the interaction with your child. So give them attention. That means you too have to refrain from doing for a moment and be with the child.

First you have to be with yourself. You have to go deep enough so that you can be present. And then you look at the child and you don't want anything from him or her.

You just look. And then perhaps words happen. You talk a bit.

What did you do today? It doesn't matter what the child says, the attention that you

give, that's what the child longs for. It wants to be recognized by the parent in its being.

And so that in this world that is still relatively rare, unfortunately, that's one of the biggest mistakes parents make, but they can't help it because they haven't recognized it in themselves. So in order to live this, you need to recognize it in yourself and then you can live it. So there's a lot there that is possible and necessary in the upbringing of a child.

And I know that more and more teachers are becoming interested in this and more and more teachers are bringing it into their classroom, not officially yet in many cases, but they introduce some elements of presence or mindfulness into their classroom. But it needs to be practiced on a much larger scale because the world is going to, what's that weird expression, to hell in a hand basket. I don't know where that comes from, but it's not moving in the right direction, you might have noticed.

And there is a lot of unhappiness in children and a lot of their prescribed mind-altering drugs at an early age when that is not necessary. In fact, it's bad just because the parents are not present, they don't even know what presence is. They don't know any better.

So all this is, these are very important changes that need to happen. And thank you for asking that important question.

[Speaker 2] (31:35 - 31:35)

Hello.

[Speaker 6] (31:36 - 31:36)

Hello.

[Speaker 2] (31:37 - 31:50)

So unlike you with Oprah, I am bursting with excitement right now. So thank you so much for having me. And I also just want to give you a giant virtual hug.

[Speaker 1] (31:50 - 31:50)

Oh, thank you.

[Speaker 2] (31:50 - 31:53)

As I'm sure so many in the room would like to do as well.

[Speaker 1] (31:53 - 31:53)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (31:54 - 33:04)

And my question is around manifesting. I get twisted in my head about that because all my life I have felt I have a purpose. And the purpose is connected with joining and being of service and support and expansion of consciousness.

And I know it's out there. I know that that's going to be something I'm very involved with at some point. And I am familiar with manifesting and the deep knowing of what that is.

And at the same time, there are a lot of spiritual teachers that talk about being very specific when you manifest something. And I have no idea what it's going to look like. And most of the time when there is something related to my deeper purpose, if I try to go left and make that happen, usually I go right.

Like it's the invisible hand guiding me right. And I feel like, well, I'm not. And you know what I mean?

So I don't really feel like I know I'm the right one to manifest my purpose because I don't know as high as my deepest self.

[Speaker 1] (33:05 - 33:13)

Yes. So are you manifesting your purpose in your life?

[Speaker 2] (33:13 - 33:45)

Well, I know that it's going to be there. I in the sense that I've always had the sense, you know, once I retire in five or 10 years or something, that I'll be doing something else that has to do with that. And but I don't know if it's here.

I don't know if it's there. I don't know what it looks like. I don't know if it's working for Eckhart teachings or whether it's, you know, working at a wellness center or participating in I have no idea what it looks like.

I just know that that is my purpose.

[Speaker 1] (33:45 - 33:48)

Yes. Can you summarize?

[Speaker 2] (33:49 - 34:02)

My question is, do I need to be specific? Because that's so much of what the spiritual teachers that I was just listening to one recently, be specific when you manifest your purpose.

[Speaker 1] (34:02 - 41:39)

Yes, for some people that works, but it can also limit it. If, if I had been specific, I would probably have limited it. Sometimes the universe has bigger plans than you have.

And so my first experience of manifestation, which is a, it's a form of spirituality to to manifest, it's important. It's not the deepest. The deepest is to realize the essence of who you are, then you can still manifest if you want to, and you'll be quite good at it, but it's secondary.

So for me, there was a kind of spiritual awakening when I was 17 years old, in the sense that I'd always been very, very negative. And always one of the mind patterns, thoughts that could go through my head was bad things always happen to me. Of course, they always do.

They always, and they did. And then I accidentally came across some books that at the time I was living in Spain with my dad. And a German woman had gone back to Germany and left some books with us.

They were spiritual teacher was not well known anymore. German spiritual teacher with a Chinese name. And I started reading these books and they were about the, there's a relationship between your external life and your inner state.

And if you change your inner state, you change your external life. That was such a revelation to me. I'd never heard that before.

And at the time I was learning to type, teaching myself on a typewriter, they don't exist anymore, to type. And I remember I copied, practicing typing, I copied many pages of those books. And then I started practicing changing my thoughts and becoming, feeling good things were going to happen to me.

I was not very specific because I didn't know what exactly would happen. I attract good things into my life. I attract whatever.

And then a few months later, shift happened. I was longing to get away from the way I was living with my dad and his second wife that was as dysfunctional as his first wife, my mother, the living together. I need to get out of here.

Please take me out of here. And finally, I got a job offer in England without an interview. It was a miracle and it was a good job and had virtually no qualifications.

It was an absolute miracle. And I knew that I had created, I had manifested that, just amazing. And one of the happiest moments of my early life was saying goodbye.

I'm off. That was so wonderful. And in England, things, many things developed, miraculous things that could never have expected.

So if I don't think you need to be too specific, unless there's something that you

desperately want or need, but hopefully since you've gone deep enough into yourself, there's nothing that you desperately want or need, because whatever happens on the horizontal dimension is an adding on. As Jesus said, whatever you manifest in this external life is lovely, but seek first the kingdom of heaven, that all the things that that you think that you need will be added on to you. So what he's saying is the world of external manifestation, yes, you have to deal with this world and it can be a lovely practice, but it's an adding on and there may come a time when you don't need to manifest anything anymore.

Things think I've acquired a certain momentum and it's growing. I've asked some successful people, did you practice manifestation before you achieved your sex? And one or two said, yes, yes, I did.

One specifically said, I think he's probably told about it publicly, so I probably don't need to keep his name a secret, but I'll do it anyway, just in case. Well, he said he had wrote himself a check for, I think it was, I can't remember how much it was, \$10 million, something, and put it in his wallet and he always poked at it. And three years later, he got a check for \$10 million for a movie role and he got it.

Then I asked Oprah, did you ever practice, did you, but he said, no, it just, it just came. What she does practice is a gratitude book. Every day she writes something to be grateful for, or several things to be grateful.

It's a very powerful tool to help you be present. To be grateful means an appreciation, an alignment with what is. So that's a powerful thing that is non-specific, but the more grateful you are for what is, the more things will come to you.

If you honor this moment, what is this moment, then the future, the so-called future, which never comes except as the present moment, will reflect that mindset. So there are others. Sometimes people just start an activity which they enjoy and then enthusiasm comes in and they do more of it and more of it, first on a small scale and they continue.

Perhaps they're musicians like the Beatles. They, I don't think they ever thought we are going to be the greatest in the world, the greatest group that ever lived. They just enjoyed the music and then they played and played and played.

And then that's the famous, the famous 10,000 hours of practice that somebody wrote about in a book that he observed that people, many people who achieve mastery in one field, they have 10,000 hours of practice. And then at that point, an additional element comes in that energizes and amplifies what they do and enormous inspiration can suddenly flow in. So that is a good preparation to enjoy what you do is in itself a tool for manifesting good things.

And even if the whatever you do is not what you really have chosen for yourself as your

life purpose, perhaps it's not even that great a job, but nevertheless you honor it in this moment. You give it attention, you do your best, and then it will evolve into something else. But just so the gratitude journal is another thing that I would recommend to everybody.

Do you do that or have you done that?

[Speaker 2] (41:39 - 41:44)

I've done it, but I haven't been doing it lately, but I feel grateful. Right.

[Speaker 1] (41:44 - 43:41)

It's good. Yes. It doesn't have to be a journal, but it's helpful.

However, gratitude can also be misunderstood. People say, okay, I'm grateful because my life is, I have so much that other people don't have, and I should really be, look at other people and I have so much more in whatever better looks or more things, or look at these poor people, I really should be grateful for what I have. That's not it.

If you're only grateful when you compare yourself to others who have less one way or another, that's not real gratitude. It's not really even gratitude for some life situation. The more powerful thing is gratitude for whatever is this moment, the little things of this moment, for this beautiful flower.

You appreciate it, you give it attention, that's all gratitude. An appreciation of the aliveness of the world around you in the present moment. On the whole, I would advocate for less, not necessarily too specific in most cases, it would limit you.

There may be exceptions to that, but non-specific does work very well. And often the, as you know, the camel driver has his plants, the camel has, so the camel might have much bigger plants than you. And I have had the same, I could not quite have imagined the growth of the teaching.

I had some vision it would grow, but not that much. So don't limit yourself and you're doing fine.

[Speaker 2] (43:42 - 43:42)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (43:42 - 43:52)

Thank you. Thank you. So a moment of stillness.

[Speaker 3] (44:04 - 44:29)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle The Deep I [e5c513c6-3fa1-420d-b7de-10ace5c41129]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:40)

The Deep Eye. In this podcast, Eckhart takes us through a live meditation inspired by a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson, the wick of individual life runs deep into the oil of pure being. Eckhart says we have great depth within.

He encourages listeners to reach beyond the of the personality to find what he calls the deep eye. He describes it as that aspect of ourselves which transcends the ego and is connected to the ultimate source of universal consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 41:37)

So here we are again in the present moment, being aware of the weather, the various ways in which the weather manifests in the present moment. It's also a way of bringing you into the now to feel the breeze of the air on your skin, for example. Listen to the sounds of rain or the wind in the trees.

And one of my favorites is watching the sky, the continuously changing paintings, abstract paintings that appear in the sky, the air, breathing in the air, the scents, the smells of nature, and taking in the entire energy field that surrounds you. If you go within, you encounter your own nature, your own essential nature. I believe it was Ralph Waldo Emerson, the American writer, spiritual writer, 19th century, who said something like, the wick of individual life runs deep into the oil of pure being.

That's an interesting analogy and quite a powerful one. The wick, if English is not your native language and you happen not to know what wick is, wick is the string that is in the candle that you light that draws up the wax. So it's a string in an oil lamp and you light the wick that sticks out of the oil and you light it, then it's a flame.

The wick draws up the oil, that oil is then consumed by the flame. So that's the wick. And in this analogy, he said, the wick of individual life, your individual life, runs deep into the oil of pure being.

So that means there is a great depth within you and your individual consciousness derives its sustenance from the greater universal consciousness. It's only a manifestation or an emanation of the greater one consciousness that you also are, that you are more fundamentally than the individual, the wick that's burning on the surface. You are a surface phenomenon on the level of your physical body and the sense-perceived, all the sense-perceived aspects of yourself and even your thinking, although your thinking already exists in the realm of invisibility, nobody has ever seen a thought, you cannot see a thought, you cannot perceive it with your senses.

And yet even thinking is a relatively superficial or surface phenomenon, it belongs to the dimension of your individual form. But there could be no thinking and there could be no sense-perception if you were not connected to something deeper, which is consciousness. So you are an emanation of something very profound, very deep, that connects you with the totality of the universe.

Now the important thing is to realize the truth of this directly, which means to sense that depth in you here and now, so that in addition to knowing yourself as an individual person, in the analogy that Emerson used, that's the wick, in addition to knowing yourself as an individual person surrounded by many other individual persons and life forms, in addition to that you are aware of a deeper dimension within yourself. And when I say you are aware of it, it may not be totally correct, because the awareness, when you become aware of your own awareness, when you become aware of the fact that you are conscious right now, and you can only become aware of that if for a moment there's no thinking and yet you have not fallen asleep, for a moment there's a cessation of thinking, like now.

What do you need to think about now? Nothing. For a moment there's no thinking.

In that moment there's a stillness, an alert stillness. That is the awareness of who you are beyond your individual form. That is the beginning of the pure being that Emerson speaks of.

It's not that difficult, especially here, right here and now, where you're not being disturbed, hopefully, by all the demands that the world normally places upon you. It's not that difficult here and now to have these brief moments, and perhaps even longer moments, when you are aware of an inner alert stillness. Cessation of thinking.

What remains is consciousness prior to thought. Consciousness before it becomes a thought. And that I sometimes describe as the deep I, as opposed to the surface.

I'm not talking about this I, because that's also interesting analogy, but I'm talking about the first person singular I pronoun. The deep I is that being, the I am, awareness of the I am-ness, being-ness. The surface I that you normally identify with, and that normally when you use the word I in everyday usage, you refer to the surface I.

Your personality, your person that you are. The bundle of thoughts and emotions that form make up the personality. That's the surface I.

And in the absence of thought activity, the surface I subsides. And if you have not fallen below thought and towards sleep, but have risen above thought, then there is an alert stillness, not a tired stillness. That is the essence of who you are, as that is the unconditioned consciousness.

And it's so close, it's not that difficult to experience, to realize, this alive depth in you,

where the personality is transcended. Although you still have, or you still are for a while, of course, also the surface self is still there. And most likely you will again and again become completely identified with the surface self, which is a normal human consciousness, the normal unawakened consciousness, the normal fairly dysfunctional consciousness.

Dysfunctional because it doesn't know its own depth. It doesn't know the root. You're, in other words, dysfunctional because you're out of touch with yourself.

Yourself meaning the deep I, the unconditioned consciousness. You cannot sense that in the background, even while you are acting in this world as a person. This is the aim of awakening means, if you are awakened, first you have glimpses of awakening, where you can sense yourself as this deep I.

That's fine. And then the glimpses are a little longer. And then you may find gradually, in your everyday life, you can live from that deeper place that changes the way in which you think.

Habitual thoughts are still there, but a greater, a deeper intelligence flows into your mind. Your thinking becomes creative, more creative, more alive, less dysfunctional. Doesn't create suffering anymore for yourself and others, because otherwise your thinking creates an enormous amount of suffering, unhappiness.

This is still the case for millions of humans on the planet. So the deepest meaning of Shakespeare's words, to your own self be true, the deepest meaning of that is to be in touch with that pure being, which is the unconditioned consciousness, which is your true being, your true self. It's no longer a separate self.

It connects you to the totality. So this frees you from the prison of your personality. If you are not aware of that deeper dimension to who you are, you are trapped on the surface level of who you are, constantly looking for an enhanced sense of identity on the surface level, where no true and ultimately satisfying sense of identity can ever be found.

And that's the search of the ego, which is the surface self that you are completely identified with. There's complete absence of the realization of who you are beyond that. So the ego is searching, but never finds.

The dictum of the ego says the cause in miracles. The dictum of the ego is seek, but do not find. So you're seeking the enhanced sense of self in many things.

And of course, the ego, usually when people speak of ego, they imagine it's somebody who thinks that he or she is the greatest, a very high opinion of yourself, that you are better than others or have achieved more. That indeed can be one version of the ego. But an equally powerful ego is one that, perhaps even more powerful ego, powerful only

in a very relative sense, ultimately there is no power in the ego.

Strong ego might be a better word. An even stronger ego is, and this is a very popular one, especially these days, ego assumes different forms in different historical time periods. Victim, seeing itself, seeing yourself as a victim, very seductive.

You may have heard the expression identity politics, and a lot of that is to do with feeling that you belong to a certain group that has or is continuously being victimized. And of course, yes, there have been obviously groups of people who have been discriminated against and so on. But you as the individual, if you derive the main part of your identity from a sense of victimhood, then you are seriously trapped in an egoic sense of self that is very limiting.

But people look, they look for an identity somewhere. The ego always looks for a bigger sense of identity. And if you or your group can be more of a victim than some other group, then that amplifies your ego.

And then you cannot, you're so trapped, you cannot find your true power. You basically declare yourself to be powerless. And the ego gets amplified by having enemies.

There's a growing number of people, for example, who declare that 50% of humanity is basically their enemy. There are men now who refuse to get involved with women. There's an expression for it, M-G-T-O-W, men going their own way.

They say, well, women don't want to have anything to do with women. They're out to exploit you. And that's already very satisfying.

If you declare already, you have a whole group of people who are basically your enemies, enormously satisfying to the ego. Of course, you have a form identity. You belong to a particular group of people, ethnic, racial, you have a gender, or maybe you're not certain if you have a pure gender anymore, who knows.

But there is obviously a form identity. You are here in a particular form, and you don't need to deny that particular form, whether it's racial or gender or political. You can acknowledge it, honor it also, without mistaking it for your true identity.

So the form, whether it's to do with your race or your national identity, it's all fine. You can honor that, but there's no ultimate self in there. So I speak of form identity and essence identity, the two dimensions.

Form identity becomes ego when that is all you know, and then it becomes very limiting and leads to a lot of dysfunction in the world, collectively and in individual lives. But if, in addition to your form identity, which you clearly recognize and you honor it, form identity includes the body. So you don't say, oh, it's just illusion.

No, you look after the body, exercise, nutrition. It's like a house you inhabit temporarily, that's all. So you don't need to deny completely your form identity, but don't look for yourself in it.

And then comes enormously liberating realization that there's more to you than anything on the level of form. And that's the true meaning of knowing yourself. Knowing yourself is knowing yourself as consciousness, right here and now.

In consciousness, you are not a man, you are not a woman, you're not even young or old, you are not successful or failure. So a great spiritual practice is, as much as possible, to refrain from applying labels to yourself, either when you speak or when you think about yourself. To refrain from applying conceptual labels to yourself, to refrain from identifying yourself through conceptual labels, I am this, I am that, in your thinking or in your speaking.

Now, you may encounter some resistance to this practice, which is the ego. But as you practice that, you'll find it's very liberating not to describe yourself to yourself or to others through any conceptual terminology. Even things like, I'm unhappy, no, let go of that too.

I'm happy, let go of that too. So when you don't apply labels, what's left of you? Well, what's left is the unconditioned consciousness of being.

So on a conceptual level, you don't know who you are anymore, and that's a wonderful state. If conceptually, you don't name any aspect of yourself, and then it was left. Am I nobody?

That's another concept. So I can't describe to you, I don't need to, just try it out. And even while I speak to you here and now, perhaps you're already doing it, especially letting go of the labels that you are really fond of, that you've been identified with for a long time.

You can always pick them up again for practical purposes, it's fine. You might need to describe yourself in certain terms in practical situations. What do you do for a living?

Well, I'm an engineer, or well, I'm this or I'm that. Okay, that's fine. If it's practical, it's good.

And then let go. And then you'll find more and more in daily life, you actually, you go, you walk into a room, you walk along the street, you sit somewhere, and you're there in that state of alert presence, because you've let go of labels. There's much less thinking in your mind now, because there's big spaces, where before there was a clutter of thoughts, bigger and bigger spaces arise within your inner spaces, because a lot of the thinking that you do, the compulsive, addictive thinking is to do with yourself, strengthening these labels.

And your practice is not labeling yourself. You're not a success. You're not a failure.

You're not old. You're not young. You're not happy.

You're not unhappy. You're not ill. It's not a denial.

It's just not living through concepts. So we transcend living through conceptual thinking. And the more you let go of this compulsive, conceptual thinking that strengthens the form identity, then the deeper dimension arises.

It arises because you have not limited yourself anymore through concepts. And then that greater intelligence can inspire you, speak through you, and use you, so to speak, as an instrument or a tool for acting upon this world. It's not just a passive thing.

It has both polarities. It can be active. Then you become truly intelligent.

Not the IQ sense of intelligence, which is a very limited thing. Creative intelligence, which can manifest in many different ways. You lead your life intelligently.

That's perhaps enough for today. I highly recommend that you practice this. And you'll be amazed how wonderful it is to be nobody in particular, just to be a conscious presence.

And then still refer to your form identity. Yes, in practical life it's fine. But not be consumed by it.

And then you can say, I don't know who I am anymore. And that will be a positive statement. I don't know who I am anymore.

Congratulations. We'll have some questions that people have been sending in. So you talk about the importance of choiceless awareness, directly confronting what is without judgment.

You also talk about the primacy of presence as the way to transcend thought, the improper use of which is the cause of our suffering. Another teaching, respected by many, celebrates thought and desire as being responsible for our evolution and the expansion of the universe. While both teachings have much in common, this appears to be an important point of departure that I cannot reconcile.

Can you help clarify? So there seems to be basically two teachings. One is accept what is choiceless awareness, presence.

The other one is using thought to create, to manifest, to transform. Are they separate? Can they be reconciled?

The two represent the two movements of the universe. One is into creation, multiplicity,

increasing complexity of life forms. It experienced itself as that.

It loves to create. That's for sure. Because if you look around, even on this planet alone, how many life forms there are, one consciousness perceiving itself through all these different forms in different ways.

And then the universe also wants to know its own source. And that's the return movement. First is the outbound movement.

And then there's the return movement. This might correspond to the Big Bang, what scientists call, which the universe came out of nothing. And suddenly it expanded and went into creativity.

And life forms began to multiply over billions of years. And then the story goes that eventually it will come together again and return to the one. In that case, that would be like the in-breath and the out-breath of God, the entire universe.

God breathes out and then it all returns back to the source for some reason that we could not even fathom. But that seems to correspond to what we do because we have a heart that also goes, and we also breathe in and breathe out. And we also wake up in the morning and do all our activities.

And at nighttime, we go, and then we go, ah. Now everything is reflected on every level. You are a microcosm of the entire universe.

So if you observe yourself, you observe how the heart works, how the breathing operates, how the sleep and wakefulness, dreamless sleep, dream state, the so-called wakeful state, which is not that wakeful for most people, but then certainly is a similar pattern everywhere. So the universe has the both movements, the creative and the return to stillness, the return to source. Every human has that incredible, the irresistible impulse every night to return to source.

If you can't resist it, it's called tiredness. And if you try to keep your eyes open, you can for a while, but you would go insane if you didn't sleep. We regard it as normal that people just drop unconscious every 15 hours or whatever.

Everybody drops unconscious. Isn't that weird? But it's so normal that nobody questions it.

You will also notice when you get really tired or how irresistible the pull is towards sleep. There's a sweetness to sleep. The more tired you get, the more you feel I need to get something.

The pull is so irresistible that people give up their life to sleep. People have been lost in the wilderness, out in the cold, in the snow, can't walk anymore. And they know if I fall

asleep, I'm never going to wake up again.

And yet at some point they do it because it feels so good. They have to go there. Oh, it doesn't matter if I don't wake up again.

I want to go back to the source. So every human goes back to oneness, but doesn't know it unknowingly and then comes back out. So here we have, if you really look at yourself, that will tell you many secrets about the universe.

I'm talking about this because this is how the two movements are reconciled. The universe needs both. It needs the creativity.

It needs also the stillness. And for humans, it's not enough to go unconsciously to the source. It's our destiny because it's the destiny of the universe for us to consciously unite with source, source consciousness.

And that's why we are here. So your life needs to be a balance, a dance between creating and not getting lost in your creations, which means not getting lost in the mind, being able to use the mind to create, but for conscious creation, because for a long, long time, the humans created their lives, but unconsciously they lost themselves in their creation. They lost themselves in the mind.

Whenever you get stressed, you are lost in your creation. You are lost in your activity. So allowing the unconditioned consciousness, which is the universe to create through you, rather than being a little ego that says, I need to be happy.

I need this and this and this and this in my life. The course in miracle says, how do I know when something is ego motivated, something has been ego motivated? Well, it's easy to know.

It says when you achieve it, it doesn't satisfy you. Maybe for a little while, but not for long, very briefly. So no egoic achievement satisfies you.

What is the motivation for creation? If you're already accepting of the present moment, if you feel completely at one with the isness of the present moment, there are two reasons why you take action here. One may be as a response to a situation that requires action.

You may be stranded somewhere without food. So you need to walk somewhere to get food and shelter. In the meantime, you can internally accept where you are.

You are right here. And then you see what this present moment requires. It requires you to take a step and then another step and another step until the situation is resolved.

So certain situations, somebody may need help. You can sit at ease contemplating nature and suddenly there's a human being who says, oh, help me. Do you sit there and say, no, I'm too at ease in the present moment.

So a situation you respond to whatever the situation, the present moment requires you to do, you respond from within. That's a natural thing. A teenager, I lived with my dad in Spain for a few years and he had gone to Spain to drop out and lead an alternative life.

And then he ran out of money. And then when I was there, we had so little money, we had not even a fridge. I mean, almost everybody had a fridge, but there in the hot summer in Spain, no fridge, no radio, no television.

Of course, I don't even think of it. So basically just the minimum. And I wasn't dreadfully unhappy because of that.

I should, to some extent, I accepted it because I was still young enough. Children find it perhaps easier to accept situations that they go into. But normally if I lived in a place like that now, I have no fridge, only basic things to live with.

Things get, I can't buy anything in advance. I have to go shopping every day because everything goes off immediately. And if you leave anything on the kitchen counter, immediately armies of ants come in and eat it.

I'd rather move than be here. You can accept that this is where I am right now. It can still be fine, but you would start looking, I'd like to live somewhere else.

Everybody has a preference. Some Buddhists might talk to you about, or some masters say, I have no preference whatsoever, but they live in an ashram. So they'd rather be in an ashram than be on Wall Street and work there.

So there must be some preference. There's nothing wrong with having a preference. I'd rather have a comfortable place than an uncomfortable place.

But if I cannot have a comfortable place, I will be perfectly okay with an uncomfortable place. If it's not possible, one thing is responding to situation and having preferences and then taking action. Another one is bringing about something entirely new into this world.

That comes when you are able to become still enough so that you know what the universe or the one consciousness wants you to do, if it wants you to do something. It may take a while before you know that. I lived for years doing relatively little, except doing occasional counseling sessions, sometimes only two a week.

And the years passed and I was just continuously just in presence on my bicycle, chopping wood, carrying water, and the years passed. I spent hours in thoughtless awareness in London, sitting on the Hampstead Heath. Three hours later, I go home having a little salad and then having a counseling session at five.

And I wondered, there must be something else that I'm supposed to do. And there was even slight moments of, what am I doing here? But there was nothing else to do than be

present, just go back to Hampstead Heath, sit there again.

There were long periods also of incredibly blissful states that people noticed, even people who are not tuned into spirituality particularly say, I can feel something. What is that? There were great states of emanation of peace, but I wasn't doing anything.

It was just that emanation, sometimes waiters or waitresses, occasionally I went to little restaurants, they felt something, but still nothing. The universe still wasn't telling me what I was supposed to do. And I believe the decisive change came, perhaps I should have thought of that earlier.

I had moved out of London to Somerset and lived in Glastonbury, the spiritual Mecca that attracts all kinds of weird people, including myself. There was a village just a few miles out of there, so I would sometimes go there and there's an ancient, like the English villages, they have their ancient church, sometimes a thousand years old, a few houses around it. There was an oak tree, I would go to an ancient oak tree in the middle of the field, magnificent, and I had a wonderful relationship with that tree.

But that church that was always empty, I went into that church and one day I went in and suddenly I had this impulse to say, I want acceleration now. I knew there was something for me to do. I clearly demanded acceleration of my life purpose.

And then I went home again and for maybe three months, two or three months, nothing happened. I'd forgotten about it already. And then one day it came.

It came when I woke up and I suddenly, I knew as a thought and a deeper knowing, I have to move to the West Coast of North America. Why? I don't know.

It wasn't just one day it stayed, the next day it was still there, the next week it was still there, the week is still there. And then finally I had to leave, couldn't not leave. If I had not left, I would have died.

So that was the first step in writing *The Power of Now*, because I needed to be in the energy field of the West Coast for some reason to write it. And that's how the book started when a few weeks after arriving on the West Coast, it started. And then it accelerated from there.

It slowly, it went, just the book took three years with on and off because I had to go back to England several times. And then the acceleration, it came more and more, but after *The Power of Now* came out more and then it'd be so much that I almost wanted to put the brake on. The power just grew and grew, but it came because for years I went so deep within that eventually the outer movement into creation, the outward creation reflected the depths of years of going within into just into stillness and deep into stillness.

So the outward creation reflected the inward movement. It was as powerful out there as it was the power that was in the inward movement. So you too will find that the more you align yourself with the essence, the stillness within the unconditioned consciousness, there might be a time gap, but hopefully not as many years as in my case, there may be a time gap, but that the power that is within you, that you sense when you become aware of yourself as the consciousness then flows through you.

And that is what creates through you, not the little ego anymore. So you don't create because you think when I achieve this or that, I'm going to be happy and fulfilled, something deeper than happiness. The fulfillment is already here now.

The true creation cannot come out of a neediness. That's egoic creation. It doesn't make you happy.

The non-egoic creation that consciousness uses you as an instrument, uses this form as an instrument, comes out of the inner fullness. So the creation comes from within to without. It creates the outward from within rather than needing to attract something from the outside.

You can only create out of this fullness that you sense when you're in touch with presence and only for those people who are meant to create. As I said before, there are certain others who will not be drawn towards that. In them, consciousness will express itself in different ways that will not be creating something new out there.

It will just be bringing this new consciousness into this world, wherever they are and contributing to the new consciousness simply by embodying it. So it is not the case that the two seemingly incompatible camps, those who say the important thing is to use thought to create and the others say, no, just be with what is. The two actually need to be together.

You need to be deeply aligned with the present moment before you can be a real creator. And you are not the creator, the consciousness creates through you. If you are not fully aligned with the present moment, you are not fully aligned with the unconditioned consciousness.

And then it can only come through in little trickles through you because any resistance of any kind closes the channel or narrows it. So the very little can come through creativity, aliveness, and even knowing what it is that wants to be created through you. That is the question.

The question is not what do I want to create? What is it that wants to be created through me? And that answer, for those of you who are meant to manifest new things in this world, the answer may already be there in you.

You may already be engaged in creating that. You may already be engaged in a small

way, doing something that you love. One important thing that you recognize when you create, when you manifest, the enjoyment that is in the activity.

That is a clear sign that it is not an egoic activity. The egoic activity very quickly gets stressed and anxious. And when little obstacles arise or big obstacles, it gets, and then it starts fighting with others and you make yourself unhappy while you're trying to create something and make others unhappy who come into contact with you.

But the creativity is joyful. It was a great joy for me to write when the first book, *The Power of Now*, was incredibly joyful every morning. Occasionally a block came and I just had to sit there and it was still fine.

And then the flow comes again. It is high energy flows through you. It's a beautiful thing when it comes, this incredibly high energy.

And you know very well, this goes far beyond your little person. Anything that little me could do, you're just receptive for it. And then the flow comes.

What form it takes varies from person to person. The ego always tries to get in there somehow. If you get stressed, it's ego.

If you're enjoying what you're doing, then you are connected with the deeper level within yourself. And the joy itself is a great power. The joy that comes in the doing.

It also means you don't need the outcome to be fulfilled or happy. If you need the outcome hoping that finally you will reach that and then it'll make you happy and fulfilled, that will be egoic. And when you achieve it, it won't satisfy you.

Or you will already have destroyed your health through stress for several years and when you finally get there, you die. Unsatisfied. But joyful creation actually reconciles the two.

Joyful creation reconciles being in the present moment and having a goal. You know what you want to create, but the important thing is the action that you take at this moment. That's joyful creation.

So it's so simple. Joyful creation reconciles the seemingly incompatible camps of being in the present moment and going somewhere, trying to achieve something. It's an art also that the foundation for it is stillness.

So before you go into creation, the two can be reconciled. Yes, they perfectly reconciled. The foundation is the yes to the present moment.

Eckhart Tolle The Deep Mystery Of Existence [2aadea8c-4717-47a9-bd6e-70f25f16e784]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 1:02)

The deep mystery of existence. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience. A mother asks what to do for her 13-year-old son who's already struggling with difficult behaviors.

A man asks how to bring the wisdom from Eckhart's retreats into his daily life. And a woman ponders the difference between a creative impulse and the ego. She asks Eckhart about his decision to move from England to the Pacific Northwest.

And Eckhart explains when the impulse continued for quite some time, he knew he had to follow it. But that's not always the case. Eckhart urges everyone to stay connected to their deepest awareness, especially when life's challenges arise and things don't go our way.

He explains why instead of reacting with irritation, anger and fear towards a situation, we should instead surrender. He says, obstacles are not enemies. They are here to help us awaken.

[Speaker 2] (1:05 - 2:16)

Hello, Eckhart, hello everyone. Thank you for the opportunity. So I've been struggling a little with the discernment of my ego wanting to contribute to the world or it being a true energy impulse.

I'm at a grateful practice and I'm very grateful for life in general and for all the blessings and challenges. And it's thanks to your practice, your teaching. But I find myself at a point where there is space for more inspired doing.

But depending on the day, the energy comes and goes, it waxes and wanes. And I enjoy the being part more than the doing. So I would love to ask you, Eckhart, about your impulse to move to the West Coast of North America.

And specifically, what did that energy feel like? And did you ever doubt it, the impulse to move or to write that book? Or how much was it about your discipline and work ethic as opposed to flow?

[Speaker 1] (2:17 - 6:59)

Right, thank you, thank you. Sometimes an impulse comes to initiate a change in your life, as it did in my case. It's good to wait if the impulse comes and see if it stays with you for a while.

It comes back down, it doesn't go away after a few days. The impulse comes and it's still there, it might even grow. And it became very strong.

And I didn't doubt it anymore, because I knew if I had not obeyed this impulse, I probably would have fallen ill or something bad would have happened. I knew I had to follow this impulse and didn't know for what reason yet. When finally I started writing *The Path Now*, suddenly when I was on the West Coast, I had moved there without knowing why.

And only much, much, much later, I realized that this energy field on the West Coast of North America, I needed that for some reason so that to give birth to *The Path Now*. I didn't realize it until I went back to England a couple of times and the writing flow stopped. Now, another question of yours is, does it, is it discipline that's required or is it hard work or that kind of thing?

That's, there is an intensity there, an intensity of energy. And that is the flow. Let's talk about writing, for example.

The flow of writing was strong, but it wasn't automatic there every day because it takes time to write a book, especially if you write slowly. I'm a very slow writer, but I had great respect for what I knew needed to happen. I knew that this book needed to be written.

From the first line, I knew that that was a book that needed to be written. And I made room for it in my life every day, every morning I would sit at the desk, even if, because the impulse wasn't necessarily there every day. Sometimes there just wasn't space there.

And so I honored it. And occasionally there was just a trickle that came. And then on other days, there was a huge flow.

And then another day, there were days when nothing came. And I wasn't unhappy about that. I knew my task is to be here, receptive for it to happen and to use my mind.

And it's, when the flow was there, it was extremely joyful and energizing, not only in the moment of writing, but the whole days went by, when the entire day felt energized. There was an energy stream, high intensity of energy. They could even be mistaken perhaps by an outside observer as stressful, but there was no stress in it.

When you are not connected to the deeper being, the deeper, when high energy comes, it can easily degenerate into stress. And people get, they have a big task to do, a big job to do. And they think, well, or even I have to write this book.

I have to, fortunately, I didn't have a deadline. Many writers have deadlines. The publisher gave them deadlines.

So there was no deadline. Many people, when they are in the act of creation, they easily

lose connectedness with the deeper level of their being, the being ultimately. They lose themselves in the doing, and they think obstacles become enemies.

When things don't go right in the act of creation, they get stressed and annoyed and reactive and angry. So this did not happen. I wasn't even particularly concerned with whether the book would be successful or not.

I just knew it had to be, I had to give birth to it. So in your case, I understand from your question that you need to, you feel you want to do more to bring consciousness, but you're already doing certain things by being conscious and interacting with people around you in a conscious manner. That is already a contribution, but you believe, and I can understand that, there's more than you could do, that you could do, is that right?

[Speaker 2] (7:00 - 7:25)

Yeah, I do feel that there's some more space for the doing. I just naturally like to be more in the being part. And so for me, the doing is a little more challenging, but it hasn't really left me because I have been watching it.

So I don't know if it's about courage and being more brave, or I should just wait until I'm really sure. I mean, you know.

[Speaker 1] (7:25 - 18:08)

But there was a time before I moved to the West Coast, before the impulse came, for quite a few years, I had been doing counseling sessions with people, spiritual sessions with people, and small workshops with people, weekend workshops. I was not very well known. I'm just very small scale workshops, but very enjoyable.

Often, maybe once a month, I would do a weekend workshop. Sometimes 10 people came, sometimes five. There was one workshop that I had announced, one, only one person turned up for a weekend workshop in England.

And I said, do you want to do it? Yes, okay, let's do it. So I did the workshop with one person.

That was an important learning process because the teaching began to be formulated through the counseling sessions and workshops. And I would take notes after sessions quite often of what I had said in response to questions, because I often said things that I didn't know before. They came out of presence.

I was just, my main job was to be present with sitting with one person. My main job was to be present, open, receptive, and then often answers came, sometimes through me, sometimes through the other person, or sometimes the question dissolved because it became irrelevant. So that was a wonderful thing that went on for a few years.

And then I contemplated this and I felt something extremely valuable that is on offer here, but I'm not reaching more people after several years. And the moment came when I was visiting in Somerset, England, a small village. I went into a village church, very ancient, one of these wonderful ancient churches that every English village has.

Nine, eight, 900 years old, nobody in there, and they sat there. It was interesting altar with interesting symbols. And then I was contemplating all this, and suddenly I had this impulse to say, I want acceleration, please.

I said, please give me acceleration in the work that I do. And that was a meditation on acceleration. And then for a few weeks, nothing happened.

And then after, I don't know, four or five weeks, the impulse came, I need to move. I didn't know that that was the acceleration I had asked for. I'd almost forgotten about it.

But I believe now there's a connection between asking for acceleration and suddenly feeling I'm going to change my life, totally move, leave the country, get rid of everything, go into a complete unknown with a limited amount of money and just do it. And that was part of the acceleration. I didn't realize it much later and retrospectively, oh, that's where it started.

So this is one way of asking for it. Sometimes you may get some kind of impulse to see what it is that you might want to do to contribute to the awakening of consciousness. And our contemporary world offers many possibilities.

As you know, for example, every human being, although there's a lot of negativity happening on the internet and all that, but on the other hand, every human being can reach millions of humans. You no longer need intermediaries to reach other humans. And you don't have gatekeepers unless you become political.

You don't have gatekeepers anymore. You can put out anything you like. And a lot of it, of course, is human unconsciousness that being disseminated through the internet.

But potentially you can also, as we are doing here now, it can also be used for the awakening of consciousness. And this is not only to you, but to anybody who don't know, who have already had a certain degree of awakening within themselves. The first step you could take is to post a little meditation on YouTube or whatever it is you want to post.

Some people may find it helpful. Or talk about yourself and what has been helpful for you. This is just one example.

You could do, countless possibilities are there. And then a few humans, you may reach a few. And if they are helped by this, then it'll spread more to others.

And this is just one way you can reach many, many humans. And we need more consciousness in the whole, the internet phenomenon, because at the moment it is largely dominated by unconsciousness and dysfunction. It amplifies egoic dysfunction.

Facebook, Instagram, et cetera, where people create images of who they are, project them into the outside world, where for many young people, the virtual world is more real than nature and the real world and real human interactions. There's very harmful things. It can affect human consciousness in a very detrimental and destructive way.

It's in itself, it may be neutral, but it's already affecting many youngsters in a very harmful way, amplifying the human ego, amplifying reactivity and so on. So we need to counteract that and use it for good, for consciousness. So it needs people to do that, quite a few are doing it already.

And this could just be a starting point, whether, or even some people even, occasionally I look, some people even post just good, wonderful quotes from others. So some people are quite popular. They just, every other day, they post a spiritual quote, an uplifting or something that takes it deeper.

All kinds of possibilities are there already, if you want to start reaching people and see where it goes from there. So I've said to quite a few people, well, go start there, get a camera. And even if you don't know what to say, that's a good starting point, not knowing what to say and being comfortable with not knowing what to say.

So you start with a moment of just being, and then perhaps a few words will come. If you're not comfortable with that, then you might prepare a few points. I would advise against reading a script because the power will be lost if you just read a script, there will be a loss of power in your transmission.

If you have a few points that you need to mention, that may be fine. So many things are possible. There are also people who produce, there's a lot of, quite a lot of creativity online also, apart from the dysfunction.

Some people produce wonderful things on nature, making viewers more conscious of nature. Some humans produce little works of art, just every day looking at trees and flowers and so on. Many, many things are possible.

If you start with one, even that one thing may not lead to anything, but that may take you somewhere else, perhaps where you meet someone and then someone presents another opportunity to you, but it's good to start somewhere, whatever it may be, take a fast step and then go from there. In the meantime, don't overlook the fact that your state of consciousness is already important, even if you don't reach anybody, because you're connected to the totality of consciousness and one human being awakening affects the totality of the human collective of consciousness, even if you don't physically

interact with other people. So even though, don't overlook that you're already contributing significantly, even though on a physical level, you may not be reaching anybody or many people.

Also, your human interactions, if you are present with other humans, that there is an outflow from you of goodwill, of benevolence, of loving kindness to the humans you come into contact with. That's already a very important contribution to a change in consciousness. So if you are present, you affect every human that you come into contact with also with that presence, because when you are present, your interactions are not dominated by the human ego, but loving kindness.

Loving kindness is a nice word. Empathy with other humans, feel a sense of connectedness or oneness, because you can sense the being of the other beyond the personality. In that way, you're already changing the world too.

So you're, and I believe you're already, your state of consciousness is always reflected in your interactions with other human beings. And there already, you're making an important contribution, even though you may only reach 20 people on a regular basis or whatever it may be, don't underestimate the importance of that also.

[Speaker 2] (18:09 - 18:13)

Thank you. Thank you. Appreciate it.

[Speaker 1] (18:13 - 18:14)

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (18:16 - 19:09)

Hi, I'll read you my question. My 13 year old son has built such a thick shell of ego around himself that he's been suffering for years. And he's completely identified with his quite nasty mind, and he has no way of getting out.

It's hard to know how to help him. I have in my head that someone said that a child builds their ego, and as an adult, we dismantle it. But he's suffering, he's only 13.

And I wonder if he's too young to start to learn to die to self. Is he formed enough for that? We've talked a little bit about this.

He's not sure he has an essence because he's never felt it. So he thinks all he is is his mind. And so I don't know where to start.

[Speaker 1] (19:10 - 26:36)

Great, thank you. Thank you. Well, it is not uncommon for adolescents particularly to

develop, not everybody does, but it's not uncommon for a less to develop a very strong, very strong ego.

He started when he was three. Yeah, well, egos start to redevelop at an early age. In some cases, quite a few cases, but not necessarily so.

In some cases, it is due to overindulgent parenting can contribute to that. Overindulgent parenting where nothing the child does is ever wrong. They never have any, well, whatever they do, they never experience any consequences for their actions because the parents want to give them total freedom.

It's an interesting idea. They want the child to develop totally freely. So give them immediately what they want.

They want the child to be happy. Give them what they need immediately. They want the child to feel good about themselves.

So they get a lot of praise. You are the greatest. You are wonderful.

And even at schools these days, sometimes you get trophies just for participating, not for winning anymore. There's a good side and a bad side to that. On the good side, it's yes, it's great.

It makes them feel good. I wish they'd had participation trophies when I was at school because I never got a trophy because I didn't win in sports events and so on. So I didn't get them.

But there's a negative side to these things, to saying, child, you are so wonderful. Because then they develop a delusional idea about who they are, about themselves. Now, there's not much you can do right now.

He is certainly not ready at this point. The fact is that if this ego is now going to control him and as he begins to go into life, begins to have relationships and so on, it is inevitable that he will experience suffering, mostly self-generated. Suffering generated in relationships that he enters, whether by suffering, other situations, whether job situations, whatever it may be.

If he has a strong ego, a very strong ego, it is virtually inevitable that he will generate a lot of conflict and suffering for himself, for others too, which is what egos do. They don't know that they're doing it. And the suffering potentially and eventually will bring about a crack in the egoic cell.

It'll crack it open at some point. That's the moment to wait for. And then when that happens, now, when this will happen, we don't know whether it'll happen five years from now, 10, 15, 20 years from now, we don't know when that will happen.

But the humans with very, very strong egos produce a lot of suffering for themselves and others. And for a long time, they will perceive all their problems as coming from other people. That's the normal thing, how an ego operates.

All that's wrong with the world, all that's wrong with their lives is blamed on others and other situations. And then they suffer more and more. And then a moment may come, in some people it never comes, but I believe because your presence is probably helpful, although there's not much you can do right now, but when the suffering really starts, then your presence may be helpful and perhaps accelerate a transcendence of ego.

Sometimes not necessarily by saying anything, but just by being there or saying something when the right moment arises. At this moment, all you can do is compassionate, realize that's not who he ultimately is. It is something that has come into him.

It's part of the evolution of humanity. And so he's a manifestation of the evolution of the human ego. And not confuse, important for you, not to confuse this egoic almost entity, although it's not an entity, but one can look at it as an entity, with who he is, because there is an essence there.

He hasn't found it. And it's maybe hard to see, but at some point when it happens, when the marriage breaks down or his second marriage breaks down or he has other relationship that create havoc, all we can hope for is that the consequences that come from egoic unconsciousness are not going to be too destructive and overwhelming as for example, it happens if youngsters sometimes, sometimes parents, they give them when they're 17 or 18, they love their child so much that on their birthday, they give them a sports car, Porsche, whatever.

Oh, there, I want to make my child happy. And then the child's ego gets even bigger because the Porsche becomes part of their ego. And then they have a few weeks later, they have a disaster, cause a disaster accident.

This many, many cases like that everywhere. Let's hope that this is not the suffering that he finds will not be of that kind, but it will be suffering. And ultimately that is the path of awakening for humans.

The stronger the ego, the stronger the suffering, but that ultimately is how it's meant to be because that is how humans evolve. He is lucky that he has you in his life because when the moment comes and he's ready, you will be there to help him. In the meantime, all you can do is observe compassionately, do what you can.

Don't try to get rid of his ego. It's not going to work. You may not even succeed in trying to find his, the being, the presence.

He's not quite right. It seems he's not ready for that, but that's fine. Now, important that

when the suffering begins for him, it's important that you're not too reactive, that you recognize it for what it is because otherwise you get drawn into the suffering.

So it's empathy, yes, compassion, yes, but also wisdom to see why it is happening.

[Speaker 5] (26:37 - 26:48)

Okay, so as a parent, if he were your son, you wouldn't even talk with him about the difference between an ego and an essence and you would leave that?

[Speaker 1] (26:48 - 27:40)

I would leave that. Okay. What I might do is take my child into nature because nature can temporarily free you from some ego, especially also interacting with nature, doing something in nature.

Okay. That I would do as much as possible to take him out of, he probably also uses these devices, whatever they use, screens. Also take some time off, take him out into nature.

That is, can be very healing and temporarily alleviate the burden of ego as much as possible, nature. That would probably be my main strategy. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (27:40 - 29:07)

Thank you so much for everything, taking the time tonight, but just being on this journey with me. And it's just been, I had to say that this evening. So it wasn't part of the question, but I had to say it, Dr. Thank you so much. My question is when I'm watching your videos or reading your books, listening to audio, I am overcome with this feeling of peace, almost like a love, something that I've never felt before that I can't even describe. How do I take that feeling? This is a two-parter.

How do I take that feeling, Eckhart, into the world with me? Because it's there, I'm feeling it now, and maybe I'll feel it a little later on, but I find it starts to dissipate. The second thing, and if you can answer both, great.

When you were speaking or when I'm reading your work, there's an understanding and a realization of how things are, but I tend to forget them. And I have to go back and it's, why do I understand when I'm with you right now? And I'm like, ah, yes, that makes sense.

And then I'm in reality and I'm like, what was that again? And why doesn't that make sense anymore?

[Speaker 1] (29:08 - 42:00)

Right, thank you. Now, it's probably not necessary to remember that much from what is being said. The essence of our being together is not really a conceptual.

It's more to participate, to join in the arising presence. And what I offer you for the time being is a reflection of the presence in you. Not your presence, but the presence that is driving through what looks like you.

And it recognizes itself. So when you, what you sense in me, you sense it in yourself. So it is yourself that you are sensing, not me.

So I give you that reflection of yourself. So it's not me. And so when you're not with me, which means the reflection isn't there, then you cannot that easily find that connection because it can, the world comes back in and you lose that connection.

And so my advice would be to create openings in your daily life for this to arise again, but not look for it. That feeling of whatever you want to use to describe it, that connectedness, the aliveness, peace, joy, whatever it is that you sense being really more fully yourself, not the person self, but not trying to regain that, but create a space for it to happen. And you create a space for it to happen.

Again, I'll mention again, what I just said to the previous questioner. One example we can do this is by giving attention to nature, going out into nature and connect with it by giving it your fullest attention, sensory attention. And once you've given it sensory attention fully, which means thinking subsides because you're just perceiving, then you become aware of two things, but it's ultimately one thing, but it looks like two things.

One thing you become aware of is yourself as the underlying awareness when you look at this tree or the flower, or just a meadow or blade of grass, or flowing river, or the sky, whatever it may be, or bird, or cat, or dog. You become aware of yourself as the awareness. And that is, you're regaining that now by becoming aware of yourself.

Nature is more helpful than the man-made, the human-made world, because in the human-made world, everything is done through the human mind. So it's not as easy to take you out of your mind when you're surrounded by mind-made things. So in the middle of a city, you're surrounded by mind-made things, or there may be a tree here and there, that's good.

Sky will still be there, that's good. But you will be surrounded by mind-made things. When you're really very present, even that is fine.

And when you're really very present already and deeply rooted in presence, you can find the consciousness even in mind-made things. But in the meantime, nature is easier. Use nature as a portal to find yourself.

Now, I mentioned two things. The one thing was when you contemplate nature, sometimes you may contemplate just one thing in nature, like a tree or a flower. At other times, you may contemplate a totality of a landscape or maybe a park, and you see the totality of the park.

Or you see the sky, you might look at one cloud, or you see the totality of the sky. Nature can be either one thing or it can be many things, a field, a meadow, whatever it may be. That's all fine.

Doesn't matter whether it's a more expansive thing or one thing. And then you become aware of yourself, as I said, as the underlying awareness. And so there's perception and there's presence.

In other words, you're very still while you're perceiving. And then the next thing was not really the next thing because they come together. And I also talked about that earlier on at the beginning of our session.

You can then also sense that there's more to the tree or to the meadow or the sky than meets the eye. You can then also sense that there's an inherent aliveness in that tree that transcends what you see with your senses. You can also realize that what you call tree is really a mystery.

By calling it tree, you create the illusion that you know what it is. And if you completely believe in every label that the mind creates, you begin to inhabit a dead universe and the mystery is gone. And you believe that you know, but all you do, and I'm not doing just to you personally, but to all humans, all you've done is created mental labels and mistake that as an explanation for the deep mystery of existence and of every being.

In other words, when you're relating through mental labels, you cannot sense the depth in anything. Nothing has any depth anymore. There's a philosopher who used the term, it was Ken Wilber, spiritual philosopher.

I don't know if he used it with reference to what I'm talking about, but I think in some way he did. He has the term flat land. You inhabit a flat land.

It has no depth to it whatsoever. And this is how many humans perceive reality. Nothing has any depth.

There's no soul in it. They can't perceive the soul in the tree, the inherent aliveness and the mystery of it and the beauty of it that's hiding there beyond sensory. So then the two things, which are not ultimately two, you can sense the awareness that is the light in which these things appear.

And you can also sense that which is beyond sensory perception in that which you are perceiving. It's no longer flat land. There is a depth to it.

There's a mystery to it. And you then realize that what you call it a tree or dismissed as an oak tree, it's a nice oak tree. How old is it?

Okay, now I know. That's why Krishnamurti, the spiritual teacher said, when you teach a child the name of the bird, the child will never see that bird again. In other words, the concept has replaced the realization of the actuality of that mystery.

So don't inhabit a world of labels. Remove labels, use labels when you need them, but not become captivated by concepts and mental labels. Experience the world beyond that and know yourself who you are yourself beyond any mental label, any conceptual reality.

So nature is helpful. Create that. One other thing I'd like to recommend is moments in your daily life of awareness.

Invite awareness into brief moments when you're just, I sometimes say, take a conscious breath, one conscious breath. One conscious breath is you give fullest attention to the act of breathing. Not particularly feeling that I'm now doing a conscious breath, but simply loving the breath that's happening anyway.

So to feel the in-breath and the out-breath, give it your fullest attention. Maybe even two conscious breaths, three perhaps, but even one is a good thing because one creates a moment of inner spaciousness because while you're giving your fullest attention to the breath, you cannot be thinking. You're thinking, you're no longer giving your attention to the breathing.

You can either give your attention to the breathing or you can be thinking. So a good way to step out of thinking when you don't want it is breath awareness. Of course, it's even been developed into a whole meditation method.

So some people sit for half an hour, one hour observing their breath. That's fine too. But I believe that these mini meditations are extremely helpful because each time they create an inner space, they reduce the mental clutter.

And it's like clouds parting, cloudy sky. And suddenly as you take one or two conscious breaths, the clouds part and then you see the blue vastness beyond the clouds. And that's in you.

So many moments during the day, some breath awareness that is a very helpful tool. Last thing, again, it's an invitation of presence. Choose every day one or two activities.

They could be routine activities that you do and do them consciously. Not nothing that takes too long. Do them consciously without looking for the end result.

Making a cup of coffee, a cup of tea. Preparing some breakfast. If you use an elevator every day, very helpful.

You press the button to call the elevator and instead of looking at your phone, as many people do, just be there consciously. You may want to take a conscious breath or not, or just be there. And then you step into the elevator and then even there, you can still be there while the elevator travels.

So every time you use it, it's a practice of presence every time. Or if you use stairs where you work or at home, as much as possible, every time you go up or down, be conscious of every step. So you break the momentum of the mind that always drags you along to the next thing and the next thing and the next thing.

So it's a very different way of going up or down the stairs, whether you're conscious of every step or whether you just want to get to the top or the bottom of the staircase. Very different way of going up or down the stairs. One last, you can come up with your own practices.

One last one that I like is if you use a car, when you get into your car, you put on the seatbelt and then you wait 30 seconds before you start the car. But don't count the seconds, just approximately 30 seconds. And if your mind tells you, I don't have time for this, it's a lie, there's nobody who doesn't have time for 30 seconds, unless it's a complete emergency.

Your wife is pregnant and you need to get her, give birth, that's different. But otherwise it's 30 seconds, it's very little. And so every time you sit there, but you're not sitting there waiting for the 30 seconds to pass, you sit there just present and contemplate.

Or if you like, one more thing.

[Speaker 6] (42:01 - 42:02)

Please, that's great.

[Speaker 1] (42:03 - 44:31)

There's a traffic light and it's red. Why not make that into every time you wait at a red light, be present. And you may want to look around, but don't lose sight completely of the light because it'll change to green.

But you may look around a bit, peripherally you can still see the red. There's other cars, there may be people. Just be there as an innocent observer of what's going on in your field of vision.

Some people have worked out, and unfortunately I don't remember how much, if a person reaches the age of 70 and since the age of 20, he drives every day to or from work or something. They've worked out how much time they spend waiting at traffic lights in their lifetime. It's an enormous amount of time.

Unfortunately I've forgotten the figure. It's like many months or almost a year, something like that, waiting it. So why not use this as a wonderful opportunity?

In fact, every kind of waiting is an opportunity for practicing. Most people these days, the moment they start waiting for something, they get out their phone. It's an automatic thing.

Most of them don't have anything particular to look at. They're not getting it out because they heard a text message. They're just getting it out because there's nothing else to do.

They have to fill this moment with something, which means mental clutter. I need more mental clutter. And if you're not doing it, somebody next to you is doing it, and then you go, okay, I better do it too.

And so they go like, they're all like this. But if somebody from the past has come, time traveler had come from Roman or Middle Ages or even 100 years ago, you would say these people are crazy. They're in some kind of state of hypnosis.

What has happened to them? They're all like this. And say, oh, the world has gone completely crazy, they would say, the time traveler.

And in some way it has. So obviously there are times when you, when the reason for using these things, maybe there is a message coming in and you want to see what it is, fine. But just at random getting it out because you just can't stand being with yourself, that's crazy.

[Speaker 3] (44:34 - 44:42)

Wonderful information. Thank you so much. Blessings to you and to your team.

Thank you. And to all of you.

[Speaker 1] (44:42 - 44:49)

Thanks. Right. Well, this is our session for today.

[Speaker 4] (44:50 - 45:13)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle The Ego Loves Its Problems [0780472e-2bdc-42b0-9b28-1b645a1ac832]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:56)

The ego loves its problems. In this podcast, Eckhart says one of the hurdles we must confront regularly is our unconscious thinking. He says our relentless self-centered thoughts actually feed the ego and keep us mired in a fictitious sense of self.

He explains the ego loves problems and strengthens its grip by creating suffering for ourselves and others. Eckhart says if we're not growing spiritually when crises strike, they will make us even more unconscious. Eckhart explains there is a paradox.

Suffering can actually push us to awaken because when we can't take the pain anymore, we finally surrender. He says most unhappiness is not the result of life's difficulties. It's our reactions to them.

Eckhart says when we have a foot on the right path, misfortune is no longer an obstacle. Instead, it becomes an opportunity for spiritual growth.

[Speaker 1] (0:58 - 6:39)

This is your continuous practice. Are you able to, as much as possible, let go of habitual, especially habitual, useless, self-serving thinking? Thinking that only feeds the fictitious self, the ego, the entity that loves, actually loves, its problems.

Well, it says, no, I don't love my problems. Yes, you do because you talk and think about them continuously. In fact, you create them continuously.

Through unconscious thinking, you create them. No, no, I don't. Yes, you do.

This entity then becomes, at first you have glimpses, sometimes accidental. They may only be a few seconds, and then perhaps a little bit longer, and then the two gradually, the being and the human, kind of merge. The being seeps into the human, and so the human, the conditioned entity, the human, becomes less and less obnoxious, and less and less dysfunctional, and less and less creating completely unnecessary and absurd suffering for yourself and others, completely unnecessary and absurd suffering created unconsciously by the ego, this entity, in its attempt to strengthen itself.

It loves its problems and its enemies. Oh, I feel much bigger. Anger is great, and really, and you can revive, talk about it all the time.

This is completely asleep, completely asleep. And so, as the awakening happens, presence begins to sometimes completely replace the person, and at other times, it kind of shines through the person, in the same way that a light shines through the

lampshade. The light shines through the lampshade, and the person still, yes, the person still has its conditioning, to some extent, and can never be totally free of the conditioning.

There's always certain ways in which you behave that's part to do with how you were brought up, your environment, all the conditioning, the country, even the language that you speak is form of mental conditioning. All those things, they are still there, but the most dysfunctional and unhappiness-creating patterns, they subside more and more. Certain patterns remain, as long as you are a person, a human.

Certain patterns remain, but not the heavy, deeply unhappy and obnoxious patterns, they gradually dissolve, and all is left with certain idiosyncrasies in your personality, and so on. That's okay. So, the person remains, but it undergoes a substantial transformation.

It no longer creates suffering. Even in the face of challenges, because they continue to happen, even as you awaken, the universe will continue to present you with challenges, new ones. No matter what situation you go into, at first you go, oh, this is great, I'm in a new situation, and before you know it, oh, it comes up from behind, another challenge.

The universe won't leave you alone, but if you're not undergoing the awakening process, every challenge that arises will make you more unconscious. It will strengthen the self, the self that is reacting, is reactive, and complaining all the time, and reacting. So, the challenge will make you more unconscious, if you are not awakening yet, and that is, you can verify that, perhaps in your own experience, when things go wrong, there is a reactive entity there, that works itself up.

Either you become angry, or despondent, or whatever the reactivity is. People like, in professions such as lawyers, often encounter people in their most unconscious states, because they tend to go to lawyers when things go wrong, they're being sued, or the divorce is happening. Divorce lawyers, to be a divorce lawyer, potentially, could be a very enlightening job, because you encounter deep human unconsciousness, which most people in a conflict situation like that, become more unconscious than they are normally, deeply unconscious.

[Speaker 3] (6:39 - 7:09)

The new Samsung Galaxy Z Fold 6 and Z Flip 6 with Galaxy AI have landed at Optus, with an out-of-this-world deal. Get a gigantic \$1,348 of bonus value, when you pre-order the new Samsung Galaxy Z series. That's \$250 off RRP, when you pay over \$1224 or 36 months.

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Teas and Cs apply.

[Speaker 1] (7:11 - 38:09)

So, when you're being challenged by life, the challenge will create a reaction, and the reaction will, you become completely identified with the reaction, and you become even more unconscious than your normal state, which is unconscious enough, but it's now, it's more unconscious. Can't stop thinking about it. Now, as you're awakening, challenge comes again, and then you suddenly see the possibility of actually being more intensely present when a challenge comes.

It's like, you know what a dimmer switch is on an electrical switch? You can turn up the light, dimmer switch, so when a challenge comes, something goes wrong, so to speak, a difficult person arises, a difficult situation arises, some kind of loss arises, whatever kind of loss it may be. Instead of reacting and becoming more unconscious, you suddenly sense you're becoming more present in the face of a challenge.

And that is when the challenges of the world are becoming helpful to you, rather than make you unconscious. They can intensify the awakening process, and that is the ultimate purpose, really, of all the challenges that humans encounter here. There is a fundamental misconception, an unconscious misconception in human beings, and that misconception is this.

They believe that the world has the ability to make them happy, but this is being withheld from them, and they regard that as a personal insult by life. It's doing, why is life withholding happiness from me? Why all the things always happen to me?

Because it's not happening to others. You read their Facebook posts, and they're all happy. They're eating meals, you see pictures of meals.

Look, I'm eating this, oh okay. And then you see their happy faces. And not only are they happy, they're also so good-looking.

Everybody's good-looking. That's the technology of filters and stuff. Everyone can look beautiful, even I do.

They did it to me, too. So people watch that and say, wow, these people's lives are so great. And then you maybe, then you also pretend, because everybody else is pretending, okay, let's go to a restaurant, take a picture of a meal.

This is what I'm eating right now. So the misconception is, the world is here to make me happy, but it's not doing it. This is a very serious misconception, because it makes your whole life miserable, because that really means that something that should be happening is not happening in my life.

Something is just not happening. But of course, that misconception is that the world is here to make you happy, and it can't do that. It's not here to make you happy.

It's here to make you conscious, to awaken you. Oh, I see. I was wrong all along.

I've been complaining uselessly for 40 years, or whatever your age is. I've been complaining uselessly for 40 years that there's something wrong with the world and my so-called life, but there wasn't anything wrong at all, because the world is here to awaken me. If humans are not challenged, or not just humans, any life form only grows through being challenged, which means encounter obstacles and difficulties.

Even plants and animals, every life form is precarious. Its existence is precarious, and it encounters obstacles to its unfoldment. And that ultimately is how evolution happens, through encountering difficulties, obstacles, challenges.

Because as you encounter the obstacles and challenges, they seem to block you, and you think, life would be much better if I did not have these challenges. But it wouldn't, because you would go to sleep even more. So you have the challenges, and that brings about an influx of energy on whatever level, even if it's physical.

Every organism already encounters challenges on a physical level, and then it grows, it gains new strengths by attempting to overcome these limitations. I sometimes mention example, because it operates on every level. If you want to become physically stronger, you have to exercise, unless you have a job that is already physically, forces you to exert yourself physically.

Otherwise, you have to exercise, and you have to start doing, if you want to grow stronger, you have to lift weights. I'm not doing it anymore, but I'm just demonstrating. Now, how does that feel at first?

What are you doing? The way I put it is this, you are making life difficult for your body, because your body is not going to grow stronger unless you make the body's life difficult. The same with jogging.

The body doesn't really want to do it, but says, no, no, you have to do it. Why are you making life difficult for your body? Your body would be so relaxed sitting on the sofa and watching Netflix.

But it's not growing stronger, it's actually getting weaker, because it's not being challenged. But challenge it, and then there is a demand for added energy. And this just operates on the physical level.

In this demand for added, there's a moment when there's a gap. You're exerting yourself, and the energy isn't there yet, so it's very hard. But at some point, the energy comes flooding in, because there was a demand for it.

And in that point, you may actually begin to enjoy the physical movement, because there's added energy. And suddenly, strength is increasing. And this is just on the physical level.

There's a demand, and it comes also on a psychological level, it can operate. And on a spiritual level, when you become very unhappy in your life, then there is a possibility that the unhappiness causes you to awaken. Because at some point, you realize, either because you've had a spiritual teacher, or teaching, or even to some people, it happens spontaneously.

The psychological suffering that humans undergo can, at some point, when you just can't stand it anymore, and something snaps, and suddenly you, it dissolves, and you're, oh, suddenly an awakening has happened. But it would not have happened if you hadn't gone through those sometimes years of suffering. Quite often, I have encountered people who tell me, I would never have come to you, or understood the books, or been open to anything spiritual, if I had not experienced, in some cases, it's a serious, very serious illness, or an accident, or some deep loss in their personal lives.

And they come, and perhaps some of you, with some of you, that is also the case. There would not have been an opening, if you had not gone through that suffering. And at some point, the suffering awakens you.

And that is really the ultimate purpose of suffering, is to awaken. And then you realize that most suffering is actually unnecessary. It's actually created by the conditioned entity.

Suffering is a psychological phenomenon, and this can be transcended. If you awaken, you transcend that suffering. In other words, you transcend unhappiness.

You are no longer unhappy. The mind loses its power to make you unhappy, because most of your unhappiness is created by unconscious thought processes, not situations. Most of unhappiness is created not by situations, difficult situations that you encounter, but what your mind is telling you about the difficult situations.

The situation itself is as it is. Then you impose an interpretation on it. The interpretation says, this should not be happening.

This is awful. Why? Always to me.

Why did he do that? Etc., etc., etc. Interpretations.

What causes the unhappiness, and strengthens the fictitious self, is the commentary, the interpretation. That is an amazing realization, that most of your unhappiness is created by your mind. And that's an amazing thing.

And then, as you become more present, unhappiness disappears from your life. Now, am I saying that you will then always be happy? No.

Happiness is a little bit superficial to the way I use the term happiness, because it usually means, yeah, ah, it's so great, it's wonderful. It's a bit superficial, although there are some spiritual teachers who use the term happiness pointing to something deeper. For example, Ramana Maharshi says, happiness is your true nature.

But he's using it in a different sense. Obviously, there are situations, even as your unhappiness leaves you, and you become more present, situations arise where you cannot say that you're happy. Somebody close to you dies.

Your father, your mother, or even a child, or somebody, or something very bad, an accident happens to someone, and you can't say, oh, I'm still happy, I'm so happy, he died. No. Sadness will come, if that happens, because that's the human on you, still, the sadness comes.

And yet, you are not consumed by the sadness when it comes. You are not consumed by it. It comes as a wave, and you may weep, because your father died, your mother died, your child died, or some recourse is going through suffering, and you may weep.

And yet, underneath that, there is still a substratum, this is a geological term, there's a substratum of peace underneath it. I don't call that happiness, but it's deeper than that. There is an all-abiding peace underneath it, although there may be tears on the surface, but then they disappear, and you don't, you don't perpetuate emotional pain by continuously thinking about it for months and years, and years pass, and you're still unhappy for years.

No, it comes as a wave, and then it subsides, and even when it's there, there is still a presence that you can sense underneath it. There's a quote that I always remember from the French writer Albert Camus, who got a Nobel Prize for literature a long time ago, and he said, I'm sure what he said reflects an experience that he had when he was alive, he said, in the midst of winter, I found that in myself, there lives an invincible summer. In the midst of winter, I found that within myself, there lives an invincible summer.

He uses winter as an analogy, winter meaning something not good on the outside, bad situation, bad circumstances, loss, whatever it may be. In the midst of winter, I found within myself, there is an invincible summer. And this, in this analogy, of course, summer refers to that state of consciousness that is beyond, that transcends circumstances.

The human still has a relationship with circumstances, and that's fine. But there's something within you that transcends circumstances of your life. And that's the ultimate freedom, the ultimate freedom, you are no longer at the mercy of what happens or doesn't happen around you.

And that is real, wonderful liberation, when your state of consciousness is no longer determined, ultimately, by what's going on around you by circumstances, and other people, and so on. So that's the liberation that is here for you to realize. And a very helpful thing, then, if you just remember that the next challenge that you encounter, or the challenge that you're encountering right now in your life, use it and allow it to make you more present, be present with it, instead of rejecting, or instead of saying, this shouldn't be happening, or, or something is missing, then why don't I have that?

Allow the challenge to be there and work with it. The challenge appears in the present moment. If it's real, there's something here that either you need to deal with, take action, or leave alone if there's nothing you can do.

The ultimate real challenge is always manifest in the present moment. Then there's a mental challenge. And most people are challenged more by their minds than by the actual situations.

So all the, the, whatever your mind is saying, for many people, represents the greatest challenge. The greatest challenge is their own mind, not the circumstances of their life. But they cannot differentiate between the circumstances of their life and their mind, because their mind continuously interprets the circumstances, and they cannot see the difference between what is, and how the mind interprets what is.

Their experience is a single phenomenon, and that's part of the unconsciousness. You can practice self-observation even with simple things, like, let's say, you wake up in the morning, and you open the curtains, let's say it's winter time, or it's November, and you open the curtains, and it's raining, and that's, oh my god, not another rainy day, another miserable day. And so here you have mixed up what is with interpretation without knowing it.

So you, it's a miserable day. No, there's water falling from the sky, that's the reality. The miserable is supplied by your mind.

And that's just a small, very small example of what happens continuously. This, the misinterpretation of what is, and unfortunately, the human ego loves to misinterpret in that way, because the more it can complain about something that is, the stronger the fictitious self feels. And this, for some of you, that might also still be helpful, because it may still happen occasionally to some of you.

A lot of the unconscious thought processes, for many people, has to do with complaining about things and people. They don't know it, because it becomes second nature to them. A lot of what, in their minds, what they think about, and talk about to others, is complaining either about other people, or situations, or what they call my life.

Whatever it is, I'm not happy with it. And I'll tell you about it, why I'm not happy with it.

You know what he did then, and what he failed to do then, what should have done, but he didn't do it.

And then he said this, when I said this, and, and of course, you are always right, and the other is always wrong, that's understood. So the complaining entity, it makes up a lot of the unconscious thinking, for most humans. So be very much aware of the tendency to complain about people, and situations, or your life.

And you can see, that is the essence of unconsciousness, and that keeps the ego alive. And if you have that, you can make it a spiritual practice. Self-observation is not easy.

It's easier to observe the unconsciousness in others, than it is to observe it in yourself. Much easier to see it in others. So it requires a bit more alertness, to see it in yourself, and say, hmm, I've been complaining for the past two hours, either mentally, or out loud.

I'm not saying to point out something that is wrong, and it can be rectified. I'm talking about useless complaining. It has no purpose, except to strengthen the ego.

So if you observe that, you can make it a spiritual practice. Let's say, I'm going to spend the next hour or two, without complaining about anything. Okay, well, for some people, it would be very hard.

Okay, I'm not complaining about the traffic, other drivers, my wife, my ex-husband, what he said, and what situation that I'm in right now. I'm not complaining about anything. I just let it be.

You can still deal, you still deal with it. Your ability to deal with situations does not diminish, if you stop complaining about situations. It's, you can only deal with situations, when you're not complaining.

You face the fact. You don't deny the fact, and then act upon it, which is complaining. You face the fact, this is what is, and this is what I can do.

Or this is what is, and there's nothing I can do about it right now. So it's fine, I'll leave it alone. That's conscious living.

The other is unconscious living, which are, most humans still live in that way. So you spend a couple of hours practicing, not complaining about anything, no matter what you're doing, or where you are. And obviously, if it's out allowed, you can catch that more easily, or you say, you can catch yourself that, I'm not saying anything.

But of course, then it's still in your mind. So there you also have to identify the thought, and say, let go of it. It's another complaining thought, drop it.

Another complaining thought, drop it. And that is, again, an essential part of the awakening process, is to become aware of what your mind is saying. Become aware of

your thought processes.

That's, that's part of the awakening. And as you know, most humans are still completely identified with that stream of unconscious thinking. You don't know what's the real thing.

You are the thought, you are at the mercy of your thoughts. Horrible way to live. Be aware of your mind, of your thoughts.

Many years ago, I spent occasionally time in Buddhist monasteries. And the monks are trying very hard, and nuns, they're trying very hard with their spiritual practice. But then they get, I've observed, they get periodically, not all, but I saw one or two highly conscious ones, one or two.

But the others are, then get taken over suddenly, they start complaining about the monastery, but this shouldn't be happening. Why do we have to get up at 4.30? It just doesn't make sense.

And the water, why don't we have to, why is the water so cold? It freezes my hands off. And, and why can't we wear something a bit warmer?

This is hard, this long, but you can't stand it anymore. So I've watched quite a bit of complaining there too. And then now, Buddhist monks have to be very polite.

So they cannot say when you observe another person's unconsciousness, you can't say, shut up. You can't do that. But what they replace it with, when they want to say, shut up, they say, watch your mind.

And sometimes it helped the other person suddenly wakes up. Oh, okay. And then becomes present again.

But that's a very powerful pointer. Watch your mind, so that you are not, it doesn't take you over this unconscious thinking. The more presence you are able to bring in, the better your mind will actually function when it's needed.

Instead of having a function that is purely self-serving, that purely strengthens the ego, which is what for many people, that's 80% of their thinking or 90% of their thinking is self-serving and problem making and not problem solving. It's problem making, not problem solving. The practice then is, important part of the practice is be aware, not only of your, what your thoughts creating, also the emotional field that is there.

Be aware of the emotions that arise, because that can, emotion coupled with thought can have you in its grasp and you can't get out. You're completely, you all have experienced anger. What that is like when it's, it's an emotion and it's usually accompanied by a story.

Emotion that energizes the story and the story gives more energy to the emotion and

the vicious circle happens. And you talk about it and think about it, this situation that makes you so angry and you get even more angry. It's horrible.

You've all experienced how unpleasant that is, but you don't know when you're in the grip of it, you love it. Not you, but the ego, which you mistake for who you are. The ego loves it.

When you're in the grip of anger, you don't want to let go. You don't want to let go. You cannot, you cannot awaken a person, even a person who is, let's say you live with somebody.

And if that person is being taken over by an emotion, like especially the pain body, as I call it, perhaps most of you know what I mean by pain body. Pain body is an old emotion that lives, still lives in you. A painful emotion that subsides, that's in you.

And sometimes it's dormant. Sometimes it comes active in order to feed on more drama and more pain. So periodically the pain body, which is accumulated, trapped, negative emotion often goes back to childhood and perhaps past lifetimes.

If you want to go there, you don't have to believe in it, but the pain body in some humans can be very, very heavy, which is accumulation of painful emotion that lives in them. Not always active. Sometimes it's dormant.

You hardly feel it. And then suddenly something triggers it and it wakes up. And if you have lived with somebody, perhaps the first time that you have observed it, let's say you, you fall in love and then you start living together, or you even sign a contract that you're going to start living together.

Okay. Can't get out of this now that you live together. And then suddenly on a week or a couple of months after you're living together, the other, your partner suddenly goes through some weird transformation.

It's not the same person anymore. It's some little monster that suddenly is, who is this? Who is this?

Suddenly very aggressive or awfully angry and goes to complete transformation of their personality and like a monstrous transformation. Oh my God. I signed a contract to be with this person forever.

So what all it means, you first encountered their pain body. They were taken over by this emotional field and the pain body attempts to feed on other people's reactions. It presses the buttons that it most will provoke a negative reaction in the other.

It'll say just the right thing that is hurtful to get the negative reaction. And so in other words, the pain body in you will attempt to awaken the other person's pain body, who

presumably also has one, maybe not as strong, but probably has one. And it attempts to get the real.

And this is how drama in relationships periodically happens. And the two that were in love yesterday, the next day they are mortal enemies, at least for a few hours or a couple of days or three. They are suddenly mortal.

They hate each other deeply. It's in the grip of their pain body. And then sometimes it happens then a little bit of time subsides and then gradually they both wake up again, not into enlightened consciousness, but into normal unconsciousness, not deep unconsciousness, which is the pain body.

And so they wake up and say, oh, and then they make up. Oh, it's all as well. You can't even remember why they, what you were fighting about.

Can't even remember it. Okay. All is well.

We are fine again. Okay. And then two or three weeks pass.

And again, happening again. Oh my God. And again, and again, I can't take any more of this.

And sometimes the intervals between pain body episodes get shorter. And then this beginning of the end, and unfortunately they don't recognize it for what it is. There's not enough, not enough presence to have at least some degree of disidentification from that entity, which is the pain body.

I suggest that you look upon it almost as if it were a little entity that lives in you, a little, little monster or gremlin or something that lives in you.

[Speaker 2] (38:15 - 38:35)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Ego and the Need to Be Right [b4681a88-a4a3-4645-b737-aee7f7f6fd61]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:42)

The ego and the need to be right. In this episode, Eckhart gives a brief talk about the difference between being versus becoming. He says, when we focus on becoming, we look to the future for our fulfillment.

He believes this is when we lose sight of our being, which is connected to the now. Eckhart then answers a question about the need to be right and winning an argument at all costs, which he explains is a common form of ego. Eckhart believes as we grow in presence, the drive to be right diminishes.

The ego loosens its grip, and we discover we might even be willing to admit we're wrong. He says this is a sure sign of spiritual growth.

[Speaker 1] (0:45 - 26:35)

Hello, everybody. Here we are, here and now, not trying to get anywhere, become anything, not even enlightened. There's nothing wrong with becoming.

But here, our attention is on being. You have the two dimensions, become being and becoming. Coming involves time, past, future, towards the future.

In some way, of course, you're aware of the future, and you need to give it some attention in your practical daily life. The becoming dimension, you want to become better at this, that or the other, learn, acquire, experience new things. It's all fine.

And it all happens on the level of becoming. So becoming is an inescapable and necessary part of being human. The only question is, is that all you know?

Are you being absorbed by the movement of becoming, dragged along by this stream of becoming? The universe is, of course, the manifested universe. It's a universe's developing, evolving life forms, new life forms arise.

Things happen continuously, new things happen. But that's only the surface level of reality, which undoubtedly exists, has a certain reality. But it's also a dreamlike thing.

The dreams evaporate fairly quickly. And in this world of becoming, things also become and then they cease to become. They become and then they dissolve, and then become and dissolve.

So when you're only moving towards becoming, you're moving towards growth, but you're also moving towards death. The future holds the promise of fulfillment, but it also holds the threat of the end, death. The future is a two-edged sword.

It says, I put everything you want, I can give you, and then it takes it away. And sometimes when the movement of when the taking away part starts, and it could start at any stage in your life, definitely it starts when you get older, you become more aware of mortality. But it could start at an earlier point too, when suddenly something goes wrong in your life, a big upset, disruption, big loss, death, somebody close to you, collapse of something that was important to you.

And whenever that happens, there's an opportunity. At first, it's a very unpleasant thing, suffering arises, of course. And then suddenly, there's a possibility for you to become aware of the being dimension, when the becoming dimension is no longer satisfying.

When the becoming dimension becomes unsatisfying, as it will, it must eventually, for quite a while, it's satisfying, and then it's no longer satisfying. So when the becoming dimension becomes unsatisfying, suffering arises, but also the possibility of being forced almost to go deeper and suddenly become aware of the depth dimension, which is the being dimension within yourself and within the universe, same thing. So you suddenly become aware that there is another dimension, you stop running towards the next thing.

And you become aware of yourself at a deeper level than the becoming level. At the deeper level, I call it the deep eye, you are already complete, there's no time involved in any kind of improvement. It's not necessary because of the level of being, nothing could be added to you.

And that is why it's often described as by those who have realized it or have had a glimpse of it, a place of intense joy and aliveness, but also deep peace. Sat Chit Ananda, being, the realization of being, Chit, consciousness, pure consciousness, Ananda, joy, bliss, it's one single realization. It is good not to wait for things to collapse in your life.

Perhaps in some ways you have already experienced collapse in various areas of your life, because as you grow older, you cannot go through life without experiencing things from time to time, loss, calamity, disaster, deep disappointment, whatever you want to call it. Of course, everybody does. And if you go through life believing that something is fundamentally wrong with your life when these things happen to you, then you're deluded.

There's nothing fundamentally wrong with you when you experience disaster or deep loss, collapse, whatever it may be. It's inevitable that there are, that is inseparable from the becoming. So the, being aware of what opens up when things collapse is death in one way or another, death.

It's some form of death. Even if you go through a divorce, a longstanding relationship breaks up. It's a kind of death you're experiencing.

And when death is faced without resistance, you see it, it's an opening. It leaves an

emptiness. Death, when something dissolves, obviously, that was there in the world of form, it leaves an emptiness.

And that emptiness, people don't want to look at it. And that's why they don't want to look at death. Death is dreadful, especially the Western world.

And a lot of the planet has become kind of Westernized. Western means focused intensely on becoming. And they're very good at it.

So the Western approach to death is virtually a taboo. Let's not talk about it. So when it comes, it's a terrible shock.

But death is, leaves this an emptiness there that you want, oh, I don't want to look at it. But if you don't resist, if you realize that this empty space that's left when something that was important to you has dissolved, that's an entry point portal into the being dimension. And when you realize that, you see how on the other side of death, which looks like a terrible calamity, especially if you've never given it any attention and pretended that death doesn't exist, or is a travesty that should never happen.

And then you see, there's this, there's an opening, an empty space. And what shines through that empty space is being. And so you, a portal into being is whenever something collapses in your life or dies, potentially, it's a portal into the realization of the dimension of being.

And then you become aware of yourself as the deep I, which is the being that you are, that is fullness, life in its fullness already is there as you, in you and as you. That's why Jesus said, I want you to have the fullness of life. That's the promise.

That's the teaching. I want you to have the fullness of life and the fullness of life. The Buddha calls emptiness.

It seems the opposite of what Jesus said, but it's the same thing. It's still, if you approach it from a different direction, fullness is not to be understood as containing many things. The fullness that Jesus speaks of is prior to all things or content.

It's not to do with content. It's a primordial fullness, the deep sense of aliveness and peace that needs nothing because everything is already contained there and prior to form. It's the formless dimension, another way of putting it.

Now the wonderful thing is we are here and now because we've realized the possibility of this and in most of you, the being dimension is already arising. You already have some access to it. This is what has drawn you here.

Ultimately not here, although we call it school, it's not a school in the sense that you learn things, that you add things to your mind, concepts and all that. It's not that. You

realize who you are at this level is totally complete and there's no time in it.

It's not the person anymore. And you get it when you see a moment of stillness, like now, when you listen attentively to these words. Of course, the words are just signposts.

They're not it. But behind the words, there is the dimension to which these words point. It is within you and it is possible.

And I hope it is the case that as you listen to these signposts, at the same time, you have at least some realization of what it is that these words point to within yourself. An inner space of stillness, for example, could call it that. The deep eye, free of concepts, free of past and future.

So, your sense of who you are, your sense of identity has shifted from the personal sense of self, determined by the past, looking towards the future. The personal sense of self, it has shifted. And by the way, the personal sense of self is a story.

Ultimately, it's a collection of thoughts that you identify with as yourself and as your life. And you tell yourself the story again and again, looking for some solution because the story is not yet satisfying enough. And some areas of the story are very unsatisfying.

But you have to think about it. Can't stop thinking about it. So, your sense of identity is no longer derived from the content of your mind, but it goes, it shifts.

It goes to a deeper level. We could use either deeper or higher. I prefer the word deeper because higher could create the impression that who you essentially are is up there somewhere.

Where is my real self? Well, it's up there. It's easier to find if you go within.

It's not up there. So, it's the deep eye. And that gives you your sense of who you are.

Identity, but very different from the self identity, the personal identity. It's an identity that is very powerful. The power of the universe itself is there, but it doesn't have concepts in it.

So, on that level, conceptually, you no longer know who you are conceptually. Because how could you? If you have no concepts about who you are, who are you?

And your past becomes irrelevant because your past is an accumulation of thoughts. You have to think about your past for the past to exist. So, all that becomes irrelevant to who you are.

So, another question I could ask, who are you without your past right now? Don't remember your past. Let go of it.

There's no need to remind yourself of who you are. Just let go of any concepts that tell you who you are. Now, what's left of who you are when you have let go of all concepts of who you are that tell you who you are?

Now, you won't be able to answer that because any answer would be another concept. But you can sense the beingness of you. That's one way of putting it.

No concepts. A presence or the presence. And that's your true identity is there.

Your true beingness is there. Who you essentially are, the essence of who you are is there. That's it.

The challenge now is when you get involved in becoming again, as you have to, because you're a person here, not to completely lose yourself in the stream of becoming so that you can deal with the becoming dimension where you do things, think about things, interact with other people, learn new skills, have new experiences, and so on. Not to be totally absorbed by the stream of becoming, because all the challenges exist there too as you move in the stream of becoming. It's like a river.

You're a current of a river. You're in this river and it's dragging you along. And then you see these big boulders sticking out of the river here and there.

So dangerous. These are the big challenges of life. And sometimes the river drags you and you hit one of these huge boulders.

Oh, that was painful. And that's inevitable that from time to time you hit these boulders in the river of becoming. So the skill then is have some awareness left, awareness of the being dimension, which is a wrong way of saying it, because when I use words, I have a subject and an object in a sentence, grammatical structure of a sentence.

So when I say awareness of being, it sounds like two things. I am aware of being, but it's not two things. It's one.

It's a self-awareness. So when I say you are aware of yourself, that again is wrong, but language forces us to use these words. And then we have a grammatical structure in a sentence that immediately creates a duality.

Whenever you open your mouth and form a sentence, which has a subject and an object, most sentences have, duality immediately arises. And so you think of yourself on a conceptual level. You think about your life, my life, even the words my life, as it's already a duality that the mind has created, because it implies that you and life are two things, different things.

My life, there's me and there's life, but you are life. And then people say, I have a good life. I have a bad life.

Well, who are you without life? What is life? And even things like I love myself, which is better than I hate myself, but it's still not the absolute truth because there's a duality there.

Who are you and what it is that you love? What is it that you love? Who are you?

And then the fear comes that you could lose your life. He lost his life. Okay.

So there's he, and there's a life that he lost, two entities. So who is he without life? So you can't lose your life and you don't have a life.

You are life, a manifestation of the one life, the one consciousness that expresses itself in in countless forms throughout the universe. The one life, the one consciousness that underlies all phenomenal, phenomenal existence, phenomena, which means the manifested world, that all the, what there is underneath the world of phenomena is that birth and death, birth and death, things arise and subside, arising and subsiding. Underneath this continuous movement of becoming and dying and becoming and dying lies a vast intelligence, a vast consciousness.

It expresses itself as a tree, a blade of grass, a bird, or you, yourself or me, a human. And it expresses itself undoubtedly in many other forms, life forms. And of course, what our senses give us access to is a very limited range of reality.

And of course, there are other dimensions, but they're all, all this is the manifested world. There's nothing beyond the one. I have some awareness and that's continuous alertness is required.

So the stream of becoming does not completely take you over. And so you have some awareness left in that field of awareness. You're aware of yourself as the presence.

In other words, you know, there's a stillness in you that you can sense in the background, even while you do things in the foreground, foreground and background. The background is the consciousness and you can't see it. It's the unseen and who you are is mostly unseen.

The body itself is a tiny fragment of who you, but you, who you essentially are is not something that could be perceived with senses, the five senses. No surgeon, if they open up your body or your brain would find you there. They cannot find you there because you are essentially invisible because you belong to that realm.

So our challenge is as you go through life, realize, don't forget to realize the most important thing in any situation or whatever you're doing is where, whether you are still aware of yourself in the background, the invisible self, the invisible being, the alive stillness, the presence in the background of what you do, even while you go about your business doing this and that, walking somewhere, driving somewhere, using your

devices.

Are you still aware of the background? So foreground, background. The background is the essence of who you are.

That's where you're complete already. The foreground is where things, you need to do things, the realm of doing. Then you are a two-dimensional being, one foot in one world, the transcendent dimension, and one foot in the phenomenal dimension of the manifested world, the world of becoming, being, becoming.

Bring these two together and then you fulfill the purpose of your life by accepting the challenge and the task of bringing the two dimensions together within yourself in your daily life. That is, are you able to succeed in that? Of course, you may not succeed immediately, but that is your main reason for being here is to embody both dimensions, bring the dimension of being into this world of becoming.

Your personal circumstances don't matter. You can do it whether you are living in a mansion, or in a prison. You can do it regardless of your life situation.

And in fact, it's probably more likely for you to realize this in a prison cell than in a mansion, until a moment comes when the mansion collapses in an earthquake, then perhaps something opens up. Or perhaps you are so detached that the mansion, although you're still there, is not important to you. It's there, it's fine, but you won't know that for sure, because it's easy to say, I've often met people who say, I'm no longer attached to these things.

But you won't know that for sure until the thing disappears or leaves you, or is destroyed. Then you'll know whether you were right or wrong when you said, I'm not attached to it. And attachment is something that means you derive part of your identity from it, ultimately a superficial and ultimately fictitious sense of self.

So perhaps we'll go to a question after this introduction. Let's see what they are.

[Speaker 2] (26:37 - 26:39)

Hi. Hello, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (26:40 - 26:41)

Hello, how are you?

[Speaker 2] (26:42 - 26:48)

I'm very well, thank you very much. And I'm just very happy to be able to be talking to you.

[Speaker 1] (26:48 - 26:49)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (26:50 - 28:40)

I've read some of your books, and a lot of the things you were talking about just now hit home with the death piece of it, because that's when I ran into your book, Power of Now. And it was the perfect time for that, because I was at that place where everything had sort of, with the death of my husband, everything else didn't matter, nothing mattered. And I was at that open place, as you talk about, and I didn't know I was at that place until later.

My question, you've answered it actually today with the becoming and the being, working together. But it's still, it's a question for me as I use these practices, is how can I stay conscious when I'm in a really intense kind of communication situation or discussion when I really want to make my point? Because I know it's the point that needs to be made, right?

I notice that I become unconscious then, and I'm really involved in that discussion. But how do I stay present in that when I really feel like I need to make that point? And then the other part of it is I practice the, okay, the breathing and being still, and then I don't even enter the discussion, really.

I just am there being still and present and not making my point. And I've tried it, but I do know that when I'm not conscious, or I watch myself being that way, so that I really, I pat myself on the back when I'm at least watching myself be unconscious, if that makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (28:40 - 28:42)

Oh yes, just makes sense.

[Speaker 2] (28:42 - 29:02)

But how can I get to that place where both, as you just said, the being and the becoming are together? Because I feel like I'm on a seesaw kind of thing, where I'm present, but I'm not really involved in the discussion, or I'm really totally in it, and I'm not really present. How do I get together?

[Speaker 1] (29:02 - 37:56)

Very good point. Very good question. Many people experience that, I'm sure.

I know that many people have the same challenge. People who become aware of the depth dimension of being, for some time, for quite some time, it may happen that they

can either be still and present, or they can be involved in the world and then lose the stillness. So are they in either one or the other?

But at least you already have access to the other. So that's a huge, a wonderful progress in your evolution, that at least you're aware of that dimension, or you're not yet able to bring the two together, which is the big challenge. So in a discussion, it's very, very easy to get completely drawn into the stream of self-identified thinking.

So there's not only, you have a mental position, that means an opinion, or viewpoint, or perspective on something, something you believe this is how it is, and it's important that the other person should also believe that. That's why the discussion arises. You want to show the other person that you are right.

So the need to be right is a very, and it's good to observe it in yourself as it arises. The need to be right is a very strong egoic need. It's part of the ego survives by being right.

It needs to be right. It cannot be wrong because it considers being wrong to be a small death. It dies when it's shown to be wrong.

It's virtually intolerable to the egoic sense of self to be wrong. So it needs to show that it's right. So it's to the desire, the compulsion to be right is a very, very common form of ego.

And now you already may, as I believe you mentioned just now, sometimes you are perhaps in the middle of being involved in a discussion, you become aware that you are in the grip of this strong movement. And that's an enormous gain in consciousness to be aware because most people are not aware. Perhaps if they're lucky, they wake up afterwards and say, oh, and then perhaps retrospectively, they say, I got so upset, but it was completely pointless.

Because very often it is pointless. No change will come of it. And the more you are identified with your mental position, which is ego, mental position is a group of thoughts or one thought.

To be identified means, as you probably know, is you derive your sense of self from certain thoughts. So these thoughts are imbued with a sense of self, very different from just ordinary thoughts. These are egoic thoughts.

And this is quite normal for most people to have to be in the grip of that, to be in the grip of mental, these mental positions. Now, if you can be aware, while it happens, you're already beginning to step out of it. You may not be able to stop yourself at that point.

Right, right. But there is an observing presence in the background. It cannot yet change the situation.

It's not strong enough to, because you're so involved in the identification with your mental position at that point, that you cannot step out of it, but you can know already that you are in it. That is an important step because most people are so identified in those moments, they do not know what's happening to them. Because ultimately, something is happening to you in these situations, you're not doing it, it's happening to you.

So, because there's virtually no choice involved, because once this is something triggers, you have a discussion, something is triggered in you, and then the mind comes up and speaks through you, and it's the egoic mind. It is helpful so that there's more presence in you to practice presence, to become aware of presence when you're not being challenged. Because, for example, situations that are conducive to being present are being out in nature.

These are situations when you're really there, absorb, look at the sky, the ocean, and to give your fullest attention, say, oh, it's so wonderful, but not just give attention to that, at the same time, feel the presence that you are as you observe that. So, you have that which you observe, and you can sense that presence. So, nature can make you still.

If you give attention to nature, any natural phenomenon, it can help you to become still because nature is not mind, it's prior to mind. So, nature can help you to use nature a lot and practice stillness when you're not being challenged. And gradually, the power of stillness grows in you, and stillness itself doesn't grow, but the ability of stillness to come through you grows.

It's like, let's say, having a light in you. The light in you ultimately does not grow because it's timeless, the light of consciousness, the light that you are, that in itself, the light does not grow. But to use an analogy, a very weird analogy, let's say, you or any human being, you are like a lamp.

The person is the lampshade, and the light behind is the light of consciousness of who you are. Now, the lampshade varies from person to person, it consists of all kinds of forms of conditioning, and some lampshades are very dense. They let very little light through.

You can still see light through, otherwise there would be nothing there, but there's a density in this lampshade. So, when I say the power of presence grows in you, it doesn't mean that the consciousness itself grows because that would imply time, and consciousness is timeless. So, the essence of who you are is timeless.

But when we look at this from this dimension, it seems that gradually you become more conscious, you become more present. What that means is that the lampshade gradually loses its density, less resistance, less ego. So, this is what I mean when I say the presence power, gradually it grows in you, which means gradually the light of presence

becomes brighter.

It shines through you more easily because the lampshade, which is a person or the personality, becomes less dense. And this is what's happening to you. So, do not demand that immediately you should be free of all identification with thinking.

There's still a lampshade there, that's perfectly fine. Gradually, though, the presence in you grows. And you already, quite often, as you say, the witnessing presence is there in the background.

And that witnessing presence is that this presence grows in you and then gets stronger. And then a point may come when in the middle of a heated discussion, let's say, you suddenly become aware and say, you see, it's actually pointless. The only point it is, it strengthens your sense of self.

And then you may be able to just drop it.

[Speaker 2] (37:56 - 38:01)

Oh, that would be nice. That would be nice. I would like that.

[Speaker 1] (38:01 - 50:25)

I recommend that you, whenever it happens, that you regard it as an experiment. Next time you are involved in some kind of discussion, whatever the topic may be, be that you feel strongly about, regard it as an experiment in consciousness and see, okay, now what happens if I drop it in the middle of it or at the beginning? It doesn't matter at what point it drops.

And am I able to do it? Am I able to really let go? Especially if you see the point, because many discussions are actually pointless.

They do not bring about any change. They only reinforce your sense of self, especially if you win the discussion. But very often there is no winner because when you are involved in an egoic position, it's very unlikely that you convince anybody else because they are involved in their egoic position.

You just strengthen, you mutually strengthen your ego. Now, there are other situations where perhaps something, you're having a discussion with somebody because some change needs to happen. For example, let's say you bought something and it's defective and then you bring it back to the store and then the shopkeeper refuses to give you your money back or whatever the situation be.

Now, here this would be a situation where you want to initiate a change in the situation and there too, it is quite often more effective to let go of the egoic involvement. It doesn't mean that you cannot pursue the discussion. And that's an interesting point.

Yes, quite often discussions are totally pointless. And the more conscious you become, the more you realize which discussions are actually completely pointless and what discussions may have some purpose. Some discussion may have some purpose, especially those discussions.

Is that question, is that an alternative to becoming so identified with your position, your viewpoint that you lose yourself in it and you become very emotional. And some people even start shouting or not you, but in some unconscious people, it even can reach a point of violence, physical violence. The ego, I'm sure you don't beat people up, but the ego in people who are very unconscious, when the ego feels it's being threatened, it's losing the argument, it can resort in very unconscious people.

It can often resort to physical violence. So often people come to physical violence happens as a result of a heated discussion. It's not uncommon in this world.

Now, is there an alternative to, is it still possible to put forward in situations where it is really necessary because a change to bring about a change in a situation, is it possible to express yourself firmly and clearly without ego? And again, that's a practice. Can you explain the situation in clear, straightforward language, perhaps even forceful because some situations may require it without anger, without negativity.

This is especially important, for example, with children. Sometimes they do silly things and you need to be very strongly say, this is wrong, which may be very dangerous, what they may be doing something to climb on a high wall and might fall off. You need to sometimes very forcefully say this.

And it's important to be able to do that, perhaps a little easier with children, your children, because perhaps you can be free of ego with your children more easily than with other people. I don't know, I'm just talking generally. To be forceful without negativity, which means without ego in situations that actually require it.

Or you have an animal, you have a dog. Some people get angry with their animals. I knew some people, they would have angry discussions with their cat.

Why did you do that? You shouldn't have done that. And there are two kinds of no.

There is a no that is toxic and negative. And there's another no that has no negativity, but it's just strong energy. And that's something you can practice.

If there's enough awareness in you, you can tell the difference between forcefully say something and to know whether there is toxic negativity in it or whether it's a clear power that speaks through you because you recognize the situation requires it. And that also means that once the situation has been dealt with, you're able to immediately let go of it. You don't need to revive it in your head because you might have noticed when you lose yourself in a discussion, a heated argument discussion, sometimes for a long time

afterwards, you replay it in your head.

It's not uncommon. And often people in their head when they replay an argument, they find better things to say that they should have said, but why didn't I think of that? I should have said that.

So they keep it alive. They keep it alive in the head. And some people then go back to that person and want to revive the discussion because they found better counter arguments in the meantime, because they, and so they go back to this person, you know, another thing I should, I want to tell you, and it starts all over again.

And you're also familiar with people having a heated discussion. One person walks out of the room in anger, and one minute later, the door opens and he or she comes back in and says, oh, and I thought of something else. It's all a little crazy and dysfunctional.

The main thing has already happened to you, which is there is an observing presence when these things arise. And as this observing presence grows, then you will be able to tell the difference between a discussion that is pointless, that only strengthens your ego, and then you practice letting go. It's a wonderful practice.

It's easier probably to let go at the beginning when you can feel the compulsion arising to say something here. And at that point, it's, you see how futile it is, and you let go of it. Oh, you drop it.

It's very liberating to let go of something like that. At first you feel the ego feels diminished when you do that. Oh, yes.

One more thing. When you are involved in a discussion, when you let go of something, the ego feels it's a little death that the ego dies when you see the futility of a counter argument, of even getting involved in it, and you let go of it. At first, it feels very strange.

You're not fueling the other person's position because when you contradict, you give fuel to the other person's ego when you come from your ego. So that's when you recognize that, you let go of that. And sometimes, you may find you want to put forward your opinion when, let's say, there's a group of people, they're discussing this or that, and suddenly you feel the need arise to various, you have a very strong need to say, no, no, no, that's not how it is, I'll tell you.

And then that is, again, is an egoic need to assert yourself. The ego wants to assert itself and grow through the situation. And when you see it's actually pointless to give your contribution here to this, and you said, okay, I'll just drop it.

This urge to insert yourself in the conversation and give your viewpoint, and you just as an experiment, let's drop it. This can be quite pleasant. At first, it feels very strange

because the ego shrinks then.

But the more the ego shrinks, the more power comes through you, true power, the more presence power comes through you. And that's a wonderful thing. So it's practice presence when you're not being challenged in these situations so that when the situations arise, you can regard them every time you're involved in some kind of discussion, which is you notice it's beginning to become a heated discussion.

See, okay, here's my experiment in consciousness, then you have, instead of your purpose, then your main purpose is no longer to, to convince the other person that you're right, or whatever it may be, your main purpose is to conduct this experiment in consciousness. So your purpose shifts in the situation. And that'll be very interesting.

So you do it next time, whenever, sometimes you can see, oh, it's beginning to happen when you're, oh, there it is. And that's where your presence needs to come in. So okay, here, let's experiment with this.

The first thing is, is there any point at all in arguing? And if you say yes, there still is a point, because this person might be convinced by what I say, it's possible, especially if you don't say it with ego, it's possible that you can convince a person, the more ego is in your argument, the less likely it is that you will convince or persuade anybody. So you only strengthen the other person's ego.

But if you put forward your position, clearly, and concisely, so there's no ego in it, you don't have the need to be right. And it could be that you're wrong. That is a wonderful thing for a person to be able to say, oh, you're right, I was wrong.

The ego can't do that. The ego would rather create some kind of lie. Because it's more important for the ego to be right than to find the truth.

And so if the ego cannot be right, it would rather lie than find the truth. So probably you are beyond that stage already. I don't think you would, from what I can sense or feel, you would resort to falsehood or lying just to be continue to be right.

But I'm just saying this for other people might be helpful for other people to know that often, the ego will be very happy to lie in order, it will create any kind of total, factual untruth, just to continue to be right. It's quite amazing to watch the ego how it operates.

[Speaker 2] (50:27 - 50:35)

So as you're talking, I can see many scenarios. And so I have many opportunities to experiment.

[Speaker 1] (50:35 - 50:48)

Right. Wonderful. Great.

Well, I wish you success in this. And I feel confident that you will succeed, perhaps not every time, but you will succeed.

[Speaker 2] (50:49 - 51:06)

Yes. And thank you very much. I thank you for the explanation and the conversation.

I appreciate it. And very much thank you personally for bringing all of this out, your books, everything, because you're right on. I mean, you really are.

[Speaker 3] (51:07 - 51:30)

Thank you. Thank you so much. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast.

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Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The End of Suffering [69299037-bd7d-439b-9ae9-99aff2d42df2]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:45)

The end of suffering. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions about suffering as part of the human condition. He says many spiritual traditions focus on awakening as the end of suffering.

Paradoxically, Eckhart says we need to go through a certain amount of suffering in order to realize we don't want it anymore. He says oftentimes our suffering is caused not by our life situation but our reaction to it. He believes much of our pain is generated by the mind.

And it's toxic narrative. Eckhart says we can move beyond suffering by embracing life's challenges. He says they are a doorway into the transcendent realm and that when we step into the light of consciousness, we are free from suffering at last.

[Speaker 1] (0:47 - 2:38)

Hello, everybody. Here we are again. Let's acknowledge the present moment, which means becoming aware, not only of your sense perceptions, but also becoming aware of yourself.

Not of yourself as a person, not the historical self, but being aware of yourself as the awareness. And so you don't need to remember who you are or who you will be. Just be aware of being, of being aware.

A silent space of presence. And that transcends who you are as a person. It transcends your life situation, whatever is happening in your life situation.

So this is the transcendent dimension of consciousness. That's the essence of all spiritual teachings. And this will always be challenged by the things of this world.

And your work, so to speak, is to embody this deeper dimension of consciousness, even while engaged in the affairs of everyday life. And even when confronted with problems.

[Speaker 3] (2:42 - 3:11)

We'll begin now with the first question, written question that we've received. This participant writes in, I do not believe that we need challenges to make presence grow. I don't believe that presence shrinks when there are no challenges.

You make it sound almost like you want bad things to keep happening so people can grow. How would you respond to this, Eckhart? ECKHART.

[Speaker 1] (3:13 - 17:55)

All spiritual teachings, or every path of awakening, if you want to call it that, is concerned with the end of suffering. Although it might not, not every teaching puts it that way, although the Buddha did. The Buddha characterized his teaching in the following words.

I teach suffering and the end of suffering. So the spiritual teaching is there to liberate you from suffering. And the strange paradox is, and this applies not to everybody, but to the majority of humans, you need to go through a certain amount of suffering before you realize that you don't want it anymore and there is a way beyond suffering.

So that's a little paradox almost. So generally speaking, the human condition is, as the Buddha characterized it, is one of suffering. He called it dukkha, translated as suffering, unhappiness, unsatisfactoriness, misery.

There are many ways you can translate it, but it all comes down to that thing. And if you look closely, you find that an enormous amount of suffering and ultimately all suffering arises through a dysfunction in the human mind. So a moment comes in a person's awakening when he or she realizes that unhappiness that they are experiencing is not derived primarily from the situation that the person finds himself in, but from the narrative of the mind that comments on the situation.

Most of your suffering, and ultimately all your suffering arises in your own mind, that's the beginning of an awakening. It could start with a simple thing like realizing when you get anxious about something, when you get irritated with something, realizing in that moment that this irritation, which is a minor form of suffering, anger is a form of suffering not usually recognized as such. So, slight irritation, you may realize that it does not, although there seems to be an external cause to it, but it does not arise ultimately from the external cause, it arises from the mental commentary about the external cause.

So, there's an awakening there when you realize that suffering is self-creating. Until you reach that point, suffering has a purpose. Suffering has a purpose because ultimately it awakens you so that you are ready, you reach that point where you realize the possibility of going beyond suffering.

Once you've reached that point, you begin to experience what presence is in your life. You begin to experience, you may have glimpses of presence, of awareness, and once you have that, you can choose to live in awareness, you can choose a moment of presence, and you don't need to be forced into it anymore by suffering. So, there comes a point where you can consciously cooperate, so to speak, with the arising of presence instead of having to be forced into presence through intense suffering.

Spiritual teachings and spiritual teachers are helpful if they are genuine because they

can accelerate the awakening process. So, it does not apply, there are exceptions to every rule, so there are some humans who awaken with little or no suffering also. I have known of some cases where humans did not need to go through an enormous amount of suffering.

It's always best if you look at your own life, if you want to know whether suffering is needed or not, did you need suffering before coming here? Did the suffering that arose in your past bring you to this point when you're here now, where you realize the possibility of, and not only realize the possibility of, where you actually are becoming more and more present, where presence deepens continuously. So, there's a reason why you have reached this point, and for most of you, it's a suffering of one kind or another, but perhaps not for all.

There are exceptions, and perhaps those people have suffered enough in past lifetimes. There are certain exceptions, for example, in the case of Ramana Maharshi, the famous sage from India. He experienced an awakening at a very early age of 17 with little or no suffering.

He had a very deep death experience at the age of, I think it was 16 or 17, a very deep experience of dying. He didn't have any illness. It was just a spontaneous death experience.

And in that moment, his ego, his egoic sense of self died, and he became awakened. That's fairly rare, but it can happen. So, the questioner says, I don't believe we need challenges to end there.

Well, whether you believe it or not doesn't really matter, but look at your own life. Is there evidence in your own life that you've gone through suffering, and the suffering has triggered an awakening, or perhaps you haven't? The important thing is the challenges that are inevitable in life, we are being challenged continuously in life.

The question is, and this is a deciding factor in finding out how conscious you are, whether you are awakening, if not awakened. The question is, do the challenges that are continuous in life, one after another, with little intervals sometimes, yes, are they transformed into suffering and unhappiness? Is there an egoic self there that experiences this as suffering, or are you able to face the challenges of life without converting them unconsciously into suffering?

And when that happens, then every challenge that comes into your life will make you more present. Until that happens, challenges that come into your life for a long time make you more reactive, more unconscious, and you suffer even more and more until finally there is an awakening. Some people awaken because they know they're going to die soon, or they have been told that they're going to die soon, which normally would create an enormous amount of suffering created by the mind.

And some people experience a spontaneous awakening when that happens, perhaps after a period of intense suffering, there's suddenly a liberation. So, generally speaking, you need to suffer until you realize you don't need to suffer anymore. Or another way of putting it is when somebody asks you, do I need time to awaken spiritually, to awaken?

You need time until you realize that you don't need time. So, time and suffering go together. So, the suffering has a purpose up to a certain point, and that's the point of the awakening of consciousness.

Then suffering can still happen, but gradually the suffering is transcended more and more and is replaced with presence. And then as the challenges arise in your life, and they may change too, they may become less. They may not be as extreme as they were before.

They may be smaller challenges. But whatever challenge happens in your life, once the awakening process has started, there's a good likelihood that the challenge will deepen you, whether it's a challenge of a relationship challenge, a health challenge, a financial challenge, it doesn't matter, challenge of what kind. And only you can know whether, when you're not being challenged, whether there's a decrease in your sense of presence, or whether you're able to sustain your presence, even when everything is going fine, everything, are you still able to embody that presence, even when you're not being challenged?

If that's the case, then you do not need the suffering anymore, the challenge anymore, to force you into presence. So, only you have to know in your own life whether you're able to sustain presence, even without, and this, many of you have reached that point, I know that, where suffering, you don't need to be forced into presence anymore, you can choose presence, this is the huge difference. But if a huge challenge should arise, then presence will intensify.

Everybody will be challenged by old age, unless you die young. As somebody once said, old age isn't so bad if you consider the alternative. So, you will be challenged by old age, you will be challenged by certain, perhaps certain bodily functions that are no longer performing as they used to.

All those things, approaching death, can be a wonderful way of being more and more present. I've experienced, I've seen people in the face of death going through a very rapid transformation, so that there was virtually no person left anymore, there was just a luminous sense of intensely alive presence, which is wonderful to see, this is a possibility. Even if you haven't practiced presence in your life, there's always a last chance, and that is as death approaches.

But if you have been consumed with the affairs of day-to-day living, and the drama of human affairs for 85 years, and then perhaps it's not so easy to become present, just as

death approaches. So, the important thing to remember is, am I still converting the challenges of life into suffering, which implies a suffering entity, a suffering me, an egoic sense of self, that actually becomes stronger when it suffers, because there's an identification with the suffering, the suffering strengthens the egoic sense of self, for quite a long time. Until a point is reached where it becomes so much that this cannot be sustained anymore, and then the opposite happens.

First suffering strengthens the ego for a long time, and then the point is reached where suffering begins to erode the ego. Sometimes it can happen very quickly, sometimes it happens gradually, developing a physical disability, or whatever, and I've seen people with physical disabilities whose ego has been gradually eroded through suffering. So, that's a very, very interesting point.

Suffering for a long time strengthens the ego until this point of a limit is reached where you can't take any more suffering, and then suddenly, the same suffering that before strengthens the ego now begins to erode the ego. It's a wonderful, wonderful process. It's also embodied in the image of the Christian cross.

The Christian cross is the torture instrument, which is a symbol for human suffering, and the Jesus on the cross is the archetypal human, and the cross is both the torture instrument, it's symbolized as suffering, but the cross is also a symbol for the divine at the same time, and that shows you that suffering, the torture, is a doorway into the transcendent dimension, and once you've taken a step into the transcendent dimension, then you leave that torture instrument behind, and the cross is the divine.

[Speaker 2] (17:58 - 18:32)

Hello. Hello, Eckhart. This is amazing.

Thank you. My question is, I had a decision to stop drinking alcohol. It had become an addiction to sort of numb myself from my emotions, and I also have been an emotional eater as well, and I'm concerned that once the course has ended that it might not be as easy.

I have so many tools with the meditations and all, but I was wondering if there is more to help me through this transition.

[Speaker 1] (18:33 - 19:19)

Right, so you were able to give up the drinking alcohol, and also eating, you say, was a problem for a while, but your eating is more, it's normal now, you eat no more than the body needs, so how did you develop the ability to stop drinking, because I know there's an urge once a certain addictive pattern that has established itself, then there's the addiction itself has a gravitational pull, and was it through presence that you were able to observe this gravitational pull and then go beyond it?

[Speaker 2] (19:20 - 19:30)

Absolutely. The teachings and listening to all the callers, it's been so helpful, and it's made me so much more aware.

[Speaker 1] (19:31 - 24:42)

Yes, so it seems to be working, and you're not the only one for whom an addiction and the need to go beyond addiction, and again, this links into the first question and answer that we had today, the addiction, which is also a form of suffering, ultimately forced you to become more present so that you could go beyond it, and again, you can see that retrospectively, you can even be thankful for having gone through that. We cannot know beforehand whether the question itself, you don't even need to ask yourself the question whether you will be able to sustain it, because for presence, all you need is to be present in this moment.

If you start thinking of whether you will be able to sustain presence when this course comes to an end, for example, you don't know the answer, but there's a good chance that this course and what preceded it, you're already reading the books and doing spiritual practice. During this time, the power of presence has been growing in you, and it's unlikely that it will now dissipate again, although setbacks can happen and have happened to people. It's true that sometimes setbacks happen, but once a certain degree of presence is reached, then the power is there against which these addictive patterns are relatively helpless.

You need to be careful, though, when some kind of challenge or problem comes into your life in whatever form, and eventually something will come again, things, they always come, that you need to be very careful at that point of when a challenge or problem arises in your life. There's the point where you can, there's a moment of, or a decision of becoming more intensely present or falling back into a pattern of numbing yourself to the emotion. You need to be very careful, be aware that no matter what problem may arise in the future, whether it's to do with the relationship, or finances, or your living situation, or your health, or somebody close to you, it doesn't matter what it is, but as a problem arises, always be very immediately identified as there's a challenge, and now you have a choice.

You can either go into numbing yourself so that you don't want to experience the pain of the challenge, and then you go to drinking or eating, or you can become more intensely present, and that you can, you look the challenge in the face, you face it completely, and then the power actually grows with every challenge, then the power in you grows. There may be certain thought patterns associated with the addiction that you need to be aware of, for example, in the case of overeating, or also in the case of drinking, there's a certain narrative that can easily arise, perhaps this happened to you before, that can easily arise in your mind, a little thing that tells you something in your mind, for

example, if it's, let's say it's overeating, you come home in the evening, you had a stressful day, you come home and there you sit, and then the thought comes in, you can feel the addiction, the certain gravitational pull towards going to the fridge and taking out something, incarnating into a chocolate cake or whatever it is, then the thought comes in, oh, I've had a rough day, I deserve a treat. I've had a really rough day, whether you say I or you talk, some people talk to themselves in this, they say you, you've had a rough day, you deserve a treat, you should, don't deprive yourself of everything, you really deserve a treat. And if you're not careful enough, this thought, which is linked to the addictive pattern, will take you to the fridge, and then you will, you'll find a justification for going along with the addiction.

So, be careful if that ever arises again, so you can identify a certain thought that seems to justify the addiction and don't believe, that's why sometimes we say, don't believe in every thought that comes into your mind. So, when there's a self-talk, be careful with any thought that seeks to justify the addiction, it's a thought that's actually been created by the energy of the addiction. Does that make sense?

[Speaker 2] (24:43 - 25:04)

It does, very much. I would say the only fear that I have is probably, you know, after the course ends, I don't know, I just feel like going out socially, that I think is where the temptation might come in, but I just believe that my path is to not, not drink.

[Speaker 1] (25:04 - 26:38)

Yes, yes, there too, observe your mind to see what it says, because your mind might say, oh, just this once, there may even come a time when you can enjoy a glass of wine or something without the danger that it will pull you into unconsciousness, but that's probably not, unless you haven't reached that point, you may not reach that point, it doesn't really matter. I drink a glass or two of wine, usually with dinner, and I cannot drink more, so there's never a desire to go beyond that, and so it's not a problem, and if I had to give it up, that would be okay too, but that's fine, and I tell people on retreats and so on, avoid alcoholic beverages if you possibly can, even people who don't have a problem with drinking, who just are casual drinkers, they should also avoid, especially when they're engaged in intensive spiritual practice, because it can easily pull the, pull you out of presence, so use this challenge that you have, and you're doing it already, so that through it, you grow in presence, and then all will be well, continue to observe your mind, so that you don't believe in a thought that seeks to justify indulging in addiction again, so that'll be your practice.

[Speaker 2] (26:39 - 26:44)

Thank you so very much, thank you very much everybody, it's been amazing.

[Speaker 3] (26:45 - 27:21)

Thank you, you're very welcome. Thank you. Our next question, Eckhart, comes from someone who wrote in, as I observe the presence capabilities of those I'm close to in my family, the question arises as to whether senility, dementia, or even full-fledged Alzheimer's will wipe away all my conscious practice in being present.

Do you think we will revert to an unconscious state if our minds regress through senility, dementia, or Alzheimer's?

[Speaker 1] (27:22 - 36:29)

Now, of course, it's good to remember that you are not your mind, your mind is an instrument through which consciousness expresses itself. Consciousness, the mind, is a kind of focal point for consciousness, so what happens then when the mind deteriorates, to find an analogy, it's a little bit like you're watching a television broadcast, and the picture is suddenly not very good anymore, and it begins to flicker, and then it fades out, and then it comes back, and then it's not sharply defined anymore, and so there's obviously something wrong. It doesn't mean that something is wrong beyond this television, it could, but in this case, the television, the machine, has developed a dysfunction. Perhaps it's old, or perhaps some water got in there, or something.

It's not able to act any longer as fully as a transmitter of whatever the signals are that are flowing into the television. So, we are consciousness, and the consciousness that you are, the consciousness that I am, is a manifestation of the one consciousness that pervades the entire universe. One could say that the mind, or to talk in physical terms, the human brain, which undoubtedly there's an association with consciousness and the human brain.

The human brain acts a little bit like, yes, television or radio or a lens through which consciousness becomes focalized, through which consciousness manifests, and then it creates this world, because this world without your mind doesn't really exist as a world. So, consciousness creates this world, and it needs your mind, it needs the physical brain, in order to express itself through that. So, when the mind begins to fail, all it means is consciousness begins to withdraw, because it cannot express itself fully anymore.

So, basically, it's the beginning of dying, and some people die on the mental realm before they die physically, that in the case of Alzheimer's becomes more and more acute, then you can see then that the person basically isn't there anymore. Occasionally, you still see glimpses of the person that was there once, but it gradually is basically dissolving, and consciousness, the brain is no longer capable of acting as a transmitter of consciousness, and no gain in consciousness is left. There's an awakening process in the entire universe that is happening.

The universe is engaged in awakening, and you are only a small but important aspect of the awakening of consciousness in this dimension. And so, if consciousness awakens through you, this is not lost, this is part of the awakening of the totality of consciousness. So, no consciousness, no gain in consciousness is ever lost, and you are not your mind.

So, that perhaps is helpful to know if you, especially for perhaps if you are with somebody close to you or a loved one who is suffering from Alzheimer, or you begin to suffer from memory loss, and then perhaps more severe. So, as you practice presence, I would, I don't have any scientific evidence for this, and I don't think it exists, but I would suggest that if you live in presence, it's less likely that you will develop Alzheimer in old age. Perhaps it could still happen, but I would suggest that it is less, much less likely.

So, you are not your mind. The mind is an instrument for consciousness, and when the mind fails, it does not affect the underlying consciousness. Underlying the entire universe, the sense-perceived universe, is a field of intelligence that is the organizing principle behind form.

And so, no matter what happens on the surface level of form, it does not affect the underlying consciousness. And so, that also implies that no matter what drama happens in this dimension, and it is, it may well be a tragedy and very dramatic and very dreadful in this dimension. There's always another perspective and another level of truth, which does not invalidate the lower level of truth.

So, it does not say that a dreadful event like genocide or something like that, that it doesn't matter. No, it is true that this is a dreadful event on this level of truth from a higher, deeper or higher perspective. That consciousness that gave life to all these suffering forms still continues to exist and has not been affected by what happens on the level of physical reality.

It's an underlying, deeper reality. So, ultimately, another way of putting it, there's only one being, there's only one I am, that is the one consciousness. There's one being that incarnates through countless billions and billions of forms.

And in this continuous process of death and becoming and birth and death, birth, becoming, dying, being born, becoming, dying, there's a gradual process of awakening in this dimension. But it emanates from a deeper dimension or higher dimension. And so, whatever happens in this dimension is almost a little bit like a symbol for something deeper.

It's not the ultimate reality. Nothing that happens here is the ultimate reality. And there's a wonderful line which I can quote to you from the book called The Course in Miracles.

And that is a little, this little quote is at the very beginning of The Course in Miracles, which is a huge book, the same length approximately as the Bible. It's a book of

psychological teaching. For some people it's very helpful, for others it's not.

But anyway, the entire course is summarized in the following words, and this is at the very beginning of the book. If you understand that, you understand the entire Course in Miracles and you understand every spiritual teaching in existence. Herein lies the peace of God, means in understanding, in experiencing the truth of this, that nothing real can be threatened, that nothing unreal ultimately exists.

In understanding this, as the Bible says, you are, your inner condition is called the peace of God that arises. And that's a very deep saying. You understand that, that's all you ever need of a level of context.

[Speaker 4] (36:31 - 36:51)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Everyday and the Transcendent [cad778c9-b066-466d-8aee-ad2f000b8c2d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:03)

The Every Day and the Transcendent. In this podcast, Eckhart elaborates on two of his key concepts, which he calls the horizontal and the vertical dimensions. Another way to put it is the every day and the transcendent.

The horizontal, he defines as the place of everyday life, our egos, identification with our thoughts and our personalities. He says the vertical is connected to the source of all life, which some call God. It's also where the transcendent dimension of ourself lives beyond space and time.

Eckhart says the primary purpose of our lives is to become aware of the vertical. Eckhart explains it's our destiny to live with a foot in both worlds. When we embrace the vertical, that transforms the horizontal.

He describes it like a cross, where the horizontal and vertical come together.

[Speaker 1] (1:06 - 47:20)

So here we are again in the present moment. What is that? It's not what you perceive with your senses, that's the content of the present moment.

What happens in the present moment. But become aware of that field of alive presence that underlies all your sense perceptions. In other words, to become deeply aware of the present moment goes beyond becoming aware of your sense perceptions, although quite often that's the first very useful step.

So to become aware of the present moment, first step, sense perceptions, you look around the room or wherever you are, perhaps you hear things, even some other senses may be involved, but probably mainly visual and auditory sense perception. So it takes you out of conceptual thinking and just pure perception, sense perception. That's number one.

And the next step is you go a bit deeper and become aware of something that you cannot see, can't really talk about, but an undeniable field of energy, consciousness that makes all sense perceptions possible, and that's always the same. The content of the present moment changes when you move from where you are now to somewhere else, different sense perceptions. Underlying all that is always the presence, without no sense perception would be possible, that presence is inseparable from who you are in your essence.

So you sense yourself as the underlying presence in which the world appears. Would

there be a room if you were not there to perceive it? That's a philosophical question.

Does it need a perceiving consciousness for the world to exist? Would there be a table without the perceiving consciousness that sees it as a table? What ultimately is just atoms and molecules in rapid motion in vast spaces in between, 99.99% empty space, and atoms and molecules swirling around continuously, it's not a table yet. But then a human sensory organ comes in and a consciousness behind it, and suddenly these swirling atoms and molecules become a table, or appear to be a table. Two very limited sensory organs, you can touch or you can see, but let's not go too far. You become aware of the present moment as that which underlies it all, and that is inseparable from who you are, the essence of who you are.

Sometimes I call it the vertical dimension because the rest of life is a horizontal dimension. The primary purpose of your life is, first of all, to become aware of the vertical dimension. Most humans are completely unaware.

For them, only the horizontal dimension exists, which is the world, and, of course, their mind. They're inseparable. Without mind, there's no world.

So your mind, your thought processes, your memories, mental images, ultimately all sense perceptions, if they're visual or auditory, they're all mental images. So the entire world that you perceive as out there happens, one could say, inside you. So one could say the world is in you.

It's an interesting way of, just for a little while, just to say there's nothing ultimately outside of me. The world happens in you. So some great philosophers have asked, what is there actually out there?

The thing in itself, is there anything out there, or what is it? We don't know. Is the entire world a mental creation, a mental projection, a little bit like the Matrix, the movie?

You can take the blue pill, then you stay confined in what I call the horizontal dimension of life. Or you can take the red pill, then you go deeper. So horizontal dimension, most humans are only aware of that.

So there's always, what now, what's the next thing, and the world is often a threatening place and never a very fulfilling place, although sometimes you achieve a bit of fulfillment here and there, or it comes to you, and then it's, ah, life is good, and it is good. But it's the goodness of life when you're only on the horizontal dimension is very limited, doesn't last long. There is a deeper goodness, but that's connected with the vertical dimension.

So the goodness you find on the surface of things is fleeting, nothing wrong with it, whatever it may be. You go on vacation, you go take a cruise, hopefully nothing happens, so you don't get suddenly the goodness of this woman gets marred, spoiled by

something happening, a virus, oh my God. And then other things happen, often it happens, your purpose of life, the purpose of your life is to become aware of the vertical dimension.

Many humans do not go there until the horizontal dimension becomes an increasingly unsatisfying place. As long as the horizontal dimension of life is relatively okay, it's okay, yeah, I've got a job, I'm doing okay, you're not really, but you can live with the worries that you have and all the things that you live on, the relationship problems and so on, okay, but it's not so much of a problem that you can't stand it anymore or that you're forced into extreme anxiety or fear, but that at some point it happens to many people.

Through adversity, the term we used, some form of suffering in their personal lives increases, great loss, or you achieve great things and the achievement of the great things are no longer satisfying, so despite your achievements, you experience again extreme anxiety and fear or depression, and that's a bad place to be, and I've met people who have achieved what the world would call great things, fame, wealth, and they've said they, after an initial high when they felt, oh, I've made it, they came down.

It's an almost common theme when you look at rock stars and some actors and their fame makes them unhappy after an initial period of elation. So the world can become an unsatisfying place not only because you lose something, it can also become an unsatisfying place because you have gained something and you've gained so much and that which you gained hasn't made you happy. Not only that, it's in some cases, in many cases of lottery winners who became more unhappy than they were before.

So whatever you do, sooner or later, the horizontal dimension where things happen, where you obtain things and look for things and experiences and people, it's all fine, there's nothing wrong with it. Achieve things in your life on this dimension, I want to build up a business, yes, why not? I want to write a book, I want to paint, become good at this or that, all wonderful, but not satisfying for very long, and wherever you go, you find something's creeping in to spoil your enjoyment of it for some reason.

We've talked about it before. So it looks as if somebody were sabotaging your life, some little demon somewhere saying, okay, you get married, you fall in love, it's so wonderful, and then the person that makes you happy today and in a year's time, the very same person makes you unhappy, or two years or a couple of months. So a human being reaches a kind of point, not every human, but you reach a point where you become dissatisfied, you see, you begin to doubt that you will ever, the world will ever make you happy, or you experience extreme forms of suffering, what in biblical word is calamity, you don't hear that word very often in the media, but you experience some form of calamity, either personal or you participate in a collective calamity that arises, a collective challenge as the virus, for example, and many other things are possible, and you can't foresee what the next one is going to be, and then suddenly millions of

humans are faced with perhaps extreme fear. They were in fear before, fear is very normal, when you only move on the horizontal dimension, then there's always an underlying fear, but you may not be very much aware of it, and sometimes it surfaces when you wake up at night, but when something happens on a collective scale, vast scale, then millions are suddenly pushed into extreme fear, anxiety, and that's the opportunity that arises when there's an extreme form of adversity for them, either in your personal life or the collective, then you become more ready to go beyond, to encounter something else that's always been there, but you ignored it completely, and that's the vertical dimension.

And the purpose of your life is to find it and then be rooted in it. Now what is the vertical dimension? It is the present moment, you could say the entry point or the portal into the vertical dimension is becoming aware of the present moment or beginning, and then, so your alertness goes up a bit when you become aware of the present moment, and you should do this particularly at the present times when you're watching the news or you're reading something on the, whatever they're posting about what's all the stuff that's extremely problematic in the world, oh my God, what's going to happen?

And of course the energy that comes through the media is high anxiety, sometimes almost hysteria, and it's very easy to be seduced by that, and then you become part of the collective fear that is there when you listen to commentators, all the stuff they talk about, so the energy that underlies it is, oh my God, and they love it because the media, the more negative emotion there is, the more people will watch it because it's kind of addictive, give me more, oh my God, so very important then when you watch these things, don't be hypnotically drawn into it, and then it takes over your mind, they're fearful, so your mind gets taken over by these thought forms, because that's what, you absorb the thought forms from the media, and then they become yours, so to speak, so what you have absorbed are energy fields that amplify what was already in you, because there was already in you throughout your life an underlying fear, an underlying sense of something is missing here, something is wrong, an unease in the background, most people have that, they don't even know it, because it's always there, like the humming noise that you hear in a room, the longer it goes on, the less you become aware of it, and if it goes on for a long time, you don't even know it's there, but when it suddenly stops, then you say, oh, what was that, there was this humming noise going on for hours, must have been going on for days or weeks, and that's the unease that is in your mental-emotional field, it's a bit like that, but it's a minor manifestation of fear, it's just an underlying sense of something not right here, yes, and there is something not right, and what's not right is ignoring the dimension of depth, the vertical dimension, that's the cross, another meaning of the cross points to the intersection of the two dimensions, the horizontal and the vertical, you need both, so then the media amplifies what was already in you, those patterns, and you absorb them, and then you can't think of anything else, so before you were thinking about your personal problems at night, you went, oh, this

and that, and now your mind gets taken over by this big one or several collective huge problems that are even bigger, they fuse with your personal problems, and so this whole thing is in your mind, it has taken you over, you don't know that that's what's happening, you don't know that what's happening is you're at the mercy of energy movements that live in you, and that's ultimately not you, there's a particular frequency to these thought forms, and the frequencies, they live in you, you don't know it because you're identified with them, so it's good to become aware that you're continuously thinking about these things and the thoughts fuel the fear in the emotional field, and say, okay, this is suffering, obviously it's a form of suffering, what is making you suffer?

Well, if you look deeply, it's the thought forms, because you haven't even caught this virus yet, if you should catch it, then it's not a problem, then you face that, we may talk about that in a minute, so you're in suffering almost worse than you were if you had caught the virus. So, realize this is not a pleasant place to be, it is destructive, it fulfills no useful purpose, and then see, could it be different? Am I at the mercy of all this, or could it be different?

You turn off the devices, doesn't mean you can't listen to the news, but not for too long, not for hours on end, you turn off the devices, and then you sit there, in your room or outside, wherever it may be, and this is the present moment, and then you become aware of your surroundings, become aware of yourself, your consciousness, and you stop thinking, what happens then, for a moment you stop thinking, but you're conscious, and that's the, there's the vertical dimension opening up, you're conscious, but not thinking, or thinking very little, there's a deepening of who you are, suddenly you discover a depth that you hadn't known before, it was there, but you didn't know it, and so a very quick way to get, if you don't know what vertical dimension is, it's just an abstract thing, to have a taste of it, is, if you stop thinking for a moment, now you might say, I can't do that, but that's just another thought that denies the fact that you can stop thinking for a moment, so you don't ask your mind whether you can stop thinking, because obviously it'll say, no, you can't, of course you can't, so you stop thinking for a moment, just like this, like now, now this is not a memorable thing, because it's not even an experience, because it doesn't have any content, if you stop thinking, there's something there, but you can't define it, just as a beingness or presence, that is your essence identity, which is connected to the vertical dimension, your form identity is the horizontal dimension, and I will now begin to look at some questions, what I've just said is virtually the answer to virtually every question, by the way, as we will see, the answer to virtually every question is that, I hear what you're saying, but when I get really afraid of losing all my money in the stock market, of getting sick, or losing a loved one, how do I handle that? Fear again, the question is about fear, how do I handle the fear of catching a disease, of losing many things, many people are experiencing not only the fear now of the virus, they're also experiencing the fear of the repercussions of what's happening, businesses are closing down, everything is closing down, it's a very strange thing, that

this is happening, it's like an enforced closing down of the busyness, not just the business, but the busyness of the world, an enforced sudden ending of all that, many planes are not flying anymore, some cities are empty of people, until this happened, the world was absurdly busy, noisy, busy, everything was in movement, everything was lost in the world, lost in the mind, and suddenly, as if somebody said, let's turn it off for a while, enforced stillness almost, exactly what millions of humans actually need to experience, it doesn't mean that they will automatically also experience the inner stillness, but there is a possibility of an awakening for many, if they can go beyond the fear, the fearful thoughts, but how do you go beyond the fearful thoughts? Well, it requires a little bit of awareness, but if you are here with us, you probably have that awareness, what I mean by that is, the awareness of what's going on in your mind, to recognize, rather than total identification with what's going on in your mind, you have in the background an awareness of what's going on in your mind, very different, because it's a different dimension of consciousness, the awareness, it's not the same as a thought, the awareness can recognize what thoughts go on in your mind, and you realize, I'm thinking all these useless thoughts, but that realization, I'm verbalizing it now, but because we are communicating through language, but that realization that all these useless and destructive thoughts are going through my head, that is a realization that is not verbal, it's pre- or post-verbal, because it comes through the awareness, and there's a simple recognition that what's going on in your mind is not helpful, it's making you fearful and unhappy, so it is to be tackled there, all these problems that he mentions, or he or she mentions three, fear of losing all my money or my savings, my investments, what I've been saving, of getting sick, or something bad could happen to a loved one, so you have fear for yourself, you have fear for others, and of course, all these things are not happening now, the things that you fear, but they could happen, says the mind, so I better think about it now, because in case it does, of course, if they did happen, you would face the situation with the power of your conscious awareness, you would face the sickness, you would face the loss of money, and you would even face the loss of a loved one, or the suffering of a loved one, with the power of your presence, you can face that, but what you cannot do, you cannot overcome these problems, or face them, because they only exist in your imagination, they haven't even happened yet, therefore, there's absolutely nothing you can do about them, in fact, they will simply be amplified, the more you think about them, the more they become amplified, it's a totally illusory realm that is making you suffer, and so if there's a minimum of awareness, you can suddenly become aware of what it is that you are doing to yourself, well, it's not that you are voluntarily doing it to yourself, but one could say, it is happening to you, so you become aware of what is happening to you, because the thoughts in your mind, virtually all the thoughts in the absence of awareness, happen to you, they are not voluntary, so people say, I think this, I think, you don't think, the thinking happens to you, when you're not aware, you are at the mercy of thought, you are at the mercy of the energy field, that is what we call thought, it lives in you, you are possessed, you don't know it, the moment you realize it, that this is not the fearful thinking, isn't something that you do,

you do it, you say, yeah, I'm doing it, but I can't stop it, no, you are not doing it, it happens to you, so some people perceive it as, well, why am I doing this to myself, well, that's already, it's a good first step, why am I making myself suffer by thinking all that, and then the next step is you realize, well, it's not really me doing it, it's the self-serving thought forms that are swirling around in my mind continuously, that are making me unhappy, that have no useful purpose, I'm not helping myself or anybody by thinking these things, by projecting bad things that could happen, and so with the awareness of what's going on in your mind, comes the first time a moment of freedom, because before you had no free will, without awareness, you have no free will, you are at the mercy of a conditioned mind, and when the conditioned mind becomes particularly amplified, for example, now by these collective events that are happening around us, that amplifies the patterns that were already there in your mind, and it amplifies the fear that was already there in your mind, and the useful thing is by becoming amplified, the opportunity becoming aware of what's happening is greater now, because it's so obvious that the suffering in you is increasing, from the normal suffering, everyday suffering, the suffering in you is increasing, that's true, that's the bad news, but the good news is the fact that the suffering is increasing makes it also more obvious, the process behind it becomes more obvious, it becomes so much louder, that the suffering starts streaming, therefore, the suffering can be an awakening for you, it awakens that suffering that is ultimately produced by your mind, by the thoughts in your mind, can awaken you, and you suddenly become, you can't stand it anymore, and then you begin to examine, how does this all happen, and the awareness grows, oh, and then you try out something, I have another question here, this person asks, what do I do after I wake up, because I've been laid off from work, and I'm petrified of what to do next, what are the practical steps I can do in that moment, so you wake up, you may notice when you wake up in the morning, there is a brief moment when the movement of thought hasn't started yet, how long, I don't know, it varies from person to person, it could be a few seconds, it could even be a minute, but that's rare, so there's a moment when you look around, oh, you've just woken up, and then you begin to remember your problems, and then the thoughts go, if you had a mirror, you could see the first moment you look quite peaceful, the eyes open, maybe you can look out of the window, there's a sky, and then you start, oh, oh, oh, and you begin to suffer already, the moment you start thinking, and if that doesn't happen, it happens in another way, you wake up, and then you're either your left or your right hand, reach for the phone, before you even look out of the window, and you go, oh, my God, what's going on, it's worse than yesterday, and immediately, it takes over your mind, you absorb immediately from the collective mind, and you don't know you're amplifying again what was already there, and you're even more possessed, every morning, you're even more possessed, so what can you do, if you wake up in the morning, don't reach for the phone, or you wake up in the night, could happen too, and that's a very fearful place for many people, because the night is a dark place, it's where many people experience despair that is greater than what they experience during the daytime, and there's light, so you wake up in the night, I remember how that was for me,

it's a long time ago, waking up in the middle of the night, and the despair that you feel, and the alien nature of the world, how awful it all is, oh, I can't stand it, everything is threatening and strange, and there's an emptiness, not in a good sense, but there's a nothingness there, and it's dark, and then the mind starts operating, oh, how awful it all is. I was suffering at that time, throughout my twenties, there wasn't enough awareness, I was identified with the thoughts, and so the questioner asks, what can I do when I wake up, and well, the prerequisite for doing anything is that you know that this is happening to you, that's the first step.

If you don't know that this is happening to you, then you are completely identified with it. So let's assume that you, almost, perhaps almost everybody who is with us, just as the questioner, has the ability, he has enough awareness to know that when you're in a state of suffering, of anxiety, fear, panic even, then you know that this is happening to you. You know there's a subtle difference between it happening to you, and knowing that this is happening to you.

It almost seems the same thing. So, when you know that you are in a state of fear, there is a witnessing consciousness that, no, there's a fear in me. It means you are not the fear, you have stepped out a little bit of it from there, you can see that there is fear.

Without the knowing, you are the fear, you become the fear. So it takes you over completely. And this knowing is the awareness of the presence.

And this awareness of the presence is the awakened consciousness. It's the beginning of it. It's the first appearance of a deeper, we could either say deeper or higher dimension of consciousness in you that is beyond thought.

And that is the purpose of your life, beyond what you do, the horizontal dimension, is this awakening. And not only briefly and then go to sleep again, become unconscious again, but to stay awake. And so that you can live in these two dimensions, the vertical and the horizontal.

You don't deny the horizontal, but you're rooted in the vertical, or the rock you built your houses. You dig deep, as Jesus said, until you find the foundation, and then you build the house, and then the house is not swept away when the floods and the storms come. So that's what we are talking about.

So let's then assume the ability for you is there to have the awareness that you are in a state of fear. That's already a great thing. And then from there you say, I'm verbalizing it now, but a lot of that is beyond conceptualization.

There's a knowing there. You can know things without spelling them out. There's a deeper knowing.

So you know all these thoughts. Ultimately you realize, the thoughts I've been thinking

make me unhappy. You know that beyond thought.

Now how do I get out of this momentum that is in me that wants to continue thinking those thoughts? The fearful thoughts, they have a momentum. They don't want to end.

They will make it hard for you to say, stop. You can't. You cannot say, okay, stop.

I want to stop. Maybe if you hold your breath for a minute, you can stop thinking fearful thoughts, but then they accumulate and then even more fearful thoughts come because you can't hold the lid on a boiling kettle for too long and then it goes off. So what do you do?

So you have recognized that what's been happening to you fulfills no useful purpose. That's an important realization because before there is an assumption in the unconscious mind that unless you worry a lot, then you're not controlling your life. There is the delusion that the more you think about, but when you don't know, it's useless.

The more you think about the problems of your life, then you need to continue thinking in order to hold it all together. You need to really worry all the problems of the world. If you don't worry, then your life will fall to pieces.

It's the underlying assumption. Of course, it's a delusion. So the worrying, the fearful thinking does not want to end.

You need to know that, that it has a momentum. And you cannot fight it. If you fight it, you make it stronger.

You give it added energy. So it's not by willpower that you can stop it. Or as I just said, you can stop it briefly, but not for long through exercising willpower.

So you stop it simply by first recognizing not only the futility, but also the destructive nature of that type of thinking. And then you begin to see that a lot of the unhappiness is produced by the narratives in your mind. At that moment, you have a choice.

You can continue being dragged along in the stream of fearful thinking. Or you can say, my choice is now to take my attention away from fearful thinking. I'm verbalizing it, but where does it go?

The fearful thinking, it wants all their consciousness continuously. It says, no, I'm letting go. I want it.

And then you say, no, I don't want to go that way anymore. It's very simple. You bring your attention somewhere else.

You need something at first. My recommendation is, feel your inner body. Direct your attention.

Let's say you wake up in the night or in the morning. Direct your attention, instead of thinking, direct your attention into the inner energy field of your hands. And then you hold it there.

It doesn't require willpower. It's just a simple decision. And you hold it.

You feel the inner aliveness in your hands. It becomes an anchor for stepping out of mind, being present. Can you feel the energy in your hands?

I can. And it's always wonderful. I've been feeling the energy in my hands for many years.

It's always fresh and new. And I don't tire speaking of it. Of course, it's not just the hands.

If you can't feel the energy in your hands, close your eyes and ask yourself if you're, let's say, your right hand, or if you're left-handed, your left hand. Ask yourself if your left or right hand is still there or not. Is it still there?

How do I know it's there? How can I know it's there right now? Now, you can't know it because you remember it was there when you saw it a few seconds ago.

You close your eyes. You're not moving your hand. How can you know it's there?

You can know it's there, but how does it happen? What is it? How do you know it?

You can feel it, but what is it that you feel? You feel the energy within the hand. It's very subtle at first, so you need to be alert to feel it.

But that alertness that then goes in the body is taken away from thinking. And you suddenly, your hand feels more alive than it was before. And that's only the beginning.

You can feel both hands simultaneously. You become aware of all pervasive sense of aliveness in the entire body, energy field. And the amazing thing is, oh, by the way, you may also become aware that you're breathing, because that's connected with the body.

You're breathing into the body. The breath flows in and it flows out. And the more you become aware of your body, the more you become aware of your breathing.

The more you become aware of your breathing, the more you become aware of the body. The wonderful aliveness there. And what happened to your mind activity?

It subsided almost completely or completely, because you cannot be aware of inner body and at the same time think. A few fragments may be there, thoughts, but not a sustained stream of thinking. It's not possible, because all your attention, your consciousness has gone away from the conceptualizing mind into the inner body.

I would suggest the more you practice, the longer you can stay there. But you need to be careful, because the mind is basically the ego that the mind that you had identified with, the mind will very soon tell you that thoughts will want to come in, because the mind will want control back. It realizes it has lost control, this energy field, and it will say something like, what do you think you're doing?

This is completely useless. That doesn't solve anything. Think about what's happening tomorrow.

You might lose your job in a day or two. What are you going to do then? You better think about that.

What are you doing with this nonsense feeling body? It's not helping you at all. And so the mind will come up with a very seductive, it says very seductive things of why this is completely pointless.

And now the question is, do you believe in every thought that comes into your head? Most people do. Whatever thought comes, they get taken over by it.

Do you believe in every thought that comes into your head? And thought says, all this meditative rubbish, just that's not helping the world or you. Of course, the opposite is true.

So the mind will use strategies to get control back. And then you need to know that when that's happening. I highly recommend if you should wake up, as many people do in the middle of the night and start worrying, it's very unpleasant.

So feel the inner body. Now, it's possible that when you feel the inner body, there may still be some fear inside you. And often it's experienced in the chest area or stomach area.

The fearful energy may still be there when you begin to feel even though you might no longer be thinking fearful thoughts when you feel your inner body. But it doesn't necessarily mean that the emotional field, which is another energy field that lives in you, it may not completely disappear the moment you stop fueling the emotion with your fearful thinking. Because you have already given so much fuel to the emotion of fear that it has a surplus of fuel in you.

So even when you're no longer fueling it with your thinking, it can survive for quite a long time without feeding it with your thinking. So it still lives in you. But it probably won't be in your hands or your arms.

It's probably around here. So as you feel the inner body, then you come to accept what you still feel is inner. And you don't say, I shouldn't be feeling that.

No, all you need to do is to recognize that it's there. And you also understand why it's there. Because you have given it so much energy through your thinking, not voluntarily, through unconscious thinking.

You've given it so much energy over the past few days, weeks, months, and years, especially here in this collective calamity that we're finding ourselves in. And so you can be aware of the inner body. And at the same time, be aware of the energy field of fear that you may still be carrying here.

And that's how it is. It's not a problem. You know where it came from, why it's there.

It becomes part of the present moment. And it's always say yes to whatever the present moment manifests within or without. Right now, it manifests the fear.

But the fear is surrounded by the sense of aliveness that you can feel in your body. So it's contained. There's a space around it.

There's an alive space around it. And I have a word, the pain body, the fear that I've just described, in the terms that I use, as you probably know, old emotion that lives in you, I call the pain body. And for many people, the predominant emotion of the pain body is fear.

For others, the predominant emotion that lives in them, fueled by years of dysfunctional thinking, egoic thinking. For others, the predominant emotion will be anger. Or for others, the predominant emotion that's in the pain body may be a deep sadness.

There is a reciprocal relationship between the thinking in your mind and the emotion. The emotion, let's say you're just practicing what I described. You're still in bed.

You're lying and you feel the aliveness in the inner body. You feel yourself breathing, present. You feel the presence that you are that's inseparable from the entire energy field of the body.

And there's a fear, still there, probably. And it's not just the mind that wants to start up again. The fearful energy has also a kind of, doesn't have a life of its own.

It's a psychic parasite living in you. And it wants more fuel after a while. So the fear will attempt to get back into your mind and force your mind to continue thinking fearful thoughts.

So the fear will go up. And then, if you're not careful, the fear will take over your mind again and you will start thinking fearful thoughts. And every fearful thought, thought being energy like everything else, every thought is an energy formation that arises in the consciousness that you are.

And this energy of fear is the same frequency as the emotional fearful pain body. The

fearful thought feeds, gives energy to the pain body. And the pain body wants more of it.

And then there come moments when it doesn't need any more energy. And then you have moments of, you can relax a bit, but it never lasts for very long. So this is a way of using the situation for spiritual awakening and for realizing the vertical dimension, which is present moment.

The portal is the present moment. And another portal, mostly related to it, or another aspect of it, is the inner body. The inner body is also the entry point, which is inseparable from the present moment.

That's the point into the vertical dimension. It goes beyond the physical body. There's more there.

And so, the vertical opens up as you go within. And when you're rooted within, and then you open your eyes, and then you look around, and you still feel the inner body, then you can deal with the horizontal in a much more effective way, a much more powerful way. Because you may need to take some action.

This person says, the questioner, I have just been laid off. I'm petrified. But he's asking, very wisely, what do I do after I wake up?

Because I've been laid off and I'm petrified. What do I do next? What are the practical steps I can do in that moment?

That's a very wise question. He's not asking, what are the practical steps that I can take in order to find a new job or make a living? He realizes that a more vital question is, what can I do in that moment to become free of the fear?

As much as possible, at least the fearful thinking. You may not immediately become free of the fear that still lives in you as the emotional pain body. That's fine.

But become free of fearful thinking. And then you become more present. The vertical dimension opens up.

Then the next step, of course, this person will have to take some action. And action happens here in the horizontal dimension. The likelihood that the questioner, or you, if you are listening and you are the questioner, the likelihood that you will take effective and wise and focused action in your search for an alternative living, job, or business, or whatever it may be, is far greater when you are not trapped in fearful thinking.

When you are trapped in fearful thinking, your ability to arrive at wise decisions and take a wise action and effective action, this ability is greatly diminished when you're in fear. Let's say you're looking for another job. If you should go for an interview and you're emanating this fearful energy, you're less likely, even if you're well-qualified, you're

much less likely to be attractive to a prospective employer.

Nobody wants to be with the energy field. Unless the employer has a strong pain body and your pain body of fear and the employer's complement each other, but that's usually the case with couples who meet. Some couples will feel very much drawn to each other.

In quite a few cases, their pain bodies complement each other, and some couples are drawn to each other because they mutually fuel their pain bodies.

[Speaker 2] (47:21 - 47:40)

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Eckhart Tolle The Evolutionary Journey Still Ahead [fe4aaafe-4a4e-4d8d-87c8-5f58667eb0ff]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:54)

The evolutionary journey still ahead. In this episode, Eckhart talks about how far we have yet to go in our spiritual growth. He says, what's critical is that we transcend our thinking because not only is it possible, it's absolutely necessary for our survival.

He says, the dysfunction of the ego dates back thousands of years. Eckhart explains we need only look at history for evidence, creating enemies, war, and endless cycles of violence. Eckhart believes that we are in crisis, a turning point.

He believes we must evolve beyond our current state of consciousness. He says, when a critical number of people connect more consistently with their transcendent selves, an entirely new world will be born. Eckhart calls it a new earth.

He says, that is our destiny and the secret to all life.

[Speaker 1] (0:56 - 44:38)

You can transcend the thinking mind. Transcend doesn't mean exclude. It means you go beyond, but you are able to use it.

I'm telling you now the secret of life for humans at this stage of evolution. In 20,000 years, it may be a different thing because there's still a huge evolutionary journey ahead of us. The secret of life at this time for humans is that not only is it possible for us to transcend thinking, it is necessary to transcend thinking because the egoic mind that is now amplified by science and technology, enormously amplified by science and technology, which means that its function of the human mind is also enormously amplified by science and technology.

So if we could create havoc 200 years ago, 500 years ago, 1,000 years ago, with swords and clubs and bows and arrows, couldn't kill that many people. But now the same dysfunction still operates and now technology creates all kinds of problems that are a manifestation of the underlying dysfunction in the human mind. We have reached the point of crisis now.

Yes, we can do all kinds of things to, there are some temporary solutions on an external level, and it's fine if you feel called upon to work for certain causes and help the world in that way. It's a wonderful thing to do. But the causal level, most of these problems exist on the level of effect, the effect of an underlying dysfunction.

So the most important thing is to address the underlying dysfunction in the human mind, and then an entirely new world will arise when there's a sufficiently large number of

humans in whom the dysfunction no longer operates. So how do we then step out of this identification with thinking? It's quite simple.

It is possible for you, and we need to find out here and now, right now, is it possible for you to sit here and be fully conscious, alert, present, with little or no thought right now, without remembering your past or your problems or thinking about future, pretending for a moment that past and future don't exist? They actually don't, but just let's say pretend. Otherwise, I don't want to create a resistance in you.

I say, past and future don't exist. Well, but they do. I had to cough coffee this morning.

That was the past. Let's pretend past and future don't exist. And of course, they don't, because they only exist as a thought in your mind.

The past is a thought in your mind, and you're having this thought now. The future is a thought in your mind, and you're having this thought now. If the future existed, some intrepid explorer would have found it and say, I have arrived at the future.

Everybody is looking for it, and I have found it. And then you ask, well, where is it? It's here now.

So no explorer has ever found the future because it does not exist except as a mental function. Of course, we need it. I'm wearing a watch because it's good we can arrange to mediate a particular time.

It's a good thing. Can't say one day we'll all come together here in the present moment. It could take a million years before we just happen to be in the same place.

So on a practical level, we need past and future. On a deeper level, in order to find who we are, in order to be deeply connected to the being of you, past and future is a great hindrance. So let's for a moment then say no past, no future, just this moment, this moment here, which consists of sense perceptions.

And you don't even need to interpret the sense perceptions. You can just be aware of the sense perceptions. So you don't need to say, oh, there's a strong light and there's a lovely flower.

You don't need to attach any labels. Practice not attaching labels, but being simply aware. So you're looking at something, or you can take in the totality of this room.

You take in the totality of this room and you're aware of it, but do you need to interpret it? Do you need to label it? It's a habit.

It's a habit that's been there for thousands of years, but it doesn't mean that you can't step out of this habit and you can, and this is why you're here. So this is vitally important to realize that you are able to perceive, in this case, this room and the sounds that you

hear and what you see, and perhaps even feel the air or whatever it is, other sense perceptions. This is the present moment perceived through your senses, but who is perceiving it when you're not labeling it mentally?

But for before we go there, just see first if you can just for a few seconds, start with three seconds, four seconds, five seconds. Be present here in this room. Be aware and alert.

Take it all in, but don't need to call it anything. It just, it is. Well, now, thought may come in again quickly, but that's okay.

Then you invite a new present moment in, and it always, the first step is always become aware of sense perceptions because if you're completely absorbed in the stream of thinking, you're hardly aware of your surroundings. You live in this hypnotic state, which is a conditioned mind in your head, and you hardly know what's around you. And you can see it when you look at a person who is completely identified with thinking.

They're not there. They're somewhere else. All their consciousness is being absorbed by thinking.

Thinking devours, gobbles up all your consciousness like a little monster that lives in your head. God must think, think. No, you don't have to think.

You can step out of thinking and be present. That's perhaps the key to all spiritual practices, meditation, and so on, to be present with what is. And of course, you start with always sense perceptions, but sense perceptions is not the ultimate of what we mean when we speak of the now, when we speak of the dimension of presence, but it's a starting point.

You're aware of sense perceptions, and you're not labeling them. What is left of you right now, or let's say, are you still there right now, when you don't remember the past and you don't think about the future, and you're just aware of this moment? What's left of you when you don't even think about who you are in mental terms, no conceptual reality anymore, just the alive reality of this moment, sense perception?

But what is underneath the sense perceptions? Underneath the sense perception is you, but not the historical you, not the narrative of you, that is the ego, a deeper dimension of you, and that deeper dimension of you is awareness, or we could say consciousness. So what's left of you when you don't label things and you just perceive, yes, one could say the surface reality is sense perceptions, and then underneath it, there is the awareness that makes sense perception possible, and that is the essence of who you are.

The essence of who you are is consciousness, and so you become aware right now, not only of sense perceptions, but underlying sense perceptions, you're becoming aware that you are aware. You can sense that you are aware. You can know without any doubt that you are conscious here.

You may even be dreaming this room, who knows? Perhaps you're dreaming that you're sitting in a room and a man is saying that you may be dreaming, it's possible, but there's still an awareness without which there would be no dream. The awareness or the consciousness makes the dream possible.

So the essence of who you are is consciousness or conscious presence. Oh, and this is not something that you can describe. It doesn't have a history, and it isn't my consciousness and your consciousness.

There's only one consciousness. We are all expressions of the one consciousness disguised temporarily as people, but we are disguised consciousness appearing as a human being, a human being. The human is your form identity, which is the body and the psychological mind, your personality, and the physical body.

That's the human you, and that undoubtedly exists. But the being, you're not just human, you're a human being. The being, the way I use the term, the being points to the deeper dimension of who you are as consciousness, the conscious being, the one being, the one consciousness that incarnates through billions of life forms continuously.

There's only one of us ultimately here. There's only one of us. There's only one universal consciousness that becomes a flower, becomes a blade of grass, becomes a dog, becomes a human.

It becomes the moon, the star, a galaxy, one consciousness assuming and manifesting through forms, born into form, incarnating. But very briefly, every human life, at the human level, your life is very short. It goes like, you're born, and then you die.

My mother was not philosophically or spiritually inclined, but one day she visited me a few years just before she passed away. She was in her early 80s. She visited me, and usually my mother would always talk a lot because it's the human mind, nothing personal.

She would talk and talk and talk because she lived alone when she was with me. Great opportunity to not just think, but actually talk. And so we went for hours and hours, and I was just present.

And for a moment, this presence transmitted itself to her for a moment, and she stopped talking, and she looked around, and then she said, what she said is the very beginning of all philosophy and spiritual search. She said, isn't it strange? We are born, and then we die.

I was amazed. This is how all philosophy starts, the strangeness, the wonder of life, how brief life is, and you look at how weird. We are born, and then we die.

So that was a temporary spiritual awakening in my mother, and then she started talking

again. But there was a spark there that goes, wow. It's a very profound statement.

So the human form, physical form, and the personality, psychological form, is short-lived, and it's good to be aware of that because you attach an excessive importance to your form identity, which is the personality and the body. You attach an excessive importance to the form identity if you're unaware of how brief this form identity actually is, the lifespan of this form identity. So the awareness of mortality can be a profoundly liberating thing.

This was practiced in medieval times. Often, people had a skull on their desk. You can see it in old paintings to be reminded of mortality.

Even to this day in some Buddhist countries, the Buddhist monks in some Buddhist traditions, the monks visit the morgue where the dead bodies are kept regularly and sit among the dead bodies and meditate there. And a Western person who has no idea what's going on, they might say, this is so weird. What are they?

This is morbid and dreadful. What are they doing? Well, they're becoming aware of mortality.

They're becoming aware of the short-lived nature of the human form, of the human part of the human being. And by becoming aware of the fleetingness of the human part of the human being, strangely, the awareness of the being, which is the awareness itself, can grow in you when you become aware of mortality. It looks negative to become aware of the short-lived nature of the human form, but when you don't run away from it, when you face it completely, when you go to India and you see that there the dead bodies are not hidden as in the West.

In the West, mortality is still changing a little bit now, but it's still a taboo because the West has kind of lost the transcendent dimension of life, which is the being dimension, the evanescent dimension. So it needs to deny mortality, and so it's dreadful, don't talk about it. Even to this day in hospitals, the doctors cannot teach you how to die.

You need to survive at all costs, even if it's only a few more days and involves enormous suffering. So you contemplate impermanence, and in a strange way, by contemplating impermanence in various ways, something arises in you that feels deeply peaceful. You can't describe what exactly that is.

Well, I can tell you what it is, but it's hard to describe in words. You become aware of that which is not impermanent, but it doesn't become aware of itself. It is the awareness.

It is the one consciousness. It is the timeless dimension of who you are. It is the being of you rather than the human.

So when the being emerges more strongly, when you become aware of the fleetingness

of the human form, it is, wow, so short. And then you feel, ah, and then your mind stops because your mind is all part of the personality. Your mind is the doing, doing and being.

In our civilization, most humans are lost in doing, and they're lost in just the human dimension, completely unaware of the dimension of being. This is why my main teaching is the teaching of being. The doing, you've got that already.

You're probably doing too much already. You're good at doing. Almost everybody's good at doing, but awareness of being needs to underlie the doing.

If awareness of being, which is awareness itself, being and awareness are one. Without that, the doing becomes self-serving and ultimately pointless and ultimately destructive. The doing only makes sense if it arises from the deeper level of being, and rather than ego-motivated doing.

And so you know, can always know whether you are connected with being when you do something, when you are active, because you don't want to have two compartments in your life because that's not quite right either. You can't say, okay, I've got a full schedule for today, and from six to 6.30, being, I practice being. Okay, then you do, oh, it's six.

Okay, time to practice being. I'm trying. I think I only need 15 minutes today.

I could do my 30-minute meditation in 15, but let's assume that you're actually good at being, so you have time for meditation, and you go, oh, it's wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. And then it's time to finish. The question is, what happens now?

Is the being still with you or is it quickly disappearing and get taken over completely again by thinking and doing, thinking and doing? Okay, let's have to get on with life now. Leave me alone.

Can't you see I'm meditating on being? Go away. It's good if you can address it, maybe that when you're not disturbed, when you're out in nature, or when you're alone in your room, you're able to become aware of being, becoming aware of being aware, or here, become aware of being aware.

Stillness arises. Not a sleepy stillness, a live stillness arises. That's consciousness, that's presence, and that's beautiful.

And initially, you may need periods of time when you're not being disturbed, and you can be aware of, out in nature perhaps, sitting under a tree, contemplating the sky, become aware of being. But it's not enough because ultimately, being and doing need to become together so that when you do, you don't lose yourself in the doing, which means you become stressed, and you're so focused on where you want to get to that the journey is not at all enjoyable. Then you know that the doing arises out of the egoic consciousness.

If you cannot enjoy the journey, I'm stressed while you're doing because you need to arrive at this point, you achieve this or that, but every step is stressful on the way there. Every step, then you know this is egoically motivated and you've lost yourself in doing, complete unawareness of being. But if you can be engaged in action, any activity, and actually be so fully present in the doing that the doing itself is fulfilling, then you have a connectedness with being.

The moment stress arises means something else has come in, you've lost awareness of being, you get lost in doing. And then you make yourself unhappy and you make everybody around you unhappy. The entire whole business structures in this world, there are big companies exclusively focused on doing.

They can say from one day to another, okay, we'll have to let you go. Yes, you've worked for us for 30 years, but we are reorganizing, so goodbye, we'll have to let you go. And everybody's stressed and everybody's fighting everybody else.

Some companies are so dysfunctional, you're amazed that they're actually still operating at all. And all geared to just the outcome. We need to make the profit, we need to achieve this, we need to get there.

Nobody's enjoying themselves. Nobody's enjoying the doing. But then there may be some companies, businesses that are relatively enlightened or conscious, where the humans actually enjoy what they do.

They enjoy the present moment. The present moment is no longer just a means to an end, which is the egoic consciousness, which is the unconsciousness. In your unconscious state, the present moment is always regarded as inferior, unconsciously, except for brief moments when you are having a few drinks, or you have a good meal, or you're having sex.

Then for a little while, the present moment is good. And then, oh, what now? The present moment is reduced to a stepping stone to some mentally projected future moment that unconsciously is considered superior to this one.

I really need to go there. I don't really want to be here, but I'm just on my way there. Just need to get there, always.

So the moment it becomes a means to an end, always. They don't know it. It's an unconscious way of living.

When the present moment is no more than a means to an end, and sometimes it's even worse than that. Sometimes the present moment is actively regarded as an enemy. You don't want to be where you are.

You don't want to be doing what you're doing, but you're doing it anyway. You don't

want to be with who you are. You don't want to be where you are, but you are there, but you don't want to be there.

You're doing it, but I don't want to be doing it. I'm just doing it, but I have to do it. So this means the present moment is regarded as an enemy, which is even more insane than regarding the present moment as a stepping stone to another mentally projected moment.

Of course, you need a goal in life. It's good to have the goal. I want to get there.

And for every goal that you have, you need time. For everything that you want to achieve, even making a cup of tea, you need a bit of time to make even a cup of tea, let alone learn a new skill, learn a craft, build something, build a house, build whatever you do, learn to dance, whatever it is. You need time to do it.

There's no doubt about that. But the question is, while you're engaged in the doing, are you able to be present in the doing so that you are not consumed by time, which ultimately doesn't exist. It's a mental thing.

You're not consumed by time. You can use time, but you are rooted in the timeless dimension of being. Then you become a very powerful creator.

The most powerful creators are able to be totally present in their doing, whatever that may be. And some of those creators, many probably, certainly, they're able to be present when they're engaged in their activity and they're very effective and very powerful because they completely enjoy the doing. It's fulfilling.

They're present. So they're connected to be... And because they're connected to being, there's an enormous influx of energy.

When you're connected to being, you're connected to the totality of consciousness. So helpful things can happen very easily. Obstacles that arise are not regarded as enemies.

Obstacles, you look at the obstacle and see, okay, what can we do here? Maybe we can use the obstacle and turn it around. Maybe we can walk around it.

But the obstacle does not create a sense of antagonism. So you're always aligned with the present moment. And those people who are very powerful creators, no matter in what field, but it often is the case that is only in the area of the activity that they can be that present and conscious.

And then they go home and go to their wife or husband, totally unconscious like everybody else. For us, it's not just being present in an activity that you do, but being present throughout your life, not just at work or whatever work you do, but make your whole life into a work of art because that's what it is. Your purpose is to bring the being

and doing together in your life and embody that.

Stress arises, that's a good sign that you've lost the present moment. Anxiety arises, you've lost the present moment. So many of the things, unhappiness arises.

Okay, where's the present moment? If you begin to inhabit a world of problems, oh, the heaviness of my life, oh, my life, that's not your life. Your life situation may be challenging, that's good, but it's not your life.

Your life is now, now. Life situation exists in time. Life is now.

Where's your problem now? Well, tomorrow I have to, no, no. My problem, I don't see it.

It could be a, maybe there's a challenge right now, then you deal with it. If it's not a challenge right now, it's not a problem. When the time comes, you will face it.

You will face the situation. So you don't dwell anymore mentally on your problems. You set aside a time when you say, okay, let's see what can I do in this situation?

Focused application. Then you walk away after 15 minutes, walk away present, present. The whole purpose of your life is to become present in what you do.

That is, the human and the being come together. The being emerges more and more. And then you are no longer really operating as a person or personality, although the personality still exists here, but you become empowered by a deeper or higher intelligence.

There's a higher intelligence that then begins to operate through you. And not only operates through you, you will also find that once, when you're engaged in an activity, you're very present in what you do, helpful factors are more likely to suddenly appear than unhelpful factors. So often coincidences happen.

Just the right thing happens at the right moment. Or you just meet the right person who offers the solution to this particular situation that you're engaged in. So these things happen, but obstacles can also still happen.

Some spiritual people say, okay, I'm going to try this now. And the moment they face the first obstacle, they say, oh, maybe I'm not meant to do that. I'm not sure anymore there's an obstacle.

Whenever you create something new, you will experience when you are present, both many helpful factors coming in, but also occasionally obstacles arise on your path. And this is good. The obstacles arise, and it does not mean that you're on the wrong path necessarily, but at least you're learning something.

And at least you enjoyed the journey. You enjoyed the doing. Even if it didn't take you

anywhere, let's say you want to become famous.

I want to become in Hollywood. I want to, if you go to Los Angeles, it's full of people who want to become famous. And so in the meantime, they have to, they work in restaurants.

There are lots of very good looking people in Los Angeles restaurants, and they're all waiting for the next acting job. Want to be famous. Okay, and some of them are unhappy doing what they're doing, and others are actually quite present in what they do.

Stay enjoying the doing. They enjoy meeting you. They enjoy talking to you.

And helpful things are more likely to happen if you're aligned with the present moment than if you're out of alignment with the present moment. And being aligned with the present moment is to enjoy the doing. So you could be a waiter.

Do you enjoy whoever you're serving? It can be a wonderful thing. Occasionally, I've met people working in restaurants who are very, very present, and they're extremely good at what they do.

They spread consciousness, and they get huge tips. And so suddenly, you may find life is taking you somewhere else, or you're very present with somebody, and he says, okay, give me a call if you want to become an actor. My name is Steven Spielberg, and I want you to have in my next movie.

Okay, but then you become famous, and then you're faced with the fact that this achievement does not satisfy you if you haven't learned to be present in the now. In fact, you may find that your fame, instead of making you happy, is making you unhappy. I've met people like that.

They thought when I become famous, they were happier when they were working in restaurants than when they were famous. No external situation is a solution. So if you cannot acknowledge the present moment, if you cannot become friendly with the present moment, if you cannot be present, then the Buddha's teaching applies.

No matter where you go, no matter what you do, who you are with, you will encounter dukkha, which is unhappiness, misery, unsatisfactoriness, or suffering. The solution is never on the external level. The solution to life lies in this moment.

Once you treat this moment in the right way, when you have a right relationship to this moment, and whatever, which means whatever arises in this moment, and the essence of this moment, which is the timeless consciousness, that is ultimately what the now is. This realization, in words, came to me after I had written *The Power of Now*, so it isn't in the book. What is the now?

Ultimately, you are the now, because the now is that which underlies everything. The

now is the timeless one consciousness, and you are that, and you become aware of that, of yourself as that. Then you are rooted in the now.

Real change only happens here and now. The so-called future then unfolds, and you will find that even on the surface level of the human dimension, life unfolds with greater ease than before when you are present. It's not free of challenges.

There will still be challenges, and that is good, because humans would not deepen, and they would first not awaken, and they would not deepen without the challenges. Challenges come, but there's a huge difference from then on. The challenges of life are no longer converted into suffering or unhappiness.

They are faced, and you say, oh, there's another one. Okay, what can I do in the present? Focus attention, become still, focus attention.

When you become still, focus attention on the situation. You're aware of yourself as the awareness, and then enormous intelligence is activated in you. This could be called, there's a book by Krishnamurti with that title.

It could be called the awakening of intelligence, and it's not the intelligence that you can measure in IQ tests, because IQ test intelligence is analytical intelligence, which is the human mind being able to accumulate information and analyze data. To accumulate information and analyze data is a certain level of intelligence necessary in this world, but it's not creative intelligence. It's not creative intelligence.

Creative intelligence comes from a deeper place, and creative intelligence comes from a place that is not conceptual. It does not come through thinking. It can inspire thinking, but it arises from a dimension that is transcendent to thinking.

All the great creators, the great composers and artists, many of them have literally said, some of the great musical pieces, it came from a realm, a very deep realm, almost ready-made, and they just wrote it down. Connected with being, with a deeper intelligence of the being, which transcends what your personal mind is able to do, although the mind can become an instrument for that. This is an amazing thing when you connect with a deeper intelligence, but it's not just intelligence.

It's also something that changes the way in which you interact with other humans, because that is vitally important when you are present and no longer trapped in the conceptual mind and no longer derive your identity from the conceptual mind, so you no longer inhabit a conceptual reality, you're present, and you meet another human being, and you talk to them, you look them in the eyes. Whatever it is you talk about is secondary. You're meeting them, you talk to them, and there's a human, you see the human, there's a body, and there's a personality speaking and acting through the body, that's fine, but within yourself, you feel the alert stillness, you feel the aware presence in

the background of your being, and as you look at them and listen, they might say something, you can sense beyond the personality in the other human being, you can sense that they, too, are, in essence, consciousness. You can sense their consciousness that is deeper than the conditioned entity, which is the surface of consciousness, like a little ripple on the surface of the ocean, is the person. The ripple on the surface of the ocean is the person, but the deeper being is the ocean, so then, to use this analogy, you can sense the ocean in the other person, the being, beyond their personality, because it's one with yours, and that's a wonderful realization, because then the other is no longer totally other.

You begin to sense a oneness with the other, and that oneness is empathy, that oneness is compassion, and that oneness is ultimately, in spiritual terms, love, because love is the realization of that oneness. Unless you realize that oneness directly, you cannot really love your neighbor as yourself, no matter how hard you try. First, you have to realize who or what you are in the essence of your being, and then you can realize who or what the other is in the essence of their being, and then, once you realize the other in the essence of their being, the sense of separation disappears, and you feel a connectedness, and more than a connectedness, you feel a sense of oneness, which is, when you're totally interpreting everything conceptually, there is never a sense of oneness, and that realization of oneness is love, not egoic love, but transcendent love. The Dalai Lama calls it kindness, but what he really is talking about is love.

The Dalai Lama said, he didn't say, my religion is Buddhism. He actually said, my religion is kindness, and kindness is, of course, is the love. Kindness is what emerges when you access, when you realize that which transcends you as a person, and realize that that transcendent dimension far transcends who you are, but at the same time is the essence of who you are, and when you find that, I mean, discover it, it's not so much find it because it's already there, realize it, that is virtually, it is like the universe, which is evolving in this dimension.

We live in an evolving universe. It's becoming more conscious gradually, but the consciousness emanates from a transcendent dimension, like light emanates from the sun. Transcendent dimension means the source of all life, which is traditionally called God, but misunderstood.

The source of all life does not exist in space or time. You can't say, oh, God must be somewhere there. It's totally transcendent.

From the transcendent dimension, something emanates into this dimension, just like light emanates from the sun, and that which emanates into this dimension is the light of consciousness, and the light of consciousness is the essence of who you are, and the light of consciousness is also the essence of the entire universe, so when you realize that, it's amazing, and you realize your connectedness with source, the source of life,

and that's enormously freeing, just, ah, and the little person then continues to operate for a few more years, and it's fine, it's not a problem anymore, then you truly know who you are, or you know what you are, that is knowing yourself, the ancient dictum, know thyself, and that knowing is not a conceptual knowing because this deeper intelligence is not a conceptual intelligence. It transcends that, so it's the very heart of the universe, it's very core, and it's your destiny to realize that, no matter what you do in your personal life, it's all secondary.

Your destiny is to discover who you are and to realize it and to live it. Your destiny is to become fully a human being, the human you have already, and now the being is shining through the human form more and more, and that is your destiny, and that is the secret of life. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (44:41 - 45:01)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these Essential Teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Fullness of Life [3c3f68cc-e5f5-44cf-a7bd-498fb3f94e8c]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:39)

The fullness of life. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions about conscious manifesting. He says, it's part of our heritage.

We have abundance in our lives. Eckhart describes what he calls the fullness of life. He believes the source for fullness is the vast underlying consciousness that is the foundation for everything, which he calls the being dimension.

Eckhart says, when we are being consciously, we are connected to a source greater than ourselves. He explains, when we are freed from the neediness of the ego, we are seeking the light of consciousness, and that's when we let go of the struggle.

[Speaker 1] (0:41 - 21:08)

Thank you, everybody. Nice to be with you. Be is the key word.

Of course, you cannot not be, but usually you're not aware of being. Usually you're not aware that you are because you're concerned with other things. But the foundation for everything, including, of course, being engaged in creating, manifesting, doing, and so on, the foundation for all that is to be rooted in the being dimension.

That's not to be forgotten. It's primary. Being is primary.

So to consciously be frees you from the neediness of the ego. It also frees you from fear, the fear that you may not arrive, or the fear that something you have achieved or that you have will be taken away from you because you identified with it. The fear of not making it.

Am I going to make it? Make what? I don't know.

It's an English expression, making it. Now, as you may remember, I assume I mentioned when we started the Conscious Manifestation course, I mentioned that a few words by Jesus encapsulate the secret of successful manifestation. And he said, when you pray for anything, believe that you have received it and it will be given to you.

That's it. So that already contains the secret of manifestation. The key being belief that you have received it, not that you will receive it.

So on the inner plane, it's already a reality. And you feel what otherwise you would look to that thing that you want to achieve, whatever it may be, you look to that as the, that which will give you an enhanced sense of identity, an enhanced sense of being. And of course, nothing that you achieve in this world or attain can for very long satisfy you on

that level.

So the mistake you make is you look to the world, the world, the world of things, the world of attainment of doing. You look to the world seeking for something that only the dimension of being can give you. That's why being is primary.

And of course, being is inseparable from who you are. So when we talk about it, it sounds as if there's being and you, or the essence of who you are, your essential identity is to be the being, the consciousness. So Jesus said, yes, he said, when you pray for anything, believe that you have received it, and then it will be given to you.

Okay, that's vitally important. It contains the secret of manifestation, but it's not, that is another statement he made that is actually primary to that, more important even than that. And that is, seek only the kingdom of heaven and all the other things that you need will be added onto you, added onto you.

So that's the absolutely primary statement. And what is the kingdom of heaven is exactly what I've just been pointing to, the realization of the essence of who you are, which is the unconditioned light of consciousness. The spaciousness, I sometimes call it space consciousness, and the other is the object consciousness.

Two dimensions operate, need to operate in your life. Space consciousness happens when the mind becomes still, but you don't lose consciousness. In fact, you're more conscious than before, but you're not conscious of anything.

You're only conscious of the fact that you are conscious. You're conscious of being conscious, not any object. The light of consciousness shines back upon itself.

At this moment, are you able to be conscious that you are conscious, to sense the fact that you are conscious, to sense the presence that you are, that is prior to the person that you are. More fundamental than the person is the consciousness, the light of consciousness, without which there would be no person, there would be no thought, there would be no emotion, there would be no sense perception. All these things are possible for a person to exist, and a person consists of sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions.

Every human being, every person, the human part of the being consists of a mixture of sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions. Sense perceptions, where you are right now, thoughts, accumulated memories, conditioning of your mind, and so on, and certain feelings associated usually with the thoughts or with what's happening around you, emotions. So how these things are mixed up varies from person to person, but everybody, every human, consists of a mixture of sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions that make up you, make you as a person.

You can change things there, of course, but more fundamental than that is the being

prior to the human, because you're a human being, you're not just human, you're a human being. So the human level is the level of doing, experiencing, attaining, achieving, becoming, better at this, becoming good at that, becoming stronger, but also becoming also is not just a positive thing. For a while becoming, you become better at this, more capable, stronger, more knowledgeable until there's a decline in the becoming, and then you become older, then you become less capable, you can no longer run as fast as you could before, then you become less physically strong.

So there's the becoming goes in one direction of unfolding like a flower, beautiful, and then the becoming turns into the wilting of a flower, and suddenly it dissolves. But there was an animating presence that manifested as the flower briefly, that manifested presence is not subject to time or decay, it is timeless because it emanates from the timeless source of all life. That presence that inhabits what we see as the flower briefly, then reappears in another form, another flower appears, another human being.

So on the level of becoming, you have the growth, and then you have the opposite of growth. Usually growth is associated with something positive, and the opposite is seen as very extremely undesirable and a kind of disaster, because you're moving towards losing everything, including the body. And of course, anybody who is not connected to that which is beyond the level of manifestation of forms will regard the inevitable decline, the so-called negative side of becoming when you become old and weak, would regard that as a travesty, the most terrible, terrible disaster, death.

Let's not talk about it, they say, let's not, we must, it's too horrible to talk about, says our contemporary world, says don't mention death, it's a kind of taboo, because they don't know what to do with it. It's so horrible. It is so horrible because you're not, you haven't found the being within yourself.

You have not become conscious of it. It is not awakened in you, so to speak. It's always there, but you always overlooked it.

So to not overlook it, even in this very moment, in this very moment, if I stop speaking for a few seconds, and you're not thinking about anything, as I stop speaking for a few seconds, you're simply alert and present. Well, that wasn't so difficult. One more time, I stopped speaking for a moment, and you don't need to figure out what I've just said, you can't think about it, it's not necessary, it's too simple to even think about it.

So there's nothing to think about, and you don't need to think about what I'm going to say next, what for? You don't know, I don't know what I'm going to say next. So there's a cessation of movement of the mind.

And the strange thing is you're fully conscious without remembering who you are as a person, without thinking, you don't remember who you are, but you know very deeply, directly that you are, you know it more strongly than when you're thinking about your

past and your problems. One more time, so you are more vitally yourself when you are not engaged in thinking about yourself, which is the human level, which is the person. So to be able to step out of being a person and step into the being of you is the point of power because you are then connected to the very power of the universe.

It's not just in you, you're connected to something vast and immeasurable. You are an emanation of that. And that's why that is a foundation for everything you may want to do on this plane here is very little compared to the depth of who you are, the essence of who you are.

Isn't that amazing? Right now, again, you can even look around, you're fully conscious, but you can feel yourself as even as you look around, you can feel the presence without which you wouldn't be any looking. The light of consciousness that makes the looking possible.

So what emerges is a very powerful, very alive stillness, I would say, because stillness means the absence of inner planes, the absence of thinking. And you are yourself, but not the memorable self, not the person, something much deeper. That self is one with the self of the universe, what in India is called the Brahman.

You are this, what you sense is the Atman, which is the inner aspect of the divine. Brahman is the transcendent, but they are one. So you can sense in mystical Christianity, it is the Christ in you.

In Buddhism, it is your Buddha nature. It doesn't matter what term you give it. It is beyond terms, beyond concepts.

That's the foundation. That is why Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven." Or everything else is an adding onto. So all manifestation is an adding onto.

And it's actually quite, can be quite enjoyable to be in this world where things come to you or you create things or you manifest things in your life is quite enjoyable. But only if you do not depend on them for your deep fulfillment and lasting happiness and knowing who you are. If you depend on that, then no matter what you achieve, you are still frustrated and ultimately not happy for very long.

So there's nothing wrong with doing things in this world. You are here for a reason. One reason is to engage in this world, to participate in the creativity of the universe, because you are an essential part of the universe.

The universe delights in creating continuously. It creates life forms continuously. They have become increasingly complex and gradually more conscious.

Can see the history of this planet, how gradually more and more complex life forms developed. The universe delights in creating. So you also can delight in creating and

manifesting, but only if you are rooted in the being dimension.

If you lose that connectedness, you can never really lose it, but if you don't realize it, it's almost as if you had lost it. So if you lose it, so to speak, then you are lost in the world of doing and becoming. Scary place, because nothing lasts for that long and you can achieve all kinds of things, even without having that connectedness.

Certain things can be achieved, yes, but they won't make you happy. In fact, many things you achieve will probably make you unhappy. So what you don't want is a terrible fate is to lose yourself in this world and to lose yourself in this world, you must first lose yourself in your mind.

When thinking takes over completely, conditioned thinking, conditioned by your past and the thinking that then you take, you absorb thoughts from all kinds of places, the media, social media, tweets, postings, whatever, and your mind continuously absorbs thoughts and it takes some thoughts, get in there and refuse to go away. And some get stuck there like a virus and proliferate and take over other thoughts in your mind. And you're lost.

You're lost in the world, you're lost in your mind because ultimately the world and your mind are inseparable. And that's a terrible fate to be lost. Even if you have achieved fame and fortune in this world, you're lost there.

And then you need something to alleviate the suffering that you feel, so you can take drugs or whatever they do, try another relationship, another marriage, third marriage, fourth marriage, fifth marriage. Some wealthy, famous people have done that. Then you get on your private jet, you're unhappy here, maybe you'll be happy on another continent, let's fly there.

Let's have a dinner in Paris. Oh, great, yeah. And then you have the dinner in Paris and then what now?

And you wake up the next morning feeling miserable again. And you need some other fix. Always looking, where is it?

Where am I? Who am I? And so now the foundation is the kingdom of heaven, which is the unconditioned consciousness, which is within you.

And then the rest, you can deal with the rest. So never losing sight of this, never as we continue to talk about manifestation, realizing the primary importance of being, of presence, of I am. I am is the first person singular of the word to be.

Strangely enough, you don't say I be, you say I am. Why don't you say I be? Would make more sense.

I don't know, it just happened. English language developed in that way. But the I am is to realize the being because you don't add anything to the fundamental realization that you are.

If you add something, then again, that's a lot of, that's the human level. I am old, middle-aged, young, good looking, not great looking, too thin, too fat, knowledgeable, educated, highly successful, wealthy, poor, Republican, Democrat. Let's see some questions.

[Speaker 3] (21:10 - 22:00)

Hello? Hi, Eckhart. I think my question was about language, about sometimes we talk about how we're going to suffer and suffering will come.

And I resist this a bit and I'm not sure why I'm resisting it. Some of it is that I know how important language is. And when we hear these things over and over, then I sort of expect them, like, okay, then I'm gonna suffer.

But also, of course, I don't want to deny reality of like you were saying the flower blossoms and then it goes back. So I think my question is just how do you deal with this? And do you still think of suffering as suffering when it comes or is it just a challenge?

And sort of how do you negotiate that in terms of language? That's my question.

[Speaker 1] (22:00 - 39:10)

Thank you. Good question. I would certainly not recommend that you expect to suffer.

I don't believe I ever said it. I hope not. I wouldn't recommend that you expect to suffer or that you think, oh, it's going to come soon.

It's going to come soon. What I may have been talking about is not necessarily that you are going to suffer because that depends on your level of consciousness. Whether a challenge that you meet, you transform it into suffering depends on your level of consciousness.

I'll come back to that in a minute. It's almost a paradox. It is advisable to focus on the good in this world.

The good, and then that part of that, for example, is to live in as much as possible in a state of appreciation of the good things in this world. Every moment, sometimes called gratitude. And that could be just gratitude for the beauty of the sky, gratitude for the breeze that you feel on your skin, gratitude for a flower that you look at, gratitude for every manifestation of life, to see the goodness in other humans, even though on the surface, they may be difficult in some ways.

Most humans are difficult. That's just so. But there's always something beyond.

So it's always to focus on the good, to see the good, the very fact that you're breathing, and not so much to seek the good in a narrative that you have in your mind. And for example, to say, well, my life is actually not that bad. I should be happy because there are millions of people who have less than I have, and they are more miserable.

No, that's not how you seek the good. To create a narrative about your life to make you feel better, and compare this narrative that you call my life to millions of others whose lives are less happy than yours is not the best way of discovering the goodness, because then your fragile happiness then depends on others being more miserable than you. So the goodness is found in the immediacy of your experience of the present moment, that you acknowledge all the goodness that's around you at any time.

Just gratitude for the aliveness of the world. So that's to look for, that's all great. Positive thinking is a good thing.

Ultimately, the best is to transcend thinking, but in the meantime, positive thinking is more powerful and fulfilling than negative thinking. However, no matter how much gratitude you have for the good things, how much you create and manifest, and that's all beautiful, all I'm saying is you need to know that we live in the world of polarities, and it is inevitable that at some point in your life or various points in your life, you will experience some kind of disruption or loss or limitation, for suddenly something will happen to disrupt what your life was going well, and suddenly something comes in to disrupt this lovely flow of your life, either on a small scale.

On a small scale, a disruption would be you get held up on your way to the airport, you lose your flight, can't get another flight, small disruption. Life is full of little things that go wrong, so to speak, and then other things that go right, and then inevitably big disruptions will sometimes come into your life, great loss, loss of possessions, loss of your social function in this world, your job, loss of a loved one, loss of an animal that you lived with, or loss will come in also, and it is inevitable. Now, you can know that without expecting it to happen, you know it's bound to happen at some point, nevertheless, you focus on the good, but when it happens, it's your recognition that this is part of the polarities of life is very important, because otherwise your reaction to the disruption or the loss or the sudden limitation that has come into your life, your reaction is what creates the suffering, and your reaction is based on the unconscious assumption that there's something drastically wrong, that these things should never have happened, that you have done something wrong or the world has done something wrong to you, so the assumption that there's something fundamentally wrong when you experience loss, disruption, or whatever it may be, like I often hear stories of people who are, let's say they're Christians and they go to church on Sundays and they are believers, and then something suddenly happens in their life, a loved one suddenly dies, or they're in a serious accident, and often some of these people, some are fine, they may have gone deeper, but some suddenly doubt, their whole face is suddenly in doubt, they thought

they had some kind of contract with God, if I go to church and I observe all these, the prayers and rituals, then that's our contract is that you God, it's your responsibility God to protect me and to make my life safe, the key word these days, people are very much concerned with safe, even before the virus, there was a very much a growing concern with safe, behind that of course is hiding fear and anxiety, because if you put a lot of emphasis on feeling safe, hiding behind that need to be safe is fear obviously, and why is there fear? Because you're not connected with the depths of who you are, so you don't expect to suffer, you don't expect that something should go wrong, it comes at some point, you know at some point it'll come, it's inevitable, and not only one thing, probably a few, but then once it arises, a limitation suddenly arises, disruption arises as with the virus, millions of people suddenly experience a disruption of their normal everyday life, just as often these things happen to one person, but sometimes they happen to millions of people at the same time, very interesting, and some people went into deep suffering, of course also depended on whether they experienced a loss of livelihood and income as many people did, others didn't, but that's another story, when it comes to recognize it as the inevitable polarities of life, and you no longer believe this should not be happening, it should not have happened, so there's this resentment that people otherwise have when things go wrong, so to speak in their lives, they have this resentment, they have this anger, or they have a feeling of guilt, resentment towards life, anger, why should this happen to me, me of all people, or guilt, I've done something wrong, I'm spiritual, and now this has happened to me, I've done something very wrong, so these are normal reactions, because you don't know that every human has to experience these from time to time, and not only that, for many humans, all humans I would say, if they did not experience disruption, loss or limitation in their lives, there would be no evolution of their consciousness, they would remain static, not only would they remain static, they would actually regress, if you could imagine a person going through life, never experiencing any particular limitation, disruption or loss, everything is given to him or her, it's all fine, it's protected, it's really safe, and no real challenge, how this person is going to not only remain static, this person will gradually go to sleep, level of consciousness will go lower and lower, until he just, if he lives, he might live in a beautiful place, on beautiful island with palm trees, everything is there, and goes to the beach every day, and then after a few years, it's all there is, is the beach every day, drinking, eating, sex, sensory pleasures, everything beautiful, are always healthy, no evolutionary growth, because evolutionary growth happens as a response to a challenge, and a challenge usually means something must go wrong, to use conventional terms, so it's not only, it's something that is inevitable, it is something that is absolutely necessary for human evolution, this what I now call here disruption, loss, limitation, is not only inevitable from time to time, the other is also there, the other polarity, yes, it is inevitable, and it is absolutely necessary for evolution, and once you recognize that, there's no longer anger, resentment or guilt, when these things do appear in your life, you can immediately come to an acceptance of this, and recognize it for what it is, and you say, ah, there it is, and it may be an opportunity for becoming more conscious, because you have to, because if

you don't become more conscious in a challenge, more present, you suffer, you become very unhappy, when you experience disruption, loss or limitation, the normal reaction is you suffer, you become very unhappy, that's what I said is resentment, anger, guilt, they're all forms of unhappiness, when, and so then these things, this is what suffering is, this is when these things make you suffer, when you have an antagonistic relationship, with, when it comes to you, loss, limitation or disruption, you have an antagonist, you're fighting it, you're, and you beat yourself up, or you complain, can't stop complaining in your mind, all that is suffering, it's called suffering, suffering is a psychological thing that happens, when certain things take place in your life, and sometimes not only, not just things that happen externally, many people suffer, because they have scenarios only in their mind, in their mind, at four o'clock in the morning, in bed, they wake up, and in their mind, they experience a scenario of loss, they experience limit, sudden limitation, they experience a disruption of their life, that could happen, or probably will happen next year, or the next week, this will happen, so the suffering is not only when things, you experience things externally, some suffering arises, when you experience things in your mind, very often things that are not actually happening now, but your mind is creating a scenario, and that makes you suffer, and ultimately it's all, your mind is the key, even as far as external things are concerned, because in any situation, when you feel unhappy about something, or you feel angry, or you feel irritated, or whatever it may be, in any situation, I often recommend that as a spiritual practice, start with little things, not so much with big things, little loss, little disruption, and little limitation, and you feel irritated, angry, resentful, you have self-talk, how awful this is, how these people are awful, they aren't, little spiritual practice is, ask yourself, how would I experience this moment, or this situation, how would I experience this, if I did not add any thought to it, if I did not add any mental interpretation, good or bad, how would I experience this, without the adding of thoughts to it, and this is a wonderful spiritual practice, it's good to do it with little things first, so suddenly, let's say you lose something, or something goes wrong, you had made plans, but then everything gets disrupted, because there's another lockdown, whatever, how would, and you get frustrated and angry, and how would I experience this situation, if I didn't add any thought to it, if I just let it be as it is, let's assume there's nothing you can do right now, if you could take action to remedy something, that's fine, but in many situations, there's nothing you can do right now, now I'm just not adding any thought, just as an experiment, how would I experience this moment, without the addition of thought, and then you'd suddenly, for a moment thought becomes removed, and there's the bare situation there, well, it's just, that's what is right now, that's the isness of this moment, and then you see that, suffering arises, when you cannot accept the isness of this moment, whatever it is here, and that's an enormous insight, the acceptance of the isness of this, is the end of suffering, and the acceptance of the isness, brings about the arising of presence, intense presence, shh, and this is how a challenge, can make you more conscious, if approached rightly, if approached rightly, a challenge will awaken you, and another challenge will awaken you even more, and that's the, so challenges

continue to come, but now, when you realize this secret, you don't suffer anymore, that's the end of suffering, as the Buddha called it, and that's the beauty of it, so it makes sense to you?

[Speaker 3] (39:12 - 39:28)

Yeah, this, thank you, that was, I had an aha moment, I think the resistance is that, yeah, I'm not in the being, so when you're in the being, it doesn't matter what you call any of it, yeah, I mean, so yes, thank you, I mean, thank you for many things, but thank you for that too.

[Speaker 2] (39:29 - 40:51)

Thank you, thank you. It's an honor to talk to you, since the moment of my surrender, I was able to feel a peace and unhappiness that I never have in my life, I feel the joy of being, but not in an enthusiastic way, no, in an exuberant way, very peaceful, very soft, so at the moment, I'm doing the manifestation, I'm trying to manifest something that I want in my life, but my question is, is it possible, when I'm doing the manifestation, I feel that it's coming, but anyway, my question is, all that I feel is so soft and subtle, is it possible that I am, actually doing it, that is coming, and then I want to ask you, if it is coming, it's a bit difficult, not to be waiting for it to manifest, so I would like, if you can expand a little bit about that, how to manage, not to be thinking all the time, when this happen, I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do that.

[Speaker 1] (40:52 - 53:23)

Yes, yes. It's good to not involve too much future thinking, when you are in the process of manifesting, if possible, remove future, or as much as possible, remove future, in other words, you are not looking forward to something, because, the thing that you want to manifest, is already here, now that requires, as Jesus said, believe that you have received it, that means, that is already reality now, so the power of manifestation arises from the now, the point of power, is the now, it arises from that point of power, now, the question of course is, how can you believe, that you have received it, when obviously, you haven't, and that is connected with the, realization of being, because, when you become still, and present, for example, now, still, present, you can sense, that you are, the beings of you, the consciousness, you can sense that, and as you go into it more deeply, it is timeless, but it emerges in the dimension of time, so it's a little bit paradoxical, the presence grows in you, the realization of presence, it deepens, it grows on this level, in itself, it's timeless, but it gradually, manifests more fully in this dimension, comes more fully into this dimension, through you, that's where you find, what again, coming back to Jesus, he said so many good things, the fullness of life, you use those terms, he said, I want you, to have the fullness of life, in some translations of the Bible, it's translated as, I want you to have abundant life, I would say fullness is probably, would be a better translation, I want you to, he said, I want you to have the

fullness of life, so that he was there, to point people to the realization, of the fullness of life, which is, the realization of being, anything that you may want to achieve, on this, outer level here, manifestation in this dimension, the enjoyment, that it would give you, the sense of satisfaction, that it would give you, when you achieve it, it can only really arise from the, the fullness of life, that is already within you now, and it is probably, true to say that, when you achieve something, like, let's just say, a nicer home, or a nice house to live in, or whatever it may be, and you, and suddenly it comes, suddenly there it is, and at first you feel, ah, you can actually feel, the fullness of life in that moment, and you think it's because of that house, but really you feel, the fullness of life in that moment, because, a, mind form, that was the desire that told you, that I need that thing, to be happy, the desire, for it, which prevented you from being, from feeling the fullness of life, suddenly the desire is fulfilled, suddenly there is an absence of that big desire, that you have the reaching out, the longing, I must have that, I want that, that suddenly, because suddenly you have it, suddenly it's there, and you feel at first, ah, some people get, oh, such joy, yeah, there's that house, is that, does that house cause, that it seems to be the case, that the house is the cause of your joy, but I would suggest to you, that the true cause of that joy, is the collapse of the, wanting and needing, that collapsed, and suddenly you don't want and need it anymore, because it's there, and as the wanting and needing collapses, you can sense, what was always already there, the fullness of life, that is within you now, your mind deceived you, it said, you will get it through this, that or the other, and this is why sometimes, just when people first obtain something, they feel so happy, oh, such joy, oh, no, not because of that thing, because of the collapse of the wanting, and needing, and grasping, so you need to go there directly, instead of continuously experiencing, because that house is not the end of it, because the structure in your mind, your egoic mind, that says, now what's the next thing that I need, will come back in very quickly, even after you get that big, nice house, the mind structure, that prevents you from enjoying this for very long, that state of no desire, the egoic mind, lives through desires, through wanting, through needing, wanting, needing more, because you haven't found yourself, you are somehow, ultimately you're looking for yourself, which is the fullness of life, is the fullness of realizing who you are, beyond the person, and then the whole story, the whole thing starts again, the game starts again, first it was a house, and then it's something else, that suddenly comes in, now you need a spouse to go with it, needs to be just right for that house, whatever the ego tells you, and the soap opera continues, indefinitely, with brief interludes, of joy and happiness, when you obtain something, and then, oh, that wasn't it, so to not to look to the future, but to be rooted in the present, nothing that you achieve, can actually provide you, with that deep sense of, with that fullness of life, that you can already feel, when you become still and present enough, and you become conscious of yourself as consciousness, that's the fullness of life, this thing can, if you bring an image, of something that you want to achieve, so to speak a mental image, let's say it's a house, you bring the mental image, into that sense of full, the fullness of life, now the kind of the two come together, then you can continue to feel, the fullness of life,

and then you feel the house, is actually already had there, because the house is the fullness of life in my mind, that's a very powerful manifestation, this is what Jesus meant, believe that you have, you already have it, that you have received it already, but you can only do that, when you know the kingdom of heaven within you, from there you can, that's where the belief of faith arises, belief is, you don't, that you don't need the house for your fulfillment, it's an adding on, that's the most powerful place for manifestation, is to realize whatever you manifest is a, the game of creation, the game of form, the universe delights in creating, and so do you, and so you delight in that, but you don't need it, for your fulfillment, you don't need it, for your happiness, your sense of being fully yourself, people want a completion, many people are looking for an identity, a stronger sense of identity through achieving this, they think when I get recognition, other people recognize my worth or worthiness, then I will feel fulfilled, many people, and some people believe youngsters, especially growing up with social media and so on, they find their fulfillment in how many likes they get on their posts, people would, and then you project an artificial image, searching for more likes, and you get totally alienated from yourself, because you're projecting some kind of image onto the screen, and you send it out into the world, and you think that's you, and then you get thousands of likes, and then the ego feels better, but underneath it, you feel worse, because more and more, you project yourself into this, it's all, it's nothing to do with who you are, in many cases, even the photos that you post, are so heavily photoshopped, and so much filter use, you become almost unrecognizable, the people who sent you all their likes, they wouldn't even recognize you in the street, this is just a little aside, how crazy this world is, so the fullness of life, does not come in time, in the future, and the fullness of life, is what for to be a powerful manifestor, is only be when you manifest, from the feeling of fullness, you bring a mental image into it, and then it's quite likely that it will manifest, so you, because the fullness of life, is associated then with that mental image, and when it happens, and you get it, you say, oh, very nice, but you no longer go, yeah, I've got it, so it's, you say, it's nice, it's great, yeah, but basically, it hasn't made you happy, because you've already had something, that was actually deeper than happiness, I am already happy, right, exactly, yes, so that's the secret, remove future of looking to when to change something, also, when, if you use affirmations, or visualizations, as many people do, you use it for a certain period of time every day, maybe twice a day, for 10 minutes, and then let it go, let, but you're not using, let it go, and after you use it for a week or so, let it go for a little while, let it go for a few days, so that you get rid of the notion, that you are doing it, you're not doing it, the universe can make it happen, but you are not doing it, as such, so you, it's the sense of surrender, and it's easier to do, when you're no longer dominated by the egoic mind, that says, I need this, I need it to be happy, I need it to be fulfilled, so it's, I wish you well, thank you, thank you,

[Speaker 2] (53:23 - 53:24)

thank you very much,

[Speaker 4] (53:24 - 53:25)

thank you,

[Speaker 2] (53:25 - 53:26)

thank you very much, very clear,

[Speaker 4] (53:26 - 53:49)

yes, thank you, I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, essential teachings, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings, on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts, if you haven't yet, go to Spotify, and follow this podcast, join us next week, for more enlightened teachings, from Eckhart Tolle, thank you for listening,

Eckhart Tolle The Future is Just a Thought [49829d1d-420a-43f2-a299-51b3f16ec8f3]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:32)

The future is just a thought. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience about our obsession with the future. He says, if we're always living for the future, we never get to experience the present because the future is only a thought.

We spend our time waiting for a life that never arrives, full of missed opportunities now. Eckhart reminds us the only moment we ever truly have is the here and now.

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 52:21)

Just checking if everybody's present. Especially important as you begin to move around again, leaving here, many of you. One little thing, if you remember to live this little thing, that would already significantly change your state of consciousness.

And that little thing to remember, not as a memory, as a concept that you remember, but to remember to apply every moment is, or concerns the value that you attribute to the present moment, whatever may be happening in the present moment. And the usual mistake or dysfunctional way of living, unconscious way, is, as I've mentioned before, is devaluing the present moment and overvaluing the next moment. That's so unconscious that most people have no idea that that's how they live because everybody lives like that and everybody has been conditioned to live like that.

But that is a significant factor in unskillful living, unconscious living, and it strengthens the ego enormously. Ego lives always with reference to past and future. For example, I come here, I emerge from behind the curtain, and then I walk to the chair.

Walking to the chair has as much value as arriving at the chair. So by giving your complete attention to every step, you actually honor this moment fully instead of unconsciously devaluing it because you believe you need to arrive somewhere else, which promises some measure of fulfillment, no matter how small, or sometimes some big fulfillment, but no matter how small. So if I walked in here in that dysfunctional and unconscious way, the steps that I'm taking towards this chair would be devalued in my mind as being less significant than arriving at this chair or starting to speak.

And the arriving is always very short. You arrive and then it's over. So now if you begin to travel again from here to home or from here to somewhere else, if you can remember that the present moment is all you ever have and carrying your suitcase from here, or people don't carry, they've got wheels these days.

So wheeling your suitcase from here to there or wherever it is, to the bus, to the car, to the airport, to the train station, all those moments are not inferior to any next moment,

because then what? And then you arrive at the train and then you look for something else to, now I need to get, need to get. Mentally, you're always somewhere else instead of giving fullest attention to this because this is the most valuable moment.

Why? Because it's the only one, the present moment. So to live as if the next moment were more significant, more important, is a very unconscious way to live.

And the strange thing is you never really ultimately arrive anywhere because the arriving is never enough. The arriving is immediately replaced by some new mental projection, some next moment. Even on a big scale, often people experience that, some huge success that they've been striving for, for years, and finally it comes and then they sit there in their big house.

Often that goes with success, but, or whatever, their private jet and it feels good for a while, especially if you invite other people who don't have private jets. Then it feels even better because it enhances your fictitious sense of self. But after a while, even that wears off.

So you have arrived, you've made it, that's the English expression. I made it. Made what?

In case you don't know that English expression, it means I have succeeded in my endeavors. I made it. Idiomatic expression, strange one.

So the world is full of people who want to make it and when they make it, there's a brief moment of satisfaction, that's the arriving. Then they go, okay, now what? The same dissatisfaction arises again and then you have to, the making it is not enough, you have to make more.

So small scale and large scale, just this little thing, give your fullest attention to this moment because it's not true that the next moment is more significant because it never comes. So it's a way of living absorbed in thought. If you always live for the future, you're absorbed in thought because future is a thought.

It's never experienced as an actuality. So essential part of being lost in your mind is to be lost in the future because to be lost in the future, always looking to the next thing is to be lost in your mind because that's where the future is, not here and now. This does not mean you will no longer make any plans.

It doesn't mean that. On a practical level, you can plan and say, okay, at such and such a time, I need to be there. Whatever you use for your planning, probably a device.

And then if you're old generation like me, you go like, I need to be there and you tap in where you need to be in your diary. Or if you are with younger generation, your fingers move in a different way. They go like that.

All the old ones, they go. And still get it wrong. Every third one is wrong.

So there is a way of being totally present in the planning for the next, for the future. So this is actually, you're very focused in planning your next destination. What time do I arrive there?

What do I need to do? When do I need to be ready? And you can write it down and you're fully present in that.

And once you've done that, your attention is again here and now. It was even here and now when you were planning it because you were not mentally devaluing this moment of planning. And the strange thing is you begin to enjoy now all the small things in life that before you had overlooked or neglected because the mind projects the bigger thing.

And even on a small scale, it's the bigger thing. Like I need to pack my suitcase and I need to get the bus. That is on a very small scale, the next big thing that I need to get to.

So in the meantime, you devalue the moment between now and getting the bus or the train. And then once you're on the bus, you think, okay, now I need to get off the bus and then where do I need to go? I need to go now.

And then you arrive there. But of course, that's only a temporary relief because now you need to go somewhere else. And when you're sitting on the plane or wherever or in the car, you mentally project yourself to tomorrow morning.

There's always a more important moment and it's in the future. Now what you neglect then and what you continuously overlook is all the small things that actually make up a vast percentage of your life. It's all the little things that before are relegated to the periphery of your life.

What are those little things? Well, for example, things that you handle in your life, things that you pick up and put there and objects around you, the world around you, walking, breathing, looking at the sky, looking at a tree, seeing, breathing in the air, looking at another human being, sensing their deeper aliveness, all the little things that constitute life. Even if you are a so-called VIP in the eyes of the world, which is pretty meaningless, it's just a narrative.

And you go from one significant thing to another, but all the steps that you take, even if you get picked up in a limo, as I sometimes do when I go for a talk, the organizers send a limo. Well, a big car with plenty of room in the back, that's a limo, and you can stretch your legs. So then it's just very little things.

You walk to the car, and you breathe, and then you get in and you sit. Okay, well, it's just, you're sitting somewhere and breathing and looking, you're looking out of the

window, and then you arrive at a venue and you take a few steps into the car and you sit again. And then you walk onto the stage.

It's all little things. And even if you're the pope or the president of a huge corporation or the president of a country, it's still the same. Life consists of small things.

All the things that, look at just your relationship with objects. This is usually overlooked because every object is treated as a means to an end. But if you live in a way that is more present, then the objects may still be a means to an end, but they are also giving just short attention, just picking up a glass.

There is pleasure in enjoyment in even just looking at a glass and the water and drinking. And to realize that, most people realize that for the first time, if ever, when they take certain types of drug, like acid, because it amplifies your sense perceptions and it shuts off your thinking mind. And then for the first time, you pick up a glass of water and you go, oh, wow.

So amazing. So amazing. I can't believe it.

And it is. And then you drink and the taste is so incredible. It's water.

It's amazing. It's liquid, alive. It's alive.

It's liquid. No, I haven't taken acid before coming here. It's just giving it your fullest attention without interference of thinking, just awareness.

And the background then to that state of inner peace or contentment is all the aliveness of everything around you. When you pick up something, put it in your suitcase, pick up something else, unfold it. That's a nice thing to do.

Taking a fruit, maybe peeling it or biting into it. The present moment in its richness that is usually overlooked because you're looking for something more significant. But even the most significant thing, let's say you got the Nobel Prize, can come to Oslo.

I think there's one Nobel Prize that people come to Norway for, that's peace. And then you stand on the balcony of that hotel that overlooks the square where the parliament is, I think. Apparently that's where they go.

And there you are. I have made it. You're just standing on a balcony, looking and breathing.

Unless you live through and for a narrative in your mind that you completely believe in, that becomes a conceptual sense of identity. I am such and such a person who has achieved this and that, and this is all the story, and that's me. And big narrative that gives you your sense of identity, thought movement.

And then you feel bigger while you stand on this balcony. And then you feel deflated when you step off the balcony. Or let's say you're a pop star.

What's the word that you use? A rock star. That's millions of people say, wow, wouldn't it be great, especially youngsters, wouldn't it be great to be a rock star?

You can do anything. And of course they experience this in a magnified way. They are on stage and energy moves through them.

And then they walk off stage and they are regarded as gods by all these, by the audience. And they go, let me only touch you. I hope nobody does that to me.

But let me only, may I just touch you, they say to the rock star. And the rock star then having, in most cases, not that much awareness. They feel they are more and more like a god because they believe in the narrative that all these unconscious people have mentally manufactured for them.

And then they begin to believe in it. And then there comes to the huge conflict or discrepancy when they go off the stage and they sit in the green room or somewhere. Where am I now?

And then they have to take drugs because what happens, there's a sense of a lack returns much more strongly than ever before, a sense of lack and insufficiency. So I need another fix, a drug, or I need to smash up my hotel suite. That's what they do, rock stars apparently.

And that enhances their sense of self a little bit more. So many people live for something that's going to happen in the future. And of course, of course you may succeed in your endeavors.

This is a nice thing, but it's not going to give you long lasting and ultimate fulfillment or tell you who you actually are. It's fine to achieve things, especially if they are beneficial, but for humanity and the totality on the planet, it's lovely to have that, but even that doesn't make up your identity. So not to live for the big thing, but to honor the small things.

The more you honor the small things, the more likely it is that you'll experience more good things in the so-called future, because you have such a good relationship with the present. The better your relationship with the present, the better your prospects are for the future, which doesn't exist. If that makes sense, it probably doesn't.

Not if you think about it, it's a paradox. The so-called future is an extension of the present. So if you want to invest in the non-existent future, invest awareness into the present moment, and the more you honor the present moment, and now we come to a related word, and that is honoring or giving attention to the small things is gratitude, is

the word of thankfulness.

Now you can be thankful even if you don't, people sometimes ask me, well, somebody says, I'm a Buddhist, I don't believe in God, and the Buddha was a spiritual teacher who was awakened, but so who am I thankful to? You don't need to be thankful to anybody in particular. Gratitude is an underlying state of consciousness, which is giving your fullest attention and honoring what is.

Gratitude is not having a certain narrative in your mind that tells you that you should be grateful because other people are worse off than you. I really should be grateful because all these people are so much worse off than me. Then you feel good because other people are bad, so that doesn't really work.

Well, it works temporarily, but it's not the true, it's not real. That is not gratitude. Gratitude is not to do with a narrative in your mind that tells you something about my life because the entire thing that you call my life consists of thoughts.

What you call my life is a bundle of thoughts that you derive your sense of identity from, and you call it my life. It's a conceptual sense of self. It's abstract, it's mental, it's fictitious ultimately.

It's not who you are. It's not yourself, as the Buddha would put it. It is no self.

There is no self in it. It's just thoughts, memories, thoughts. So thankfulness or gratitude is just giving your attention to a flower or a glass of water or the stillness in this room, the lights, even if they are artificial lights, the aliveness in your body, and then a contentment arises, an inner peace arises because you're honoring the present moment.

And less and less do you then feel that you need to get to some other moment to get away from this one or just reduce this moment to a means to an end. So gratitude is something very powerful. It does not even have to be in words.

You can add some words to it if you'd like, but gratitude is just giving your fullest attention to something and experiencing it and realizing its presence, its aliveness, even if it's an object. Now, if you want to create something that is not an egoic thing, but is something you realize from the depth of your being that something wants to be created through you, whatever it may be. Maybe you want to, you're writing a, write a book, open a hairdressing salon, create a retreat center, or a conscious business or whatever you want to create, and the vision comes to you, or you may want to create, it's not necessarily selfish, a better place to live, a place that is externally more peaceful than where you are now or warmer.

You may have a vision of what it is that you want to achieve, and then you focus on that vision and the most powerful way to manifest, as you probably know, I don't usually talk about that too much because other things are more important. I talk about the

foundation for your life, but manifesting is a secondary thing that can be significant in your life, and to manifest the most important secret, to use that word, I'm not specifically referring to a book called The Secret, but there's helpful things in there too, as long as you don't believe that certain things that you want to manifest are going to make you happy. The power to manifest is in experiencing the fullness of the present moment, the undifferentiated fullness, what Jesus called life in its fullness in one of the translations.

I want you to have life in its fullness, he said, and that is not stuff. He's not referring to things. Life in its fullness is an inner state of being.

It is to experience, to know, to realize the beingness within you, the I am, which is consciousness itself. That is the fullness of life in the words of Jesus. The fullness of life is to realize that so that once you realize that and it is consciousness, you know yourself as consciousness.

Once you know that, then no future moment can possibly be better. Anything that can happen in the future isn't adding on to. So if you bring together, if you have a vision in your mind of what it is you want to achieve or create or manifest, and you bring this vision into this sense of still fullness that you sense now, and you bring that together, that is the most powerful creative tool.

The way that it's usually expressed, Jesus expressed it too. He said, when you pray for something, believe that you already have it. But I think he probably used actually slightly different words, but that's how it was written down.

He's probably said, feel that you already have it. Whatever it is that you want to have that you think is going to be, you need to feel already the feeling that you are now. How do you do that?

By feeling that which is beyond the world of phenomena out of which everything arises, which is consciousness. So when you know yourself as consciousness, that's already the fulfillment. Let's say even an insignificant thing.

Let's say you want to have a nice house. Let's just say, if I had a nice house out in nature, then I would be really happy. I want to have a nice house in nature next to a little forest.

And then there's a lake there and I can walk to the lake. And then how would you feel? Okay.

I would feel exactly the way I'm feeling now. I want to live in Hawaii and have a deck behind my house with a very comfortable chair. And then I would sit in there every day and contemplate the ocean.

Well, good luck. How would you feel? What would you feel?

I would feel the fullness of life. Okay. And you can't feel it now.

No. Why can't you feel it now? Because I'm not sitting in this deck chair.

And I'm not looking at the ocean. And it's not sunny. That's why I can't feel the full.

And I don't have a house behind me that I say is mine. So I can't feel the fullness of life now. Okay.

Then do you think you're going to feel it when you finally sit in the deck chair? No. If you can't feel it now, you can't feel it then.

Because you will be again dissatisfied in your deck chair behind the house because you will get very bored and stung by mosquitoes. And it's too hot anyway. I should have gotten a house higher up because down here by the beach, it's just too hot.

Why didn't I get a house higher up? Because there's a mountain just behind me. It would be cooler when you sell your house.

Get one higher up. But then the nights are too cold. You can't sit outside anymore.

If you cannot feel the fullness of life on your bicycle and enjoy that moment tremendously of being on your bicycle, you will not feel the fullness of life when you're sitting in your Rolls Royce or Bentley or Ferrari, Tester, Testeron, Testerosa. There's an overvaluing of things around you that I need things to be in a certain way around me to be happy and content. And that doesn't mean that you cannot change the environment around you.

You can take steps towards changing it because you may have certain preferences. That's fine. Everybody has a preference.

There's some spiritual teachers who say, or I don't know who, I can't remember, but there are some who say, I have no preference. Well, they live somewhere, but not somewhere else. So you must have a preference for being there unless somebody picks them up and puts them somewhere.

So you can have a preference for living here rather than there. Yes, this country rather than that country. But while you're not there, you can be in touch with the fullness of life within yourself now.

And then it's much more likely that your external surroundings will reflect your state of consciousness. Now it goes so far in some spiritual traditions, also in ancient Christian practices, that the thankfulness is applied not only to the seemingly good things in life, nice things, little things, but nice things, but the thankfulness is also applied to the seemingly negative things in life. That seems a little strange.

So when something so-called bad happens to you, you say, thank you. And that of course implies that you accept this moment completely as it is. And then internally, you rise above the external circumstances of your life by being in a position of non-reactivity towards the external circumstances of your life.

And this is the spiritual practice that one teacher recommended to his disciples. It's a simple saying, which consists of two sentences. And it says, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. That's a spiritual practice. It's not just the words, so you have to actually feel what the words are saying.

Now this is to be applied in any circumstance in your life, so-called good or so-called bad. Whatever you meet in your life, which will be in the present moment, of course, you would apply this thanks for everything either verbally or just as an attitude, an inner underlying attitude towards what happens. Thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. No complaint is an important part too, because if you don't complain anymore, the ego will have quite a struggle to continue to survive in you. It may find a few other things, but it will be struggling to survive without any mental complaint.

You can't complain about people anymore in your mind, what they should have done but didn't do, how unconscious they are, what a jerk he is, what he said to me, what he didn't do when he should have done it long ago, why couldn't he, and so on. And you complain about situations and groups of people, entire collective groups, millions of all those, whatever label you attach to them, complain, complain. I have no complaint whatsoever.

Well, that stops a lot of the activity of your mind. What can I think about now? I'm not complaining.

I can't complain about my life anymore. If I have no complaint whatsoever, I can't complain about my so-called life. Now that's a big one.

How many people complain about their lives, either out loud or in their mind? My life, I need to sort it out somehow, but it's just, why is it always things go wrong? Why did it all, why didn't I make it?

I didn't make it. Or I made it and then I lost it. Or I made it and then it became meaningless.

Or I made it and then it made me sick because it was so much stress, making it required so much stress I became sick. My life, as long as you believe in a narrative called my life, you experience your so-called life as a burden that you carry around with you. And this burden that you carry around with you is your sense of identity.

And your sense of identity is a bundle of recurring thoughts. But you don't know that. And if you don't know that, you are so identified with it that this burden you have to carry around with wherever you go.

You carry the self, as the Buddhists call it, the self. And without knowing it, no matter where you go, Hawaii, Bali, the Himalayas, India, New York, Detroit, you always carry the burden of yourself around, the unhappy me with brief interludes of illusory happiness. Meeting someone in a bar or it's exciting, a new person.

And a few days later or weeks later, he didn't make me happy. So when you don't complain about not only other people, but also about your life, then you can't be a victim anymore. And there are quite a few people who have a huge investment in their victim identity, which can be either personal or collective.

Now you may indeed belong to a collective, racial or otherwise, that traditionally and historically has been disadvantaged. You may indeed be part or have come out of a so-called marginalized group that has experienced discrimination in the past and may even be still experience discrimination in the present. And so you may be part of that.

And undeniably, certain historical things happened. It is very seductive to the ego and ego strengthening to seek a sense of identity in feeling that you belong to this group of people. And this is very seductive and seems to make sense, but you will be trapped.

You're walking into a prison. You're walking into a mental prison by deriving a sense of identity from being a victim in your mind. Whether it's on a personal level, things might have happened to you as a person in your childhood.

Somebody treated you very badly, a father, a mother, a caregiver, somebody else. So that you still carry the scars or wounds of your childhood with you. Undoubtedly, these things happen quite frequently to human beings.

And yet, if the narrative that you form in your mind and that becomes the basis for your sense of self is one of victimhood, then you are imprisoned in a conceptual, deeply entrenched sense of identity that is also ultimately fictitious. Because whatever happened to you is not who you are now. It is not your true nature.

Yes, the emotional scars may be there, and you can still feel them. But who is it that feels the emotional scars and the emotional wounds at this moment? Who is it that feels these things?

I feel them. Well, who is I? I is not what you feel.

That's an emotion. It's not a thought. I is the light of consciousness in which these feelings are being experienced right now.

So undoubtedly, you may still experience scars or wounds from past pain. You may experience it as the pain body inside you. But the pain body is not who you are.

It is an accumulation of past emotional pain. To make it into who you are and then forming a narrative on the basis of the pain body is a very seductive thing, can happen very easily, seems to make a lot of sense because millions of other people are doing the same thing. And you can even, if it's collective rather than personal, you can even get a great sense of belonging.

But you are condemned to living through and in the conceptual prison in your mind. Not only that, you're also condemned, especially if it's a collective victim identity, in making other groups of people, no longer looking at the individual, but making an entire group of people into your enemy. Of course, and as you know, the ego loves its enemies.

It strengthens itself enormously through creating the conceptual idea of your enemies. And so there are millions of people who still fall into this trap, egoic trap, where they, so this can happen as I said, either on a personal level, things that happen to you in your background, or the collective that you belong to have come out of. And then you have a huge group of enemies and you will never be able to, if you meet anybody who belongs to that group of people, it could even be such a huge group as, let's say it's 50% of humanity, and that 50% of humanity is called men.

I hate men, what they did to me. And then we're all victims of the patriarchy. We're all victims.

Of course, there has been a patriarchy. Of course, there has been extreme forms of yang that created havoc on the planet. And so we have shifted more towards yang now, which is a good thing.

Hopefully we're not going to an extreme of yang because that will also create havoc, but let's not go there. Nothing in excess. Victim is a huge, a huge present.

It is not who you are and make it impossible for you to find your own, your true power, because it would block access to your true nature, your deep identity. Any big egoic structure blocks access to who you are in your essence. So you don't even know what you're doing to yourself.

It's comforting to the ego, to the fictitious sense of self, but it is ultimately a mental disability. You can still look back at history. You can recognize things that happened, whether it's your personal history or a collective history.

And yet, of course, the pain was inflicted on you or your ancestors by human unconsciousness. If it's your parents, you can blame them. You can transform the unconsciousness that they manifested into their identity, or you can recognize that they could not act beyond their level of consciousness at the time.

Nobody can. I did that with my parents. And it was wonderful to realize that my father, for example, had accumulated enormous amount of emotional pain in childhood and felt neglected, not given love and attention because he was the seventh child.

Nobody wanted another child. He just happened. And he had many sisters.

They all were older than him. And he was just the last one, or not another one. The mother was very tired after giving birth to seven children, just tired.

So there he was, neglected, never hugged. And it was enormous. I only realized it much later, enormous amount of pain in his childhood.

And that pain manifested as anger, anger towards human beings, and latent, that was the pain body, anger towards women too, because the women neglected him. The mother neglected him. The sisters neglected him.

And yet there was this anger towards women and there was this enormous longing to have the attention of a woman, which he didn't get as a child. So there was a resentment that he didn't get the attention and there was a longing for the attention. Now, this is a pattern that he grew up with and became an adult.

How did it manifest in his life? I only understood that much later. It manifested in his life as needing an unconscious, powerful urge to gain the attention of as many women as possible, seducing them, he called it, to seduce women and get them.

And he became a master at seducing women. He was good looking, unlike me. And so he was a master.

He could get any, when he was young, any woman would fall for him. He could play this role of being, you are the most important person I've ever seen, the most, oh yeah. And the women got, oh.

And the moment they started a relationship, very quickly, he suddenly got very angry with her. And that was the end of the relationship. Start another one and another.

Then unfortunately, he got married. So it took a few years before it ended, but one good thing came out of it. And I know there was a being underneath those patterns that occasionally surfaced.

And it was wonderful to see that occasionally from beyond those heavy egoic and pain body patterns, occasionally a being emerged that was able, for example, to respect and recognize the work that I do. He read *The Power of Now* and not fully realizing the meaning at the deepest level, but he got, he said, what you are doing is the most important thing in the world. I know that, but I can't live it, but I know it's the most important thing he said.

So there's something in him that recognized it. There was a little bit, especially as he grew older, small cracks appeared in the egoic shell and there was occasionally the light came through. And that's wonderful.

I'm grateful for that also. My mother has another story, which we'll leave for some other day. It's strange how destiny and fate works.

Just one more thing about how it's all connected. Both my mother and father were a little bit eccentric. And when my mother fitted in more easily in contemporary world, when, but national socialism in Germany, my father was so angry with it that he started talking against it when he was a soldier and they put him in prison.

And that was in North Africa. He was a soldier in North Africa and he escaped from the prison. So he trekked through the desert.

It's a huge story. And ended up living underground with a woman that he found in Tripoli. And my mother escaped from this kind of military service in a factory where she was supposed to work to manufacture weapons when she was 19.

After the second day, she escaped on a truck, jumped in the back of the truck and escaped from there. And then the police were looking for her and she lived underground with an aunt for two years. That factory got bombed only a few months later where the people who worked there also lived and she would have died if she hadn't escaped.

So this impulsive 19 year old who jumped on the back of a truck to escape from the weapons factory had a significant impact on the consciousness of humanity. It's amazing how it's all connected. So the important thing now is that you honor the present moment as you move away from here and realize the real retreat is within you.

It's not the externals of this retreat. So you are not going to leave the retreat. The retreat means being in touch with the transcendent dimension within you.

So the retreat can now become permanent and you don't need to come back if you are in touch with the transcendent dimension within you. If you have problems and you lose it again, you could come back to another, but I hope you don't have to. Remember, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. And after you've said that and you truly live it, the mind is actually still for a moment because without a complaint, there isn't that much to think about right now. And without devaluing the present moment, there isn't that much to think about.

Just giving your attention to this moment. So don't reduce this precious moment to a means to an end. Take one step at a time and honor every step.

Then wonderful contentment arises. It seems to come out of the little things that you do, the little movements. You enjoy them.

There's an enjoyment in what you do. And if something so-called bad happens, a big challenge could happen sooner or later. There are always two things a human can go when being challenged by something seemingly very negative.

There are two things you can go. It can pull you into unconscious reactivity, make you unconscious, or it can intensify the presence within you. It's more likely in your case that it will intensify now that there's already significant field of presence arising in you.

It's more likely that the next challenge, bigger challenge that comes into your life will intensify your presence. But don't wait for it to become more present because then you would certainly get it. It'll come anyway.

Life won't leave you alone. Please just leave me alone. Let me just have a peaceful life without all those things going wrong and difficult situations and difficult people.

No. Life says, no, you need the challenges. So there's this wonderful stillness here, and let's acknowledge it.

Let's notice it. Be aware of it, the stillness in this room. And while you're aware of it, almost one could say listen to it, observe that your mind is also still.

So the external silence is perceived through inner stillness, and it can deepen the inner stillness. And once it's there, then even when you're at a noisy airport or in a noisy traffic, you no longer depend on external silence. But while it's there, it can be very helpful.

So let's be aware of it now, even as I'm still speaking. I'll stop speaking in a moment. I'm still speaking, but there is this background here to the words, the sounds, that actually has power to it.

The power is not just in you. It's all around you. Ultimately, there's no division between within and without.

There is power in the space itself. There is consciousness that pervades the space here, and the human brain is like a lens or a focalization of that consciousness, a particular way in which it focuses, a prism, but it's diffused everywhere. You don't have to believe me, but it just comes, it's an intuitive realization, which you may also share.

So that's all around you. The most significant thing in this room is not what you see. The most significant thing in this room is actually not a thing.

The most significant thing in this room is the space. And the most significant thing in you is not a thing either. It's the space of consciousness.

And this outer space is just an externalization of inner space, of consciousness. The vastness of outer space is an externalization of the depths of who you are internally. And ultimately, you are it.

You are the universe, which at this very moment is becoming conscious of itself. So let's tune into this stillness, the silence in this room. Listen to it.

[Speaker 2] (52:24 - 52:43)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Greatest Mystery Is the Mystery Of the Universe [b7af39e0-d183-4578-afbd-138c0c88b814]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:57)

The greatest mystery is the mystery of the universe. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the awakening universe. He says the great miracle and the mystery is that the universe is conscious.

In fact, Eckhart explains that it is a manifestation of consciousness itself, and we are part of that. He explains there are millions and billions of other life forms across the galaxies, but here on Earth, the universe expresses consciousness through us. He believes as we grow in awareness, we let go of the limitations of the ego.

We discover we are more than a person with a personality. Ultimately, we learn to see others just as ourselves. In Eastern traditions, this is called metta.

In the West, it's called love. Eckhart believes by acknowledging our shared humanity, we discover all our expressions are part of the one great consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 37:06)

My digital timer here is at zero. That's good. Time has stopped.

It's still at zero. Oh, it just turned to one. To get out of time, all you have to do is stop thinking and just being present.

And that's the vertical dimension then opens up, and there is no time. In the external, time still happens, but you no longer have any internal time. So time doesn't really exist outside of the human mind.

That seems perhaps hard to believe, but even some philosophers already came to that conclusion. So as a practice, as you know, I recommend practicing the cessation of thought. For example, when you're walking from A to B, that maybe start with a very short distance, like from here to that wall.

Make that as a practice. Obviously, you're walking for some reason. You want to get somewhere, probably, or maybe you're just taking a walk.

It doesn't matter, but you're making it a practice. This space, the space between here and there, let's see if I can be just present with every step and be free of thought until I reach that spot there. And so you walk.

You know, you see everything, perceive everything. You're breathing, of course, hopefully. You're not walking as a person then, because there's nothing that makes you a person that is to do with the personality that you have during that space.

Of not thinking, you don't have a personality. There's no person walking. There is a conscious presence walking if you're able to be free of thinking.

And that is very helpful practice. You can do it anywhere, whether you're in nature or in a city. In a city, you can say between here and the next lamp post, I will be just present.

Then you walk. You may not succeed every time, but it's an easy, relatively easy practice, can be incorporated into your everyday life. Even a simple thing like walking across the room, you can make that into a conscious action, a conscious action.

And then you can sense there's a just incredible difference between walking as a person and walking as presence. Often, of course, we speak of presence, we point to presence. Presence is not just the absence of sound.

It's also the presence of presence. There's a silent power in that presence. The more you go there, the more you can sense it.

And that silent power has nothing to do with any achievement in your life of achievement of the person. And you cannot say that it's yours. It would be misguided to say, this is my power.

There is a silent power. It's not yours because nothing is yours. And perhaps you can even feel it at this moment here now.

Maybe it's very, just very subtle. When you are rooted in that, you are it, basically. That's, of course, the end of all fear or anxiety.

And you will no longer have a problem with self-worth or self-esteem. No need to compare yourself anymore to anyone else. Potentially, every human could have access to that consciously.

They all have a trickle. That's why they're still alive. They have a trickle of that, but the ego stands in the way, the pseudo power of the ego, which is a dreamlike state.

When you go into not thinking, you are above thought. You are alert. There's an alert state of being above thought.

But it can happen that you slip, so to speak, and from the state of being above thought for too long, more than you can stand, you fall below thought. This happens to people in meditation everywhere. It happens in Zen monasteries.

It happens everywhere. All the professional meditators have a problem with that. That's why the Zen master goes around and hits you when he feels you're nodding off.

He has a stick, and he hits you on the back. So you go, it's an early morning meditation,

so obviously you didn't get enough sleep. So you're present for a few minutes, and then, heck, it works.

It works. This is a microcosm of the macrocosm in everyday life. When you become unconscious, life will challenge you again and hit you with something.

When your life turns unconscious, life will hit you with a metaphorical stick, or worse. So walking, and then you can extend it a little bit. Instead of the next lamppost, make it two lampposts.

You're walking from here to the second lamppost. You're less likely to fall asleep when you're walking. So presence practice is very helpful when there's some movement, and this is an amazing shift to be walking as a presence rather than as a person.

If I were here as a person, primarily, I mean, obviously there is a little bit of a person still here, but it's not a big thing, just a little person. For a person, it would be stressful, and it would produce anxiety to know that now I'm going to give another talk. Is it going to work, says the person?

Am I going to be able to talk, or what's going to happen? Or let's say I give a talk in a big city, there may be 4,000 people, and there I am sitting in my hotel room waiting to be picked up to give a talk. This could be stressful.

If I had the idea in my head, now I'm going to give a talk. I am a spiritual teacher, and I am about to give a talk to 4,000 people, and it has to go well, it has to succeed. I have to make an effort to make, whatever the mind might be saying, very stressful.

If I go from the hotel to the venue, and I sit in the car thinking about, is it going to work, what am I going to say? Oh, how can I fill two or three hours? No, that doesn't work.

But if I am just a presence, I'm sitting in the car as a presence looking out of the window without thought, and I can sense the power that is going to give the talk. I know that the silent power will flow into the mind and the talk will happen. I don't need to know how it's going to unfold or what exactly is going to be said.

So you're kind of, you rest in that silent power that is there beyond thought. And then I sit in the so-called green room, which is a waiting room behind stages. They call it green, but most of them are not green.

I don't know. And then I sit there in the state of no thought. It's beautiful.

And sometimes I walk up and down. It might look as if I'm nervous, but I'm walking because I don't want to sit for that long. So walk up and down the room.

And then I walk on stage. There's some steps here, one step at a time. And then there's a moment of silence.

And then words come. That is everybody's destiny, is to get in touch with that silent power and realize that that silent power is the essence of who or what you are. It is the Tao or whatever you want to call it.

And it can only be felt, sensed, if the ego gets out of the way. And the ego is mind activity and is particularly identification with mind activity. So we have to make room for the silent power and to let go of thought is making room for that to arise.

So that's a practice, whether you're walking, also lovely if you're in the car driving, you can also practice. You'll actually be quite present. Many people drive, they're thinking about something totally different.

And only if there's a critical situation, they suddenly become aware that they're driving. But driving is also a way of practice. Every traffic light when the car stops, just being present.

And more and more you can, in many, many situations, people are asking often how to incorporate this into everyday life. In as many situations as possible, practice the cessation of thinking so that you are able to rise above thinking and the person temporarily subsides. Then you can experience the world also as a perceiving consciousness instead of perceiving the world through the veil of your conditioned mind.

And that's a wonderful way you can actually enjoy what you perceive through visually or other senses. You can enjoy that very much. And you find aliveness and beauty in the smallest things that before you could never have noticed.

Because if you relate to reality through the veil of your conditioned thinking, it kind of deadens the world because it becomes conceptualized through excessive naming. For example, you no longer can sense the reality of that thing that you are naming. But if you drop the naming, then you can connect with it.

The naming, the constant naming, which is thought, creates a sense of separation between everything that is named and you. You drop the naming and the sense of separation, of separateness goes. And there is a connection with whatever it is that you are contemplating or looking at or sensing or touching or hearing.

There's no longer a sense of the other. I call it sometimes this, this is the non-conceptual intelligence, the non-conceptual way of knowing, as I call it sometimes. You can know something conceptually or you can know it in a deeper way, non-conceptually.

And this deeper knowing is a very different kind of knowing. To some extent, you become one with that thing, whatever it may be, or it could be a being or a human. In the case of human beings, when you are present with another human being, and let go of the naming, you connect with the human being at a deeper level.

And that deep connectedness is actually what in some, like in Buddhism, they call it loving kindness or kindness or metta. That's, it's love, but not in the conventional sense, in a deeper sense. Love is the recognition of the other as ultimately not other.

The recognition of the other as ultimately yourself, because everything is a manifestation of the one consciousness. That is the Tao or Brahman. Everything is a manifestation of that.

And even the table here is a material object, is consciousness at a lower frequency, frozen consciousness, one could say, that's matter. Or you could say consciousness that's totally asleep. And then you have life, plant life.

You have minerals and rocks and minerals that is frozen consciousness or consciousness asleep. And then you have the next stage, the evolutionary stage, is plant life. That's a different state.

You can also compare it with water. You can have, water can be solid, frozen, and then water can be liquid. And then water again can undergo another metamorphosis and become vapor.

So consciousness, various frequencies as matter, solid matter or plant life. That's another step. And then the next evolutionary step is animal life.

One could say consciousness is a deeper sleep in matter. Consciousness is dreaming in the plant, trees, flowers, et cetera. Consciousness then is animal life, perhaps a greater awakening of another vibrational frequency of consciousness.

Perhaps the early beginnings of an awakening. And then there's a transition to the humans. And the humans are still half asleep and partly in the dream state.

The humans are transitional entities, transitional beings between where they are supposed to go and the evolutionary, the evolution of consciousness and where they are now. As Nietzsche said, they're like a walker on a tightrope. And so there's, the animal is there and the, that's hard to translate, the future human, that's why we're the superhuman or whatever, the overhuman is the goal where halfway between animal and a conscious, fully conscious human being.

We're like a walker on the tightrope and it's quite dangerous, he says, because we could fall off and then not make it. So then the, it's unitive consciousness, you know things and you don't sense, have that sense that here's you and there's the rest of the universe. You feel a connectedness with all things and all beings, a oneness with all things and all beings through letting go of thought processes.

When needed, thought can operate beautifully, especially when you have access to that deeper dimension. Then thought can be inspired by that deeper dimension and it can

use your mind instead of your mind pretending to be you and using you, this silent power can use your mind because it has created it. And this silent power, which is consciousness itself, the unconditioned consciousness, you might ask, well, the human mind never stops asking and then it asks, so where does that come from?

Is that God? I will offering to you now my intuitive perception of this. It is something that emanates from the source of all life, which is not part of this dimension at all.

It does not exist in space and time. It emanates as the sun emanates light, the source emanates what we call consciousness into this dimension. So it is like the light of the sun.

The consciousness is the light of the source. It's metaphorical light, but it's often compared to light in various traditions. So this is the emanation of the one, which traditionally is called God.

But I don't like to use that word because it's been misunderstood for so long. God has been made into an entity that is somewhere traditionally up there until the first astronaut who went up into space, Russian astronaut. Of course, he came from an atheist country at the time.

And he said, I didn't see God anywhere up there. Oh, OK, that proves it. There is no God.

So the consciousness, the silent power that is that unconditioned consciousness, one could say it is the emanation of, let's use that word for a moment. I hope we don't mind, of God in you. It is the light of God in you.

And Jesus actually said it. He said, you are the light of the world. What could that mean?

What is that light of the world? It is the light in which the world appears, which is consciousness. Would there even be a world without that consciousness that perceives this?

That's an interesting question. You probably know the question. It's sometimes regarded as a Zen question.

The Zen question has no answer. For example, the Zen question is, what is the sound of one hand clapping? So that you cannot answer that because it doesn't make sense.

It is the Zen questions, which are called koans. They are supposed to drive your mind to its limit so that the mind finally surrenders. And when the mind finally surrenders, then you can hear the sound of one hand clapping because it's the silence.

I've given an explanation now. One shouldn't do that. But that's how it is.

There's another question which is regarded sometimes as a Zen question, but it's not

because it has an answer. If a tree falls in the forest and there's nobody around to hear it, does it make a sound? Now the answer is, of course, it does not make a sound.

When there's nobody there to hear it. Because for a sound to happen, it requires a sensory organ and a consciousness behind it. Without the sensory organ, which we call the ear, there may be a vibration when the tree falls, but the vibration does not become sound because there's no organ to perceive it.

So the tree does not make a sound when it falls in the forest and there's nobody there to hear it. Next question would be, interesting question, there's a rainbow, a beautiful rainbow. Would this rainbow be there if there were nobody there to see it?

No, of course not. Because the rainbow isn't even something. It's something that the light does.

And if nobody perceives it, then it's not happening. Is that confusing? And what is this table without the human organs of perception and the consciousness behind it?

What is left if there's no entity perceiving this? Of course, obviously, then there wouldn't be a table anymore. All that's left is perhaps atoms and molecules in rapid motion, because that's what the table consists of.

Molecules, atoms in vast motion. An energy field, that's all. An energy field with vast spaces in between that 99.999% of this table is empty space. It's nothingness, basically. Because even within the atoms, there's empty space. So all this is just, it's space.

It's all that. There's no table or room here or bodies in the room, just consciousness. Atoms are perhaps the most rudimentary form of consciousness.

Some scientists have written about the, speculated about the consciousness of the atom. But I don't want to go too far with this. Let's leave it at a practical level.

Your consciousness is an essential part of what you perceive as the world. You cannot separate them. There isn't the world and your consciousness.

The two form a unity. So without your consciousness, there isn't really a world. You are an essential part of what you perceive as the external world.

Is it really external? Isn't everything experienced within you? Everything that looks like the external world is experienced in your consciousness, in your mind.

There are sensory perception. Sensory perception sends signals to the brain which are then decoded by the brain. And then the brain recreates, or the mind, brain is the physical aspect of mind, which is non-physical.

They hang together. The brain or the mind then decodes the signal that it receives and

then reconstructs something of those signals. And then it becomes suddenly a room and a table.

And philosophers have speculated whether there's anything there at all outside or are we making it all up? Is life a dream? That consciousness is dreaming in a way it is.

Because everything, just like a dream, it comes and goes. It arises and subsides. Everything evaporates fairly quickly from this world.

Like a dream, a dream evaporates when you wake up. It's gone. It dissolves.

And everybody that's in this room is destined to dissolve within a few years. By a few, I mean, well, there's no little children here. So let's say, uh, 80 years at the most.

Within 80 years, I believe everybody here will be gone. And for many, including myself, much less than that. And so, if you could see a speeded up version of human life, you would see the human being born and growing and maturing maturity like a flower that comes out of the ground.

Opens up. It's beautiful. And then it begins to wilt.

But there is something, in essence, what you are, what you can see is a tiny fraction of what you are. You are, even as a person, which is not the essence of who you are, it's a temporal coming together. But you're essentially invisible.

Every thought you have exists in an invisible dimension. It is related to the human brain, yes. But thought itself, you cannot find it by opening up the brain and examining it.

Any thought, you have millions of thoughts and memories in your mind or in your brain. But no surgeon would ever be able to find a single memory by opening up your brain and looking with a microscope to find where is the memory of your grandmother? Where does it live?

Is it material or is it somehow related to the actual physical brain in the same way that when a radio plays a piece of music, there's a relationship between the radio, the receiver, and the music that it transmits. The music needs the radio to come into this dimension. But the music itself is not created by the radio.

In the same way that consciousness, it obviously is related to the physical brain in the same way that the music that is played by the radio is related to the radio in some way. And if something goes wrong with the radio, the music, either it will stop completely or will become distorted. So if something goes wrong with the human brain, obviously, then you can see that consciousness becomes distorted.

For example, when brain damage happens and even through certain drugs, it can happen. In the same way, if you put liquid or something into a radio receiver, the music

would become distorted or it would stop completely after a while. Does that mean that the music is produced by the radio?

It looks like it, but everybody knows it isn't. In the same way, I would suggest to you that consciousness has a relationship, of course, with the physical brain, but is not produced by the physical brain. It acts as a receiver.

It focalizes consciousness into this dimension. And so you can see then that all your thoughts are essentially invisible, even on the level of thought and your entire sense of who you are. Yes, the physical body that you can see, but even on the level of the personality, not to mention the deeper level of the essence of who or what you are, you are invisible and you don't actually exist in this dimension as this invisible entity.

You are multidimensional. In this dimension, you are a physical being, but even on the level of thought, you're already in another dimension. Thought exists in another dimension.

You cannot find it here. So all these memories that you have, nobody really knows in what form these memories live in you. I can say now, can do you remember the first teacher you had at school?

And immediately you go, yeah, there he or she, there she is. You remember? I do.

I remember what she looked like. I remember her name. And would anybody be able to find it by opening up my brain?

Would a surgeon be able to find my first teacher? No, can't find anything. You cannot find you at all because you exist in a dimension that is non-physical essentially.

And the essence of where you are, even more so, exists in an even deeper or higher dimension than that. But it's an amazing realization, isn't it? That you are essentially invisible on a material level.

Nobody could find you. They can find your body, but not you. That's quite an amazing thing.

There are enormous mysteries in this universe. There's the mystery of the microcosm of the subatomic realm that we do not understand. It's totally mysterious what happens there.

And then there's a mystery of the macrocosm, the mystery of outer space of billions of galaxies, inconceivable vastness of it. Does it ever end? The mystery of space itself.

Does it go on and on? When I was, I don't know how old, 11 or 12, I asked my dad, what is there? Does it go on and on or does it have an end?

Because I always loved looking at the night sky. Of course, nobody knows. It's inconceivable.

It is both inconceivable that space has an end somewhere and it is equally inconceivable that space has no end. Because if it has an end, what's beyond it? And if it has no end, it's totally impossible to imagine that.

So there's a huge mystery there and there's a huge mystery in the smallest and in the largest. But the greatest mystery of all is the mystery of consciousness. The greatest mystery and the greatest miracle is that the universe is conscious and consciousness is the essence of the universe.

And you are that. The universe is conscious through you and most likely conscious through millions of other, billions other life forms everywhere. But here, the universe is conscious through you.

And as you awaken out of the egoic state, it is part of the awakening universe. And if it's happening here, we can assume, almost with certainty, that it is happening in countless other places in this universe. It is awakening.

You are not in the universe as some entity that has come into this universe, this alien universe. That's how the ego perceives it. There's me and there's this alien world.

You are an essential part of it. You have come out of this universe, which is a manifestation of consciousness itself. So you are the consciousness of the universe, obviously.

Not the, it expresses itself in countless other forms too. But so you're not just a person. You are the temporary manifestation of the consciousness of the universe.

And then it withdraws. This little manifestation withdraws. Then the body dies.

But something of that entity still remains of that. The invisible you does not immediately dissolve. The invisible you is still there without the body.

And I don't want to go into this in too much detail because you'll find this out for yourself soon enough. So we don't need to talk about it because it's everybody's destiny to find out what happens.

[Speaker 2] (37:08 - 37:27)

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Eckhart Tolle The Hidden Dimension Within [6cd1dec0-2ea0-4ebf-b421-3d1ab28d8234]

[Speaker 1] (0:10 - 57:18)

I finally made it to Winnipeg and it's wonderful to see so many of you here and of course the reason why you're here is, although you may not call it that, but the reason why you're here is that you're experiencing a kind of awakening, awakening of consciousness, although you may not call it that, and you're here because you recognize the possibility that this awakening may deepen by being here. And if your mind right now is puzzled and saying, can you please define awakening of consciousness, I'll say by the end of this evening you will know, if you don't know already what it is, you will understand to the degree to which it can be understood what awakening of consciousness or spiritual awakening means. But more importantly, the awakening of consciousness is not a heightened conceptual understanding of what consciousness is, or even a heightened conceptual understanding of who you are, although it may be that also, but primarily it is the ability in you to become aware of a deeper dimension to who you are.

So ultimately it's a deepening of your sense of identity. And I assume this is what our evening here is going to be about. I'm saying, I assume, because I don't prepare anything beforehand.

So I never know what's going to come out of this mouth next. Living in the present moment. So if this is not a lecture in a conventional terms, and although of course I speak, which means I use concepts, which are thoughts, I use concepts here.

There is another dimension to this gathering, which is beyond conceptual understanding. It's a kind of, I could say, experiencing a deeper reality to life, a deeper reality to who you are. And this requires you to have, even if it's just a little, some access in yourself to this, so that you can go a little bit beyond conceptual understanding to a deeper realization that is beyond words and concepts.

So I would even go so far as to say that the essence of this gathering is not to be found on a conceptual level. So I'm not one to discourage anybody from taking notes, but you will probably derive greater benefit from this if you don't take notes, or if you feel compelled to do so, that's fine. And it is quite possible that after leaving here, you go back home and somebody says, well, what did he talk about for two hours?

And it's quite possible that you might say, I don't know. It seems very deeply meaningful, and yet, I remember a few bits and pieces, and that there's nothing wrong with that. It doesn't mean that you've missed the whole evening.

It may very well mean that you have gone deeper to a, what I sometimes call it,

transcendent dimension within yourself, the spiritual dimension, whatever you want to call it. These are just concepts, words. So the essence of this gathering is beyond conceptual understanding, or the conceptual understanding has two purposes here.

One purpose is mentioning what stands in the way of a deeper realization of who you are, what stands in the way to a deeper awakening to who you are. So there are certain obstacles that tend to be common to all humans, and they are to be found in the mental, emotional field of every human being. So it's helpful, and I will be talking about this probably, to mention certain obstacles to the full awakening, the next, as I sometimes call it, the next stage in human evolution seen from a larger perspective.

So the other way we use words or concepts is as signposts. Signposts, I call them signposts, they are concepts that point you in a certain direction, and usually the direction is within. Traditionally in spiritual discourse, very often you see that in ancient old paintings, religious paintings, and so on.

Very often the spiritual dimension is given a certain location, and often you see saints and others, they have got their finger raised like this, because we had a limited understanding. There was up and there was down. Now, of course, we know the moment you leave this planet, there's no up and down anymore.

So traditionally you looked upwards for something higher, but I would suggest a more reliable pathway towards the essence of who you are is this way. It goes within. So the words that I use very often are signposts.

For example, many of you are familiar with this terminology. When I say be present, to be present, of course we'll be going deeply into this. To be present is something that you cannot ultimately understand.

But if you don't know what I'm talking about, it's fine. Just wait. Just be here.

Be here non-present until you're present. So ultimately being present, being conscious in spiritual terminology, you cannot understand conceptually what presence is. You can only experientially know what is meant by presence.

And so right now I'm using certain concepts as signposts towards presence. But you may notice, especially if, and many of you are already going through this awakening process, you may notice in a way that you cannot explain. As I mentioned these words, there is a kind of recognition in you of what I'm talking about, but you would not be able to perhaps explain it.

Because as I talk about presence as a state of consciousness, as I talk about it, there's not only the words which are signposts that are pointing towards it, there's also underlying the words, and in between the words, there is already that state of presence. And this is then the hidden dimension of our gathering here. The hidden dimension of

this gathering is deeper than words.

And this is why sometimes I slow down a bit, it just happens, so that you don't attach excessive importance or give excessive attention to the words. They are helpful, but don't be like somebody who collects signposts and has a wonderful collection. Let's say the signposts say Rome or Mecca, and they point that way and say, oh, this is a beautiful signpost, I'm going to keep this and talk about it.

Then after a while, you confuse the signpost with the destination. So you don't become a collector of signposts, because then you become intellectually very knowledgeable, perhaps about spirituality, but you're like the proverbial person who writes a PhD about honey without ever having tasted honey. So there is a knowing, the possibility in you of accessing a knowing that is non-conceptual.

And this is completely overlooked in our civilization, almost completely, because our civilization encourages the ability, even already in young children, to conceptualize and to analyze and to think. And the teacher asked a question, and the best students, according to the educational system, are those that immediately go, huh, I know, that's it. And then you begin to mistake names for the deeper reality of things.

It starts with something like when the child learns language, and the child asks the parent, what's that? The child is looking at a big something, doesn't know what it is, what's that? And the dad or mom says, that's an oak tree.

Oh, oak tree. Okay, thanks, dad. And from then on, whenever the child looks at that kind of tree, he says, oh, that's an oak tree.

And you confuse the naming with what it is. In many, many cases, when you think you know, it's only the illusion of knowledge, because you've attached labels to things. And the moment the mind attaches a label to a thing, the mind says, oh, now I know.

Dad, how do birds find their way when they migrate every year from here to South America? And how do they find their way back to their nesting grounds the following year? How is that possible?

Dad, please tell me. And the dad says, oh, that's easy. It's instinct.

Oh, okay. You've attached a label, now you think you know how it works. Oh, it's by instinct, they find, then the exam comes, and right, by instinct, if birds find, oh, great, give it an A plus.

So part of this awakening of consciousness is to realize that there is a whole hidden, until now, or until recently, there is a whole dimension of consciousness in you that you had been unaware of, that you had always overlooked. The whole dimension that actually our whole civilization is continuously encouraging you to overlook. Just don't look there.

And there are many ways in which we can approach talking about it. But more importantly, of course, here, we are here to deepen our experience of that dimension. And that dimension of consciousness, which in spiritual traditions, all the ancient teachers have pointed to it, using different kinds of signposts, which of course, the collectors of signposts say, no, this signpost is totally different from that one.

Look, they're totally different writing on it, and let's analyze it even more, not realizing they're pointing exactly the same way. So the ancient teachings and teachers have spoken about it in various ways, whether they talk about liberation, awakening, salvation, or the Buddha, in negative terms, the end of suffering, or another term the Buddha used is emptiness, which is not very inspiring, as you might have noticed, but it's very deep. If the Buddha says emptiness, he's giving you a signpost that is very hard to take and say, I believe in this signpost, because it's a negative term.

But he's pointing to a certain state of consciousness to is pointing to a certain realization. And he calls it emptiness. Very wise, because this discourages people from worshipping the signpost.

You can worship the kingdom of heaven. It's a term that Jesus used, by the way, they talk about exactly the same thing, as you would see in about two minutes. They talk about exactly the same thing, but the Buddha's one of the key terms in Buddhism is sunyata, which means empty, translated as emptiness.

That's an interesting choice of signposts, because you cannot worship or make an idol out of emptiness, but you can make an idol out of the kingdom of heaven, because then you can say, oh, where is it? It is somewhere, probably up there. And when am I going to get there?

So you create space and time, and then the kingdom of heaven is a certain location. And you can even, it becomes part of your thought structure, and you begin to worship the kingdom of heaven, not realizing that it's a signpost. So emptiness, the Buddhist term emptiness, is closely related to the kingdom of heaven of Jesus.

In churches, they won't explain it to you, of course. It's closely related. My translation of emptiness is spaciousness.

And my translation of the kingdom of heaven is kingdom, in modern terminology, is dimension. Heaven is this vastness of the sky. This vastness of the sky, the sky stands for spaciousness.

The dimension of spaciousness is the kingdom of heaven, which is Buddha's emptiness or spaciousness. Same thing or the same? No thing.

And what is this thing? What is this dimension of spaciousness? It is a dimension within you.

It is a dimension of consciousness that is possible for humans to access. Although in most humans, it only exists in seed form as a potential. Not that many humans have actually even begun to realize that that dimension exists in them, except you.

And that's why you're here. But even you might only have had an inkling. An inkling is enough to bring you here.

And you don't know quite, may not even know why you've come here. But this thing, you know there is something here that is extraordinarily important. Because if there was not something here that is extraordinarily important, how could you possibly listen to a man talking, sitting on a chair for two hours?

It would be excruciating. Usually this is a stage when things happen. Dramatic things happen and your attention gets captured by that.

But how can your attention be captured by a little man sitting on a chair? So if you do not find this gathering here absolutely excruciating, and you will perhaps if you were forced to come here by a friend or relative, then it is possible that you, because you couldn't say no, you could always take a workshop on how to say no, but I don't do that. You couldn't say no, and now you're sitting there in this theater where it's not even a central aisle where you can get out.

So if it's so excruciating you have to disrupt the entire audience to leave here. But don't be concerned. If you cannot stand it, then please feel free to remove yourself.

And you will not be judged because all the others here are spiritually advanced and they don't judge you. So a little bit of humor is good because it opens us up. And while we laugh, the ego is not operating.

That's a good thing, unless we laugh at somebody. So the spaciousness that the Buddha refers to, the dimension of spaciousness that Jesus refers to, which other traditions use different terminology, is a dimension of consciousness that is in you. And it already is in you, but it's concealed in many, not in you, but in most humans.

Although there is a growing number of humans who are awakening to that dimension within themselves. But an awakening to that dimension within you is also a deepening of your sense of identity. And that's why it's so important.

It is not something other from you. This dimension of spaciousness, the spiritual dimension, is not something that is separate from who you are in the depths of your being. So the most vital thing is to realize who you are beyond the personality, beyond the person, beyond the historical person.

For most people, the historical person or personality is the basis for their sense of self, for their sense of identity. And that's a very limited sense of self, a very limited sense of

identity. The very essence of all spirituality, if you go to the very essence of it, is it points to the possibility of realizing the transcendent dimension of who you are, which is also the transcendent dimension of life itself.

So it is a transcendent dimension of the universe, and it is a transcendent dimension of who you are. They're not separate. So that then is the awakening of consciousness.

You awaken to that deeper dimension. In ancient Hindu spiritual philosophy, they have the term Turiya, which means the fourth. They divide consciousness into the state of being asleep, the state of dreaming, the state of ordinary wakefulness.

And then the Turiya, the fourth, points to the possibility of living, being rooted in a deeper state of consciousness than the normal waking state. And that's what it is. Now, I don't want to delay the secret of our gathering and the essence of this to the last minute of our gathering.

I want to continuously have the essence already here, even as I talk more about it. So I'm inviting you now for the first time to, and then I'll carry on with other things, inviting you here to deepen your realization of that. So what is this inner spaciousness?

What is this inner, the kingdom of heaven that is within you? What is the transcendent dimension to who I am? What is it that in ancient Greek philosophy, the most important dictum was, know thyself, know thyself.

The ancient Greek philosophers, probably this phrase, know thyself, is probably uttered by Pythagoras, one of the very first philosophers, the very person who created the term philosophy, which means lover of wisdom. Philosopher is a lover of wisdom, and wisdom is another name for that dimension, or rather, wisdom comes out of that dimension. Now, you may not necessarily be aware that, well, you probably are because you're here.

There's a lot of thinking that goes on in your mind. It goes on and on, it goes on and on, and it doesn't stop. And even if you wanted to stop, it says, why can't you stop?

Why can't you stop? Well, I can't, I can't help it. And that's it again.

So even if you say, please stop, it's part of the thinking process. The voice appears in different disguises. And some people have a monologue that goes on, that comments on what is going on around you, or is totally unaware of what goes on around you, just a little bit, so you don't stumble, but is totally somewhere else in thought processes about the possible future, or the heaviness of the past.

There's completely somewhere else, and it's there, there's a voice going inside of you. Sometimes it's a dialogue, because one, the voice takes on just one disguise, and then another aspect of the voice takes on another disguise. And, and then there's another

aspect of the voice that is your mother, who passed away 10 years ago.

And then there's your dad, and then your mom says, why do, why can't you ever succeed at this? What do you, what do you, can't you do it, please? That's why, please shut up, mom, I don't want to hear this.

We can have different voices in your head. You can have an argument with yourself, which is not uncommon. It sounds quite insane, but you can argue with yourself.

In, in Gestalt therapy, it's called the top dog and the underdog. So one person, why do I always fail at these things? Why am I not good enough?

Well, you should try harder. Well, I'm trying hard, but I just can't. So the, this is the voice in the head.

This, these are compulsive, incessant thought processes. So whether you are completely absorbed in that, and not even know what your surroundings are, you just know enough to know where you're going, but 90% of your attention is absorbed in thinking. And so you're not, you're obviously not present.

You're somewhere, but you're not present because your entire consciousness is absorbed by thought. And that's normal state of being. And you might have noticed a lot of that compulsive thinking is not even pleasant.

If it were pleasant, perhaps it wouldn't be so bad. It's, it says nice things about people and remembering nice things and thinking about the wonderful things that are going to happen to me. That would be a beautiful, pleasant dream.

And you can, but so then perhaps it wouldn't be so bad. It would still be a weird dream, but perhaps not so bad. But the strange thing is for many people, this voice in the head is a kind of torture.

It, because it is very critical of yourself or others or places or it's, it complains a lot. It is, it seeks to be right all the time. It seeks and it loves arguments.

Whether you're out aloud or you're arguing in your mind with an imaginary opponent, especially after something has just happened. Somebody has been rude and you said, and then you start, the mind starts up thinking what you could have said. And then, then you replay it and it becomes a huge little play where you say the most clever heart and heart hitting things to this person.

And 20 minutes later, you say, Oh, where am I? And then it goes on with something else. And then it goes on.

It creates a lot of thought about next moments, future moments, what's going to happen. And a lot of that is not pleasant because it imagines scenarios of losing

something you have, not getting what you want, something you think will make you happy. You might never get it, or it's something you have, you may lose it or all kinds of things gone.

This voice in the head is often very negative, more freak, more, much more negative for most people than positive. Strangely enough, you might notice that if, for example, a pleasant thing that you, let's say yesterday, you witnessed a beautiful sunset. And for a moment, you felt so good and happy watching the sun go down and it was so beautiful.

And then the next day, yes, you remember it. And all the mind can do with that, it says, that was a beautiful sunset. Okay.

But if something unpleasant happened yesterday, the mind can get in there and create a whole train of associated negative thoughts about how unpleasant people are, or how things are, how dreadful your life is. And anyway, it's all completely pointless, obviously. And why am I even here?

Now, what, what then happens is gradually you form a, an identity that is based on the bundles of thoughts that you think most frequently. These bundles of thoughts arise and they become who you think you are. So when people say my life, and often they think about, you think about my life or you talk about my life.

And what that is, if you look more closely, what my life is, it's a certain narrative in your mind that you need to revive by thinking about it. It is thought. So it's your past.

It's the things that have happened to you, the things that you did. And very importantly, it's the things that you identify with. You identify with certain things.

And these things that you identify with become thoughts. So as we know, people identify with possessions. Identify means there's a thought that arises that says my car, for example, this is my car.

This thought from my car gives you an enhanced sense of self. If it's a car that's better than other people's cars or a diminished sense of self, it's an old rusty car or a bicycle. And so if you have a bicycle and you identify with the bicycle in this, this we're talking now, beginning to talk about the ego, this is the ego.

This is a mind made sense of self that is based on a narrative of me, me and my life. You call it me and my life. It's the ego.

It identifies with things. Primarily what it identifies with is thought because everything that becomes a thought, the car becomes the thought of my car. The body is the very first thing probably that you identify with.

And many people go through their lives continuously carrying a very strong body

identification. But the body, of course, becomes a mental image of my body. And it's a possession.

People don't say, I am a beautiful body. That would sound very strange because they say I have a beauty or I am an ugly body. No, that sounds very weird.

You have an ugly, in the same way that you have a car, you have a body. You have an ugly or beautiful body or in between. So very strange.

So there's gradually a construct arises in your mind and that is the conditioned sense of self. It is conditioned by the past. When the voice in the head thinks, a lot of the thinking it does is about my life, your life.

My life is very important. My life is the most important thing to me. It's my life.

Of course, I have to think about it. It is problematic, that's for sure. And probably more problematic than anybody else's life.

Because everybody else is fine. I see in their Facebook pages, they are all fine. They are all enjoying the best meals all the time they go.

So the mental image that they have, they've had it for thousands of years. You live in the mental image of me. Now, through the miracle, miraculous powers of technology, you can actually amplify through technology.

You can amplify the mental image of you and send it out into the world. And you can polish it so that it looks better before you send it out. Before you send it out, you say, oh, this looks great.

Do I look happy enough? Yes. And so Facebook is full of happy, happy entities.

But if you look, it's all a phantom. It's a phantom created by the mind, but the egoic sense of self. Amazing.

The very first time this happened is in Greek mythology. It goes back, whether this person ever existed, we don't know, probably not. But there's deep truth in this mythological figure.

A very ancient Greek myth is this young man who was incredibly beautiful apparently. And of course, at the time they had no mirrors and he couldn't take any selfies. One day he happened to see his image in a pool of water.

And so the first time he saw his image, oh, by the way, his name was Narcissus. And so he looked into this pool of water and the story goes that he fell in love with himself. But I think a better translation would be, he became obsessed with himself.

In other words, what this mythological story points to, oh, by the way, he did not end well after that thing sprang downhill, but we don't need to go there. He looked into this pool of water and there was suddenly something arose within him, which was a mental image of who he is. And this mythological story shows the beginning of the egoic sense of self, because the ego is a mind created phantom self that people carry around with them, but they don't know that they carry this phantom self because they are so identified with this phantom self, they become it.

And that is identification, ego identification. And that is what in many spiritual traditions is called a false self. I don't call it a false self because it has its place.

I call it your, it is your form identity. The form that you are, the form is the physical form of your body and the form is the psychological form, it's thought forms, emotional and mental forms of who you are. So every human being has a form identity, the body and the mind, they together are the form identity.

And that is fine, but if that's all you know of yourself, then your life is very, very limited. And not only is it very limited, it also is very frustrating because if you are looking for some kind of ultimate fulfillment or ultimate happiness, whatever you want to call it, or ultimately finding a complete and satisfying sense of self, if you're looking for that on that level of your form identity, you will never find it. That's everybody who reaches a certain age begins to realize, almost everybody, and sooner or later everybody, my life isn't working quite out the way it was supposed to work out.

What's happening? Something's gone wrong. And then you look, I need something to enhance this deficient sense of who I am, this deficient sense of self.

There's always an underlying, always some underlying discontent, always something, a sense of not having arrived yet, a sense of not being at, not really being at home where you are, not, not being comfortable in your own skin, as the expression goes, it's always something missing. And, and a few times you think I found it now it's there, whether it's a possession, you suddenly you buy something and for a few days or a few hours, it enhances your sense of self because you have superiority. This is a big thing about the egoic sense of self.

It always compares itself to others in, am I inferior or superior to this? Okay. I have, if I buy this, I'm superior because as you know, some people are addicted to shopping so they, you can buy an expensive designer thing and immediately it becomes a mental image.

It's incorporated into your sense of self. I'm wearing Prada. Well, I'm not, but I think the devil wears Prada.

Isn't that a movie? So for a moment, it gives you an enhanced sense of self, but it

doesn't last too very long and then dissatisfaction creeps in again. And so you have the, the story of me is not that happy.

And for many people, now this is very important. Many people walk around with a very unhappy narrative and this unhappy narrative gives them their sense of self. So they are an unhappy person like walking around with a burden and they have a narrative.

If you talk to them, you say, what about your life? They might say, oh, let me tell you about my life. Oh, it started going wrong when I was two.

Dreadful childhood. Never had a chance after that. Then my wife, she, she was just completely betrayed me, complete betrayal.

Just everybody I've ever known, let me down. The universe is against me. And I now realize that the world is an awful place and my life is dreadful.

You don't realize that there's a narrative in your mind that is making you unhappy, but you believe you're so identified with this stream of thinking that that becomes you. So, so people walk around with an unhappy identity, not realizing that it is created by the storytelling in their minds. This is the story of me and it's an unhappy one.

Wow. That's quite a realization. But then of course, this is, could be the beginning of an awakening of consciousness when you realize, what is it that makes me so unhappy?

And then you need to kind of begin to wake up a little bit and you begin to wake up a little bit out of the complete identification with thinking. And this waking up a little bit out of the complete identification with thinking, we could call that the arising of awareness, or we could call it the arising of presence. And that is that deeper or higher could call it, but I call it deeper, the deeper dimension of consciousness that is not thought, that exists transcendent to thought activity.

So it begins when you have the suspicion, beginning suspicion that your unhappy self could possibly be a mental phantom. And you begin to see that the emotions that you continuously go through are actually not created to a large extent by circumstances, although it very certainly looks like it. But if you look more closely, the unhappy emotions that become your unhappy self are ultimately not created by the circumstances of your life, but are created by what this voice in the head has to say about the circumstances of your life.

It is the narrative in your mind ultimately that creates the unhappiness, the unhappy self. And that's an amazing realization. That happened to me one night when I was 29, I was very much identified with the unhappy self in my mind.

And then this thought arose, as I described briefly in the Power of Now at Interaction, I cannot live with myself any longer. And that's a wonderful point to reach, but also a

dangerous point. Because if you cannot live with yourself any longer, you become so unhappy, so depressed, or so anxious that you experience your whole life as just a burden.

You become a burden to yourself. You experience yourself as this heaviness, this heavy burden. It's potentially the most wonderful place to reach and a very dangerous place.

The danger is that you commit suicide. But the potential is that you disidentify from the narrative in your mind, and suddenly something arises within you that is able to see this narrative that's been going on for years, to see it for what it is, a story that you're telling yourself. And it's the unhappy story of me.

Oh, now to see that, there needs to have been this awakening of awareness. Awareness is that space that the Buddha talks about that is the spaciousness, traditionally translated as emptiness, not a good translation, spaciousness, that Jesus talks about as the dimension of spaciousness, kingdom of heaven, which is within you. All teachings point to ultimately the arising of that consciousness that is unconditioned.

Because the conditioned consciousness is your thought processes. And all your thought processes are conditioned by the past. They are conditioned by your personal past, plus conditioned by the past of the collective in which you grew up.

They're conditioned by your surrounding culture. They're conditioned by certain religious beliefs. They're conditioned by political beliefs.

They're conditioned by even the language that you grow up with is already a form of conditioning. So that is all part of your form identity that everybody has. You have a past, and I have a past, and you can't deny that.

It has its place, and you have a future. Well, so-called. But of course, you don't really, because I don't know if you've noticed that the future doesn't actually exist.

Because if it did, you would have gotten there at some point. Now, for many people, the unhappy self in their mind often looks to the future, and it is a sword with two double-edged swords, or whatever the expression is. On the one hand, you look to future, which, what do you mean you look to the future?

What is it then if it doesn't exist? Well, obviously, the only way you can experience the future is by thinking about the future. So the future consists of thought.

It's the thought of future that creates future. On a practical level, I cannot deny that future is helpful. This is why we were able to meet here at a certain time on a certain day.

Otherwise, it would have been difficult. Just let's see. It probably would have taken

several million years for us accidentally coming together here.

So obviously, on a practical level, it works, and it has to work. You need it. You can't live without future.

But on a deeper level, where you are, it's concerning your identity, concerning who you are, concerning what it is that really fulfills you in life. There is no future except as a thought form, obviously. And there is no past, even, because for anything to happen, it can only be now.

Happen and now, you can't separate them. Happen and past is not... Whatever happened to you in the past, it's paradoxical when one talks about it.

Obviously, when it happened, it was the now. And when you remember it, it's still the now. But what the now is, we will see.

The now is the essence of who you are. The now is that space of consciousness in which everything happens that is transcendent to everything but contains everything. And that is the essence of who you are.

And you cannot know that until you become dissatisfied with your life. You need to have some degree of dissatisfaction with your life is a necessary and wonderful thing. Because otherwise, you will never awaken spiritually.

As long as you have, let's say, what do people imagine? What would my best life be? I would have a trust fund.

Never have to worry about earning money so I can pursue all my wonderful interests. I can go anywhere, satisfy any desire immediately. And anything, I can have anybody because I can buy my trophy wife, a trophy husband.

I can have anything, private jet even, everything. And then that person, this trust fund person, first of all, would not be sitting here. He or she would be just absorbed in some drug or sensual pleasure and being moving towards unconsciousness, not being challenged by life whatsoever.

And then after a while, he or she would realize that the absence of challenges in everyday life becomes the greatest challenge. And huge unhappiness would overtake him or her after a few years because there's nothing to live for anymore. Then all the little challenges that normal human beings face become one big challenge of somebody who is becoming very, very unhappy.

And there's nowhere to look because normal people, they look to things, okay, when I get that, I'll be okay. When I get that, I'll be good. Nothing to look forward anymore.

I've had it. I've seen it all. Dreadful.

So that becomes the biggest challenge. No human being escapes the challenges of life. And this is a necessary part of living.

And this is what awakens you. The becoming frustrated with this level of what I call your form identity operates on a surface level of reality. I call this form identity the surface I.

This is the surface I, which is the personality, the historical person with its story. And it has its place. The surface I looks to the future for either great sum fulfillment, or it looks to the future in dread because the future is so threatening.

The future is always the two edged sword. It promises more fulfillment, or it represents the threat of loss. So the future is a very weird place to go to, and the ego doesn't know what to do with it, but it goes there all the time.

Okay. People look to the future for completion, a sense of self. Now the future is good for when you learn things on the level of your form identity, you need future even to learn to play the piano.

You need future. You can't learn the piano in one moment, even to make a cup of tea. You need future.

Anything you do, you learn another language. You learn, you have new experiences. You need future for all these things.

You need future, which doesn't exist, but it unfolds in time. These things unfold in time. That's where future comes in.

So you look, the ego looks to the future for fulfillment, but it never really comes because the future doesn't come. It's always the present moment. And it's always the ultimately dissatisfying present moment.

Sometimes giving the deceptive appearance that it is satisfying. I've fallen in love with this wonderful, wonderful person. Oh, and this law has a certain lifespan, that state of unconsciousness.

And then the strange paradoxical thing is as if there were some malevolent entity trying to sabotage your life, the very person that you fell in love that made you so happy for six months. Two or three years later, this person makes you dreadfully unhappy. It's called the divorce proceedings.

Or you live together, but hate each other. How could I ever have fallen in love with this jerk? Now I'm stuck.

And then you carry the narrative of this unhappy story, me. And everything you experience is seen through this veil of your conditioned mind. And of course, the future is terribly dangerous too, because although the ego doesn't want to admit it, the future

obviously, eventually kills you.

So the ego feels drawn to the future for fulfillment, but deep down it knows actually, it's going to kill me. So not a pleasant place to be, but it's trapped in an egoic consciousness. And the egoic consciousness continuously is frustrated.

Always a sense of unease that is covered up often by smiles, or you can cover it up with taking alcohol or certain drugs that free you a little bit from this torture, daily torture of your mind. It slows down the mind. If you drink enough, the mind slows down and it's for a little while you feel liberated until you take three or four more, and then you become unconscious completely.

Of course, at least you're not thinking about your problems anymore. So it's a kind of liberation. And then this surface identity is then looking for some kind of solution on the surface level of reality.

And this is where the ego tries to satisfy itself, its sense of self. It does that by creating antagonism. The ego loves to be hostile towards people and situations because then it grows through that.

So whenever you have an argument with somebody, the need to be right arises and that requires the other person to be wrong. It's very unconscious.

Eckhart Tolle The Individual and Collective Pain Body [0721cb60-3021-4310-bdb9-9bd74ef0e64c]

[Speaker 1] (0:10 - 9:15)

Hello, everybody. Wonderful to share this moment with you, this moment. And perhaps we can start with the foundation for your entire life, which is always the present moment.

And that's also the foundation for manifestation. Manifesting things externally requires time, but the foundation for all manifestation is in the present moment and lies in the power of the present moment. So let's begin with acknowledging the present moment.

Now, you might think that's a normal thing to do, but it's not for most people. So acknowledging the present moment is to become aware of your sense perceptions at this moment, visual, let's bring up for a moment the people who are here with us, a number of human beings, many humans. I'm going to use the words in a strange way now, not many human beings, just many humans, but one being.

That's a incredible realization. It changes the way in which you perceive others, also changes the way in which you perceive yourself. You are human, the conditioned entity, the person which has a body, a name, a race, a gender, other things that make up the identity of the person, that's the human.

Beyond that, at a deeper level is the consciousness, not the conditioned consciousness, which is the mind and the emotional field, but the unconditioned, the light of consciousness that emanates from the source of all life and can be sensed or realized within here and now, only here in this moment. So in this moment, we see the humans, you yourself are one of them, I am one of them, and if you go deeply into the now, that is inseparable from going deeply within, beyond the conditioned entity. And if you go deep within, thinking subsides, but you stay conscious.

You continue to perceive this world. You perceive other so-called humans. You perceive yourself, your body, but you become aware of, one could say, that without which no perception would be possible.

What is it that makes it possible for you to perceive this world, including the humans that you see? That doesn't have an answer on a conceptual level, but only on an experiential level. For this world to be perceived, what is indispensable, an indispensable prerequisite is you.

You as the consciousness, without which you couldn't perceive anything. So you are both, on the one hand, you are the human, and at a deeper level, you are the being. Many humans, one being.

That's the amazing realization that takes you to sensing. As thinking subsides, awareness remains, presence remains, and you can't define it, it doesn't have an age or gender or race or anything. You just know that you are conscious.

It is indisputable. Not only are you conscious, you are consciousness. If you say, I am conscious, it's not entirely correct because there's a duality, there's I who has something that's consciousness, but I, the fundamental I and consciousness are one.

So I am conscious is a conventional way of putting it, but the truth is I am consciousness. You can even drop the consciousness, I am, and that is the deepest meditation, and that's the foundation for everything. If you lose that, if you don't know yourself as the being, if you only know yourself as the human, no manifestation will be of much use.

You might succeed here and there, but no manifestation will be of very much use, and the world is going to be very frustrating if you miss the foundation, which is inseparable from who you are in your essence, and that essentially is also the essence of what we call the now or the present moment, because the now or the present moment is actually the space for everything, and that is the, for lack of a better word, the unconditioned consciousness. So that's the foundation.

Once you know that, manifestation is a secondary thing that you, from time to time, practice or engaged in, but to put it differently, one could say that when you are in touch with that deeper dimension, then you are manifesting, even when you're not explicitly manifesting something specifically in this world, you manifest a different reality. So this manifestation is, sometimes you may want to manifest specifically, not in order to achieve something that will eventually bring you to some kind of ultimate fulfillment, because it won't, if you have missed the depth dimension, the being, but because that's part of being here in this world, because the universe delights in manifesting, in creating forms. So you might as well participate.

In fact, you're meant to participate in it, the process of creation, but be conscious in it. Otherwise there's a dream, that you live in a dream-like world, oftentimes into a nightmare. So you're manifesting, the reality that you manifest is different when you know yourself as a being, primarily, and then you can accept what you are, who you are as a human, and you accept other humans, humanness, which is always imperfect and limited, but your humanness is no longer a huge troublemaker, when you are connected with a depth dimension of who you are, the being that you are, the awareness. Then the human is no longer crazy.

Okay, let's go on to the first question.

[Speaker 2] (9:17 - 10:32)

It's nice to speak with you, and it's an honor to be here to ask my question. So the

question I wrote a few weeks ago was about a human being who manifests as a person of color. So I self-identify as a woman of color.

So in spiritual teachings that use some of the language you use, that includes stories and thoughts, in quotation marks, cause suffering. When someone who identifies as a minority or person of color, and if you're in a predominantly white, middle-class spiritual community, that particular phrase can feel more like spiritually bypassing a human existence that includes race and gender. And so sometimes as a human, a body, I struggle with those phrases.

So I'm just, when I wrote to you, I was really desperate to understand how the teachings that come through you help with that experience of being a human body that has identified with a race and a gender, but also here's your teachings or the things that you can say, but not sure how to reconcile that in our communities that might not look like us. So that was my question.

[Speaker 1] (10:33 - 34:52)

Thank you, thank you. So bypassing, that's an interesting term that you used, and it is something that can easily happen. It can happen externally.

I'll give you one or two examples in a second. It can happen externally, it can happen internally. There's an external bypassing and an internal bypassing.

The external bypassing would be your encounter situation that is damaging, harmful. It could be that you are living with somebody who is abusive, just an example, and it continues, the behavior of that person continues towards you. And this example can stand for many other things, collective things, other things of a personal nature.

You continue to live with this person and you meditate. Instead of taking action in order to change the situation, now, in this particular example, it's not likely that you will change the abuser, but you can change the situation, for example, by removing yourself from that situation. That's one way.

But if you are so spiritual that you practice external spiritual bypassing, then you meditate, all you do is meditate every day and kind of denying that the person you are living with is deeply unconscious. And it's actually, the behavior is actually harmful. It might hurt you or kill you eventually, but you're not taking action because you believe that perhaps it's unspiritual to take action or whatever, you don't want to hurt him or whatever justification you may have for that.

A completely different thing would be, before I go on to talk about internal bypassing, if you were trapped in a prison cell with a person who is maybe abusive or extremely obnoxious, whatever it may be, and there's absolutely no way of getting out, then you would have to go into a state of complete surrender. And that is, there's nothing you can

do unless there's something you can do, but in that moment, there's nothing you can do. There are certain situations where action is not possible, at least not right now.

Those situations require complete surrender, but many other situations can be changed by taking action. So bypassing is to avoid taking action for whatever reason the mind comes up with. And that is the external bypassing, but even more importantly than that, internal bypassing is not to acknowledge the emotions that you feel, to deny the emotions that you feel, that emotional pain, for example, not to look at emotional pain.

Spiritual people and religious people have been doing it for a very long time. The internal bypassing is to deny the reality of what you're feeling. Traditionally, if you're a religious person, you may deny certain destructive emotions, extreme anger within yourself.

You cannot admit to yourself that you are angry because it would conflict with a mental image that you have of who you are. Most people live through a mental image of who they are. And if there's an inner, an emotion, certain emotions that conflict with the mental image, the emotions are denied.

So that's internal bypassing. And you continue to be a highly spiritual person who does not have these painful emotions, but of course they will come out and you will be taken over by them periodically. That's how a person in the past, often who were unconscious, had this image.

And then they were very cruel to their spouses or their children and could not admit that the cruelty came from their anger, never acknowledged. So the trauma happens in many humans, both on a personal level and on a collective level. And the trauma can be of a personal kind and let something very bad happens to you.

Your pain is inflicted on you by other humans, often in childhood, but also later on us. And that leaves behind emotional pain. So you live with emotional pain.

This can be collective also. It could be the emotional pain of, it could be, there could be a racial foundation to the emotional pain. In other words, the collective of an entire race could, in their collective energy field, they could have the accumulation of pain that goes back centuries sometimes.

This I call, as you probably know, I call the pain body, which has a personal aspect, but things you experience in your personal life that leaves that pain, but also a collective aspect. Here we are talking about, relevant to your question, there is a, for obvious reasons, collective pain that is of a racial kind in the United States, because it all started with slavery, the fact of slavery, that leaves behind this energy field of pain that primarily black people have to recognize within themselves. Some have already transcended it, you can transcend it, but it's not fooling yourself and bypassing and saying you have transcended when you haven't.

So that is, it was also there in the Native American energy field, that they experience another kind of pain. It's, by the way, it's also there in entire nations in the world where huge suffering happened on a very large scale, such as Germany and Russia, enormous suffering, and that left behind a collective, remnant of collective pain in the entire energy field, and virtually every human who lives there has some share in that collective pain body. So then every human has partly a personal pain body and partly a collective pain body, and sometimes one is stronger than the other.

So it's very important to recognize that. Even white Americans, to some extent, share in that pain body. They have the collective pain body that is generated through the suffering because both the victim and the perpetrator have a share.

This is how the collective pain arises. So, but how do you deal with it? You have to deal with it.

Every individual has to deal with it within themselves. That's where it is recognized. To recognize that it's there, the more to recognize it directly so that, let's say it is, it could be anger.

It could be things that are related to anger. It could be resentment. It could even be rage, but at least this, that's fine as long as you recognize it within yourself for what it is, and then you can begin to use it and transmute it into awareness.

And that is why humans who have a strong pain body, whether it's personal or collective, actually, the strange thing is, are more likely to awaken spiritually than those who have a weaker pain body. So that's very important to recognize. If you don't recognize the accumulated suffering within yourself for what it is, then it becomes unconscious.

When it's unconscious, it can easily rise up into your mind and create certain thoughts. Then your thinking becomes controlled almost by the pain body, and then your thinking becomes emotionally controlled thinking, and it can no longer be rational. And you would then, the ego would be there without awareness.

The ego is there. The great danger is to any human who has suffered, who has a strong pain body, the danger is that you develop an image, which is a mental creation of yourself as a victim. And that is a pitfall.

It's a danger to be aware of any, whether it's a personal or collective, when you, there's a huge difference between recognizing the pain within yourself and realize, know what it is. If it's of a personal kind, you know that it's your dad who did that to you and that to you, and your unconscious parents or somebody else did this or that to you, and you recognize that it's there. If it's collective, you recognize that you not only carry suffering from your personal life, you also carry the suffering of your ancestors.

And there it is. If you don't recognize it, the suffering becomes incorporated into a

mental image. Then your identity, which means your sense of self, becomes predominantly that of a victim.

And that's very dangerous. To not see yourself as a victim is not a denial that something bad happened to you. It's not transforming something bad that happened to you in the past, transforming it into an identity.

That's the trap, because then you completely, you become completely disempowered. But for the ego, the seductive thing is the ego likes it. The stronger, it is always looking for a strong sense of identity.

It's looking for a stronger, it always needs enemies. It needs the other. And so when you see us, it's very, to the ego, it's a wonderful thing to see itself as a victim.

It gives you a very strong ego identity. And that is the case with anybody who has a pain body. A great danger is that you see yourself as a victim.

This is not to deny that you actually, you or your ancestors were a victim of others. But does that become your identity in the present? The huge difference is to acknowledge that, yes, you or your aunt or your ancestors were victims.

Yes, an undeniable fact. The danger is, is that becoming the main part of your sense of self? That's where you would go astray.

And that's where, then you're not really, all the suffering of your ancestors would be in vain, one could say, because it has not brought you then to a point of consciousness. It has brought you to further unconsciousness. In Eastern terms, it's called perpetuating karma.

Because then you're a victim, then you have enemies. And of course, as a victim, you have the ego always wants to be superior to others. It seeks superiority, it lives on, it thrives on superiority.

Now, a victim has enormous superiority towards others. It's moral superiority, of course. So there's a lot of that these days in the energy field.

And that's the ego is manifest in that way. It's highly important for people to be aware of that. And to remember, we are not denying that people were victimized and even are victimized still.

On the one hand, that's a fact. Not denying what you feel in your energy field, but then realize that is what happened or that is to do with a human. That's how it is.

But not to derive your sense of who you are from it. So, highly important to be aware of that so that you don't perpetuate human unconsciousness so that you can use the suffering in your own life and the suffering of your ancestors so that the transmutation

needs to happen in you. I know it's already happening in you.

I can see that. And perhaps you can help many others also to awaken to that. But you have to be very careful because when you question anything that is ego, the ego can easily hit back at you if you don't explain it carefully and point it out.

And if anybody who's not ready to hear it, you will get a reaction. If you question people's victim identity, you will get an enormous reaction. If they don't understand what you mean by that, because the ego will immediately defend itself, you will immediately become the enemy.

They haven't understood the difference between having been a victim or even to some extent still experiencing discrimination and so on, that those are facts. On the other hand, basing your sense of who you are on that, because then the opening into presence or awareness is then completely shut to you when you have a strong egoic identity, or in this case, victim identity, then awareness doesn't rise, which means the power that is there accessible to humans potentially, then you would have no access to it. But the ego feels enormously strengthened and satisfied in its, so that's a, it's a very subtle thing that needs to be recognized.

So that bypassing then is avoided by becoming aware of what it is that you're feeling so that there's an awareness and you allow yourself to feel and recognize it for what it is. It's accumulated emotional suffering from the past, personal as well as collective. And then as you recognize it, it cannot use your mind anymore and it doesn't become an identity, but it's acknowledged, but doesn't become an identity.

So you become, now what happens if you acknowledge the pain body within yourself, it means you're conscious of it, there it is. And a very subtle thing happens when you become conscious of it, there's this, suddenly you are not it anymore, you are the one who is conscious, you are the awareness for that, you are the space for it. Let's say, here's the accumulated pain and here's the awareness around it, you're aware of it.

And as you continue to be aware of it, whenever it arises, one could say that space around it grows, gets bigger. And that space is the space of awareness or presence. And that space is inseparable from who you are as a being.

What you are observing there is the human part, the conditioned, the suffering entity, the human. So you have the being and the human. And then this, as the, what I sometimes call it the light of consciousness, as the light of consciousness shines on it, it becomes transmuted into more consciousness.

So the suffering is like something that you put like a, I think in the power of now, I wrote about it. It's like a log you put into the fire and the fire, it becomes, whatever you put into the fire becomes fire, it consumes it. So the suffering is transmuted into awareness.

And that is part of the awakening. And that's a wonderful process. And all those who have achieved great things to bring mankind, humankind, a little bit further in the evolutionary process, which means awakening, none of these people had a victim identity.

You cannot make a useful contribution to this world if you have a victim identity. So also the great, let's look at the great black teachers who made a huge difference. Martin Luther King, when you read the writings, there is no victim identity there.

You look at Nelson Mandela in South Africa. Now he was for many, many years in prison. When he came out of prison, he was not the same person as the person who went into prison.

He went through a transformation in prison. And when in prison, he no longer had a victim identity. So he was, power was suddenly came through him.

And what he said was very wise. What he did was very wise. He also, I mean, he could have had enormous justification for making all white people into enemies, but he had already, he had transcended that.

And those are the people who can make a wonderful, the only people who can make a contribution to true change is not the people who demonize others or who make others into enemies, because that's always a sign of consciousness. Sometimes, yes, you have to defend yourself when you're being attacked. You have to defend yourself.

But to transform others into enemies is thereby strengthening your righteous, egoic victim identity is unconscious. So if anybody, you look at the Gandhi, how he brought about the independence of India. Again, not coming from a victim identity, they all had found that those humans were able to transcend that within themselves and then became enormous power came through them.

That is the teaching for, and that's the promise and the incredible opportunity in, let's say in America for black people to use the suffering and transmute it and it's been happening. And then experience the power that comes through and they can play an enormous part in the awakening of the country as a whole. There's enormous potential for the transmutation of all that into consciousness, enormous possibilities.

So this is a possibility that's opening up now as a growing awareness of race and so on in the United States, a growing awareness. So that is a possibility. It can go that way.

It can also go, can draw the country by further back into unconsciousness. It could be a regressive step too. It can go either way.

In the long term, even it's a regressive step in the most extreme scenario, it could lead to civil war or whatever. If that were to happen, even that in the long term would lead to

an awakening, but it's long and painful. Or the awareness that's arising now could lead to a very positive change when increasing number of humans transcend the suffering within themselves, not by ignoring it, but by acknowledging it and not transforming it into an identity and then becoming aware of the power that lies within them.

So that's the promise and the possibility of the present age.

[Speaker 2] (34:54 - 34:56)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 3] (34:59 - 35:18)

I'm Oprah Winfrey. And you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle The Joy of Being [d5920c0b-ce87-431d-bd94-7e5c1e7abceb]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

The joy of being. In this episode, Eckhart talks to a live audience about discovering the joy of being. He says in any given moment we have the chance to remain open to life, align with what is, and experience a natural sense of peace and aliveness.

Eckhart helps us release past conditioning to experience ourselves and our lives with a fresh perspective and sense of vibrancy and delight.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 34:05)

The joy of being. My suggestion is that you don't actually try to find or look for the joy of being. Right now, let's just, let's forget about the joy and just focus on the being.

Otherwise, well, you'll be looking for happiness. And if you're looking for happiness, it's unlikely that you'll find it. And if you're looking for joy, equally unlikely.

Because looking for it implies it's not here, or you believe it's not here. So being, that's a strange thing. Could be, to some people, it's a very abstract term, like something you would read in existentialist philosophy or in some incomprehensible works by Jean-Paul Sartre or Heidegger.

But being is actually very easy to realize. And humans don't know, most of them, how easy it is or even that it exists. If I had to write a philosophical work, I won't, but I would probably call it, maybe it exists already, I don't know, but I would probably call it being and existence, or existence and being, not sure which.

Being and existence. Existence is whatever you perceive with your senses and also whatever arises in your outer or inner perception. Outer perception would involve the senses.

So you have all this beauty here. And if you are listening to this and you're not here because this is being streamed, I forgot to say hello to you. Even if you're sitting in a, well, we are in a room here, the landscape outside your place may not be spectacular.

That doesn't matter. Existence is whatever you perceive with your senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching. And also whatever arises in your mind, a thought exists for a while until it doesn't exist.

An emotion exists for a while until it no longer exists. And then it exists again. The physical body exists for a while until it pops like a soap bubble and ceases to exist.

All the bodies in this room are destined sooner or later to pop like soap bubbles. And one

day you're here, and the next day you're gone. Everybody's just waiting to pop.

That's existence. The body exists. Whatever you perceive exists.

Thoughts exist. Emotions exist. Ex, the exist comes from Latin.

So ex means out. Whatever stands out, which means whatever is manifested. To stand, exist, stand out.

So it manifests. And ultimately, of course, even all those things that you perceive with your senses, you perceive them in the inner space of your mind. So they all manifest in your mind, even your body.

You look at it, you touch it, and you have certain relationship with it, good or bad. All that manifests in your mind as thought, or in your mental emotional field as an emotion into thought. Look at my great body.

Oh, I'm so unhappy with my body. Those thoughts exist. Existence.

That's existence. To most people, their life consists of existence. That's the dimension.

One could say that's the so-called external dimension, that things exist there. And then there's the inner dimension, that things exist as thought and emotions, feelings. Ultimately, it's all inner.

Of course, in miracles, there's nothing outside of you. I have to think about that. And then there's another dimension to life that to most humans doesn't exist.

In fact, that dimension doesn't exist. But most humans are completely unaware of that dimension. And that is being.

Being does not stand out, does not exist. Now, being is a noun. Let's talk about rudimentary English grammar for a minute.

Being is a noun. The being. The verb is to be.

It's an irregular verb, which means the first person singular of to be, for some strange reason, is not IB. Although in German, you still have that form. Ich bin is related to the B of being, which means I am.

But in English, for some reason, it switched to I am. I don't know what am is. It's a strange sound.

Am. But it refers to being. So to become aware of being, you become aware of I am, because that's being.

Now, when we say become aware right now, here and now, that you exist, that's not

quite correct. Because yes, of course, you can become aware that you exist, in which case you would become aware of your physical body. You become aware of your thoughts.

You become aware of your personal history, your historical person. You exist as an historical person in the realm of the mind. And then that means you become aware of yourself as existing.

But now we want something else. We are looking for the I am that does not exist. That is.

Is is the third person singular of that strange to be. Changes with each one. The second person is you are.

It's weird. It's all the same thing. The same verb.

To be. Am is are. Strange.

So is it possible to go deeper and instead of becoming aware of yourself as existing here as of what I sometimes call a form identity, physical and mental form identity, there's a physical form to who you are, the body. And there's a mental form to who you are, which is the mental image that you have of yourself that consists of conditioning from your so-called past. So there's certain mental accumulations, thought movements, narratives that you think about, repeat in your mind, compulsively for many people.

Think about compulsively about me and my life. And it's very problematic, of course. That's why I have to think a bit more about me and my life, because perhaps if I think enough about me and my life, perhaps at some point I will be able to solve the riddle and the problem of me.

Give me just a few more years and another thousand sleepless nights. And perhaps if I really think I can solve this problem and arrive at a place where I no longer regard myself or no longer derive my sense of identity from this problematic image, and when I no longer consider myself a problem that needs to be solved unconsciously, never at ease, always a slight sense of lack in the background and sometimes in the foreground, discontent in the background, always a sense of not having arrived yet, except for brief moments that always turn out to be illusory. No, oh, I have arrived.

I've made it. Little bit later, oh no, that wasn't it. So you cannot solve the problem of you by thinking, although there may be certain practical problems in your life that can be solved by applying focused thought, of course.

So instead of becoming aware that you exist as a physical visible form and as an invisible entity that is made up of mind and emotion, and that's a greater part of you is just that invisible entity made up of mind and emotion, can you become aware of a deeper dimension, not by becoming aware that you exist, but by becoming aware that

you are. And it's not just playing with words. You become aware, not that I am such and such a person, such and such an age, such and such a gender and so on, but go a little deeper and become aware that you are the pure beingness of you without the addition of thought.

I am. And that is another way of putting it is to say that you become aware that you are conscious prior to any content that may arise in consciousness. And that content would be sensory perception, thoughts, and emotions prior to any content that arises in consciousness.

You're aware of that, which is prior to and underlies all content that may arise and then disappear and then something else arises and disappears. Prior to that, the very foundation, the very space, it's perhaps a good word to use, the space within which all that exists exists is the space of consciousness. It arises in consciousness and that's you.

What I'm talking about now, you cannot understand conceptually, even if you have three PhDs and a genius level IQ, in fact, might even be less likely that you'll understand. You cannot understand this conceptually. You can only understand it at a different level.

It's a different level of knowing, not conceptual. You have to abandon, to realize the I am, the beingness of you, the consciousness that you are. You need to be prepared temporarily to let go of all knowing, conceptual knowing, knowing through thought, through memory, through analysis, labeling, judgments, opinions.

And then, of course, what happens is you become suddenly very still. In that stillness, you're not moving towards sleep unless you're suffering. And some of you, I'm sure, are from severe jet lag right now.

So if somebody close to you is falling asleep, it does not mean that they are too unconscious to stay awake here. It probably means they're suffering from severe jet lag. So you can't understand it through thinking about it.

And the very thinking is the obstacle. The entire essence of our retreat, spiritual awakening, is this. I'm telling you now, in case you want to leave early, then at least you haven't wasted your time.

You go away with the secret of the universe. The entire essence of the retreat is this. For some of you, realize that the possibility exists, and it's not all that difficult, of accessing that state of consciousness that is the I am, that is the unconditioned consciousness, that is pure awareness or presence.

And for many of you, it already is operating in your life, perhaps not all the time. Perhaps you still occasionally get drawn into complete identification with the mind. And so then it becomes a deepening here.

And there may be some of you who are still puzzled right now and thinking, I don't understand when I can only say, neither do I. But that is the most vital thing in your entire existence here, which is a relatively short one, even if you live to a hundred, is to awaken to that. And it's not just you who is awakening, it's the universe is awakening through you.

Universal consciousness is awakening to that. And so there are two modalities or two dimensions. You exist as a person with your history, your past and your future, which all exist as thought, with your kind of identity, that is the identity of the historical person, that's a relatively fragile identity.

And then you are, the surface is, you exist here as a person, there's no doubt about that. And that I call sometimes the surface I, the pronoun I, when you use the word I, and it's a word that's used very frequently in the English language. Perhaps it's the word that is most frequently, I, I, I, usually refers to the surface self, the historical person.

In other languages, I is used a little less frequently because in many Latin based languages, it's built into the ending of the verb. You don't always have to say I in Spanish, for example, but you're still identified with a surface I. And then there's the deep I, and that is the most vital realization in your lifetime, is to realize that in addition to being a historical person and having this surface I, and more fundamentally, you are the deep I, that frees you from looking to the surface I for your ultimate sense of identity and never finding it and always being frustrated and always feeling there's something not right, there's something missing. And so how do you realize it? In the gap between two thoughts, for example, now, in which the historical person or the surface I momentarily subsides and disappears.

And what's left of you is not anything that you could talk about or even understand. All you know is there is a, there's an underlying sense of presence or beingness. It's still, but it's alive.

There's an alertness to it. And that, then you become aware of that dimension. But of course, that dimension is awareness, so it's not totally correct to say that you become aware of that dimension.

You become aware of awareness. You become aware that you are aware. That's what it is.

More and more in your life, your ordinary day-to-day life, you actually invite these moments of presence in so that you don't spend the whole day and every day in the stream of mind that drags you along. And so there's always that pull. Well, I need to think about this.

I need to deal with this. And there's no gap, never a gap, except when you begin to fall

asleep, then you have a gap. Oh, you're moving.

You're falling below thought. That's liberating, kind of. And then you lose consciousness.

Consciousness withdraws. So you begin to realize your essence identity. Brief moments at first where you become present, which means thinking subsides, but you're not moving towards sleep.

You're alert. You just are. I am.

And then you realize that when this arises in your daily life, you begin to realize that what is called intelligence also exists in two dimensions. One is the intelligence of the thinking mind. This is the kind of thing that perhaps they measure with IQ tests.

But even that, even the intelligence of the thinking mind, IQ tests are only even a short aspect or fragment of that. That's the intelligence, the analytical intelligence, memory, being able to analyze, to think, accumulated knowledge, education. So that is one type of intelligence.

And to the world, the unawakened world, that's all there is to intelligence. What's your IQ? That determines everything.

I don't know what my IQ is. I think it's low because whenever I look at an IQ test, I think, what is this? And after a minute or two, I lose interest.

Why do I have to solve this puzzle? Now, what's not realized is that is intelligence. Yes, it operates, but it's relatively limited.

And it's not even creative. It can only memorize and analyze. And then there's another type of intelligence that is connected with the deep eye.

And that is non-conceptual intelligence. So there are two ways of knowing anything in this world. One is through conceptualization, judgments of the mind, and one is through pure awareness.

But the second type, which is the deeper, which is also the dimension where creativity arises in order to be able to think, to have any creative thoughts, anything new, no matter what it is, anything that's new, you need to have at least a little bit of access to the deeper level of non-conceptual. For example, two seconds of no thought. There are people who are creative who don't even know that this is how it happens.

Two seconds of no thought. And out of these two seconds of no thought, this creative new thought arises. And then they, for example, it could be even a simple thing like a stand-up comedian.

If he hasn't, some of the things they prepare, but they also interact with the audience

sometimes. And then they suddenly something creative, they say creative. Any joke that you make, if it comes to you, suddenly it comes from, unless it's a stupid joke, it comes from some deeper place.

Anything you say that is, if you write a poem or whatever it is, a new way of putting words together that nobody's done before, a new way of looking at something, or suddenly all that comes from a moment of connectedness with, and then it disappears again. But here we want more than that. Our task is to be rooted in that dimension so that, and this is so important, the fact that you become more creative is a secondary thing.

It's an adding on. But more important is that as you're rooted in that deeper dimension of being, more and more you realize that your essential identity is not the historical person. So you no longer derive your sense of who you are from your personal history.

Victories, defeats, successes, failures, dreadful mistakes, wonderful things that you achieved and then they passed, relationships that worked and then didn't work, mistakes made, wonderful things happened, and now they're gone. That's where most people derive their sense of identity from. It's the me, the person, and that's what they defend.

They're always careful. You have to defend that mental self, that mind-made self. Not only defend it, you have to look for things to strengthen it.

What can I add to me, to the image of who I am? It could be a simple thing like a possession. If I buy this, as all the advertisers, people want to sell things, most of them work with your sense of identity.

They promise, again, an enhancement of your sense of identity by buying this particular product. Well, not all products, but many. So in a subtle way, they imply, even just simply putting good-looking people, they're using the product.

So they are not telling you that if you buy this product, unconsciously you will believe that you are somehow also associated with these good-looking people and you become one of them. You can be one of these great, these wonderful-looking people. They're using the product.

I'm going to use it too. And then you buy it. I remember it.

When I was in my early 20s, I was still smoking. And I always carefully looked on what brand am I going to buy that, well, I didn't consciously verbalize it in that way, that I want a brand that enhances my sense of self. And so I looked out for the best one and I looked at the ads.

And then for a while I chose, I don't know if it still exists. I stopped smoking a long, long, long time ago. I chose for my favorite brand became, I tried others for masculine image.

I tried Lucky Strike, but they made me feel sick. And then some other brands and finally a hit on Benson and Hedges. And it comes in a gold, the good packet it comes in looks like a gold bar.

Wow. So you buy it, you take off the cellophane, makes a sound, and then you pull it out and you light it. You are smoking Benson and Hedges.

And for a while that fed the ego until it didn't anymore. And then looked for something else. Then for a while I became an intellectual.

I added knowledge to myself. I could then be more knowledgeable than somebody else. So much better than having Benson and Hedges.

I can show you that I'm actually highly knowledgeable. Just ask me. So you identify with all kinds of things.

You identify with knowledge, you identify with possessions, you identify with anything, achievements, or you identify negatively with things. You failed so badly. And this image of being such a failure is in your mind.

And perhaps your parents were so stupid that they called you stupid, which happens to children. Any parents who call their young children stupid are obviously very stupid, to use a generic term. Unconscious might be more charitable.

And of course that can get stuck in a person's mind and becomes an image of who they are, of being part of the mind-made sense of self. Very hard to get rid of it. There are many people who carry their mother's or father's voice, although they might have passed away a long time ago.

The mother and father lives in your mind and still talks. Not good enough. I'm doing my best.

No, not good enough. You have a dialogue in your mind. It's all thought.

It all becomes part of your sense of self. Many people don't have a very happy sense of self, but the unhappy sense of self is equally egoic. Where do you derive it?

That is so important because that determines everything. Your sense of who you are determines how you relate to the world, how you relate to other human beings, how you perceive things. That's all to do with your sense of identity.

Identity after shelter and enough to eat. What's the most important thing that humans look for is identity. Even already children, they need an identity.

Youngsters, if they can't have anything, if they're not, have no recognized role in this world, then they go to gangs. They become, in a desperate search for identity, they

become a gang member. And then that helps for a while until somebody shoots them and that's that.

And they kill people for their identity. And that's not uncommon. That happens.

One could talk about this for a long time, but this is the historical self that is the mind-made self that is a foundation for people's sense of who they are. The victim is a big one for many people. Of course, people did bad things to you.

Yes, probably. And sometimes very bad things, either to you or to your ancestors or to your family or your religious group or your political, whatever. And of course you have to, yes, undoubtedly, yes, terrible.

The question is, do you begin to derive your sense of who you are mainly from being a victim of certain other people or groups? Very seductive and dangerous because you get trapped in a fictitious sense of self that even prevents you from taking positive action. But because what action can you take?

Your life is effed up because of what these people did to you or to us. No point in doing anything now, but you can complain. And with every complaint, your sense of identity grows.

So you don't want to be trapped there on that level. Now, as the deep eye, you become aware of the deep eye, you become aware of awareness. Increasingly, your sense of who you are is derived from there.

And then your secondary identity is your historical identity and whatever it is in your mind, the story of your life. Of course, you remember it. And yes, you still have a sense of who you are in this world relative to others, but it's no longer the basis.

It's no longer the foundation for who you are. The need to add more things to enhance your sense of self goes away because that is no longer the foundation for your sense of self. The defensiveness goes away because you begin to realize that whatever you're defending is ultimately an illusion, an illusory self.

And the more you defend the illusory self, the more you are trapped in the illusory self. Even in a simple thing like a discussion, your point of view, somebody questions it. Somebody disagrees with it.

Somebody says, no, you're completely wrong. What do you mean? And then you notice an enormous influx of emotion, a threat.

You're being threatened. Your life is being threatened. It's the unconscious belief because your very sense of identity is being threatened.

When you're completely identified with mind and mental positions, that becomes who,

this is who you are or think you are. Somebody questions it. They question your very life, your very sense of self.

And you become, of course, very defensive. And very quickly, the emotion comes and you get involved in a heated argument. And nobody's more unconscious than somebody involved in a heated argument.

There are people who, whenever they hear they're with somebody who expresses a very different opinion or opposite opinion from the one they hold, they go into emotional meltdown. It happens on the internet a lot. Somebody has a different opinion.

The internet is a wonderful thing where the false sense of self can continuously be enhanced and strengthened. All you have to do is sit on your keyboard and... So wonderful advance, you don't even have to go out anymore.

You can strengthen your ego in your room or your mother's basement.

[Speaker 2] (34:26 - 34:27)

Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The Kingdom of Heaven Is A State of Consciousness [7c665530-2c30-4661-9337-5f8952b4818b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:56)

The kingdom of heaven is a state of consciousness. In this episode, Eckhart talks about how we define success. He asks, do we look to the world to determine that for us?

If yes, we may be heading down the wrong path because to a large extent, Eckhart says the world is insane. He explains money, property, prestige and power do not signify we've reached the pinnacle. He says for the people who strive to attain these things.

Many say after the initial high comes a very emotional low. Eckhart reveals the greatest source of riches is within. And the real indicator of success is our state of consciousness.

He asks, do we bring light to this world? In the Bible, Jesus described it as the kingdom of heaven. In present day terms, Eckhart explains the kingdom of heaven is a state of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:59 - 53:22)

Thank you. Thank you. Wonderful to be here.

Thank you for waiting patiently. But in fact, most of you are enlightened or close to enlightenment. So you actually haven't been waiting for anything because you've given up waiting.

Waiting is part of the old state of consciousness. And you are all here because in you, there's something new arising. We could call it presence, a dimension of consciousness that is, one could say, deeper or higher than the thinking function, which is fine.

But in itself, in the absence of the transcendent dimension, which is presence, the thinking function can be pretty crazy, but it can also do wonderful things. It can be destructive and it can be wonderful, like fire, an enormous energy for the sun, the energy of the sun. It's life giving.

It can also kill you. And thinking can do the same. You can create through thought or you can destroy through thought.

Destroy your others and yourself and the planet through dysfunctional thinking. We may be talking about that, as you might have guessed. I have no plan as such for this evening.

In other words, I don't know what I am going to say exactly. And that's fine. Almost all of you are here because you are awakening or awakened.

Something is arising in you that is, as I said, deeper or higher than the thinking function. In some of you, it started as a slight shift in consciousness, perhaps an increasing ability to be more present, less absorbed in the voice in the head, less reactive in certain situations, more peaceful. Not all the time, perhaps, that's fine.

But you are here because you are awakening beings. And the context for our gathering is the awakening of human consciousness. There may be one or two here, possibly, that are not yet awakening, which means still very much identified with the continuous stream of thinking.

And this identification with the continuous stream of thinking we call that the egoic state of consciousness. That's how the ego arises through complete identification with thought. That is ego.

So there may be some of you who are here and still not, have not yet been able to step out of this complete identification with thinking and the emotions that go with thinking. The entire entity that makes up the personality in the absence of transcendence. And so, those few of you are probably here because a friend or family member said, you must come and listen to this guy.

You really need it. And I would like to suggest that they are probably right. So the question is whether this gathering here is going to make sense to you if you're not awakening yet.

It could be a revelation. You suddenly go, oh wow, oh yeah, something in you recognizes the truth. Or it could be that you find it increasingly irritating and ultimately unbearable to be sitting here.

And you start fidgeting and your mind goes, what's he talking about? I don't understand anything. He's been talking for 10 minutes and he hasn't said anything.

So the gathering is, and the context for this gathering, is the awakening of human consciousness, awakening. You awaken into presence, which is the, I sometimes call it, the transcendent state of consciousness. There are many other words you can use.

The portal into that state of consciousness is, of course, the now. The now that is usually overlooked by most people who are still trapped completely in their minds. The now that is most of the time devalued, ignored.

You want to get it out of the way as quickly as possible because you want to get to somewhere that's not the now. It's called the future, some future moment. In the meantime, at best, the now is a stepping stone towards the future moment that you're longing for.

Small scale or big scale? Small scale, it's an hour from now I need to be there waiting for

this evening to do... Or big scale, next year when this happens, then I'll be just looking forward.

In the meantime, this moment is just an irritation. Shouldn't really be here. As I said, at best, a stepping stone to some future moment that is imagined as promising fulfillment in some way.

But somehow, you'd rather be there than here. That's the underlying. I'd rather be there than here.

That's a very strange thing. But it's quite normal, very normal. And then, of course, many other millions of humans, they don't just devalue the now or make it devalued into a stepping stone to the next moment and the next and the next.

Many other millions of humans live in continuously almost, and this is really, really weird and insane, they live in an antagonistic relationship with the present moment. Which means most of the time they don't like it. And they'd rather be somewhere else or rather be doing something else.

They're doing it now, but I don't really want to be doing this. When you're stressed, that's a sign that you don't really want to be doing it. You'd rather be at the end of it.

Stress means it's a tension between now and then. Tension between now and then is a mental projection. The now is this.

So it's a very dysfunctional state because after all, and one cannot emphasize this enough, the now is all there ever is. You cannot experience, feel, do, whatever, anything that's other than in the space of now. Everything is experienced in now.

This is potentially a life-transforming truth. If you can feel the reality of it rather than use it as a mental concept, because if it's just a mental concept then you start questioning it, of course, whether the now is really the most important thing. And then I go so far as to say past and future actually don't exist as such.

Now, the mind says, that's not true, I'm going to have dinner when I get home, so obviously it exists. Or it said, what do you mean the past doesn't exist? I was stuck in a traffic jam an hour ago and it exists.

Well, where and how does it exist? It exists as a thought. This is difficult to question.

When you start thinking about it you can't really find an answer. It sounds very strange, paradoxical. I could say, for example, we are going to be here for an hour and a half to two hours.

Who knows? It could be three, four, five, I don't know. We are going to be here for, let's say, one and a half to two hours.

True, on one level. But do you ever actually experience this gathering as one and a half or two hours? No.

Only when you start thinking about it. When you start thinking, how much longer is this person going to talk? Then you look at your, oh no, another hour to go.

You can always pretend that you urgently need to go to the bathroom. You will not be judged. Most of us are close to enlightenment, so we are not judging anybody.

So, the strange thing, nobody has ever experienced the future except as a thought in your mind. Isn't that strange? Because when it comes, it's now.

So, if we could realize the absolute importance of presence, of the now, the realization of that is not an intellectual thing. It's not an opinion or belief that you need to agree with or you disagree with it to actually experientially verify the truth of this statement that your entire life is inseparable from the present moment or from presence of the now. It unfolds in the space of now.

The rest is thought, memories of, one could say, previous nows. Because when whatever happened, it could only have happened in the now. And when you remember it, you remember it now.

So, outside of the now, nothing is, except as a thought form. We are talking about time because past and future are time. We cannot deny the reality of time on this level of existence, on this practical level of existence where we move from day to day, where we do things, we meet at a particular time.

We could not have met here without the help of time because if I had said, announced on the Internet, at some point in the now, we are going to meet, we are going to all come together in Oakland in the present moment. But since there is no time, I will not specify when. Now, if given unlimited time, perhaps within one or two billion years, we could accidentally have come together here, but that would not have worked very well.

So we use time, the existence of which you cannot deny on this level of existence. I call it the horizontal level. On this level, time is everywhere and it's all-consuming.

So when I talk about the transcendence of time, I'm talking about a different state of consciousness that we could call the vertical state as opposed to the horizontal state and the vertical state of consciousness is realized, for example, when the stream of thinking subsides for a moment and there's a gap. One thought has come to an end. The other thought has not arisen yet and there's a gap.

Was that it? Sesame? You don't mind?

Yeah. There is no was in it. There is no will be in it.

So the secret to the realization of the awakened state is to find the gap between thoughts, the cessation of the otherwise compulsive, involuntary, even obsessive movement of thought. Always somewhere else. And then, presence, suddenly you become aware of the now.

The vertical dimension opens up. The stream of thinking subsides. It doesn't matter for how long.

You don't need to measure it. But even to have a glimpse of the possibility of being conscious without the interference of thought, that is an amazing realization. Even if it's just three seconds, five seconds, don't count it.

Just the gap. Now, what is that? First, it seems to be just an absence.

An absence of thought. A kind of, some people might say, a blank state or something like that. But it's better not to attach labels to it, but to verify for yourself what that is and who or what you are, because most humans, when they're still unawakened, we call it unconscious, by the way.

The world is still full of unconscious humans. It doesn't mean they're all asleep. It means they are totally identified with the mind.

They derive their sense of self from the narratives. They continuously occur in the thinking mind. An entire story builds up over the years, starting in early childhood.

And this narrative in the mind, certain repetitive thought patterns, those become the core of the egoic state of consciousness, the personality. So that's what many people call it, my life. They refer to something they call my life.

And for most people, my life is problematic and not all that pleasant. When I look back on my life, there are many things that I should have done differently or shouldn't have happened or were done to me by other unconscious people. But I probably don't call them unconscious.

I call them horrible beings. Ex-husbands and ex-wives. Horrible, horrible.

And they did something to me. And there's a story. You remember that story.

You tell yourself and others. And you identify with all kinds of things in your life. Identifying means you derive your sense of self from them.

But all that is, these are mental representations of things. Let's say if your egoic sense of self is derived to a large extent, as it is for many people, derived from things that you possess. Maybe it means you possess more things than other people.

Then you derive your sense of self from things. Cars, houses, maybe private jets. And

then your ego has that.

That's great. But what does it really mean? You identify with things, but it's not really the things.

It's the mental representation of the thing. Because you can only experience things in your consciousness. So even the car that you identify with is ultimately a thought form that you identify with.

So when people identify with possessions, it looks like external things, but the external things are represented in your mind as thought forms. So you're still identified with thought. No matter what you identify with, another very common identification that virtually everybody has, to some extent, is your physical body.

That's the most obvious thing that you derive your sense of self from, which means identify. So this is the physical body. And for many people, physical body is a more important source of their sense of self than possessions.

So it varies, or it's a mixture of things. But physical body obviously is important for most people. And identification with the body is always a form of ego.

In conventional terms, you think of ego as something that says, I am the greatest. And of course, that can also happen if your body is better looking than most other bodies. Most obviously, especially if you're young, the ego uses that in order to feed on that image.

It's ultimately, again, it's not the body. It's the mental image of body. Everything that you experience, you experience as a mental image.

Philosophers have discussed whether there's actually anything out there at all. Let's not go too far into that matrix. But it's undeniable that you experience everything as a mental image.

And even your body, you experience your body as a mental representation that you call my body. And then you mentally compare your body in order to use it in the service of your self-image. You have to compare it to others.

And then if you're lucky, your body is stronger or better looking than most other bodies. And then your ego uses that. It doesn't have to look so much for possessions.

We do like possessions too. But it can focus a lot on the superiority of a body that's stronger or better looking than others. The ego loves that.

But there are many people who don't have that because their body isn't stronger or better looking than others. And then you get the opposite. On the one hand, the body is a source of pride or the body is a source of shame.

The body is weaker, not as good looking as, you're not happy with it at all. And that becomes a source of suffering. And then you have a body image that is a negative kind.

It becomes a source of suffering. And for many people, there are probably more people for whom their body image creates suffering than for whom their body image creates pride. If your body is so great, then it's really, as you grow older and your sense of self was derived from body identification, there's a lot of suffering that's going to happen to you because the body is not going to last.

And gradually, it is attacked by something very dreadful. The dreadful disease, it's called time. And time is going to gradually do something to your body.

And if you were identified for the first 30 years of your life, for whatever years, with your body, then the body is no longer that great because it begins to develop imperfections. Time does that. So we cannot deny the existence of time on the horizontal level.

Time is not only, it's not only promises fulfillment on the level of the person. That's all fine, time. You need time to do things, everything.

You need time to even make a cup of tea. It takes time, time. And you look to time for some kind of liberation from a state of dissatisfaction in the present moment that you don't like.

So you look to time, one day I'm going to make it. One day I'm going to start living. And that's a weird idea that actually many people have, not perhaps consciously verbalized, but underlying that feeling, one day I'm going to start living.

And then finally you reach retirement. And you thought retirement was going to be it because you realized nothing much is happening. But retirement, then I'll be free.

No, you won't. You will still be trapped in your mind because the only freedom is the disidentification from the thinking mind. So identification with body leads to ultimately suffering.

Either you suffer even when you're young because your body is not as great as other people's or not as good looking. I had that when I was young. I wasn't happy with my body.

But what can you do? So I had an unhappy identification with the body. So I had to look for other things, for my ego.

Well, there was some ego in the dissatisfaction with the body. I have a body that's not great. Oh, I don't like it.

And then some people, I don't like myself. They're so identified. They call the body myself.

I don't like myself. But I looked then for other things, happier identifications. And eventually I found things like sexual pursuits.

I realized I'm not stronger than other people. I don't have more possessions than other people. I don't have more past identity in the sense of belonging to some aristocratic lineage family that goes back 500 years that I can say, I am the descendant of the Earl of so-and-so and my family goes back 600 years or 1,000 years and that gives you a wonderful sense of...

It's fiction in your mind. But it can sustain the ego. In some countries that is still important.

I lived in England for many years so that kind of thing still kind of exists not as much as before. But again, I was in England. I have nothing in my family past to be particularly proud of.

All I can remember is my grandmother but nothing beyond that. They have all disappeared into nothingness. My ancestors.

I didn't have pictures of my ancestors on my walls. Just one or two fading photographs. So that didn't work either.

But finally my ego found something. Intellectual pursuits. I was reading books and beginning to talk knowledgeably about things and finally I could identify with me as knowing more than other people as an intellectual.

And that provided some food for the ego for some years but the ego became increasingly unhappy even with that as it usually does. So the ego usually identifies the things you have, the things you can do or things you know but whatever you do it's not going to be satisfying for very long. In the case of body it could be satisfying for a few decades and then you suffer.

Unless you find something beyond that limited sense of self. Body identification, possessions all kinds of other things that are what other people think of you you take that on starting childhood your parents, what your parents tell you about yourself you absorb that what society tells you about who you are whether you are a success or failure again it's narratives in your mind that tell you something so what is a success in life how do you determine whether your life is a success or not are you looking to the world to tell you whether you are a success or not that's very misleading because to a large extent the world is insane and so if you're looking to the world to tell you whether your life is a success it's probably not correct because all the things that the world says are the marks of success are actually not and many of these people if not most of these people who have achieved the things that the world tells you are worth striving for fame, wealth, power all those things do not fulfill you for long in fact they can make you even

more unhappy that's not it that is not it the only success is conscious whether you are conscious or not at least is consciousness emerging in or through you that's why you are here you are the bringer of consciousness into this dimension it's not your consciousness something that comes through you it wants to come through you you are not doing it you just have to allow it to come through you it's not a doing the awakening is something that is better it's better to define it as to allow the awakening to happen through you rather than to want to make it happen or regarding it as an achievement an achievement because that could happen the ego is very never and subtle as you awaken spiritually it can at any stage almost still come in through the back door and claim credit and it does that by creating another mental concept of who or what you are and it then says I am awakened I am I am enlightened me I have achieved it and you can see how it's a concept perhaps there has been some change in you but then the mind gets in there and misinterprets it and it claims credit me and so before you know it another conceptual identity has arisen in your mind and you are trapped in ego again and there are some people who are stuck somewhere on the trajectory of spiritual awakening they are trapped somewhere along the way and at that point the ego came in and at that point the ego claimed credit and a big spiritual ego developed but if you have enough discernment you can kind of see it somehow detect it usually they will tell you what's wrong with you immediately they'll tell you what you need to do I'm going to heal you now I'll heal you you know all the answers but it's very subtle you need to be very careful that you do not get trapped in another conceptual identity and again a conceptual identity is based on thought it's a narrative in your mind a story that you tell yourself and this is very subtle you begin to realize that there is a consciousness that is arising in you that is deeper or higher than the thinking mind and that's wonderful so need to be very alert that the thinking mind doesn't come in and says that's me so spiritual egos are sometimes more difficult to detect than the more obvious forms of ego the more obvious form of ego is the person who is driving his Ferrari and Ferrari is very noisy it's supposed to be noisy because it's supposed to draw attention to me so you drive the Ferrari it's red too it's red and a very noisy engine and you're looking around are they looking at me yes they are that is a very obvious ego and then let's say the Ferrari driver goes to some talks by Eckhart Tolle and then he suddenly realizes that he was completely identified with his possessions oh my god completely I was so unconscious and then he sells his Ferrari and he gets a bicycle and that sounds great so that's at least not making that much noise anymore or pollution too then suddenly this ex-Ferrari owner finds himself on the bicycle and then next to him some other Ferrari draws up and he says oh look at this unconscious person completely in his ego god whereas I am I have transcended all that so if you identified again with that you haven't transcended if you no longer have a mental conceptual image of me as being superior in some way to somebody to others the ego needs superiority even the most miserable ego is miserable because through its misery it achieves some kind of superiority it's an imagined superiority it's all imagined so even a very miserable ego will say for example I have been treated unfairly more unfairly than any other human by god the universe whatever been treated so unfairly

that I'm more miserable than you I'm certainly more miserable than you you should just listen to me I'll tell you my story always my dad who had a big ego for a long time until he reached old age in his old age my dad's big tongues broke off his ego but other tongues didn't break off so whenever somebody said he was still trapped in his ego completely it would take for weeks and they don't even talk about it the ego needs superiority victim identity is something that needs to be mentioned here it's another form of ego I am not implying that certain people have not been treated well by other people in this world because the world is full of unconscious people unconscious people are very dysfunctional and they create suffering for themselves and others the world is full parents certain social groups many people have been treated well virtually everybody in some way or another has been treated badly by one person or group of people some much more than others there's no denying that you were a child there's no denying that you were a victim of a very deeply unconscious person the problem arises if your sense of identity continues to be derived from the mental image of you as the victim it's not that you deny that the bad things happen of course they happen you see it clearly but do you use your memory or the imprint of that and derive your sense of self from that this is what we call victim identity and it is a trap it is a terrible trap to find yourself in and it has its attraction because it can give you a very strong sense of self but it's ego too that also is a form of ego of egoic identity so there's a huge difference between recognizing that these things happened to you in the past but at the same time be present enough so that you are not forced to derive your identity from the idea of you as a victim which is a mental concept so that's very important now some people even who imagine themselves to be victims yes there are many who actually were victims in actuality but because it's such a wonderful source of ego enhancement victim identity you even come up with the ego can come up with fictional stories and call yourself a victim so be careful if there's anybody here who feels angry about what I've said then that's something for you to look at but I'm not a victim how dare you suggest that I haven't said that bad things did not necessarily happen to you it's your sense of self do you derive your sense of self from that and it's ego so conceptual identities transcending that conceptual identities they all operate on the horizontal dimension of life and obviously you continue to have some identification with your form I use the expression form identity your form identity is your body your function in this world you have a particular function social function in this world your form identity has to do with your relationships your form identity is here it's a psychological form of you the personality the conditioned personality the conditioning of your mind from the past so it's a physical form and psychological form everybody has one that's undeniable to some extent that continues you have a form identity but the question is is that all there is to who you are are you existing exclusively on that level which is the horizontal level or are you able to go deeper and discover a deeper identity or sense of self that is beyond the form the psychological forms and the physical forms that is I call that your essence identity so it is your most vital the most vital task in this lifetime for you is the discovery or we could say realization of your essence identity beyond the form identity the form identity then

although it remains there is still some identification but it is not your main source of identity we begin to have somewhat detached even playful relationship with all the stuff in your life including your personality you are no longer trapped you still have a personality but there is something beyond that and you are rooted in that then the personality happens still on the surface level of your being it still does its things has certain idiosyncrasies and characteristics it's been conditioned by the past that's fine but there is something else the transcendent consciousness has arisen that is beyond the personality and that is the liberation from the personality this means liberation from the personality so the personality remains but there is no longer identification with it it's just things the way in which you operate in this world and the essence identity it arises out of the vertical dimension and the portal into the vertical dimension is always the present moment and the vertical dimension is there subsides conscious presence remains stream of thinking subsides conscious presence remains and this conscious presence may at first be perceived as just an absence of something this kind of nothing there sometimes a word that I use to point to it I use many different words to point to it but the point to that dimension is stillness stillness refers to an inner state silence externally is the absence of noise stillness is an internal state of absence of thought silence absence of noise stillness absence of mental noise which is thought and this is a great experiment if I invite you to come into the present moment and when you are fully in the present moment what does that even mean you might say some of you who are not yet quite awakening come into the present moment coming to the present moment is for most people it's initially a heightened awareness of the world around you through sensory perception so to come into the present moment is a stepping out of the stream of thinking and be more conscious of sensory perception so one could say you come to your senses there's a huge difference between being absorbed in the stream of thinking all your consciousness is continuously gobbled up by thought one thought after another and people walk through well there are many people in this world who are almost continuously in that mind absorbed self absorbed state they're not really here because they're always labeling what they're perceiving now some kind of judgment and usually it's negative more than positive because that feeds the ego much more if you dislike somebody it feeds the ego much more than liking somebody or remembering an unpleasant event that memory you can dwell on that for hours somebody was rude to you yesterday you can dwell on that for hours but if you saw a beautiful sunset yesterday it's unlikely that you would think about that for hours on end it was such a beautiful sunset but somebody was rude to you and you think okay I should have said that that would have been great and you can dwell on that and again and again play out alternative scenarios and feel more and more worked up about it emotionally and that imagine accumulation of that kind of that state of consciousness things accumulate over the years and then you have a personality that is predominantly unhappy a grievance looking for a cause and so you look at the whole of the world through the veil of your conditioned mind not there and then you come to your senses and you're suddenly in awareness and now you notice when you become aware of your surroundings through

sensory perception you cannot really be aware of it fully if you're continuously interpreting what you're perceiving this is habitual for most people they have to attach labels to their sense perceptions they hear something I wonder what kind of a bird what does that sound like oh that's a nice flower I wonder what that's called I wish I had that in my garden I want to see where they sell these flowers that reminds me of the flower that last year somebody gave me oh isn't that beautiful it looks like a painting by so and so you're not really there's still a veil of continuous interpretation which is a conditioned mind for full sensory perception the thinking mind needs to step aside and then the two ingredients for sensory perception whether it's visual, auditory, tactile whatever the two ingredients are that which is being perceived and the awareness that makes the perception possible which is consciousness so when you look at a flower I'm mentioning natural things somehow easier with natural things but anything could be used for that, the entirety of this room for example there's this room and you're aware there's this man sitting on a chair talking, the lights and you're conscious you're aware of that but not labeling it you're aware and there's perception happening so you're not perceiving anymore as a person you're perceiving as consciousness as presence and that's an amazing shift to the ego it doesn't seem anything to do with that the thinking mind but it's an amazing shift it's very subtle but it's very important and quite profound when suddenly you're able to perceive without compulsive interpretation or labeling try it out in nature wherever you may be in nature look at a tree and look at it let go of thought if it wants to come in that you're not interested and then just sounds, hear sounds whatever sounds arise at night perhaps you're awake in bed and there's certain sounds it doesn't matter what don't label don't even differentiate between good and bad sounds that's just that is that's the beginning of being present for many people starts with heightened sensory perception so sensory perception can help you come into the present moment be present but then the next step one could say is very important when you perceive in that way and that's kind of innocent perception like it's a how a one year old child would perceive something because the child doesn't have the concepts yet to label things unless you become like little children you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven kingdom of heaven is a state of consciousness but you're not regressing to the pre conceptual state that a child is in the pre egoic state that a one year old is in you are arising above the egoic state you rise above the thinking child instead of being pre egoic and pre thought you are now post egoic or post thought but there are certain similarities in the pre and the post and in both cases the conceptual mind is not operating but in the post egoic post thought state the thinking mind can and will operate but it is no longer dysfunctional and it is no longer self serving you don't derive your sense of self it becomes just a tool through which consciousness can express itself as a tool it becomes a servant it's not a master anymore when you're trapped in it

[Speaker 2] (53:23 - 53:43)

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Eckhart Tolle The Light of Being Shines Through Our Humanness [5ba9f1e3-e07d-4288-835c-0b2137969c9d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:58)

The light of being shines through our humanness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about bringing together the human and the being aspects of ourselves. He says we would be consigned to a miserable fate if all we were was human, trapped by a limited identity, there would be no possibility of self-transcendence.

Eckhart points out even big egos have little selves and their achievements, even if considerable, often make people so unhappy and don't help transform the world. Eckhart explains when the human and the being come together, the being shines through our humanness, reflecting the light of consciousness. He says the greatest miracle of all is that the universe is conscious and we are a part of that.

He quotes Alan Watts, the famous writer and spiritual teacher who said, you are a function universe is doing in the same way that a wave is a function of what the whole ocean is doing.

[Speaker 1] (1:01 - 26:00)

So when you bring together the human and the being, instead of just being a human, it's not enough being a human. It's a terrible fate if you only know yourself as a human. You have, in other words, zero self-transcendence.

You are trapped in this limited little self. And even the big egos, the little, little selves, there are some people who seem to have achieved much in this world only through having a huge ego. That is possible.

But the achievements are really not achievements at all because they make countless people unhappy. So there's no point in building up some huge enterprise. And while you're doing it, you're not only unhappy yourself, you make everybody else unhappy too.

That does not transform this world. So the human and the being coming together, then the being shines through the human. The light of being shines through the human.

And the light of being is the light of consciousness. Now, what is that? Nobody has been able to define consciousness because in order, a scientist trying to figure out what consciousness is, nobody has figured out what consciousness is because, and it's the greatest mystery in the universe, the greatest miracle and the greatest mystery in the universe is the fact that the universe is conscious.

How do you know that the universe is? Well, I'm conscious and I am the universe. I'm an aspect of the universe.

I haven't been put into this universe. I have come out of this universe. I am this universe.

This universe is conscious, but what is conscious? This light of consciousness. Now, scientists haven't found an answer because if you're trying to figure out what consciousness is, let's say it's a bit like you have a flashlight or torch, as it's called in England.

You have a flashlight and you're looking for the light of the flashlight. So you're using the torch or the flashlight and you're trying to find the light. You can never find it because you think the light is an object of your consciousness, but it's not.

You can only find the light by being aware that you are the light, but it's not an object in consciousness. It's consciousness without an object. So looking for yourself or looking for God is the same thing.

It's like using a flashlight and trying to find or understand this light. So you cannot know conceptually what consciousness is, but you can know it experientially as a realization, but that knowing is not conceptual knowing. Mainstream science still believes that consciousness is a by-product of the physical brain, but of course, that is a very limiting belief and there are many things that discrepancies that you come up with when you believe that the miracle of this world, even the miracle of human creation is produced by the chemical soup in your brain on the level of chemistry, or if you go more deeply, the atoms and molecules that make up your brain and what is the relationship between the brain and consciousness if consciousness is not the product of the physical brain. It is the same relationship as a television set and that which the television set transmits and shows you on the screen.

What the television set shows you on the screen is not produced by the television, but it's necessary for it to appear. It's a receiver. It gives form to something or it transforms form, electrical impulses.

It is a conduit that gives form to something that was formless before. So the human brain is like a receiver. It focalizes consciousness and by focalizing consciousness into this dimension, it creates this dimension.

You can ask yourself an interesting question. You can take any object. I'm sitting in a room here.

If you were not perceiving consciously these things that surround you here and now, what would there be without a conscious perceiver of these surroundings? The desk I'm sitting in front of here, the screen behind me, let's say without a conscious perceiver, would there still be a desk and the screen behind me and whatever else is in this room? Conventionally, you would say, yes, of course it would still be there.

There would still be a desk. What I see as this desk and as this screen and as this little

tree, et cetera, what I perceive as solid physical objects, physicists, they have figured out and they are right. These things are actually molecules, atoms and molecules in continuous incessant motion with vast spaces in between, 99.99% empty space. My consciousness transforms this process of molecules, atoms and molecules in incessant rapid motion with 99.9% empty spaces in between to virtually nothing. This heavy desk is virtually nothing, just a few movements of molecules and empty spaces. It's a process.

But my perception transforms it, it creates the desk. Out of it, every moment, I create this desk. Remove the organ of perception, sight and touch, remove that, and then the consciousness that's behind the organ of perception, is there still a desk?

Of course not. At the most, there's molecules and atoms in motion, but there's no desk anymore. And this applies to the entire world.

The moment you perceive this world, you create it. And perhaps a different consciousness could create a very different world in the same space. And there would be different dimensions that can co-exist in the same space.

Your consciousness is inseparable from the world. You cannot have a world without consciousness. Your consciousness creates the world every moment.

It's amazing, quite amazing. So there are no, ultimately, there are only, the entire world is, there are processes that happen. The perception that there are physical, solid physical things in this world is an act of creation that's ultimately not true.

You're creating this dreamlike world through consciousness. And in this dream, there seems to be a solid object. Very solid.

My God. But it's not, it just seems to be. So everything is just an energy, fluctuating energy, that's the entire universe.

What you make of this fluctuating energy depends on the makeup of your consciousness. And here the brain comes in, the particular way the brain makes it possible for consciousness to create this particular world. And probably many other worlds can be created in different ways by different entities who have embodied different consciousness.

There are ultimately no separate objects in this world. Everything is an interconnected energy field. And that's why somebody said, I think it was Alan Watts said about humans, you are something that the whole universe is doing in the same way that the wave is something that the whole ocean is doing.

We say, oh, there's a wave. It doesn't have any separate existence. The wave in itself is nothing.

It's something that the ocean is doing. Like you, in yourself, you are nothing as a separate, you're not a separate entity. You are something that the whole universe is doing.

You are consciousness that has taken on temporarily this particular form and this particular brain and is creating this particular world. There's no ultimate reality to it. But all this comes back to the source, go back to the source, conscious connection with source.

So the consciousness that pervades this universe, that is this universe, it becomes focalized through this particular form, this consciousness that you can know in yourself consciously as a presence, and you are that presence, you don't have it, you don't have consciousness, you are consciousness. And even to say, I am conscious is not quite correct. I am consciousness is more correct.

So you are consciousness. Now, if the brain just is a transformer of consciousness, a receiver of consciousness, a channel of consciousness, where does this consciousness come from? Where does it emanate from?

The consciousness does not exist in this dimension. That's important, very important to realize. This dimension is the physical dimension.

The physical dimension is where your physical body is and the physical objects of the senses. Then underneath the physical begins already that which is not part of the physical dimension. And that already begins with your thoughts.

Even your thoughts are not part of this physical dimension anymore. They live in another, they exist in another dimension. And this is, you're going below the surface of, this is the surface world of physical things, and your physical body.

You go by being aware of your thoughts already not part of the physical dimension. They already exist in a deeper dimension. How do we know that?

Because you cannot find a thought in the physical realm. A surgeon could open your brain, looking for your thoughts. He would not be able to find a single thought.

Because we don't know, nobody knows what a thought is and where thought lives. Where does it live in you? Does every atom represent a thought?

Do some molecules represent the memory of what happened to you on that day when you were 10 years old and millions of other memories? Where do they live? All languages, apart from English, I know two other languages.

Well, they're getting a little rusty. But somewhere, those two languages that I know, they live somewhere. But where?

Where do they live? At the moment, I'm not conscious of them. Say something in German or Spanish, suddenly something would come.

I could say it, but where? Does this whole thing live? Emotion, you cannot find, emotion has certain, correlates with certain physical processes, just as thought does.

You can imagine something and then the body reacts to it. Imagine you're drinking lemon juice right now. Immediately saliva would start accumulating in your mouth because your body thinks it's real.

And if you get angry, your stomach lining, the inside will become red and many other things will happen in your body as you become angry. But the anger itself does not exist in the physical realm. Then you go further down and into the unseen.

So in other words, consciousness is not of this dimension. Consciousness represents another dimension, the transcendent dimension. So the consciousness that you are emanates from another dimension and comes then into this and an awakening happens.

My suggestion to you is to consider the possibility, this is my intuitive realization. I don't want to convince you that it is correct, but it is my intuitive realization. The consciousness emanates from the source of all life, which of course does not exist here.

It is, but it doesn't exist. Consciousness is the emanation of God. In the same way that light is the emanation of the sun, consciousness is the emanation of God into this dimension.

And it seems that gradually the light of consciousness increases in this dimension. Gradually. You can see it in yourself, how gradually you grow in consciousness.

You seem to grow in consciousness. And you are only a microcosm of the macrocosm. Whatever happens in you can tell you a lot about the universe.

If you could understand yourself, you understand the universe. So consciousness comes into this dimension more and more. Consciousness itself is timeless.

And then it enters this dimension where there is time. And there you experience it as an intensification of consciousness. You become more conscious.

A human can become more conscious. The entire planet gradually is becoming more conscious. If you go back millions and millions and millions of years, life on the planet was less conscious than it is now.

Even animal life and plant life was less developed, less differentiated, less complex. Gradually the world is being created still. The creation of the world is still happening.

The entire process, we have no idea why this is happening, what the purpose of it is. You

cannot understand it conceptually. It's such a vast, vast process.

But all you need to know is what you sense in yourself as consciousness, the presence, emanates from the source of all life, which we can call God. So you are an emanation of God. And this is why sometimes this realization is called God realization.

God in you, God as you. Then the question arises, does that mean that you are God? Well, yes and no.

I wouldn't go so far because the ray of sunlight is an intrinsic part of the sun, undoubtedly. But if the ray of sunlight could speak and the ray of sunlight said, I am the sun. Well, in one sense, yes.

In another sense, no. The sun is, the power of the sun is so infinite. How can a ray of sunlight compare to, and yet it is one with the sun.

So there's a little paradox here. The essence of who you are is eternally connected to the essence of all life. You are an emanation of the one, appearing as many.

That's wonderful to realize that who you truly are, your home is there. You are that. The sense of being a disconnected fragment in this universe, in a hostile universe, that disappears.

That is a delusion. The delusion of the ego is that you are a disconnected fragment in a hostile universe. That's how egos perceive themselves.

And that illusion dissolves. As you become more rooted in that presence that you are, a very powerful sense of peace is there then always in the background of your life, because you have that sense of connectedness to the transcendent, to God, that sense of connectedness to God. That is the end of living in a state of fear, fear, anxiety, et cetera, et cetera.

That is the state of connectedness. Ah, that means you're already home. I always think that the famous ohm sound and the English word home are related.

It's not by accident that they are so similar. I am home. Home.

Home. Ah. So that is through self-transcendence, you realize the one self that you are an expression of.

And for many people, self-transcendence does not come until the dream of a separate self becomes unbearably difficult and painful. For many people, I'll repeat it, self-transcendence does not come until your so-called life gets very unpleasant and very difficult and you experience all kinds of loss and limitation. And then something can happen that suddenly when the self becomes very unsatisfying and limiting and painful, something opens up.

Then the self gives way and you transcend it and you realize the essence of who you are beyond the person, the being. But you don't have to wait for that. And many of you have already been through the painful, the experience of suffering, which is inseparable from considering yourself to be a separate entity.

Suffering. Suffering is that which leads you to awakening. That's a miracle.

Ultimately, suffering is transcended, but it is not transcended until the self is transcended, the limited egoic self. But until that happens, suffering is the most important thing in your life. The most indispensable thing in your life is suffering.

It's the way. Suffering is the way until it's not needed anymore, but it leads potentially to self-transcendence. When the self becomes too unpleasant, you can't stand it anymore.

The pain is too much. So when it happens in your life, welcome it. Suffering happens when loss happens on whatever level, loss of possessions, loss of status, loss of certain physical abilities, loss of loved ones.

That brings about a lot of suffering. Many other forms of suffering are only created by the human mind, like many forms of anxiety and fear created almost exclusively, but just by the mind. I teach suffering, said the Buddha.

I teach suffering. And the end of suffering. And the same message is symbolic form in Jesus on the cross is the archetypal image of suffering.

Jesus is the archetypal human, represents every human. And this is the image of ultimate suffering. This is a death on the cross and resurrection, self-transcendence.

That's a beautiful teaching contained in an image so people can intuitively understand it without having the ability to understand it conceptually. Even a very simple person could intuitively get this message.

[Speaker 2] (26:01 - 26:21)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Most Difficult People In Your Life Are Your Greatest Teachers [827bffff-8baf-4ecb-9587-a25269568c89]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:01)

The most difficult people in your life are your greatest teachers. In this episode, Eckhart says no one person can make us happy because the demand is not only too much, but also an impossible task. He explains falling in love may feel wonderful.

The honeymoon starts and everything is beautiful until the day comes when we discover our partner has issues or even worse, a very active pain body. He says we might panic thinking I made a terrible mistake. With his humor, Eckhart explains what's really happening is the relationship no longer masks the real problem, our underlying anxiety and disconnection.

He says as long as we look for gratification outside ourselves in people, places and things or what he calls a horizontal dimension, we will always feel like something is missing. He shares that the most difficult people in our lives can become our greatest teachers because they push us to awaken to step into the vertical or transcendent dimension.

[Speaker 1] (1:03 - 37:41)

You will be challenged by the things of the world and that could be other people. The most difficult people in your life are your teachers. When you suddenly realize the world is here to challenge me so that I awaken to the deeper dimension of who I am, then you can recognize that especially the difficult people in your life and the biggest challenges which could be of other kinds too.

There can be physical challenges, the body, there can be financial challenges, challenges of relationships, challenges of great loss, upheavals on a personal level, upheavals on a collective level that you are part of. We had this pandemic that affected millions and millions of people in different ways, some more severely than others, but challenged everybody and there are more challenges coming towards us. We are moving into turbulent waters collectively so in addition to your personal challenges we will have collective challenges.

The purpose is the world is here to awaken us and we awaken us by taking us out of our comfort zone because in your comfort zone which is fine when sometimes you have periods of in your life when you are in your comfort zone and enjoy it while it lasts, it's not going to last that long. I mean you have honeymoons and stuff like that, it's great and the first year or two may also be great and then you realize that your partner has a pain body. I married the wrong person.

Somebody wrote an article a few years ago and it might have been in the New York Times why you will marry the wrong person. You always marry the wrong person. Well the thought comes in I made a mistake and sometimes you did make a mistake that's possible.

I'm not denying that these mistakes do happen, but in every situation no human being can really make you happy. So all that these relationships do when they in the initial stages of falling in love and the initial stages they cover up the residual discontent that you live with when you only exist on the horizontal dimension of life. There's always in the background there's an anxiety, there's a discontent, there's a sense of something missing, something important missing and temporarily a relationship can cover that up.

I'm okay now. No you're not. And this is a wonderful realization.

The world is here to challenge you and it does that all the time. So you can verify in your own experience that that is true and that's how we awaken to the vertical dimension if you want to call it that symbolized one of the meanings of the cross which is a christian symbol but it already existed before even before christianity the symbol of the cross the intersection of the vertical and the horizontal dimension that is the path that is human destiny is to live in both dimensions here so that you can exist and function on this level here but are not trapped on this level. There is more to you. You're no longer acting as an egoic entity.

So the transcendence of the ego happens with the discovery with the realization of the vertical dimension when the experience a moment of pure presence thinking subsides and what remains is pure presence then there's not the ego isn't there without thinking the ego isn't there so you're free you've transcended the ego then it comes back usually now it does not mean that all thinking is ego thinking turns into ego in the complete absence of awareness when there's only the stream of thinking and you're not even aware of the kinds of thoughts you're thinking because you're so identified with every thought that there's no space beyond the movement of thought that is the unconscious state and that is the egoic state so you are in you are trapped in the stream of thinking and confuse it with who you are spiritually speaking you are completely unconscious in that state you are possessed by thought and you derive your sense of identity from that stream of thinking and it is always a problematic identity it makes life difficult for yourself and for others you become a problem to yourself and by becoming a problem to yourself you automatically become a problem to others around you and not only around you nowadays the problematic egos can spread their unconsciousness through technology into the world you just go on your thing and and thousands of people will respond and say yes yes you are right and before a very unconscious person couldn't do much he could stand you could what in london you could go to a hyper corner stand on a box and and shout and that's how i used to sometimes go there when i lived in london every sunday people at hyper corner speak this is old tradition i don't know if they still

do it in a problem but nowadays they probably sit at home on their keyboard to reach many more people but no matter how crazy you are you will reach many people who will like your craziness and so the craziness spreads it's amplified through technology and that is the egoic state of consciousness that humans are trapped in when they're completely identified with the stream of thinking and then it often happens that certain thoughts can play the same role on the mental level as a virus plays on the physical level there are certain thoughts that can occupy your mind and proliferate and affect other thoughts so that your entire mind becomes possessed by one particular stream of thought one fixed idea for example you see if french idee fixe you have a fixed idea or some obsessive way of looking at the world it's the viral thoughts and become and you don't know it then you look at the world through these viral thoughts on an individual level this is easily recognized as a mental illness for example let's say paranoia or paranoid schizophrenia i had a family member who suffered from that and i was able to a long time ago was able to observe it how it gradually developed what it does to the mind that certain thoughts take over or take over your mind and this you have no immunity the immunity is the awareness of your thoughts without awareness you have no immunity against viral thoughts infectious thoughts that can possess your mind so this family member then developed certain thoughts about the world they were totally delusional that certain groups of people were continuously spying on her that all people who looked in a certain way were part of this group of people and there must have been according to this paranoid thought pattern there must have been several hundred people in this world in this city whose sole occupation was to spy to spy on her and to follow her not realizing the absurdity of those thoughts because being completely trapped in those thoughts and again it happens when there's not sufficient awareness to be aware of what kind of thoughts are arising in your mind the awareness is that there's a freedom complete identification with thought is ego ego and it's always dysfunctional and sometimes it's so dysfunctional it is then recognized as a mental illness but the dysfunction is always there when you're trapped in thought people say i think but most people don't think thinking happens to them so you need some awareness in order to even change your thinking to some extent awareness is required or to step out of thinking altogether even more awareness is required so you don't think thinking happens to you in the same way that your heart is beating you don't beat your heart your heart is doing it it's something that just happens by itself it seems so that's the movement of thought and then the great danger is the infection of the human mind by collective viral thoughts that can arise in the in a collective then millions of human minds are possessed and taken over by certain thoughts this for example happens when the entire collective is taken over by a certain ideology which is a way of looking at the world and you get disastrous regimes or an entire country you can get phenomena like national socialism you get phenomena like communism and i don't know if you're familiar with Mao Zedong what happened in china during the cultural revolution when millions of people got taken over by one type of thought for example Mao Zedong the thought was the world is divided into oppressor and oppressed Mao Zedong had learned that from reading

western thinkers like Marx so the entire history of the world is interpreted through these this one thought oppressor and oppressed and the thought takes over their minds not realizing yes oppression oppressor and oppressed does exist and has existed but it's only one facet of a very complex way in which societies develop and exist there there are many other factors but these the ego identifies with one thought and once it has identified with one this thought grows and takes over your mind you can be very intelligent and it can happen to you intelligence does not mean that there's awareness there it can happen to a very intelligent person and the result of that was for example in under Mao Zedong in china just to give one example of millions of people being infected by one viral thought since he had interpreted society in that way yes there was a partial truth but that partial truth was very far from being the whole truth of how a society functions it is far more dangerous to elevate a partial truth which is a thought to the whole truth than a lie it's it's easier to recognize a lie thought is a complete lie it's easy to recognize but a partial truth pretending to be the whole truth is more difficult to recognize in the absence of awareness it cannot be recognized it just takes over your mind so Mao Zedong had to recognize that and said all the history of china was completely wrong it was all evil oppressor against the oppressed we need to do away with all the old things the old ideas the old habits the old things do away so they started to destroy temples buddhist temples taoist temples statues everything destroyed they they ripped flowers out of the parts because beauty was associated with the oppressors millions died massacres happened teachers and university professors were murdered by their steward to the thousands the worst probably the worst history and the worst period in chinese history so he had recognized yes absence of wisdom which comes through awareness he had recognized that there was something that was holding china back because china had fallen behind in technology and and science which had developed quickly in the west through industrial revolution and so on so he saw there were old patterns that people were still the partial truth but then the partial truth was assumed to be the whole truth and then you know the famous saying throwing out the baby with the bath water that's what he did it's a weird saying it means you want to get rid of what needs to be gotten rid of with the dirty bath water but the precious thing that's there the baby you don't want to throw that out uh so he destructed chinese highly developed civilization buddhism taoism confucianism highly developed spiritual civilization let's destroy it so millions died a period of complete collective insanity so this is um what can happen when viral thought infects the human mind and so we need to have immunity otherwise it could happen to you it can happen even more easily nowadays because everybody is connected to the to the internet and social media devices where things can spread much more quickly like real like like a virus mental viruses be careful with what whenever you interact be aware be aware of thoughts don't identify with the movement of thought and i can only tell you that because you're already at a point where you don't have to identify there are still millions of people when i say to them don't identify with thought they would think are you crazy what are you talking about identify with thought what the world needs therefore is not more knowledge in the convention in conventional

terms the world does not need more knowledge it does not need more intelligence that's the iq kind of intelligence conceptual intelligence the world needs something deeper to be saved and we could call that wisdom wisdom arises from the non-conceptual intelligence that's where wisdom arises then we can we are able to use our minds without the mind becoming destructive and without the mind taking us over so it is vital for us now to develop wisdom and the wisdom is inseparable from awareness the awareness the presence that is non-conceptual knowing so that you have the two you are able to use concepts and thoughts but you are not used by concepts and thoughts that's the vital difference and it's an enormous difference you are not used anymore by thoughts because everything is energy every thought is a thought form in your consciousness it arises it's a little it's a little entity every thought is and it wants to grow in your mind says okay i'm not going anywhere and then you have another thought that says go away i don't want you all right it's all the that's thought these are thought forms that that in the absence of awareness they begin to use you they're like parasites psychic parasites in the absence of awareness thought can become have the function of a psychic parasite that just uses you to grow and then you and then then it can make you do crazy things and and you can induce the craziest beliefs that has nothing to do with reality anymore but it's the thought is that's how it is two and two is five i saw someone who was a few weeks ago who had a t-shirt said two plus two equals four and i was told when i asked him he said it's a revolutionary statement in other words in a crazy world reality is a revolutionary statement so the danger then being used by thought and then moving into complete irrationality complete craziness that creates havoc in your personal life if it's a personal thought or collectively happening to millions of people the only thing that provides immunity against that is awareness presence so that you can be you can know what's going on in your mind and you do not need to believe in every thought that comes into your head you can be there as the observer of your mind as the witness like a guardian you say oh yeah that's a weird thought so what happens then in a deeper sense the in the unconscious state there's complete identification of consciousness with thought thought is a form that consciousness takes so here you have the complete identification your consciousness is continuously being transformed into thoughts and then the awakening happens when there's a realization that you are not your thoughts you begin to realize that essentially you are the awareness behind your thoughts you are the consciousness so here the thoughts and then you there's a stepping back one could say you awaken there's a presence and here your thought and then from here the thoughts can be observed if they they still use consciousness but not all of it you reclaim consciousness from thought that is the process of evolution of human consciousness at this present time you need to reclaim consciousness from thought because conscience has been trapped in thought for a long long long time that has led to the development of the human ego content has been trapped in thought for a long time now you realize that it is possible to reclaim consciousness from thought and then you realize yes consciousness this is the I am the beingness the presence the vertical dimension and here's the thoughts that are

happening in your mind again they are not separate because the thoughts still use consciousness but not all of it anymore they don't use all of it anymore some of it remains in its unconditioned state there it is so you have reclaimed you are reclaiming consciousness from thought that is the awakening then you begin to live in such a way that you're never completely trapped in the movement of thought again or perhaps initially it can still happen occasionally you revert back into it but then quickly you come back out of it again then you are conscious and you can use thought but no longer used by it and then thought is actually a good thing there's no longer self-seeking in thought you're not seeking yourself in thought but thought can be used as a wonderful tool for creating things it's very powerful but when there's complete identification it's egoic thought and then it still can create things but most of the things it creates are lead to suffering not good and there you have this is the arising of wisdom wisdom is when some of your consciousness is no longer trapped in thought and then thought can function beautifully and that is the arising of wisdom and that is what's happening to us here it's vitally important it's an enormous thing it's an enormous evolutionary step in human consciousness this this separation of thought and consciousness and again i'm not talking about a duality there's no duality because there's still only the one consciousness and some of it is transformed into thought and also sense perceptions and some of it is realized in its unconditioned state and there you are and that is also can be described as the balance between being and doing that is also another way of putting it the primordial doing is the doing of thinking that's thinking is a continuous doing so you're able to think this is the doing but you you're aware of being self-awareness being being and doing are in then in balance and that is of vital importance in your life you are here in order to go through this transition where being and doing we come into balance and that is an evolutionary step in human consciousness that is enormous and it's enormous that that awakening that's why we're here balance between being and doing not and now not everybody is totally balanced between being and doing nobody is you can't be well very few we are totally in the middle where you have you you're good at doing but yeah you never lose your rootedness in being i'm not perfectly balanced i must admit you might guess where i'm more in the being or doing as far as that that the spiritual teaching goes i'm good at doing if you can call it doing but that doing is in the service of being so i don't know if that counts so when doing is in the service of being i'm good at doing but otherwise i must admit i'm not that great at doing and many things in my daily life that should be i should be doing i don't do them because i'm i'm more in the being dimension than the doing dimension much much more but not i'm not totally incapable of doing not totally no no i can't and there may be others who are much more in the doing dimension they're always active creating something new without losing their connectedness with the being dimension so they still have this in the background they have this sense of connectedness with being and again there is a danger in this dance between being and doing there is a danger that you could go one extreme or the other and lose yourself again in doing most of the world that we know here is obviously lost in the doing dimension with no awareness of the other

dimension so it would probably be easier for contemporary humans to get lost again even as you are awakening there is a danger as you go back into your daily life there's a danger that you could lose yourself again in the in the doing and everything you get completely uprooted again into reactive and anxious and stressed and what's the next thing i have to do now oh god i can't stand that could happen but then when you begin to suffer and then oh okay let's come back to the present moment and then the thought comes no i can't do it now but then you remember that you can because it's easy you're breathing no not now i don't have time and you do it anyway because you're not you're observing the thought that says you can't do it so awareness has returned you're observing the thought that tells you there's no point in being spiritual you've too much on your plate now and then you look at the thought okay there's this thought but it's not a correct thought it's a lie but that's fine it's thought does that sometimes oh and then of course another is you could lose yourself in being too that's possible i was there for a little while into early a long time ago almost lost in being not totally i could still get up and feed myself and even look for a job here and there during that time period i had weird temporary jobs here and there lasting a few days at a time so the being lost in being would be it can be very beautiful going to what's the point in doing anything at all the entire world is illusory anyway i have transcended all doing can you give me some food please the world challenges you it's not the way to completely deny the world the world has a function and an important purpose if you completely deny the world and there's a heavy price to pay to the and the world won't even allow you to do that it will challenge you and the charge could be hunger now i have to do something because we're we're not in india they're not feeding me they don't recognize that i'm a holy man they're not feeding me there's a real possibility if you were in india in totally immersed in being people would come and feed you because it is a long tradition of holy men and women who are completely immersed in being that is a tradition going back thousands of years they've always been there and many by the way pretend to be immersed in they just don't they just don't want to do any work but that's another that's another story but there are real ones and they are immersed in being and people come and offer food but go to new york or wherever won't happen they won't offer you any food probably not so the the dance between these two dimensions and again vitally important the disidentification from the stream of thinking reclaiming consciousness from the mind the thinking mind but the thinking mind there's still more than enough left for the thinking mind to operate and not only that the thinking mind is then can derive intelligence inspiration from the unconditioned consciousness the awareness and this can flow into thinking and transform the way in which the thinking mind functions it then functions in a more effective way sometimes called higher intelligence i don't like the word higher so much because then you have to go i prefer to call it deeper the deeper or greater intelligence can then the thinking mind can do inspired and inspiring and very creative things when you have there's the unconditioned consciousness and the thinking mind then the thinking mind can derive inspiration and creative power from the unconditioned conscious which is a much higher intelligence than the thinking mind itself the thinking

mind is a borrowed intelligence from the they're not separate but just talking about as if it were they were separate it's a borrowed intelligence from unconditioned consciousness and that's how creativity can happen you can have creative thoughts you can have creative insights intuitions inspiration to suddenly you know what you want to do and it comes from there because you have now accessed the place where inspiration arises and wisdom to be able to think clearly without being taken over by one or two viral thoughts so to continue to have the ability to think clearly and rationally without your thought processes being infected by the ego the human ego so all this happens as this as the separation happens you become a more effective and powerful human being it affects even how you conduct your life on the horizontal level of existence it changes that also so incredibly important and amazing that we live in this age where this has become possible for fairly large numbers of people this shift in consciousness yes statistically or whatever speaking it's a still a small percentage of the totality of humanity but that doesn't matter it's it is happening and it coincides as these decisive transitional periods always coincide with moments of critical time periods dangerous and critical time periods that we live in collectively there they go together on a smaller scale in the 60s and 70s you know on a much smaller scale it was like a preliminary awakening it started in the united states especially california and it coincided with the craziness of the vietnam war so you had the two coming together there was a there's a movement of awakening that's where ram das started and suddenly wisdom teachings were coming in from the east there was a rediscovery of spirituality and so on those amazing times and then of course the ego reasserted itself after a while but there may be some of you left who were already part of that i was alive already at that time but i was too much of an outsider i wasn't even part of the outsider group of the hippies that were even i was so much outside i didn't fit in with any group so would have been nice to have been a hippie hippie for a while and hanging out i greet and salute all former hippies who are present here today you did a great job and you survived because the hippie movement went through some deterioration towards the end unfortunately maybe too many drugs i don't know but it had an important function it had an important function in the evolution of consciousness but what's happening now is even deeper although it may not be apparent on the surface especially if you watch mainstream sources of information then everything looks pretty bleak but that's that's not the whole story at all not at all

[Speaker 2] (37:57 - 38:16)

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Eckhart Tolle The Most Fundamental Thing In Human Life [21ae89e2-d041-435a-ad10-e0d5aed59eb3]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:09)

The most fundamental thing in human life. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to a live audience in Arizona. He emphasizes the importance of stillness and says through stillness, we will reach the next step in human development, the evolution of our consciousness.

He explains that for thousands of years, we've been trapped in complete identification with the ego, a thought cluttered entity called me. We feel anxious and ill at ease in the world because we're cut off from our deeper spiritual roots. We may seek escape in alcohol, in drugs, food, sex and other addictions, but Eckhart says we cannot continue along this path.

Eckhart believes humanity has reached a crisis point. Not only are millions of people on the planet suffering the delusion of self-centeredness, the dysfunction of the ego is further amplified on a mass scale through technology. Eckhart says we must evolve beyond our current state of awareness through stillness.

He says transcending self-centered thought is the most fundamental thing in human life.

[Speaker 1] (1:12 - 39:58)

Welcome to a live event. Also welcome to other people joining us in different parts of the world. It's good to start with stillness and it's even better not to lose stillness even when speaking happens so that stillness remains in the background.

And when there's no speaking, stillness can be in the foreground. Another reason why it's good to start with stillness is that usually I haven't prepared anything and I don't know what to say. I don't know what to say.

Which could be a very uncomfortable thing if I thought that I needed to know what I'm going to say. If I'm comfortable, however, with not knowing what to say, it's quite a pleasant state. But it implies a trust, a trust in something deeper than the personal mind and the trust that the words will come from that deeper dimension out of the present moment.

So we are here to access or deepen that transcendent dimension of consciousness. It begins when the mind ceases to create thought if only for a moment and yet you haven't fallen asleep. I will make allowances for people who have only just got here from other parts of the planet and are suffering from jet lag.

The mind stops just for a moment, but there's no decrease in consciousness. In fact,

there's an increase in consciousness. A certain alertness, a gentle, alert presence.

And one could say you sense that presence both within and without. Although ultimately, although I'm not going to go into that right now, I'll just throw it out there. Ultimately, there isn't within and without, there's only within.

It's all within. This entire space is within you. Now, let's try to work that out by thinking about it.

And of course, you'll notice the moment you start trying to figure it out by thinking about it, it's gone. So the essence of our retreat is no different from the essence of your life, your so-called life. There is no your life, we just use those words.

Until you awaken to this dimension or into this dimension, which we may call stillness, your mind is full of clutter. Some of it may be useful, a lot of it is useless. And a lot of it is actually harmful, destroys your happiness.

A lot of what goes on in your mind, the mind is full of clutter, the clutter of one thought after another, plus the emotions that reflect thoughts and also amplify the thoughts. Most people only know their whole life consists of that clutter of thought. Their entire sense of identity is derived from the clutter of thought, me.

Not a pleasant sense of identity. And everybody's looking, everybody feels in the background or sometimes in the foreground, a sense of insufficiency or dissatisfaction with who they are. No matter what they have achieved, there's always in the back of a sense of something missing, a dissatisfaction, an unease, sometimes more pronounced than it's not just unease, anxieties, heaviness of regrets and feelings of guilt and undoubtedly the person.

And if you derive your sense of identity from the continuous movement of thought, and then some kind of narrative emerges out of that continuous movement of thought and this narrative that emerges, the repetitive narrative that emerges out of this movement of thought, thoughts which consist of memories and so on, reactions to past events and so on. Out of this clutter emerges a more, a persistent, repetitive narrative. And this becomes the core of the person or personality, the narrative of me.

So people call it me and my life, my life. And of course, I don't know any life that's not problematic. You're not the only one.

That can may come as a surprise if you spend a lot of time on Facebook because everybody else's life seems to be so perfect. They even look perfect. Through the infinite power of technology, they all look perfect.

Even I, they did it to me a few times. Even I can look perfect. If you apply the right filters.

But every person is a problem, a walking problem. Seeking for a solution. But of course, as every therapist knows, there is an identification with the mind-created entity, the self, the problematic self.

Yes, I want to be free of it, but also there's a feeling that's me. I don't want to let go of that. It's an unconscious reluctance to let go of this thing that is so problematic that is me.

And then when moments arrive when you, there's a possibility of transcendence appears suddenly on the horizon, so to speak, and immediately say, oh no, I don't want to go there. I want to hang on to this because what is too uncertain. I don't want to step into the unknown.

I'd rather be with my problematic self. And so every therapist has experienced that many times that people, there's a point where people don't want to, they want to hang on to that problematic identity. And then, okay, then you suffer a bit more.

And perhaps a few years pass, and then perhaps you just can't stand it anymore. And then finally there's a readiness. Now, since we are talking about the clutter of thought, this may be a good moment to just introduce very briefly a few things that may be helpful while you're here.

It's mostly about things that I recommend that you refrain from doing rather than recommend that you do something. First of all, there's a television in your room. Please don't turn it on because the moment you turn it on, it amplifies and adds to the clutter of your mind.

It is very unlikely that you will miss anything important. It's very unlikely. Okay, it's a recommendation.

There's no built-in camera in your room just to control that you actually don't. Now, the next recommendation may be a little bit more problematic for some people. Because of the addictive nature of this thing you hold in your hand, my recommendation is to use it as little as possible while you're here and only use it if there's a specific purpose.

Perhaps there is an important message, but not to randomly go there as that's very normal. Whenever there's a moment of you're waiting for something, automatically the hand goes into your pocket or your handbag. Everybody seems to be doing that and you get that thing out.

You don't know why, but everybody else is doing it. And then it appears that you're engaged in some important activity. And you feel that it's clutter.

What it prevents is the arising of even the slightest glimpse of inner spaciousness. At least before the clever human mind invented these things, when you were waiting for

something, there was nothing to do. And you just had to stand or sit there, unless that's, well, if you were in a waiting room somewhere they had magazines.

But in other cases, you were waiting somewhere, there wasn't much to do if you didn't have any book or magazine. And so you were just left with yourself. And there was a possibility of at least having a glimpse of briefly emerging out of this sea of thought and briefly coming into the present moment.

And you go, oh. That happens very rarely though, because the moment you stop, you get this thing out. So it's addictive.

My recommendation is then to, if you can, not use it at all while you're here. It's not that long. But if you have to, once a day or twice a day, if you have to check it, okay.

Therefore, because we are here in order to access, this is another way of putting it, we called it stillness, to access the dimension of inner spaciousness, which is an enormous step forward in the evolution of human consciousness, the transcendent dimension. This is why we're here. So it's good to refrain from doing things that prevent that.

Another thing that is to be recommended is not to indulge in the consumption of substances. Okay, if you cannot enjoy your dinner without a glass of wine, that's fine. But if you know yourself and you know that if you drink one glass of wine, your determination to only drink one glass of wine after you're finished drinking that one glass of wine, the original determination to only have one glass of wine goes out of the window.

And then it's in a second and a third and a fourth. Alcohol can lower your consciousness and prevent the rising of presence. Although I myself enjoy a glass of wine occasionally or a nice cool beer in this hot weather is actually quite nice.

But beyond that, you have to be careful, especially if you know yourself. If you can refrain altogether, that's great. While you're here.

Okay, and one last thing, not to indulge in excessive intake of food, especially before our sessions. So eat in moderation. So these are just some very basic practical, but they are important.

Oh, another one is wear a hat if you go out during the daytime. And because through excessive heat, you could suddenly become unconscious, not just in a spiritual sense. And oh, and now I will add something else to this.

And this is a wonderful spiritual practice, especially while you're here and you might even want to extend it when you leave here, you might want to also practice that in your daily life. Self-observation is very important, which requires some awareness and awareness is presence. And presence is the dimension of stillness that arises.

Awareness, stillness, presence, it's all different pointers pointing to the one reality. So a certain amount of awareness is needed for self-observation. Self-observation means to know what's going on in your mind and in your emotional field, rather than being what's going on in your mind and your emotional field.

Rather than being the thought and the emotion that takes a hold of you, being able to be the presence behind it, whether it's anxiety, anger, whatever it may be, be the presence behind the emotion rather than being totally in the grip of the emotion or the narrative, the story that you're telling yourself in any particular moment. And so my recommendation is that while you're here, to be so aligned with the present moment that you don't complain about it. Of course, if there's something wrong, really wrong, not just in your mind, if something is wrong and you need to tell somebody about it because this person may be able to rectify it, it's not complaining, it's you're conveying information.

But I'm talking about one of the favorite activities of the ego for many, many people, but they don't even know it, is to argue, continuously argue with reality, with what is. Some people are so deeply trapped in this mind pattern that they could be described as grievances, looking for a cause and of course, easy to find. So if you refrain from complaining internally, first of all, you become more aligned with the present moment, the isness of whatever is.

And the mind might say, it's so hot here, why, I just can't stand it anymore. I can't stand, it's awful. How can we do a retreat here in this heat?

Don't you agree? The more people you can talk to, the better about it. And if you're lucky, you find one or two that totally agree and then the thing gets amplified.

Right? Now, of course, there's always something wrong wherever you go. You will find certain things that are not right according to what the mind expects.

Only in your imagination could you think of a retreat place where there's absolutely nothing wrong, nothing. Everything is perfect for your spiritual practice. 100% perfect.

Even if that existed, it would not be very helpful. The strange thing is the potential for spiritual awakening arises the moment something goes wrong. Of course, it's not wrong at all, but it's just a mental interpretation.

This shouldn't be happening, but it is, but it shouldn't. They shouldn't do that, but they do. They should have done that, but they didn't.

But you can have continuous narratives running through your mind of that kind. And the more you can argue with reality, the stronger the egoic sense of self, the delusion, the delusional self, the fiction, the fictional entity, the stronger it gets. So the letting go of any kind of complaining, unless something can be done and you talk to somebody about

it, and again, then not in a complaining way, but in a factual way, that's already a huge shift.

And then continuous self-observation is part of that also. What are the thoughts that go through your mind? And be the awareness of what is happening in your emotional field.

Are you, as you're sitting here, are you carrying something in your emotional field that is a residue of something that happened an hour ago, this morning, or while you were traveling here, yesterday? Some imaginary situation your mind is creating, and the emotion reflects that as if it were reality. And again, without the awareness, it takes you over.

You don't need to get rid of anything. You don't need to get rid of the emotion. Without the awareness, you don't have an emotion.

The emotion has you. And the emotion is an energy form, an energy field. A thought is an energy formation.

Everything is energy, and this is emotion and thought are non-physical energy formations. So the thought then has you. You don't have it.

You're not even there. You are, spiritually speaking, asleep, and you're being run by the mental-emotional conditioning. The mental-emotional conditioning says, I, and it refers to all that stuff, that accumulated stuff.

I, everybody says I continuously. Everybody's favorite pronoun is I. And what they refer to usually is that entity.

The problematic entity, the ego. That's the word, the egoic self, I. There's a deeper I that is not the egoic self.

And that deeper I, this is why we're here, to access that, to deepen that. Most of you already have access to it, but it may periodically become obscured. In this world, not surprisingly, when things go wrong, that's a moment of becoming more conscious.

It's every, even the smallest things. If you don't react out of the conditioning, the mental-emotional conditioning, but be the awareness, and then, oh, and you observe. If emotions arise, you are there, and you can say, oh, there's the anxiety again.

And then you know that there's anxiety without calling it anything. That is a huge difference to know that anxiety is in you, anger is in you right now, for example, or anxiety, whatever else it may be, or some mood that suddenly gets a hold of you, and then you're suddenly in a bad mood. Don't talk to me, don't think.

I'm grumpy. Well, to say I'm grumpy is already a little bit step forward because at least you know that you're grumpy. If you're totally unconscious, the grumpiness is you, and

you don't even know that you're grumpy.

To say, don't talk to me, I'm grumpy, that's already means there's a little bit of awareness there, it's great. So there's a huge difference between saying, I'm angry, and I feel angry, or there's anger in me. I feel that there's anger in me.

I feel angry. There's somewhat a difference when I am angry because then you equate identity with emotion. So it's not, I am angry, that's a huge, you've fallen into a huge trap.

If you equate emotion with your identity, or if you equate a thought with your identity, or a story in your mind, you equate that with your identity, or an opinion, which is thought. The world is full of people who don't know the difference between their opinion and their identity. Their opinion becomes their identity.

And then they have lots of fights with other people because they are totally confused about who they are. They derive their identity from a set of opinions, politics, for example. It doesn't mean you cannot have opinions, everybody has opinions.

But where does your sense of identity come from? Does it come from the opinions, or do you realize that you have certain opinions which may be valid or not? You're on a human level, you have opinions, or viewpoints, or perspective, mental positions, you have them, they are there, but do these give you your sense of self?

Or if they do, then you're continuously arguing with other people, making other people into enemies, because when you contradict somebody who equates opinion with identity, unconsciously they believe that you are attacking their very self, because there's a confusion about who they are, they don't know who they are. So you attack the opinion of somebody who's totally identified with their opinion, and you become their mortal enemy. They might even try to kill you in an extreme form of unconsciousness.

So, this is why it's so important to transcend that. Transcend doesn't mean you exclude it, it doesn't mean no more opinions. I'm now, I'm having no opinion about anything or anyone, no, that's not going to work.

What do you think of the Republican Party, the Democratic Party? Nothing. But there is a deeper level, if you can go to a deeper level, and your sense of I does not come from the movement of thought, it comes from a deeper place, your identity, who you feel or sense you are, does not come from the emotional field, or from the mental formations.

And that is the awakening, that is to be awakened, is, first of all, it is to discover that dimension. For some people at first, it comes in little glimpses, perhaps sometimes in protected settings, environments like here, and I say, are you able to, this moment, are you able to let go of thinking without falling asleep, but remaining alert, in a gentle way, not through willpower, just relinquish, conceptualization, no need to interpret

compulsively this moment. What could you add to it?

Interpret, you like it, you dislike this, I don't like that. Yes, likes and dislikes still exist on the surface of your being, but when you become rooted in the deeper presence, the being of you, then you're suddenly free. And you can sense that in that stillness, if we want to call it that, stillness just means the absence of thought, and what remains when thought goes, but you don't fall asleep, is conscious presence, pure consciousness remains.

And that is the deeper I, the deeper I am. So a moment of presence or stillness, in that moment, you have transcended the person, the personal self. Of course, you go back into it after a while, and the question is, are you going to lose yourself in it again, perhaps?

And then you come out of it again. And after a while, this is your, the aim of spiritual practice, that your connectedness with the deeper dimension is not lost, even when you're engaged in daily activities, or discussions, or whatever it may be, that connectedness remains in the background, which may be the case with you now, as you listen to this, something in you recognizes what the words are pointing to, and that's not the conceptual mind, that which recognizes it as true, is the immediate realization of it, of the truth of it. You don't have to think about it, you can't think about it. So it's, you know, immediately, yes, I know, there's a direct knowing, not conceptual knowing.

Conceptual means knowing through thinking. Most people live through a conceptual reality, their identity is a conceptual identity, and they conceptualize everybody else they meet, they immediately form judgments that come very quickly, and you form a conceptual identity for the other. You trap the other person in this mental concept, but you do that because you've already done it to yourself.

So you live through a conceptual identity, me. And so we step, we go to a deeper place, or you could call it higher or deeper, it doesn't matter. I prefer deeper, well, you go to a deeper place where the movement of thought ceases, and immediately you have transcended the self, the egoic self, if only for a few seconds, or a minute.

And everybody is longing to be free of this problematic entity, unconsciously, they want to be free, but they don't want to let go. There's a paradox here, they don't want to let go, and yet they can't stand it, they want to be free. So much drug taking in this world, or they want to transcend this heaviness of experiencing life as this heavy burden, and their identity is very unsatisfying.

So they're longing to be free, but they're going below thinking, the road that takes you below, you fall below thought, and to some extent, yes, you have become free of the self, before you go to sleep, there's a transitional moment when you're in bed, and you're halfway to sleep already, and that moment feels really good. You feel, ah, it feels,

you can feel the pull of sleep, and you can feel, you can't think about your problems anymore, your entire sense of identity isn't there because you're too tired, and then you're pulled into sleep. Same with many substances that you take, they'll pull you below thought.

At first, it feels liberating, at least, even the smoking of this dried leaf that people like. They smoke, and it slows you down, it slows down the mind. I tried it once.

I tried another thing, too, but this was, this was, I tried it in a hotel room in Amsterdam. It's true. It's not that great, but I can see what it does, it kind of creates a fogginess in your mind, kind of fog, and you go, oh.

And you fall below thought, and that is why, for many people, that's so liberating. They, for once, they experience a kind of freedom. Oh, I can let go, ah, I need a bit more, ah, right.

For some people, it gives them a glimpse of something, it's fine, it's not a permanent solution at all to a human problem, it's not a permanent solution at all, because it takes you below thought. Here, it's rising above thought, transcending thought by rising above thought. That is the most fundamental thing in human life, because that's the next step in human evolution, the evolution of consciousness for humanity, which has been trapped in thought, ego, egoic thought, complete identification with thought for thousands of years.

And now we've reached a crisis point where we have created a world that amplifies the dysfunction of the egoic mind through technology and science. Dysfunctions which before were already there, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 years ago. The technology amplifies the dysfunction, and then there's the possibility of destruction.

So our entire gathering here, the retreat, is only really about one thing. Well, it's not a thing, but that is, discover in yourself this possibility of shifting from being a person to being the awareness. And then you can, in some situations, you may find you're completely the person again.

You might lose the awareness. Eventually, you won't lose it, but you have a person you prefer, especially when you talk to others with your mouth. You can see when people talk how they are in the grip of a mind stream.

They are not talking. Their mind is talking through them. The conditioned mind is talking through them.

They can't stop it. They don't even know they're there. Basically, they are asleep while the mind is talking.

And the talking mind says, I, I, I. And by the way, it's easier to observe this state of being

lost in the mind. It's easier to observe it in others than in yourself, by the way.

Because the moment you observe it, you're no longer lost. The moment you know that the light of awareness is suddenly there, that's the light which I believe is in the title of our retreat. This light is a light of consciousness, is a light of awareness.

It's a light that in the mythological account of creation, which is actually quite inspired and quite deep in the beginning of the Bible, the entire thing starts with, creation starts with the words, let there be light. And that is uttered by God. We'll, we may explore what that means later.

This is uttered before God creates even the sun and the stars. So it's more than that. So it points to something else.

Let there be light. That's the very foundation, the light of the consciousness that underlies the phenomenal existence. Phenomenal means consisting of phenomena.

Everything that happens, everything that's manifested are phenomena, they come and go. They're all ripples on the surface of the ocean, as you are and I am, as this physical form and the psychological form.

[Speaker 2] (40:01 - 40:21)

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Eckhart Tolle The Most Important Thing to Realize Is the Deep I [3c582911-659f-4940-864e-cd0e052d5dde]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

The most important thing to realize is the deep eye. In this episode, Eckhart talks about a collective awakening, growing on the planet, even while the majority of people remain spiritually asleep. He explains most of us are completely identified with our thoughts, the constant compulsive stream of thinking that dominates our awareness and creates a very limited identity.

He says beyond thoughts is a more profound and truer self, which Eckhart calls the deep eye. We begin to awaken when we recognize the difference between the two.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 1:02:13)

You're welcome. Makes me feel a little emotional. I'm finally back in Toronto.

We are starting a little late. And, but of course, you're already practicing presence as you are sitting there, not waiting for me or anything to happen. That's a very simple spiritual practice.

And you might be amazed to discover how often during a normal day, you're waiting for something or someone, even spiritually advanced people like yourselves. Most of you. There are always some who didn't come of their own free will.

Or they couldn't say no to someone who said you need to come to this. And if that's you, then you're in for a wonderful awakening or an excruciatingly boring experience. And whether it's one or the other, depends on something inside you that is not really to do with intellectual understanding or intelligence in the conventional sense of the word, but something else.

There's something in you that could be described almost as a faculty that in many humans is still either undeveloped or dormant, like a seed. It's a faculty that is now awakening in a growing number of humans. But in the majority of the planet's population is still dormant and that's just how it is.

Now, we are going more deeply tonight into this, what that is in you. And if that has awakened already a little bit, that faculty, then you will sense something as you listen to the words. You will sense something within you that recognizes not only what these words point to, because the truth that is within you, which is inseparable from that, what I call right now the faculty, the truth that is within you, needs to be a little bit awakened to be able to hear what I'm saying.

So if you're still totally close to that, then it may be difficult for you to sit here for two

hours listening to a man sitting on a chair and with nothing else happening. If you went to a movie, you would expect a lot of action in order to sit through one and a half to two hours. And if it is not enough action, then you fall asleep or you walk out.

But here, just a man talking, sitting on a chair, there needs to be something extraordinarily important. And there needs to be something in you that recognizes that this is extraordinarily important to keep you here. So just, if you are one of those few who came here because you couldn't say no, and after a little while, you just can't stand it anymore, please feel free to get up and leave.

You will not be judged. Because everybody here is spiritually advanced. It is also possible that you may need to go to the bathroom, in which case you could say, I'll be back, I'll be back.

So I just, to start with, I mentioned the fact that it's surprising how much time humans spend waiting for the next thing. They're always looking ahead to the next thing. And that's, if you detect that in yourself, in a normal day, that is already a little shift.

If you detect that, it's an unconscious movement in you. It's a mental movement. Some emotions may be connected with it too.

It's a mind that wants to tell you that there's always the next moment that's more important than this one. That's the implication. It doesn't say that out aloud, but the implied, the mindset that's implicit in that is that the present is of less value than the future or the past.

There are some people who carry a lot of past weight, and especially as you get older, if you get older and the amount of future that you have shrinks, then there's a shift. Instead of looking always to the future, because there may not be that much, then you look to the past. And we all know that, how old people start talking and thinking about the past more and more and more.

And before they reached that stage, they were thinking about the future a lot of the time, missing always something vital. And that vital thing is the present moment, which is just this. So, and that's a kind of awakening when you come to, when your attention moves away from past and future into the present moment.

It's a shift. It's sometimes you may register it almost as if you were waking up from a dream. And that is why in traditionally, in various spiritual traditions, you have the term awakening, spiritual awakening, or the awakening of consciousness.

And this is why the very word Buddha, for example, which is a title, it's not anybody's name, it's a title given to someone 2,500 years ago. The title Buddha means, it has a Sanskrit root, which means the one who is awake. So that's, the Buddha is awake.

Now, normally a person would say, well, what does that mean? I'm awake, obviously, look at me, I'm awake. So it's not, we're not using awake in a conventional sense of the word.

We're using awake in a different sense. You get the first glimpse of this awakening when your attention moves into the present moment. And when your attention moves into the present moment, it sometimes feels to you as if you were stepping out of a dream.

Or now, what kind of a dream? It's a dream of, this dream of thinking. The voice in the head, and the voice is failing right now.

But, we may have to spend the rest of the evening in silence. I have a little book called *Stillness Speaks*, which I highly recommend, you can, maybe we can distribute copies here and you can start reading. When you, let's say you observe somebody else, it's always easier to observe somebody else.

You can see when they're very much identified with a stream of thinking, that's, I call it the voice in the head. You might have noticed that you also have one. The voice in the head, which is a monologue or sometimes a dialogue.

It comments on what's going on around you or it takes you completely away from what's going on around you and you're thinking about the past. What happened yesterday? What you could have said when you met this unpleasant person, but you failed to say it.

And then you can replay the scenario in your head and you have a very satisfying experience. And then the next thing comes up and then you're in there. And when you observe many people, they live in a kind of, the intention is here, they're not really, they're only present enough not to stumble, bump into furniture or they have, they're vaguely aware of where they are going and so on.

But 80 to 90% of their attention is in the stream of thinking. And so they go through it. And some people spend the whole day, the whole, all their waking hours in the state of complete identification with that inner voice.

And that is the state of, in spiritual terms, we call that unconscious. Unconscious has a different meaning when we use it with reference to the spiritual rather than conventional meaning. The conventional meaning of unconscious is obviously you're knocked out.

So when you tell somebody, you are unconscious, you say, what are you talking about? Of course, the thing that's saying, what are you talking about is the voice in the head that now is actually speaking out loud through that person. And there may be an angry reaction perhaps because the voice in the head is often accompanied by certain emotions.

And the voice in the head says, what is that rubbish you're talking about? I'm not

unconscious. You can see I'm completely conscious.

What is this nonsense? Why do you go to this guy, Eckhart Tolle? And that's not a person speaking.

It's the conditioned mind speaking through this human being. But this human being who is actually almost completely asleep somewhere in the background doesn't even know that he or she is being possessed by this, we could call it entity, which consists of thought forms that consists of the continuous stream of thinking. And the type of thinking you do is of course conditioned by your past, your personal past and the past of your environmental and cultural past where you grew up, what happened to you.

And so you have certain types of thought that go through your mind. And after a while, these thought become your identity. You do not exist or you rather, you don't know that there is in you.

And that's the faculty I mentioned a little earlier. You don't know then that there is in you a deeper, more profound identity, a more essential identity, a truer identity than the sense of identity or sense of self that is derived from complete identification with this continuous incessant and compulsive stream of thinking. So when you discover that there is in you another dimension of consciousness, that is the beginning of the spiritual awakening, or we could call it the awakening of consciousness.

That is the beginning of you becoming the Buddha or in Christian mysticism, the Christ, the Christ in you, the Christ in you is, or Buddha nature is a term that is sometimes used in certain Buddhist traditions. They say everybody has Buddha nature. Your true nature is the Buddha nature.

And I call that sometimes the deep I, I meaning I, you, I, as opposed to the surface I. And now this is very interesting. I is everybody's favorite word.

Because it's probably the word that's used most frequently in the language. How many times during the day do you say I? And what that refers to, usually it refers to your likes or your dislikes or your whatever feelings, your opinions, your desires, whatever you remember, it refers to the mind made entity, which is the surface I.

So the surface I is the conditioned you. The deep I is something that is not yet awakened in many humans, but is a possibility in all humans. The reason why you are here, most of you, is that this deep I, the unconditioned self, if you want to call it that, which the Buddhists, by the way, call the no self, this unconditioned self is awakening in you.

And it has brought you here in order to deepen the awakening that you already sense that's happening in you. So something that is transcendent to who you are as a person is awakening. It is not totally separate from the person.

And my favorite analogy is to compare it to a ripple on the surface of the ocean. Let's say you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean. It's not a bad analogy because a ripple on the surface of the ocean has a limited lifespan.

It goes, oh, it's gone. Of course, you could give it a name. Then you give it a kind of identity.

Oh, this ripple is called John. Oh, there's John. Oh no, he's dying.

Oh no, he's dead. That was John, he's gone, completely gone. Oh no.

Now, perhaps John never realized that John is a ripple on this vast ocean. Perhaps John was so identified with his ripple identity that he always looked on the surface of the ocean for whatever fulfillment and desires and how to make himself happier. He was always looking on the surface, looking at other ripples, liking some, disliking others.

Disliking more than liking. And other ripples say, come, if you join me, we can be a bigger ripple together. Let's sign a contract.

Now, if John never realized, then he missed something very important. He missed the very essence of his being. He missed his essence identity.

And you are, in a way, that ripple because you exist here as a form identity, undoubtedly. You have a physical form. You have a body.

You might've noticed that people say, I have a body. They don't say, I am a body. Well, in the power of now, there's a little meditation where I suggest that people change it to, I am a body, but because I want them to realize the inner body, which is not the physical body that you see.

So it would be very rare, though, to hear a person say, I am a beautiful body, or I am an overweight body. No, they say, I have. So they know that the body is not who they are.

And that the body is a first stage of form identity. And for many people, it's extremely important that their kind of body is a source of either pride or misery for many people, even young people. The way the body looks and is perceived by yourself and others, it causes a lot of suffering to many people because they are not happy with their body.

It's an important part of their sense of identity. And others are very happy with their body because it happens to look better than others, other bodies, and that can already be a wonderful thing as long as you're young. This form identity of identifying with the body, which is better than other bodies or stronger, that strengthens your identification with the body, which, so the body becomes a source of pride and can become the foundation for your identity.

Even if you're unhappy with the body, it can become a foundation for your identity. It

just happens to be an unhappy foundation. So you have either a happy foundation or an unhappy foundation.

And body, of course, you add clothes to your body. So they are very close to the body so that your clothes become an extension of the body. So you can change things a bit there because now you have a choice.

And so the body is first the beginning of this mental image of who you are. It's not really so much the physical body as the mental image of this is in your mind. You experience the body.

And so it's the experience of my body, me, that's me. But that's not the end of your form identity. Your form identity is also your psychological form of who you are, that's me.

This starts with your name as a child. You're given a name that becomes the receptacle for all the other things that you put in that over the years develop into who you are as a person or as a personality. Experiences and memories and stories and achievements, possessions.

Mind, the idea of mind becomes very important even for a little child. Also, we are talking, of course, about the growth of the ego. That, and you cannot stop it.

You cannot stop the growth of the ego in a child. It would be absurd, don't try it, to say to a child that you give the child a car and then another child takes away the car and the child screams and says, this is a terrible, my, it's mine, mine. Terrible suffering arises in the child.

No, you cannot tell the child, no, this is your ego developing. You need to be detached, detached from the car. You need to be as detached as your daddy is detached from his BMW.

Until somebody scratches it. I thought I was detached. So possessions become an important part for many humans because they're incorporated into your form identity.

But of course, if you don't have possessions, then there are many other avenues for your ego to grow and to develop a more enhanced form identity, for example, through achievements or abilities, which are wonderful things, there's nothing wrong with them. You can listen to little children when a child says, I can jump this far. You can't jump.

Look how far I can jump. Can you do that? No, you can't.

The ego grows. I can do something that you can't do. It's a great thing for a child that feels what the ego is growing.

So you can't stop it. My dad has a bigger house than yours. Terrible blow to the other child.

But if the ego in the other child is clever and has already developed certain strategies, the other child will say, well, my dad has a friend who knows somebody who has a house that is four times as big as your dad's. Thus devaluing the other person's ego identification. And this sounds a little weird, but it's done, adults do that kind of thing all the time.

In slightly more subtle ways. And so you see, after a while, you have a personality. You are a person, a personality.

It has its certain likes and dislikes and opinions. And you have a sense of who you are, a sense of identity, which is the most important thing for humans after shelter and sufficient food. The most important thing for humans is to have a sense of identity.

Because the question is, who am I? What am I? And this is for young people who grow up in deprived environments where they don't really have anything.

They feel a great need to identify with something. So they become members of gangs. So you have gang warfare.

So you get a little tattoo or lots of tattoos. And so you're a member of this gang, and then it's completely arbitrary. And then you join another, somebody else joins another gang, and they kill each other.

Now, these are rudimentary manifestations of the ego, but the ego can manifest in many, many different ways. Some people have an enormous identification with their sports team. That becomes part of who you think you are.

Why? I don't know. Because you happen to live in one particular city, so you associate with that particular team.

These are rudimentary egos that are not very subtle egos, but these are rudimentary egos that lead to warfare. The football hooligans in many countries, they fight each other. These are rudimentary manifestations of egoic conscience.

And they love it because that's who they are. That's me. It's great.

It always gives the ego food, fantastic. And so, very interesting to see how much a human being is in the grip, completely possessed by this mind-made, conditioned entity. And this is when they say, I, this is what is speaking through them.

The conditioned entity is speaking through them, But they might not say, I, they might say, we. We, you have a personal aspect of ego. That's either your possessions, your achievements or your failures, all kinds of things that form the narrative of me in your mind.

And you have also the collective aspect of ego. That's the we, when the I becomes a we.

And when the I becomes a we, that's a very satisfying thing for the ego because you identify with a collective, which may be a political party, which may be a religion.

It may be, as I said, a football team, any kind of collective that you identify with, a nation, nationalism. That is very satisfying to the ego. You can become a part of a cult.

We become part of a cult. You get a huge ego inflation. And some nations are like cults, the bit less so now than they used to be.

There was Soviet communism. There was communist China. There's still North Korea, and which is very much like the entire nation becomes a cult.

So every human is in the grip of that. And a significant part of their identity is linked to the collective. And then it looks as if those humans had overcome their ego because within the limited sphere of the collective, they operate beautifully and they help each other.

And they sacrifice, they work for hours without pay, and they do everything. And these become completely egoless. Isn't that wonderful?

In this cult, these people are so egoless. Unfortunately, the cult itself is one gigantic ego. So the personal ego has been relinquished and something else has taken the place of the personal ego, which is the collective ego.

Now, the personal ego is a huge troublemaker. The personal ego causes a lot of suffering, but the collective ego is far worse, potentially. All these, the great atrocities that humans perpetrate upon each other, most of them are perpetrated by people who are identified with the collective ego.

So you have one group fighting the others, which are the enemies, especially if the collective ego needs enemies to define its identity through it, because without the other, you lose your identity, the egoic identity. You need the other who is not us. On a personal level, you need somebody to disagree with.

You love somebody to disagree with you because in that struggle to be right and to make somebody else wrong, the ego grows. If everybody agrees with you, who are you? Everybody shares all your opinions and all your positions.

And everyone says, yes, absolutely. Who are you? Or let's say people identify racially too with their race.

So, and again, you need the other who is not us that sharpens your sense of identity. Again, it's ultimately an illusory sense of identity. So let's just imagine you're very much identified with one political party.

I won't name any. And let's say suddenly the entire country is totally in favor. There's not

a single person who is not a member of this political party.

Who are you suddenly? Nobody. Because the other is gone.

So without the other, you cannot define your identity anymore or race. Let's say everybody suddenly is exactly the same skin color. There's no difference.

And if you had been strongly identified with your race and suddenly you wake up on this planet where everybody is exactly the same skin color as yours, who are you? You disappear. You go, oh my God, I'm nobody anymore.

Because the other has gone. The egoic identity needs the otherness of others. It needs to strengthen in their mind the otherness of others in order to enhance their own identity.

And on the personal level, the ego does that with very simple things like easy to overlook. I mentioned that here because these things are obstacles towards the realization of the essence of who you are, the deep I. We'll be going into the deep I.

Don't worry. So, but what stands in the way of the deep I? And that is, these are things, some things are very, very common that apply almost to everybody.

I just mentioned the need to emphasize the otherness of others because that defines who you are more. And that is done, for example, whenever you disagree with somebody, then you strengthen the otherness. When you need to be right in an argument, nobody's more unconscious than somebody who is engaged in being right.

Let me tell you how it is. And you know what's happening to that person. That person is identified with a certain thought or group of thoughts.

Identified means derives, they derive their sense of self from these thoughts. So these thoughts are imbued with self, to use a kind of Buddhist terminology. The thoughts are imbued with a sense of self.

They're not just thoughts. They are thoughts that I'm so identified with that I don't know the difference anymore between who I am and these thoughts that are floating around in my mind. I become those thoughts.

That is the essence of unconsciousness. And that is the essence of ego. And that's an amazing realization.

Every time you are engaged in being right with somebody, it may happen occasionally, you may notice this either extreme defensiveness or aggression. And when you notice that, that's a wonderful thing to notice because what you're noticing is the ego in you. The need to be right is so distinct, it is destructive of many relationships, intimate relationships.

There are many marriages that break down because both partners are completely identified with their mental positions. And then they're fighting. One mental position against another mental position.

Then they don't have no idea what's happening. So engaged in being right, which means somebody else needs to be wrong. And for many people to be right becomes more important than the truth.

So you would even start to lie, not you, but some. You would even start to lie in order to continue to be right. That's an amazing thing to discover in yourself.

It's the emotion that comes in when you're discussing something. Now, does that mean you let go completely and you say, okay, you're right. I have no opinion.

I'm so spiritual. I have no position anymore. Eckhart said, it's all ego.

You won't be able to do that. No, there continue to be mental positions. You continue to have, of course, certain viewpoints and certain opinions.

This part of who you are as this form identity. But you're no longer totally identified. You can total shift in a discussion, for example, when two people are not identified with their mental positions, they can put forward, this is how I see it.

And that, and that, and that. How do you see it? Complete opposite.

That, that, that. Okay. So whether or not something comes of it, perhaps out of the opposing positions, some new synthesis arises.

If you're truly able to listen to the other, perhaps you both come to a new realization that perhaps each person has a little bit of the truth, but no person has the whole truth. That would be an amazing thing. That would be part of humans living more consciously instead of needing somebody to be wrong in order to be right.

So that's already one important thing that can happen as you become more conscious. But this little thing, while you're engaged in a discussion, needing the other to be wrong because you need to be right to strengthen your sense of self. The moment you notice this energy behind the need to be right, then that is the ego in you.

But the fact that you notice it means you're no longer totally in the grip of it. Now, where does that come from? This, the ability to notice the ego in you when it appears, what that is, that is the awakening of the unconditioned consciousness that we could call awareness.

We could call presence. That is something that arises from the depth of you that is not part of the stream of thinking. That is the ocean becoming aware of the ripple and then the ripple becoming aware of the ocean.

There's an arising awareness in you that that's not who you are. And that's an amazing liberation because people who need to be right, they are like trapped in their own minds in a very limited sense of identity. Another one that's very common, I'll just mention it because it appears so often in human beings that prevents you from realizing the transcendent dimension to who you are, which is the most important thing in your entire life is to realize this deep eye, the transcendent dimension to who you are.

And so another obstacle that is very common is certain tendency, automatic kind of thinking, compulsive and automatic types of thought. A very frequent one is, I call it complaining. Complaining is, it starts even with a little thing like you're waiting here and it's 10 past seven and I haven't arrived yet.

There's a certain thoughts go through your head. Why can't he be on time? Why is he keeping us waiting here?

Keeping me waiting, me. Even there, you could already have a narrative arising in your mind that says, it's not just that he hasn't arrived yet, that's a simple fact. But you could have a spin a narrative around it and the narrative says, why can't he have the decency of being on time?

So you haven't got a huge thing already built up in your mind. And you don't know what you're doing it. Forgive them for they know not what they do.

And once you start with a thought like that, why can't he have the decency that will lead to another similar thought? And before you know it, you are trapped in an antagonistic attitude towards this person who is keeping you waiting. Keeping me waiting, me.

And then that can color the entire interaction of when this person finally arrives, this unhappy, luckless person finally arrives. And then the assassin doesn't know that you've already created a huge mental phantom of who that person is. And then you're no longer meeting that person, you're meeting your mental phantom.

So you're still, yes, you see this human being, but there's a huge veil between you and him. And that veil is the mental phantom that you have created. It's a narrative.

And that narrative provided food for your ego. That narrative emphasized the otherness of the other and the ego loves it. And then once you've done that, then you go home and then you pick up the phone and then you tell the story of what happened to somebody else.

And it blows up, it goes even more. And then the other person, oh, that's nothing. You know what happened to me?

Now, there's always an element of the need to be superior that's concealed, but the need for superiority is always part of these egoic strategies. So even when you're

pronouncing judgment, you're creating these strange narratives about assumed motivations and all kinds of things about this other person. There's always, there's something in the background and that is the, my thought has suddenly stopped.

There's something in the, thought stopping is a wonderful thing, by the way. We'll come to that. I'm going to stop all your thoughts.

So there's always, there's something in the background which is the need to be superior that's concealed. You might not even always see it very clearly that it contains a need to be superior because whenever you pronounce judgment upon somebody through a narrative, it implies that you are superior because you are pronouncing judgment about this person. This is how, it is an implication of superiority.

The need to be right is an enormous need to be superior to the other because if you are right, you elevate yourself to superior position, obviously by implication. Related to that, another very common ego strategy is complaining, complaining about all kinds of things, all kinds of things. Other people, that's a favorite one.

What they, that's related to what I just said earlier, but what other people did, but should not have done, failed to do or any kind of, any judgment, they should have done this, but they didn't do it. They failed to do that. If you're complaining about other people, complaining about situations you find yourself in, complaining about what you're doing, but you're doing it, but while you're doing it, you're complaining about doing it.

Very unconscious. In other words, it's a terrible way to live. If you are engaged in an activity and mentally you're complaining about being engaged in this activity, it's a terrible mental, emotional dysfunction, but it's not recognized as such.

And it provides food for the ego. So be very careful that whenever you are doing something that there's not in the background, a complaining entity that doesn't really want to be doing this. Why do I have to do this?

Well, it's always me is doing. And so you can, the ego grows in that. And even then there's an element of superiority because you're superior towards what you're doing.

When you complain about a situation, a place where you are, there's something wrong here. You've just, wherever, there's something not right. Immediately there's an element of superiority because you can pronounce judgment about something.

Oh, suddenly if you're isn't elevated yourself. And complaining is a very common thing. And even some of you may still occasionally, mentally complain about your life.

Oh, not just other people. You can complain about your life. That's even better.

You can go on for hours, days, weeks, and years. And in your mind have developed a

complaining voice about how effed up your life really is. And the ego loves even that.

Because you become the judge and it's awful. And you have an enemy. And for some people, the enemy is weirdly, very weird, weird.

The enemy is what they call my life. They're so unhappy with it that my life becomes their enemy. I hate my life.

And I know exactly who to blame for my life. It started when I was born. That's why it's so.

That's why it all started going wrong. And of course, obviously everybody has had their share of suffering. There's no human being who has not had their share of suffering of various kinds.

I don't know if it's news to you that you are not the only one who is suffering. But this might be difficult to believe because especially if you only relate to other people or predominantly you're young and you predominantly relate to others, not in person, but through Facebook, then you will find it difficult to believe that they are also suffering. Because on Facebook, it shows they are not suffering at all because they're very happy.

Everybody's happy except me. And that means you need to polish your Facebook page too. And so you go to a restaurant and then you take a photo of your food.

So you strengthen the image, the mental image of you and you project it out into the world. You couldn't do that before this miraculous technology happened. You had to project a mental image in your mind only and maybe a little bit in your immediate surroundings.

But now you have a polished, you've polished this mental image of who you are and you sent it out into the world. Great progress. Selfies are helpful too.

You're no longer just yourself and you begin to have a relationship with yourself. This is the mind-made image of me, the narrative of me. And you would be surprised or maybe not surprised how many people have a very complicated, uneasy and even very unpleasant relationship with themselves.

And there's a self-talk often in the head in many, many people that is so self-critical and negative if you lived with somebody who voiced those thoughts that your mind is creating on a daily basis, you would have left this person a long time ago. Just, it's intolerable. I don't want to be with this negative person that's telling me all that stuff.

I'm leaving, goodbye. But you can't do it with their side. You can go to another continent and your mind goes with you.

Amazing. So be careful with complaining unless there's something that can be changed.

Then say, please take some action.

There's something wrong here. The toilet won't flush. Action is needed.

I'm not talking about that kind of complaining, but the useless complaining that only serves the ego. And whether you do it in your mind only or out aloud doesn't matter. It's the same kind of pattern.

So if you catch yourself in any situation saying how bad this is, this should be different. Whenever you're waiting somewhere, the complaining means you're not present, but you're waiting. If you were waiting for something without complaining whatsoever, you wouldn't be waiting anymore.

You would just be present. So waiting means this moment isn't as good as it should be. It implies that some next moment is going to be better and you want to be there already.

So very interesting about how complaining, how waiting arises. And if you observe yourself when the arising of any negative state in you, any form of unhappiness, which is a generic term, which I use for all unhappiness, could be anything from mild irritation to extreme anger or extreme sadness. There's a whole range of unhappiness that you can experience.

And as a spiritual practice, one of the best spiritual practices is to observe in you, in any given situation, the arising of any form of unhappiness and see where it comes from. Where does this come from? And you need to be, there needs to be some awareness in you so that I feel unhappy.

I'm standing in line at the supermarket and I'm beginning to feel unhappy. Why? I'm beginning to feel unhappy because these people are so inefficient.

And this woman, I mean, this woman is talking to this client when she should be going through there. And why is she, does she want to cash in those vouchers? Why?

Why has she got 50 vouchers and keeping everybody waiting? Doesn't she have any decency and people? And you're beginning to feel very unhappy.

And finally, when you get your, I'm not, I'm not coming back here. I can tell you that. And then you leave and another 30 minutes, you're in.

This is unhappiness, but it's not recognized when you're totally unconscious. You love it when you're totally unconscious. The ego loves it.

The body doesn't, because the body doesn't, gets affected by any negative state. It disrupts the otherwise harmonious functioning of the body, the heartbeat, the circulation of blood, all kinds of functions. Now, if you were, if you could wake up in the moment of the arising of unhappiness, you could say, oh, okay, I'm feeling, beginning to feel very

irritated here.

Why? Well, the first thing the mind would say is, well, because these people are so inefficient. But that's not the call.

That is not what's making you unhappy. What's making you unhappy is the narrative that these people are so inefficient and which is thought movement in your mind that interprets the situation in a particular way. It's a narrative that your mind creates unconsciously.

This narrative produces emotion, and that emotion is unhappiness. Then you can experiment. How would I experience this situation if I did not add any narrative to it?

My mind. You've got plenty of time because the lineup is moving so slowly. So you might as well experiment.

So experiment, how would I experience this situation without adding the unnecessary baggage of narrative or storytelling to it? Okay, let's experiment. And there you stand.

You've just let go of the baggage. And suddenly you realize the irritation is gone. This moment is as it is.

You haven't added anything to it. A huge weight was lifted off your shoulders. You have not created unhappiness or suffering out of this situation.

Isn't that amazing? And then you go into another situation that will be very similar. And you say, how does it, where does the unhappiness arise?

Is it in the situation or is it in the voice that's telling me that there's something wrong with this situation, which is the present moment always. So the voice that argues with what is, is part of the conditioned mind, is part of the ego. And then you come to a point, awareness grows, and you're no longer totally in the grip of this unconscious mind movement.

And then increasingly, you become free in situations that before would have produced enormous amount of unhappiness of whatever kind, you become free and you can face situations in that state of absolute clarity. This is what is. Because it already is.

What is the point of arguing with the is-ness of the present moment? It is. Of course, some situations require you to take action.

Yes. And then you look at the situation and there's a moment. Now, this is probably the most important part of all this.

There's a moment where you look at a situation, you face a situation, not through thought, but through awareness or presence, which means you are able to look at it.

Look, not necessarily visually, but it might also include visual perception of whatever the situation is. But looking in a wider sense, this means you give it attention.

And this attention is awareness. And in that awareness that enables you to be with a situation and look at it, thought, thinking, has subsided. But you have not become unconscious in the conventional sense.

Thinking has not subsided because you have deadened yourself to thinking and you've had six whiskeys. This is not why thinking has subsided. That's not the way to go.

You're falling below thought. We don't want to fall below thought. We've been there.

We spent 2 million years below thought. That's fine. We've come out of that.

The ability to think arose with a credible, wonderful evolutionary development. But of course there was a price to pay and had a huge downside. With like everything in this world of polarities.

So thinking was a wonderful thing until over thousands of years, thinking took you over so completely that you no longer realized the essence of who you are that far transcends thinking. That is the big downside of thinking. And now we don't need to abandon thinking.

That would be absurd. But we need to be able to think instead of being at the mercy of our thinking, which is unconsciousness. People say, I think, but in most cases, unless they are awakening or awakened, it's not really true.

They don't think. I think implies that there's some volition, that you are doing something, but it's as untrue as to say, I'm beating my heart. You can't, you're not doing it.

It happens to you. And to most people, they are not thinking. Their thinking happens to them.

They are being thought. They are not thinking. And they are so identified with the thoughts that they are trapped in the movement of thought.

And that's the ego and that's unconsciousness. So when you have developed the ability, this awakening is, you realize that there is another dimension in you that is not thought and that is vaster than thought. It's not so much that he has thought and he has not thought.

It's more like he has thought on the surface. This is why I use the ripple analogy. He has thought on the surface and he has a vastness underneath it that is consciousness.

So there's a difference between consciousness, awareness, and thought. Thought arises out of awareness, but awareness or consciousness is much vaster than thought. And so if

you can meet any situation or any human being with the ability to look without immediately going into thought, that means you're awakening.

And also means you're beginning to transcend who you are as a person or a personality. It doesn't mean it disappears completely, but you are beginning to transcend it. This is why I sometimes call that the transcendent dimension to who you are or the transcendent dimension of consciousness.

And when I say the transcendent dimension of consciousness sounds like a deeply philosophical and abstract concept, but it's not at all because it begins with a simple thing like standing in the lineup at the supermarket or not add unnecessary baggage to that situation. So now we have the transcendent dimension of consciousness is no longer some mental abstraction that belongs in the realm of philosophy. No, it's something very vital and practical and immediate and can be realized within yourself in any situation at any given moment.

So the transcendent dimension of consciousness is when there's a cessation of compulsive thinking and a little gap of no thinking. In that little gap of no thinking, you haven't fallen below thinking, you've risen above thinking. And that is the next evolutionary step for humanity is to rise above thinking.

And once you have risen above thinking, then you know that that dimension exists in you. Of course, then yes, you come back into thinking. Then you fluctuate between moments of stepping out of thought like now and thinking again.

So at first you have the little compartment of no thought, but it doesn't stay like that. It becomes incorporated more into your life where you're able to frequently step back from thought and then use thought again. Step back from thought into awareness and use thought again.

You're no longer used by thought, you are now using thought. And then dysfunctional thoughts tend to dissolve after a while when you recognize them as really very dysfunctional. So dysfunctional states, when you recognize them as dysfunctional, you don't want them anymore.

And then they tend to dissolve. You don't even need to do anything. And then your thinking becomes more powerful and focused.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:14 - 1:02:34)

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Eckhart Tolle The Next Stage of Human Evolution [379ca02d-f98f-49ba-970d-adb201499346]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

The next stage of human evolution. In this episode, Eckhart talks to a live audience. He says most of us are going through a transition in consciousness, which he calls awakening.

He sees that as the next stage of human evolution. There have been rare periods in history when collective awareness made great leaps forward. Eckhart sees a similar shift happening now.

He says we must continue with our practice, release our inner turmoil and align ourselves with the inevitable now.

[Speaker 1] (0:36 - 43:56)

So it's good to be back here. We'll be spending the evening together, it seems, unless you can't stand it anymore and you run away. So you are here because most of you are going through a transition in your consciousness, where a new dimension of consciousness emerges in you.

And that's sometimes called awakening or spiritual awakening. And it is, as I see it, the next stage in human evolution, because human beings are not finished yet. God hasn't quite finished with them yet, because if humans were already finished as a species, that would be tragic, because they are obviously a work in progress.

That's a charitable way of looking at humans. Maybe they are at an adolescent stage, and now we're going into adulthood. There are many ways of looking at it, but there is undoubtedly something new emerging.

And at the same time, the old, I sometimes call it the old consciousness, the egoic consciousness that has created what we know as human history, which is a history of, to a large extent, of insanity. The old consciousness continues, even intensifies. At the same time, the new consciousness is arising in a certain number of humans, more than ever before.

And so you are all here because that is emerging in you. One could almost say it's a faculty that in most humans still lies dormant. And this faculty, in some, begins to sprout and emerge.

And this is what the ancient teachers, of course, have already pointed to. There have been few rare periods in human history when a huge step forward happened in collective consciousness. One, for example, was about 500 years BC at a time when the Buddha

lived.

So that's 2,500 years ago. At the time, the Buddha lived at that time and taught. The ancient Greek philosophers were teaching at that time, including the pre-Socratic philosophers.

Lao Tse, the author of the Chinese Tao Te Ching, Confucius, Zoroaster in Persia. So we are at a similar period now where a shift is happening in the collective consciousness. And it often coincides with a critical situation in the collective.

And this is happening again now. So that's all fine. And as I just said, you're all here, not all, most, because something new is emerging.

And if it is not emerging in you, it will not be pleasant for you to be here for these two hours or so that we are going to spend together. You will become restless and you will feel either extremely bored or you will feel the need to leave here or to shout something out that nobody wants to listen to. And it could be in the case of some of you that somebody dragged you here.

You didn't really want to come. But your spouse or friend said, you really need to listen to this guy. And then you sit here and you go, what the hell is he talking about?

So this works on two levels. I will be speaking for two hours or so. That's the conceptual level.

And at that level, mostly what the words point to is something that is beyond words. And if that's something from within you responds, and you can sense that as a sense of intensified aliveness, or one could simply say, you enjoy being here and you can feel that there is a deepening happening in you. Because the whole purpose of us being here together is to deepen something and to intensify something that's already happening in you.

And what is that? That is the disidentification from the stream of thinking. And that is one way of looking at the awakening that's happening.

And that's very interesting. As you might have noticed, most of the time there is a voice in your head that comments and has opinions and viewpoints and interpretations about what's going on in your life. I call that the voice in the head.

For most humans, that is completely involuntary. They don't even know that they have a voice in the head that never stops talking. Most of the time, silently in your head.

At other times, it may even shout something out. So it wants to be heard. And so if you walk in the street, you will find most people look fairly sane.

They're not talking to themselves, it seems, because they're not talking out aloud. But if

you listened into everybody's head, you would be amazed of how noisy the inside of every human is. It's like a radio, you know, these radio stations where the people talk in an excited voice.

They go on and on. If you go to a foreign country and you don't know what they're talking about, you might think this must be extremely important. But if you can understand what they're saying, you realize it's completely meaningless.

It's just noise. So a significant part of what happens in your mind, the larger part, is actually just superfluous noise. Thinking is a wonderful ability, a wonderful tool.

If used rightly, it is an instrument that causes dysfunction and misery for millions on the planet, unhappiness for millions on the planet, if thinking is not used, but if you are used by thought. So when humans say, I think, in most cases, that's actually not true, because they have no control over their thinking. It's a compulsive and involuntary.

And they are so identified with the thought processes, they don't even know that they are in the grip of their thought processes, because they are so identified, they become their thought processes. So whatever comes into your head, you completely believe in it. When I was struggling to survive on a physical plane, I often ate baked beans on toast.

I was living in England. There's a little bit of relevance here, too. And that could have been a very unhappy period in my life, not being able what to live on the next day or the day after.

I was already in my 30s. And so my mental commentary, the involuntary thought processes, would normally have said, you're a complete failure. You can't afford the rent.

You don't know. You have no income. You've made a mess out of your life.

And this is what I'm reduced to. Baked beans on toast. Look at your contemporaries that are driving around in their BMWs.

They've got all that. And so this is what life has done to me, or what I have done to mess up my life. I could have had many kinds of narratives accompanying what was happening in the present moment that would have created unhappiness.

And I wouldn't even have known it. And this happens, just a small example of how a narrative that you have, that accompanies something that you are doing, causes unhappiness. And you can do the same thing without the narrative, and you're free of unhappiness.

You're eating baked beans on toast, and actually it doesn't taste that bad at all. And it's useful, and it is nourishing. And you don't even have to say that.

You can simply enjoy the sensory perceptions associated with that, without building a

sense of self around it. The sense of self that you build around it arises through involuntary and compulsive thinking. Me.

And the Buddha was already talking about that. So, and this, I'm saying this now in case you need to leave early or want to go across the street. If you only take this away from this evening, but hopefully there will be much more.

If you only take this away, if you look at whenever you feel unhappiness, this is a generic term, unhappiness in whatever form. Unhappiness can arise as irritation, can arise as anger, can arise as even boredom, is a form of unhappiness. Sadness, all kinds of states that they don't feel pleasant, unhappiness.

And usually they are attributed to a life situation, something that's going on in your life. So for example, waiting at the airline counter, and of course how often things don't go well there. Let's hope they don't drag you out of the plane, but that could, that could happen too.

Whenever you feel irritation arising, anger arising, upset in whatever form, ask yourself, is this caused by the situation or is it caused by what my mind is telling me about the situation? And in 95% of cases, you will find that the mental commentary, that argues and complains about something that's going on, but should not be going on, but it is, but shouldn't be. And the gap between what is and what the mind says should be, or should not be, that gap is the arising of unhappiness and misery.

Or as the Buddha called suffering. It arises in the gap between the isness of things in this moment, and the arguing with the isness of things in this moment, imposing a narrative on it that says, no, this should not be. I'm not talking about situations where you can take action to change it.

There are certain situations where action is possible and necessary. That's fine. But even if action is possible and necessary at this very moment, it still is as it is, then you can take action.

But this moment is as it is. So when you allow this moment to be as it is, because you recognize the inevitability of is, this seems so obvious, but it's not obvious to most humans, the inevitability of what is already the case now. And if you can internally align yourself with this inevitable now, the next moment is a different thing.

But when the next moment comes, it's now, of course. There is no next moment except as a thought in the head. Where is the future?

You've never experienced it. You can't. Impossible.

And yet humans think about it more than the present moment. They want to get to the future because they don't want what is. They believe some kind of liberation or

fulfillment will come next, always missing the essence of things.

So if unhappiness arises, examine, does it come, is it caused by the situation I'm in or is it caused by how my mind is interpreting the situation? And in most cases you will find it's the mind interpretation that causes the unhappiness. The body reacts to that.

It is a narrative that you carry with you. And the interesting thing is many humans carry a very heavy burden of negative narrative concerning what they call my life. My life is so problematic.

There is so much going on and so many things happen that should never have happened. I never expected them to happen when I was 18. It wasn't supposed to go like that.

But it did and that's my life. It's so problematic. Let me tell you about it.

Now the strange thing is there is no human life, although you might not believe this when you read glossy magazines that have pictures of celebrities or even when you walk around the street, but you can't look into people's heads. They all seem quite sane and they might even seem happy. But if you could look inside you would see there's a lot of turmoil going on.

There's a great deal of unhappiness and suffering going on in humans. And a huge amount of suffering is caused by what I call my problematic life and situations that I find myself in that are connected with my relationships. Relationships?

Huge source of suffering. Because humans are so difficult to live with. And that's why the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre said hell is other people.

So a lot of the problematic life situation that you encounter and find yourself in is caused by other humans. And often it is caused by precisely those humans who three years ago caused you intense happiness. That's called the wedding.

And three, four years later the same human that made you happy now makes you unhappy. Strange. It seems to be a fairly common pattern and even if there's no wedding can still happen.

All you have to do is move in together. Humans are faced with obviously I'm not denying that to be a human being is not easy. Even to be another life form is not easy.

But human being is even more difficult because we have a mind. But for every life form on the planet life is experienced as challenging. And every life form encounters from the moment it is born its own set of challenges to survival.

Every life form. And humans also the challenges are never ending to being. You might have you still might think you will arrive at a point in your life where suddenly you can

relax and say now I have sorted everything out.

I've sorted out my professional life. My work situation is going great. I've sorted out my relationships.

They're also wonderful. I've sorted out my financial situation. I'm doing fine.

I've got the investments. It's all there. You've sorted out your life, your living situation, the house where you are and you've got the vacations and you are recognized by others as very important person.

And you are loved by others and it's it must be possible. Well, it could happen for short a period of time. And if you happen to be in a situation right now where everything works together in the way I just described you may have to wait a little and see what happens.

Now humans believe that there is something wrong with life when they're being challenged, when problems arise and they will arise in the area of health, in the area of finances, in the area of work, in the area of relationships or living situation. Broadly speaking, those are it and you can see by where your main problems are at this moment. And so every life form is challenged and every life form, this is the truth of why every life form is challenged by life.

This is how they evolve. Every life form only evolves by encountering obstacles and by encountering obstacles that calls forth new power, new energy, more consciousness in order to overcome or transcend the obstacles that arise on your path. So it seems almost that life is maliciously putting obstacles in your path.

You can sometimes overcome them and at other times they stop you completely and then you have to go somewhere else. But every human experience is that life is not always helpful. At times it is, but everything is impermanent.

Every situation you find yourself in is impermanent as the Buddha always pointed out. So sooner or later it changes. So even a situation that makes you happy now can make you unhappy a little later or loses the capacity of making you happy.

So if we see a fundamental truth of life, which is it seems that the world is not designed to make us happy, the world is designed for something else. The world is not designed to produce comfort zones for everybody. Although it's nice to occasionally have comfort zones.

It's lovely when they appear, knowing that they may not last, but of course enjoy your comfort zones when they are there, but know that your comfort zone is not where your awakening happens. It is unlikely that your comfort zone is where you will find more intense consciousness. The comfort zone is lovely as a rest, but where humans evolve, it's when the life takes you out of your comfort zone and challenges you.

And that's when you lose something, you fail at something. So-called failure is from a spiritual viewpoint much more conducive to spiritual realization than so-called success. And this is why there's an ancient saying, I believe it comes from Sufism, but I'm not sure.

When the spirit weeps, when the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found. And that is, many of you can verify in your own life if you had not experienced those seemingly negative events in your life, you probably would not even be here. You would be in the crown temple.

And getting very excited about it. So, and once you, the delusion that life is here to make you comfortable, that expectation, you can drop that. And then you can actually approach life in a different way, knowing that life is meant to be challenging.

And then once you know that, then you also realize that the challenges arise in the present moment. It's where everything arises, in the present moment. And then you can find a different relationship with the present moment that is no longer antagonistic, as most, many, many humans still live in a relationship with the present moment that is not good.

Because most of the time they don't want to be in it. So they mentally project themselves out of it always. This isn't what I want.

I want that. Let me just get there. Whether that is a minute from now, or tomorrow, or in 10 years time, or whenever I find what I think will make me happy, it doesn't matter.

But it's away from now. So you deny the present moment. Let's say if the present moment were a human being, you would be always living with someone you don't want to live with.

Why am I stuck with this person? Now you may have actually experienced that too. That's another matter.

But I'm using it as an analogy now. If the present moment, and you cannot get away from it. So there's no way you can divorce this person.

There's no way you can even leave this person. If the present moment is a person, in this analogy. Now imagine having to live with this person, and just can't stand him or her.

So you have to mentally always project yourself away from thinking, oh there, I need to get to that other person. But that other person doesn't actually exist except in your mind. Because when that other, we're still using an analogy.

When that other person comes, it's the same person again. That's a nightmare. So these people have a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment.

And to have a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment has enormous repercussions. Because if you have a dysfunctional relationship with the moment, then in some way you have a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment. With virtually everybody you meet.

Very soon, sometimes it's fine at the beginning, but very quickly. Again, it turns dysfunctional. Places you go to.

Situations you encounter. Very quickly you find something that's not right. That shouldn't be.

So a very foundation for enlightened living. Is asking yourself, what is my relationship with this moment? And this becomes of extreme importance if you realize something that seems on the one hand obvious, but on the other hand almost paradoxical or hard to understand.

If you realize that all there ever is in your life is this moment. Everything unfolds in the now. There is never a moment that's not now.

There is only this moment. It's always now. Isn't that strange?

But people live as if the now were not a desirable place. Some other now is the desirable place, but no other now exists. Except this one.

So this is an enormous realization and awakening that all you have in your life, and this is why it's so precious, and of such vital importance, all you ever have is this moment. So you might as well have a good relationship with this moment. You might as well become friendly with this moment, because after all, that's all there ever is.

And if your mind pattern is one of antagonism towards the present moment, denial, antagonism, then your entire life, you miss the whole thing. You basically miss your entire life, because even when you're 75, 80, 85, you're still, in some way, you've waited to start living. And it was always going to happen any moment now.

It was always going to happen. And the last thing that you wanted, you're looking towards retirement. That was the big thing that was going to come.

So your whole working life, you stared at the clock in the office, reaching, when is it, five o'clock? Or whatever, in whatever way you denied the present moment. And then retirement comes, and then your first day of your retirement, you sit in the chair, and now what?

And very soon, where's your identity? You don't have the, other people don't tell you anymore who you are. The function that you had is gone.

There's nothing left. What am I going to do with myself? And that's the reason why,

actually, many people die soon after they retire, because life has become totally purposeless.

So, present moment, make the present, as I put it, make the present moment your friend. Not your enemy. So, one way in which the present moment is denied, is you reduce it always to a means to an end.

Which means you're always on your way. Away. So, I just need to get this out of the way, because I want to get there.

And you do it even with small things, like preparing a cup of coffee or tea. You just go walking from here to there. How much time do you spend moving the body, either by walking or by driving or by sitting on a bus?

How much time of your life do you spend moving your body from point A to point B? And what is your state of consciousness while you're moving your body from point A to point B? Are you present with every step and enjoying the aliveness of this moment, while you run towards the bus, or while you run from one end of your room to the other?

Or are you so mentally fixated on where you need to get to, that the intervening period is stressful? Stress is the disease that in our civilization most people suffer from. And it is a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment.

It is a movement away. You would rather be somewhere else. You would rather already have finished what you're doing.

And that mental projection away from now causes what we call stress. You are actually mentally ahead in the so-called future, which doesn't even exist. And you're being pulled towards it.

And that pull is painful. And that is stress, which is conventionally called stress these days. And you can look in families, how families live with their children.

There's always this never giving full attention to the child. You're always telling the child, have you done this? Now go and do this.

And you call it responsible parenting. Have you brushed your teeth? No.

Have you done your homework? Do good. Go and now do this.

Now do that. There's always, we need to do, do, do, do, do. What do I need to do now?

I need to think. And so you don't realize that there needs to be a balance in your life between doing and being. The being is totally forgotten in our civilization.

It's been just for most humans completely, they don't even know what being is. Now

being does not mean that necessarily you stop doing completely. Although as you first experience being, it might be associated with meditation.

It might be associated with sitting still for a moment. But being and doing can actually coexist together when you're not being mentally pulled away from the present moment. I can move from A to B and walk fast and be present with every step and enjoy the intense energy of moving my body from A to B and I'm in the present moment.

So it doesn't necessarily mean that you become ineffective and extremely slow when you are being, when you are in the present moment. I am perhaps a little slower than most people, I must admit that, but I can move fast if I have to and enjoy it. So the balance between being and doing is extraordinarily important.

Now everybody knows doing. Doing includes thinking. Thinking is where doing happens primarily and then it becomes external doing.

Never being able to to be in this moment and actually say, wow, this is it. This is, this is my life. It's, my life is not the narrative in my head.

The narrative in my head is my life situation, my past and my so-called future. And this narrative in the head for many people is a source of great unhappiness. Because the story of me is not a pleasant one.

And I have to think about it a bit more because maybe I can solve this dilemma of myself. I am a problem to myself. This is how many people experience their lives.

I am a problem that needs to be solved somehow. But it is so multifaceted, this problem that needs to be solved. I don't know how to go about it.

I could seek the help of a psychiatrist who might reveal to me the different, many different layers of unhappiness and the problematic nature of my existence. But people carry this burden around with them, which is an essential part of their personality. Which is the me, which is a story you tell yourself.

It's your whole past, what you have done, what you have failed to do, what you did to other people, what other people did to you, things you identify with that give you your sense of self, your possessions, your achievements, your failures. You can have a positive identification. You can have a negative identification.

It's all thought. Your so-called life is thought structures and what you call my life. Thought structures in your head, stories in your head, and images in your head that you identify with.

So you derive your sense of self. This is so important. You derive your sense of identity from what your mind is telling you about yourself.

That is, for most people who have not awakened, that is where they derive their sense of self from. In other words, they derive their sense of self from the movement of thought. Repetitive thought, yes.

Rarely an original thought. It just goes on and on, year after year. The same thing that, the unsatisfying sense of self that is based on thought.

I call it the mind-made sense of self. This is the source of most people's identity. So it's a mental identity.

It's identification with a narrative in your mind. Certain thoughts, certain pronouncements, certain judgments. And then you come to a conclusion about your life.

And you carry this heavy burden in which you call my life. And this, for many people, it makes them unhappy every day of their lives. When they start thinking about my life, they become unhappy.

This is amazing. They don't know. They don't know what they're doing to themselves.

They don't realize that's not their life at all. They don't realize that that is a narrative that is connected in some way with their past. But it is a narrative that is thought.

It reflected emotions. The emotions reflect the thoughts. So the emotions are not pleasant because the thoughts you're telling you about yourself is my life, which hasn't turned out the way I wanted it to turn out.

And if it has at this moment, maybe next year or in five years time, something will shift and you become unhappy with your life. You need to get out of that identity that is based on a story in your head. So that's why we're here.

I call that your life situation, but it's not your life. Everybody has a life situation. You have a past and you probably have a future.

Probably, you never know. You have a past. You have a future.

Your sense of identity is derived from the past and your failures and successes in the past, whatever the mind interprets as failure and success. It's just an interpretation. It doesn't mean I have failed at everything that I ever did.

It won't be so terrible. Or what life has done to me, my parents, if I had had more conscious parents, everything would have been okay, but they were so unconscious that, of course, I've turned out the way I've turned out. What could I have done?

Or you can argue with God. Why did God give this burden to me? Why did God inflict this upon me?

It's all thought also. So let's see. Is there something else in you?

Is there something else in you that is more vital, more real, more alive than the movement of thought in you? And that is what we could call being, the being of you. And let's just see if we can explore this experientially, more deeply here, because if that becomes the source of your sense of self, then everything shifts.

Then you're no longer an unhappy human being. You're no longer made unhappy by the challenges of life. So, at this moment, let's just go do a little, I don't want to call it meditation.

Let's find that place where you are, but not the historical you. Very simple. Very simple.

Right now, I suggest you forget that you have a history. You don't need to remember, you don't need to remember your past right now, or even your name, or your email address, or your phone number, or anything that has happened to you in the past. What is left of you if you don't mentally revive anything from your past as you sit here?

Okay, let's forget about the past. There's only this moment. Okay.

You don't even have a name. Okay. If you don't even have a name or past, is there still a sense of you? So, what does it mean to sense yourself without your personal history?

So, if you dismiss your personal history, what is left of yourself? And that's a very interesting thing to explore. What is left is undoubtedly a sense of presence.

And in that sense of presence or beingness, you realize I am. You know that. But since you don't remember your past, you don't know what you are, but you know that you are.

And that is a vital thing to realize. The I am-ness in you, which is at this very moment, this I am is perceiving this room. This I am is perceiving auditory perception, my voice, the totality of this room, and whatever else this I am is perceiving at this moment.

Undoubtedly, they are the sense perceptions. And what is it that makes all the sense perceptions possible at this moment? It is the I am.

But what is that? Who am I if I am not my personal history? If I let go of my personal history first for this moment, and I can still sense very clearly and deeply, there is an underlying I am-ness, a beingness, a presence.

Because if there were not this underlying I am-ness, beingness, or presence, there would be nobody here to perceive this room. There would be nobody here to listen to that voice. Would this room still exist?

Who knows? That's a philosophical question. You could see, well, yes, there would still be molecules and atoms floating around here and there, but would there be a room?

No. You create this room, the I am. Its perception creates this room at this moment.

I am. Now, so you're conscious of your sense perceptions right now. The room and the voice, whatever else is there, you're conscious of that.

Okay. That's interesting. You can actually be conscious of sense perceptions without mentally labeling your sense perception.

And that's an amazing thing, and that is part of the awakening, that you no longer compulsively label in your mind everything that you perceive, and call it this or call it that. You can know that this is a room without having a mental concept that says, oh, this is a room that just looks like that and is like that and like that. You can just perceive, in other words, you perceive against a background of stillness in you.

That's the I am. When you remove personal history, when you remove thought, which is personal history, your entire personal history is thought. When you remove thought, it's fine.

You don't worry. You'll remember it again when you need it. But for the moment, you don't need it.

So you remove thought, and when you remove thought, two things are possible. Either you fall asleep, which could happen to you as you sit here, because I'm not a speaker who makes a lot of noise. I don't jump up and down the stage or just, well, I do gesticulate, but you can either fall asleep, which means you're falling below thought.

That's what I call it. Or you can rise above thought and be still, alert, and present. And then you can look around the room.

You're totally awake, but there is a stillness against which you're perceiving whatever it is you're perceiving at this moment. And that's an amazing state. It's a beautiful state to be able to be in that state of presence when there is no interference of thought upon your sense perceptions.

And that is a state of absolute presence. In that state, you are connected with a deeper intelligence that transcends who you are as a person.

[Speaker 2] (43:57 - 44:17)

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Eckhart Tolle The One Transcendent Source Of All Light [b4589bb4-58df-4e1b-8a4e-6a65960dcc66]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:48)

The one transcendent source of all light. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with an audience in Paris and he contemplates the mysteries of space and the subatomic world. He says the greatest mystery is that the universe is conscious.

He remarks that science has not yet been able to examine consciousness because it's not an object and it's not generated by the brain. He says science has not yet discovered its source. However, Eckhart says there may come a time when science and spirituality merge.

He explains there's only one consciousness which is beyond space and time and he compares it to the sun which shines rays of light into this dimension. He says we are those rays emanating from the one transcendent source of all light.

[Speaker 1] (0:51 - 27:15)

The universe is a miraculous and mysterious thing. Outer space, so much we don't know about it and it's vast and unimaginable. Subatomic space, also very, very mysterious realm, very mysterious dimension.

So you have two great mysteries, the smallest and the biggest. But an even greater mystery is that the universe is conscious. That is the greatest mystery and that's not even mentioned by most scientists because they don't know what to do with consciousness.

Where? Where is it? Well, the thing that's looking for it is it.

Okay, so consciousness can never become an object. Consciousness is the eternal subject. This is why science cannot examine consciousness.

So the universe is conscious, but is that true? How do I know that? I know that because I am conscious.

And you know that because you are conscious. But they are not two different consciousnesses. The word in English does not even have a plural.

I don't know if the word in French has a plural. There is one consciousness and this is something that science has not discovered yet. Maybe one day science and spirituality will merge into one.

And what I'm saying now, you don't have to believe it comes from an intuitive realization. Whether or not you believe it doesn't matter very much. It's not the absolute

essence of our evening together.

Consciousness pervades the entire universe and consciousness becomes focalized where certain life forms appear. The brain is an instrument through which consciousness expresses itself in a particular form. Undoubtedly, there is a link between the brain and consciousness.

So in the same way that there's a link between the television receiver and what it is that it receives. This is so amazing that it is possible for you to realize your essence identity as the consciousness of the universe. You are a person for a little while.

You are a person here. That's fine. Not for long.

But you transcend something that there's something in you that manifests briefly as a person. Like a ray of sunlight manifesting briefly as this or that person. Let me talk for just one moment about the taboo word.

And that taboo word is God. I say it is a taboo word because I usually try to avoid it because it creates many misunderstandings. But now I'll use it for a moment.

God is the source of all life. Transcendent source. Has no location in space or time.

It transcends this dimension. The best analogy for God perhaps would be to say it's a bit like the sun, which continuously pours out energy and light. Well, we perceive it as light.

And when the ray of sunlight touches your skin, are you touching the sun? Well, no, because if you touch the sun that your hand would disappear immediately. However, the ray of sunlight is still connected to the sun.

It is an extension of the sun. So when Jesus says, you are the light of the world, he refers to the consciousness that you are. And the consciousness that you are is an emanation of the source, the transcendent source of all light in the same way that the light that we perceive from the sun is an emanation of the sun.

And this emanation from the source is you, appears as a person. And it's like a ray of consciousness. And perhaps it appears as another person and another.

The same ray may continue for a while until it fully realizes its identity. You are an emanation of that. And this is not just abstract.

The strange thing is you can sense that in yourself, the moment thinking subsides and presence, I am presence, remains. And there's an absolute stillness there. In that stillness, from the point of view of conceptual self, you don't know anything anymore, because there's no thinking.

There's no conceptual knowing in that stillness. And yet, you are connected with a much

vaster and deeper non-conceptual knowing. This connectedness with a source of who you are, that is also the source of wisdom.

Wisdom is not created by analytical thought, is not created by more information. Wisdom arises from the depths of non-conceptual, unconditioned consciousness or intelligence. If you are connected with that, which means sense that space within yourself.

If you're connected with that, then you have access to the source of what is traditionally called wisdom. And not only wisdom, also you have access to the source of all creativity, because the conceptual mind itself cannot create anything new. It can give it form, but it cannot create it.

And to create anything new, or even to have an original insight that suddenly manifests as a thought, even to have that, you need for a moment to be connected with a non-conceptual intelligence within you, which means for a moment, your thinking needs to subside. There needs to be just a little, just a space of aware presence, stillness. You've risen above thinking, there's stillness.

And then out of that stillness, if anything that is needed comes as a realization, an intuition, an interesting or new thought, any form of creativity arises out of that. And not only that, something else that arises out of that dimension of consciousness is a feeling of connectedness with other life forms and other human beings. A feeling of strong connectedness with other human beings, which is particularly important, but you can feel it more easily at first with animals, perhaps, or nature, trees, flowers, plants.

You look at them and you're not thinking, you just perceive them, and then you can perceive their essential beingness. You can, for example, you can look at a flower or a tree for a minute, and you can sense the stillness in which it exists as a living presence. Some trees survive for hundreds of years, even thousands of years.

The trees are so still. And if your mind is still also, and you're looking at a tree, you can sense the essence of that tree in that stillness of the tree. There's a living essence there that is very, very different consciousness from yours, the same consciousness, but a very different manifestation in a completely different vibrational frequency.

And then you connect with this tree as you'd never connected before, because before the tree was a label, and the label covered up the reality of the tree. It covered it up. It said, oh, that's an oak tree, such and such.

That's a label. When you need the label, you have it. But when you don't need it, you put it aside.

That's the art of living. You can use labels when you need them, but don't let life be obscured by mental labels. So you can look at the oak tree, but it's no longer an oak tree.

It's just a beingness there. And the trees, you connect it in that stillness. You connect with a tree and the flower.

And then you look into the eyes of a dog and you love that dog. Not so much the, although it's very pleasant to the touch, but what you really love when you look into the eyes of a dog is the consciousness of the dog. You connect with that.

You can sense there's a being in there that is invisible. Just as most of you is invisible. Wasn't there a French writer who said, Saint-Exupery said, what is essential is invisible to the eye.

Everything that is essential is invisible to the eye. The eye, this eye. You are, most of you are invisible, even on the mental, even still the form identity that you are is already invisible beyond the physical body.

Nobody, if they can open up your brain, they're not going to find a single thought. They don't even know what a thought is. You have a million memories in your brain.

How do they survive in there? In what form do they survive in there? Who was your first teacher at school when you were five or six years old?

There he or she is. Where was this teacher until now, when I remembered? I don't know.

Was it a molecule that said, this is my teacher? We don't know. It's all invisible.

You are invisible. The essence of who you are is consciousness. And the dog, the essence of the dog is invisible.

But that is what you love in the dog, because you recognize it, not conceptually, but experientially, you recognize it as one with your essence. Just a different expression of consciousness, just as you recognize the tree as ultimately one with your essence. There's the oneness in all life forms, an expression of the one.

And then comes the most fascinating thing. You connect with other humans in that way. And that's amazing, because when you connected to the ego with other humans, there was continuous labeling, judgments, evaluation.

Is this human being a threat to me? Or can I use this human being? Or do I want to add this human being to make myself feel better or bigger?

There's always that. And that goes. And from this deepest level of presence, when the mind, the thinking mind subsides for a moment, and then you look at another human being, and suddenly all these, I talked about wisdom arising from that dimension of consciousness.

I talked about creativity arising from that dimension of consciousness. And now talking

about empathy arising with other human beings. Now, what does that mean?

It means there is a benevolence, to use that word. It's probably a similar word in French, because it goes back to Latin. There is a benevolence that emanates from you towards the other.

And the other is no longer completely other. And that, when you connect with another human being, and yes, yes, you are aware, perhaps, of their personality that covers up the essence of that human being. And yet, you don't get caught up in the personality.

You can actually look deeper and can sense in another what you share, which is consciousness, the one consciousness. And so ultimately, what that is, is love. Not love in a romantic sense, but love as a realization that ultimately, you are looking at yourself, loving the other as yourself.

So there's a self-recognition. And so one could almost say that ultimately, you only always love yourself, not in an egoic sense. But ultimately, when you love any other life form, it's a recognition of the oneness, but you can only recognize it when you are present and for a moment, free of mental concepts and thoughts.

Then you are the presence. And then you recognize, you can sense the presence in the other who is no longer other. And that's a wonderful thing, because then you go around the world always meeting yourself, ultimately.

And that makes it very pleasant. It is much easier then to tolerate or even overlook the madness that is still there in many human beings, the dysfunctional, egoic behavior. You can very often look through it and realize there is that essence.

Underneath all that, there is the essence, and I can feel the essence of that person. And if you can feel it, sometimes you bring it forth out of the other. So one person can make a lot of difference when you honor the other person by recognizing who they are in their essence, then that has a very healing effect on the other person.

And generally, if you live in connectedness with that dimension, then you truly create a different world and a different reality. So that is, it's really ultimately very simple. And yet, we are shifting from thousands of years of being identified with thinking increasingly more and more and more.

And there's a shift that now happens when we step out of identification with thinking, we're no longer addicted to thinking, because otherwise, when you are a compulsive thinker, you are addicted to thinking. And a most large percentage of that thinking is not only unnecessary, it also creates unhappiness, misery, and suffering. So this is the essence, is stepping out of thinking.

Meditation can help. If you have a meditation method, the way I teach is choosing to be

free of thinking. What we are doing now is become aware of the present moment, and already thinking begins to subside.

Become aware of the present moment, then you look around, and you listen, you look, you sense your surroundings. And if you're very alert, thinking subsides. And already the world seems more alive suddenly.

And you perceive beauty everywhere, even in seemingly insignificant things, like how the light is reflected off the floor, which I see here. So that you step out of thinking into the present moment, this moment. The first step is usually become aware of sense perceptions.

Then you become aware of your inner body, that you're alive, the inner body is alive, and you've sensed that aliveness. And then you are, you look around, and you're breathing. And then you become aware of the deeper dimension of the present moment.

The way I put it is the present moment has the surface dimension, which is sense perceptions, and that's good. The present moment has a depth dimension, which is consciousness. The mind becomes still, and that stillness is the essence of the present moment.

It's the light of consciousness. That is the essence. You've gone deeply into the present moment.

And that's something you invite into your life as much as you can, and use your smartphone a little bit less. So instead of uselessly looking at your phone when they're waiting for something, become present. Look around.

Sense that alertness. Become familiar with that. And also catch yourself when spontaneously you experience a moment of just being present.

It could be when you're engaged in some kind of physical activity, especially a dangerous activity, or they don't recommend it. But some people get addicted to dangerous activities, climbing a mountain, racing a car. Why do they get addicted?

Because it frees them from the personality, from the person, from the mind. It forces them into presence. But you don't have to do that.

Just go there. Another thing that does it is life gives you a little shock, a little accident or big accident, some loss. These little shocks can also shock you into presence, and suddenly you go, oh.

So if you need it, life will give it to you. But the more you voluntarily go there into that dimension, the less life will need to give you a shock, because you're already doing it. You're aligning yourself with the entire purpose of the universe, which is consciousness,

growing in consciousness in this dimension.

And one could say, to use theistic language, God expressing himself, herself, itself more and more fully in this dimension. The ultimate purpose, who knows? We cannot go there with our mind.

But when the mind stops for a moment and we rise above thinking, we can get some intuition of what the ultimate purpose of the universe is, which is connected with your life purpose here and now. And that's why we can get an intuition of that, but we cannot put it into words or even thoughts. There's a knowing that's completely non-conceptual.

So I've spoken about the most important things in human life, the transformation of consciousness, things that perhaps one day will be the primary subject at every school. It will be the very foundation for every human life. Right now, it's still a relatively small percentage of humans who are ready and are awakening, but it's growing.

Don't let yourself be deceived and think that because the political situation is becoming so chaotic that that means humans are becoming more unconscious. There's an intensification of unconsciousness as there is an intensification of consciousness. The two polarities are there, and it's usually at critical time periods, challenging times, both in the person's life and in the life of the collective.

At challenging times, transformation is more possible than at times when there's little or no challenge. Your comfort zone, I don't know if you know that expression, your comfort zone is not the best place for your spiritual awakening, unfortunately. Sorry about that.

So this is the secret. Well, it has been a kind of secret for a long time, but now it's out in the open, and it's a great adventure to be part of the unfolding consciousness, which transcends whatever purpose you may have on a personal level. Yeah, of course, that continues.

You continue to honor your form identity. It doesn't mean that you're only now totally interested in essence identity. I'm not going to eat much anymore.

I'm not going to have any bath or shower anymore because the body is an illusion. No, that's not. You honor your form identity.

You do your best. You look after the body. You can also honor your form identity on the mental, emotional level, both collective and personal.

You have your parents. You have your ancestors. Maybe if you remember them, you have your family.

You can have your country. You can honor the culture of your country. There's nothing wrong with that.

It's a beautiful thing. But if that's the only thing that gives you your identity, then it becomes a huge limitation, and then you probably need others to be less than, or you might even need others to be enemies. But to be honoring your culture is great.

If you're not attempting to derive your ultimate identity from that, it's a beautiful thing. So honoring form identity, but being rooted in your essence identity. And that is the secret of life.

And with that, I will leave you for tonight. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (27:22 - 27:42)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The Paradox of Order and Chaos [2e48580d-98ac-4930-a8d9-ad2d01584d24]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:28)

Order and chaos. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the paradox of order and chaos. From the minor disruptions we experience in daily life to bigger events like the loss of income or someone we love, Eckhart says chaos and disorder are an essential part of a higher order.

If we surrender to the present moment, life's challenges will shake us out of our complacency, transforming our consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 43:12)

Two fundamental opposites in this world, without which the world could not even be, are the opposites of order and disorder. Another word for disorder, when it becomes more extreme, would be chaos. Order and chaos, or order and disorder.

Usually we would prefer, of course, to have order in our lives, which means to have things going well, things growing, we learn things, we experience new things, your life unfolds, we would like relative harmony in our lives, and yet that very often is marred by the eruption of some form of disorder. And usually we resent that. We can get resentful or angry or despondent or sad.

Things in our lives are not going in a way we would want them to go. And so disorder can come in many forms. What I call disorder, although it may not usually be recognized as disorder, a simple thing, whenever the smooth way in which your life unfolds on a daily basis is interrupted by some form of adversity, let's say you lose your wallet, so suddenly something comes in which looks like an act of sabotage against you, and you're thrown into fear or panic or confusion.

Suffering arises, and that's a relatively small thing. You're at a meeting, and suddenly there's a huge disagreement and people shouting at each other before it was going well, and then one person made a comment and everybody reacted, and before you know it, the meeting has degenerated into disorder. It comes in so many forms, small forms, missing an appointment, missing the plane, contracting a small illness or having a small accident.

Disorder comes in many, many forms, big and small, and usually when disorder comes, it creates a kind of havoc sometimes in our lives for a while, and there's definitely the strong underlying belief that there's something very wrong, that this should not be happening, or the underlying belief there's something wrong with me, or somebody's against me, maybe God is against me, otherwise why would this be happening to me?

Slightly bigger forms of disorder, breakdown of a marriage, you lose your job, you lose your home, a more serious illness, something bad happening to somebody very close to you, a child, a spouse, or something connected with a collective pandemic, financial breakdown, civil unrest, hurricanes, earthquakes, and so usually it brings up a very strong reaction.

As I said, the ways in which you can react is through anger, through fear, through panic, becoming sad, despondent, say what's the point of it all, I strived so hard to build up this business and now this has to happen. Now we need to understand that, again, disorder, which earlier we called adversity, is inevitable and is an essential part of a higher order. Normally when we look at order and disorder, we look at order, which things are going as they should, they're going well, we call that that's harmonious.

Disorder is lack of harmony, something comes in, or could even be worse, could be chaos. So we usually look at order as desirable, it's harmony and things going well. Disorder is undesirable, lack of harmony, things going wrong, and that's true on this one level, that's true.

But there is always other levels, you can look at it from a higher perspective, a higher level, the existence of order and disorder, or order and chaos, are a necessary part for the evolution of life. A few examples, I sometimes walk in the forest, and when you walk in the forest, there's the typical smell that you have of this vegetation, but part of what you smell in the forest is actually the soil, especially when it's been raining, you can smell the soil. Now what is the soil?

The soil is mostly decaying matter. The soil is trees that have fallen or other plants that have died, and these plants are returning into the molecular structure of the plants and so on. It's no longer ordered, the atoms are separating, they are dissolving into disorder.

It's no longer structured, it's not orderly, the decaying matter is a manifestation of disorder or chaos. It's death, and yet the death is necessary for the new trees to thrive and to grow. They grow out of the chaos of decaying matter, grows the new order of new plant life and new trees.

You cannot separate them. Every day, when you eat, whatever you eat, you create disorder or chaos to that which you eat. You bite into an apple, the apple has a very orderly molecular structure.

When you bite into an apple and you start chewing it, you destroy the order that created the apple, the molecule that makes it into an apple. You create chaos or disorder, so that's what you do every time you eat. Then the apple goes into the digestive system and things happen to this.

It's now become disorderly, but then your body absorbs the nutrients and this becomes

part of the, again, the orderly structure of your body. So the food is destroyed, chaos is created, so that life can be sustained and continue. Interesting way of looking at it.

Many people have found that they experience a deepening and a deeper sense of self or beingness, a deeper peace or some kind of renewal in their lives after, immediately after and as a result of having endured a period of disorder or chaos. That is, I don't know if you're familiar with the spiritual term which comes from Christianity, medieval Christianity, dark night of the soul, dark night of the soul. Christian spiritual teachers and mystics in the Middle Ages, I think they created this expression.

What it means is, before you awaken spiritually, it's before quite a few of those teachers awakened spiritually, they experienced extreme forms of despondency and depression, where everything suddenly became meaningless. So they experienced in their mental chaos, so to speak, often even a mental breakdown. And out of that, and in this mental breakdown, the old self kind of died, experienced a death.

So there was the eruption of disorder, of destruction, the destruction. Then out of that, a deeper realization arose. And so that is, the dark night of the soul is basically the experience of inner chaos or inner disorder.

When things don't make sense anymore, that's a form of disorder on the level of mind. And other people, they experienced some kind of breakdown in their lives. It could have been sometimes two or three things happening, bad things happening at the same time.

At the same time, their marriage collapsed, they lost their job and their income, and then somebody very close to them died at the same time. The eruption of, to use our terminology, the eruption of disorder suddenly came in multiple forms. And when something that you had identified with, that had become part of your life, suddenly dissolves, is taken away, that's what you could call disorder.

I sometimes compare that to a tapestry. And when you have a tapestry, that's your life, the various elements that make up your life, let's say in this analogy, it's like a tapestry. These are the people that you know, your family, your work, your home, all the tapestry of your life.

And suddenly, something is torn out of this tapestry of your life violently. It could have been an accident, could be, as I said, complete financial breakdown, or whatever it may be, end of marriage. And suddenly, it leaves a gaping hole in the tapestry of your life.

And it's yes, basically, yes, certainly is disorder. And yet, often people report that they experience spiritual awakening when holes appeared in the tapestry of their lives. So the tapestry of their lives represents whatever it is that these people identified with and called it my life.

And suddenly, what you called my life, a big chunk of what you called your life is not

there anymore. And that can be very painful. But the strange thing is, it's precisely there that many humans experienced a transcendence to remain for a moment with this analogy, the hole that was torn into the tapestry of their lives, this hole pointed to something beyond the forms of life, there was a space behind that hole is an empty space.

And so they suddenly experienced an empty space within where something had been before, let's say, your spouse died, or even worse, your child died, or your mother died father. And suddenly, this weather before there was this presence, it was part of your life, there is an empty space. I mean, when somebody dies, you can look next day, there's a chair, they sat in this every day, they would sit in this chair.

And now the chairs empty, very strange, this emptiness left behind. And at first, it's very painful. But it can be that when you come to a place of acceptance, the emptiness brings about an inner emptiness in you, but not in a negative sense, an emptiness in the sense of spaciousness, where something you become aware of, just the content is gone, this particular content of your consciousness is gone.

And what remains when you remove the content of your consciousness is the consciousness itself without the content. One could also say to use another analogy, the ripple on the surface of the ocean, this particular ripple has dissolved. It's not there anymore.

But what's left is the ocean, the ripple had a particular form. But the ocean has no form. And that's what's left is the formless consciousness.

And that is the realization of the transcendent dimension within you. And that often comes with breakdown, loss, death. In other words, the experience of some form of disorder or chaos.

In other words, again, something that would normally be labeled as bad, or very bad. And that's very strange. So here we have that something that normally would be called good.

And then we have something that's normally called bad. But that which was called good, actually kept you in a relatively confined and limited place. Whereas that which is conventionally called bad, created an opening in you.

This loss created an opening in you. Strange fact is that the good, and usually perhaps when you say, my life is going well, you're in a relative comfort zone in your life, things are going well. And when something so called bad erupts, it then destroys the comfort zone.

But the strange fact is that it almost never happens that people awaken spiritually, while they're in their comfort zone, or that they deepen, become more deeper as human

beings, which would be a partial awakening. It almost never happens. So the place where people truly, where the evolutionary shift happens, or the evolutionary step forward, the evolutionary leap, is usually the experience of disorder in a person's life.

But not only in a person's life, we'll see in a minute. And so your life then moves between order and disorder. You have both, and they're both necessary.

And you don't have to look for disorder, because you want to awaken spiritually, and then say, okay, I need to make myself suffer, and I need to give up everything and make myself suffer. Many people have done that in the past, because they could see how it operates. They could see that when somebody suffers, there is a possibility of transcendence and awakening.

Not a guarantee. They may be stuck in their suffering until they die, or they may die off their suffering. There's no guarantee that when disorder erupts, or when you suffer, that this will bring about an awakening, or at least a deepening.

There's always the possibility. It is an opportunity, but often it is not. It is missed.

And then the person becomes even more deeply entrenched in their egoic sense of self. It becomes very rigid. You can see it with some people who have had a bad life, and what's left of them towards the end of their lives is a personality whose main component is a deep sense of bitterness, grievances, and resentments.

Instead of giving them an opening into transcendence, it has made the ego more rigid. That's not uncommon. So you get older people, sometimes even younger people, who already have an important part of their personality is their grievances, their bitterness, and their resentment.

And that colors everything they see and perceive and every relationship. And that's very sad. Nobody has told them, because it's not common knowledge yet, that experiencing suffering can be a great opportunity, and is actually inevitable in everybody's life.

They didn't know. Nobody at school teaches these things, which should be one of the most important subjects at school. There's no guarantee then that it will happen.

It's just an opportunity for it to happen. Sometimes suffering is already a disorder, is already experienced early in a person's life. Some children are born into a very chaotic environment.

There could be violence where they live in their family, between their parents. One parent or both parents could be alcoholics, could be drug addicts. Some children are born into very disordered and chaotic environments, and other children experience great loss at an early age.

Some children experience the loss of one or both of their parents at a very young age, like six, seven, through accidents and so on. That's a huge challenge early in a person's life. Nobody can predict what effect this will have on the child.

Without guidance, it could easily mean that, especially in a child that grows up in a very dysfunctional household with alcoholism, violence, and drug addiction, the chance that this child will, through experiencing this type of chaos or adversity, that this child will grow into a very conscious adult, the chances are relatively small, especially if the child gets no guidance from anybody at all. All that happens there is the perpetuation of the dysfunction, and then the child would then have a relationship and perhaps create a similar environment again. And then the next generation, until perhaps sometimes it happens after a generation of several dysfunctional family backgrounds, finally one human can break this vicious circle and suddenly step out and awaken spiritually and become an enormous power for good in this world.

But this person came out of sometimes generations of suffering and dysfunction. There are children who experience early loss in their lives, through loss of a parent, and some of them become mature at a very early age. That can happen, too.

I've seen that a few times, where children who've already been through that great loss already have access to wisdom. Even at the age of 11 or 12, they say wise things. So it can go either way.

So the important thing is to realize it is inevitable that you will experience both opposites in your life. Usually, it is advisable that you strive for order in your life. It's advisable that you think positively, if you can, that you acknowledge the goodness of life in every moment, that you live in a state of gratitude, because the more you live in a state of acknowledging the good that is here now, the more good will manifest in your life.

It does not mean, however, even if you live like that every day, you will still experience certain forms of disorder erupting into your life, but probably much less so than a person who is very unconscious and whose daily life is fairly negative, with continuous complaining, with harboring grievances, with bouts of anger, with always accusing other people of this or that, always criticizing everything and everybody. There, already, you have a lack of harmony, even in their daily lives.

And often, these people experience a succession of disasters and drama and so on. The periods then for creating something new, there's a new order that you create. When you create something new, you create whatever it may be, a new structure, a new business, and you write a book, you make music, you create some artistic, whatever it may be, you create something new in this world.

That means you bring about a new structure that is an ordered structure into this world. That's all order, and that's good. So the creative periods in your life is when you manifest

a new order, an orderly structure, and this is wonderful.

But even if you do, at some point, you will still experience, from time to time, the eruption of disorder in whatever form. Perhaps what you created will still, of course, what you created is still subject to the law of impermanence of all things, so nothing lasts for too long. So whatever you create may not last.

If you get too attached to what you create and you said, I did that, if there's ego in it, then you suffer a lot when things begin to dissolve or leave you. No matter how consciously you live, a certain amount of disorder will occasionally appear. And, of course, we're all moving towards old age and finally death.

Of course, death is the ultimate disorder or chaos for the human being because it's the same as the forest where the trees have fallen and the soil is basically decaying matter. So when you die, that which held the atoms and molecules of the body together in an orderly way, very highly intelligent structure, suddenly is totally disordered. It begins to dissolve.

So on a physical level, we are all moving towards, obviously, disorder. And even when you get old, you begin to get old, you experience the body doesn't function as well anymore. Just athlete, you reach a certain age and suddenly you can't do this anymore, you can't do that anymore.

If you were too identified with the order in your life, if you derived your sense of identity from the order in your life, then you suffer. So you appreciate, you can appreciate the order in your life, the order is going well. You have certain abilities that other people may not have.

That's wonderful. You have achieved perhaps certain things that other people have not achieved, but things that have contributed to enriching people's lives or making people more conscious, all that's wonderful. But if there was a sense of I in whatever you'd created, which means you derived your sense of identity from that which you created, and it's not going to last, all the abilities that you have that others don't have, it's not going to last.

So anything you identify with creates suffering because it will leave you or it'll dissolve or not satisfy you. It's subject to the law of impermanence. In other words, it will go back to disorder.

Everything in this world is subject to impermanence. Everything in this world, including your body, and yet there's something within you that is not subject to impermanence. We'll come to that in a little while.

I just want to mention one more thing to see how order and disorder operates on all levels. We talked about the forest, we talked about when you eat, you create disorder so

that a new order can then manifest. On a huge global scale, the planet itself periodically experiences the eruption of extreme disorder or chaos.

This has been found through geology and virtually all scientists agree with those findings. And what they found is in the evolutionary life of our planet, the planet has already experienced five extinctions. Five times in the life of this planet, life became almost extinct.

It was always the borderline of extinction of all life. I believe, if I remember correctly, in the second extinction, which I don't know when it was, 400 million years ago over there, almost 90 percent of all life forms disappeared. The last one they say was 60 million years ago and I believe that was the one the dinosaurs and many other species disappeared fairly quickly, probably created by a meteor impact.

Now that's a great example for disorder. Before you had an orderly planet, harmonious life, suddenly a huge thing comes from outer space and rams into this planet and totally changes everything. The climate, everything immediately changed.

Temperature would have probably fallen very, very quickly because there's not much sunlight coming through anymore. That was about 60 million years ago. Now the interesting fact is, yes, it took the planet each time several million years to recover, so to speak, but every time it did more than recover.

Every time the life forms that came became more complex. There was greater complexity of life forms. And then the complex life forms were destroyed again like 100 million years later and again to destruction and then rebirth.

So the planet has experienced destruction on a vast scale, rebirth and destruction already five times. Some people say we are moving into a sixth extinction. That's a very interesting subject and very relevant.

But here I'm just giving it as an example for this law of opposites, order and disorder, operates on all levels. So it's the same law when you bite into an apple. It's suggested as the law that brings about massive extinctions on the planet.

Humans are surprised because they don't know these things. When suddenly disorder happens, as it's happening now, for example, with a pandemic, life seemed so safe and secure and suddenly it doesn't seem that safe and secure anymore. It's a great shock to many people.

They didn't realize that the life that surrounds us is not that secure. Everybody is one heartbeat away from death. Everybody who listens to this will be dead in a few years, but by a few I mean could be anything from one or two to 80 or 90 years.

Not that much. They are amazed that when a pandemic happens, then you become a

little bit aware of your mortality. And that can be a great, at first perhaps painful, but then a deepening realization.

Mortality, the awareness of mortality, is happening to many people now. And they are fearful, as if nobody had told them that death could happen at any moment. Now you might think, well, if you're young, you're in your 20s or 30s, you think, I don't need to think about death.

It's a long way away. Or as I heard somebody say not a while ago, a young 20-year-old said, she said, oh, I'm not worried about death. By the time I get old, they will have found a cure for it.

It's such a long way in the future. We should not dwell on death in a morbid fashion, but to be aware that death can happen easily and not necessarily when you grow old. If you're lucky, you grow old and then you die.

Some people would say if you're unlucky, you grow very old and then you die, experience some years of disability. But many young people die. We are not aware.

There are certain things that we take for granted. For example, every year, approximately 1,250,000 people die in traffic accidents on the planet. 1,250,000.

Many are young. Out of these, at least two or three times as many experience serious disability through traffic accidents. They survive, but serious injury.

There's despair, suicide. 800,000 to 1,000,000 people commit suicide every year. On average, every 40 seconds somebody commits suicide on the planet.

And people, of course, die continuously. In this very moment, several people are dying right now and now and now and now, continuously. Others are being born.

Amazing. Now, death, suffering and death. Interesting, when the Buddha was a young man, he grew up in a very wealthy environment, very protected because his parents, his father especially, protected him from all adversity.

Only surrounded by beautiful things, good food, pleasant experiences. That was how the Buddha grew up. Then when he was already, I don't know how old, 20 or something, for the first time he left the sheltered environment of the palace grounds.

Maybe his parents were kind of probably kings of a small kingdom. And he went to the village and a town and there he saw an old person because you had always been surrounded by lovely young people because his father wanted him to not experience unhappiness. It had been predicted that the Buddha would either become a great spiritual master or he would become very successful in business or as a ruler of a kingdom.

His father wanted him to be successful as a ruler. He said, he must not become spiritual so we're not going to show him anything that might give, would put bad ideas into his head. But he did leave his parents, his palace on an excursion when he was maybe 20 or 21.

And he saw a 90 year old man is there close to death and he was so shocked. What is this? He said, he's old.

Old? What's that? He said, well it happens to everybody sooner or later.

What? This is terrible. And then he walked a bit further and he saw a sick person.

I don't know, probably coronavirus. And the sick person was there. Oh, so painful.

What's that? This person is sick. Sick?

He said, yes, everybody eventually gets sick. Everybody experiences it. What?

When he saw a dead body, he said, what's that? He said, this is a dead body. What?

Yes, everybody dies. He couldn't believe it. If this is our destiny, then everything I've experienced so far is delusion.

If he had experienced it from an early age, he would have gotten used to it. But because his father waited for so long to release him into the world, it was such a shock to him to experience sickness, old age, and death that he said, I need to find something, whether there's anything beyond that. Because if there's nothing beyond it, everything is meaningless.

And that was the beginning of his spiritual search. He left. And then what he did then is what he had never experienced before.

He inflicted adversity on himself because he became an ascetic monk who lived on virtually no food. They eat locusts and leaves. And for several years, he practiced extreme deprivations of all sense pleasures.

And he became very, very thin and almost wasted away. So he knew he needed to experience something beyond. And after that, he said, No, this is not the way either.

Then he started eating and drinking again. And then he became enlightened. So some people say he realized that adversity or extreme deprivation or suffering doesn't get you there.

But that's not really true. He had to go through extreme suffering and deprivation, which he inflicted on himself. And then he went, he stopped it.

And if he hadn't gone through that and realized you don't really need that, but he did.

You don't really need it, but you do need it. There's a there's a paradox here.

People have recognized how it works that through disorder and suffering, you awakened. In many traditions, they have tried to recreate adversity in a spiritual setting. They've tried to recreate the experience of deprivation, of even sensory deprivation, of deprivation of food, of in many, many traditions, in order to bring about a spiritual awakening through extreme forms of adversity.

I don't think that's necessary. And in very few cases has it actually worked. Although I can see the idea behind it seems to make sense.

But you don't need it. Life is enough. Normal life is enough.

Normal life will give you exactly what you need for your spiritual awakening. Normal life will give you good experiences. And normal life will also give you the experience of disorder or chaos.

The important thing is to come to realize that to believe that there is something fundamentally wrong when you experience disorder or chaos, that's a delusion that prevents you from fully, one could almost say, taking advantage of this opportunity that loss or disorder brings when you believe this should not be happening to me. Why to me? Well, it happens to everybody sooner or later.

So if you complain about it, if you have a strong inner resistance to it, then you cannot accept what's happening. You are in opposition to the flow of life. You have an antagonistic relationship with the present moment, because what is happening in the present moment, you condemn as dreadful.

You have a narrative around it. So you cannot use this opportunity of deepening and awakening. So harmony, disharmony on this conventional level, order is harmony, disorder is disharmony or chaos.

But on a higher level, there is a higher hidden harmony, which includes disorder and chaos. Because these two, life moves between these two opposites and evolves between these two opposites. So there is a higher order that includes all the bad things that on our level where we look very bad.

Hidden harmony that is transcendent. And that's helpful to know, but not just as a mental belief that doesn't help very much. If you said, well, Eckhart said there's a hidden harmony, so it must be true.

Well, no, it's not true unless you at least have a glimpse of what that means. Harmony that's beyond the so-called good and bad, that is beyond good and bad. And you can see what it means, perhaps in your own life, if you've already been through a certain amount of suffering and seen that it has taken you already this far.

So it has had a purpose. It's brought you here. Of course, it could have killed you.

What then? Now, that's an interesting question. The usual argument or very the most common argument against the existence of God is a fact of suffering.

And so usually when you argue with an atheist or two atheists talking to each other and agreeing with everything they say, the person who denies the existence of God, whatever that is, but they talk about it without really knowing what it is. But let's put that aside. When you use the word God, it doesn't mean you know what you're talking about.

You're just using a sound. So the usual argument is for the non-existence of God is the fact of human suffering and violence and disorder. And they say, look, if God is omnipotent, as God is supposed to be omnipotent, because if he's not omnipotent, he's not God.

If God is omnipotent, would he allow this suffering? Would he allow a child to die of disease? Would he allow millions to die in a pandemic?

Would he allow genocide in concentration camps and labor camps? The dreadful things that have happened to humans, mostly actually done by humans to other humans. Would he allow these things?

If I were God, I wouldn't allow. I would have created a much better world, a just and fair world, and not this. So therefore, I would be morally superior to this God that you talk about.

This is the argument. Therefore, there is no God, because if I'm morally superior, then what kind of God is that? And so that's the traditional argument against it.

Non-existence of God is the seemingly meaningless suffering in this world on a huge, vast scale. But it could be that the starting point for the discussion was already a mistake. And the starting point for this discussion was the belief that there is a controlling entity somewhere that could control things, that has created all these imperfect things, could improve them, and could control them, but is refusing to do so.

So you start with this idea that there's an omnipotent entity who is not doing what he should be doing. And therefore, either he doesn't exist, or he's not worthy of being called God, and maybe he's just a demon. There was actually a belief in the very early Christianity.

There were the Gnostics, a Christian sect, and some of them believed that the God of the Old Testament and the God that created this world was an inferior deity, that not God at all, because if it were God would not have created this extremely imperfect world. So here we have the starting point for this discussion was already the erroneous assumption

that there is an omnipotent being somewhere that could control things, but doesn't do it, or takes pleasure in torturing people. So we have to remove the erroneous foundation for this discussion, say this is not what God is at all.

God is not an entity somewhere that's controlling. So what meaning does God have then, the word God? Very hard to talk about.

The moment you talk about it, you can almost say you've already distorted it.

[Speaker 2] (43:13 - 43:32)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The Power of Unconditioned Consciousness [5b8287d8-6550-4dff-a2e2-3b52a0aa2f3c]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:52)

The power of unconditioned consciousness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the importance of connecting with what he calls unconditioned consciousness. He says it's the source of all creativity and true intelligence.

Eckhart explains when we're in this place, mental noise stops and thinking recedes. And what remains is aware stillness. He says, this is the beginning of awakening.

He explains we may sustain this state for a while and then lose it again. It's part of the process. He encourages everyone to keep a foot in both worlds, the everyday and the transcendent.

He believes if we do this, greater intelligence will flow through us. Eckhart says, this leap forward in consciousness is the next step for humanity. He believes without more spiritual development, we will not survive.

[Speaker 1] (0:55 - 37:33)

Who are you without the mental noise? You haven't fallen asleep. No, well, one or two might have, but you're actually very alert.

In this moment, there is an alertness, but also stillness. In other words, there's an absence of mental noise, but there's an alertness, but not, there's no stress behind it. There's no willpower behind it.

There's a power there, but it's not produced by the person. It's there because the person has stepped back. And so that power is the unconditioned consciousness.

It's the source of all creativity or anything new, everything. True intelligence is there. It's pure intelligence.

And that is the awakening. And at first you may find this, occasionally you can be there and then you lose it again. And there's nothing wrong with that.

And then you realize that you lost yourself. The person is making your life difficult. And increasingly you use situations to be present instead of being reactive to the situation, especially when you have to wait for something, why not use those precious moments for being present?

You wait, you're waiting at the airport. You're waiting in the traffic jam. You're waiting for somebody to arrive.

You're waiting for somebody, a human being to answer the phone while you're trying to get through to the bank or somewhere like that. And you're waiting and they say, your call is important to us. And a human being will speak to you shortly.

It will only be another 55 minutes. Wonderful. Thank you.

And then you say, ah, I hope nobody answers. And then a time may come when, and this is the mastery of life that you're moving towards, when the person and the deeper I, the person that I call the surface I and the deep I don't exist as separate. So one day you're, and then for a moment you're, but the two can come together.

And so then you're able to function in this world as a person, but always with an additional dimension that operates now through that person. In other words, the way in which you deal with difficulties and situations and people changes, it's no longer an egoic way of dealing with things, but dealing with things consciously, this greater intelligence can now operate and use your flow into your mind. And then their mind comes up with the right solution suddenly, or spontaneously, you take the right action.

Whereas before you would have been reactive out of the egoic conditioning, which usually is wrong. It just makes things worse. So then the two, I sometimes put it like this.

You can have one foot in this dimension where you are a person, and you have the other foot in the transcendent dimension. And then you don't lose yourself anymore, ultimately in your mind. And that means you don't lose yourself in the world anymore, because ultimately the so-called world and your mind are one and the same thing.

So you don't lose yourself anymore. You operate within this limited realm, but you're no longer looking for yourself or for some kind of ultimate completion or fulfillment in this limited realm of the horizontal dimension. Which means you can now pursue a goal still, because the surface eye still operates here.

You pursue a goal, but you do not make the mistake of overemphasizing what this goal can do for you once you reach it. Yes, you might be very dedicated to what you're doing, but there is not an excessive projection into where you're feeling you need to get to. I need to get there.

I need to achieve the success that will make me feel complete and fulfilled. And then I will have made it. Made what?

The ego. That goes, you pursue a goal, but your attention is in the doing rather than where you want to get to. You know where you want to get to, but your main attention is in the quality of the doing now.

Whatever action you take now, you're able to be present with it rather than always devaluing everything you do now in the service of this greater goal in the future that will

never ultimately satisfy you anyway. And that is a very dysfunctional way to live. Whenever stress arises, something has happened.

You don't want to be where you are, and ultimately you don't want to be doing what you're doing now. Stress means there is a projection to some future point where you want to be. Rather than here, you want to be there.

So the quality of the doing diminishes. The consciousness doesn't flow into the doing. The doing is a means to an end.

It goes like, I want to be there, and here I'm doing. Instead of, yes, peripherally, you know where you want to get to, but that's not where your main focus is. Your main focus is the doing itself.

So the doing is no longer in the service of the future. It is self-fulfilling. And then it becomes actually much more empowered.

In other words, you enjoy the doing, no matter what it is. There is an enjoyment of the energy that flows into the doing. And that's conscious action, as I call it.

Conscious action. It's not reduced just to a means to an end. Yes, it is also a means to an end, but it is not only a means to an end.

It is fundamentally an end in itself, the doing itself. The ancient scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, which, if you haven't read it, you should. Nobody knows how old it is, maybe 2,000 years or more.

Again, one of the main lessons in the Bhagavad Gita is it is possible to perform an action without losing yourself in some desired goal, which in the Bhagavad Gita is called the fruit of the action. It says, don't give excessive attention to the fruit of the action. Just be conscious of the action itself.

And this is the spiritual practice. It's called karma yoga. The yoga in the sense of, yoga here means spiritual practice, not necessarily body movement, but that's fine too.

Karma yoga, karma means action. Karma, action, and reaction, karmas. So karma yoga is the action as spiritual practice.

And that's a very, very powerful teaching that's been around a long, long time. Any activity that you perform as a person, by performing it in this way, becomes actually empowered. And then you have a foot in both worlds.

You have the unconditioned consciousness acting through you, giving your attention, your fullest attention to the doing in the moment, in this moment, whatever you do in this moment. And if it's not just doing, it might be something else. You're not always doing, you're always walking around this world, perceiving things and talking and

perceiving and so on.

You may be familiar, I'm sure you are, with the term that's mentioned a lot these days as in new age teachings and others, gratefulness or gratitude. And again, that is related to this. What does it mean, gratitude?

Well, people say, well, you say thank you for, okay. It sounds a little weird. Somebody asked me, who am I thanking?

If I don't think of a God that has just given me something, so why do I say thank you? I don't understand, who am I thanking? Gratitude is really appreciation.

It's an alternative term you could use. What is appreciation? Again, it's related to be present with a sense perceptions, for example.

You can have appreciation for anything by giving it attention. And to give attention, your mind needs to be free of the conditioned naming and labeling, so awareness again, presence. You give attention to this flower, for example.

You give it attention. This is visual in this case. And you appreciate its beauty, but without mentally saying, do you mean, yes, the thought may come into your mind, it's beautiful, but you don't stay stuck in that thought.

Then the thought disappears and you continue to be aware of that flower. And you appreciate its, it's just, if one had to use words, incredible presence and aliveness. And then a kind of thank you arises that is not necessarily verbal.

It's a deep appreciation, but you can even do it with even so-called inanimate objects. There's a glass of water here and I can see the reflections of the light in the water. It's really beautiful.

And for a moment, the mind stops and simply perceives the incredible beauty of this without even calling it beauty. Wow. And then you feel this, everything is a gift.

There's an aliveness all around you. Some people make a mistake with the gratitude practice, which is a way of being in the present moment. The mistake is they associate gratitude with a story in their mind.

And the story would go like this. I really should be grateful what I have because look at all these people who have less than me. Okay.

Well, this may be true, but it's not the path to true gratitude because if you can only be appreciative and have gratitude by comparing yourself to others who are worse off than you, that is not true gratitude. You're dependent on others to be worse off than you to feel a bit more grateful or should be more grateful. Don't look for gratitude on the level of narratives in your mind, but the immediate thing, sense perception, hearing birdsong,

clouds, sky, whatever, even how light gets reflected off the surface.

Just this moment of pure appreciation of the aliveness of things. And another factor that comes in and is important whenever you are aware of these things, whether you are performing an action or you're simply contemplating something and feel this gratitude or acknowledgement of the being of whatever it is, there's a very subtle thing here. Again, let's make it experiential.

Right here now, we take in the totality of this room and the lights and a man on the chair talking. And perhaps you're aware that you're breathing while you're contemplating all this. And now we come to the, perhaps the most important point of realization.

As you're aware of all this and appreciate it, are you also aware of yourself at the same time, but not the person? As you are aware of all this and you're inside, you're still, are you aware of that still, let's say what words to be used, are you aware of that still presence that is aware of all this? Are you aware of yourself as that awareness?

And that's a very subtle thing, but it's very important. So you have here the outer world of the senses, which ultimately is only the surface reality, but beautiful too. But you're also aware of yourself as consciousness, as the stillness, which is the unconditioned consciousness.

Now, when I put it like that, in words, a little error arises, which is created by language, because I'm asking, are you aware of yourself? That seems to imply that there's a duality there, but it arises because we're using language. When you say, I am aware of myself, that looks like a duality.

There's I, and there's that which I am aware of, but that's not how it is. It only appears like that when you begin to talk about it. But when you don't talk about it, there's just the awareness itself, because you are not separate from the awareness.

So it's not really true to say, I am aware of the awareness in me. No, the awareness in you is aware of itself. That's perhaps a better way of putting it.

And that is so, that's the secret of not losing yourself in the world and in your mind. While you're operating in this world, can you be aware of yourself as, now I'm using another term now, are you aware of yourself as the space for whatever it is that arises in your awareness, the forms that arise, your physical body, even your thoughts and trance perceptions, all these things arise in the awareness that you are. The awareness is the space for it.

So to be aware of that space is ultimately to be aware of yourself at the deepest level, where that far transcends who or what you are as a person. And that space of awareness is actually the true meaning of the present moment. That is the power of the present moment, the power itself, of consciousness itself, of life itself.

And that power is the power of now. Then you are aware of yourself as that, and there's the world. This is the, in some spiritual traditions, called the I am, the beingness of you, the essence of you.

That is the I am that, in the Old Testament, God replies when, I can't remember who, Abraham or Moses asks, meets God, so to speak. It's a story, I mean, you can't meet God like that, but there's a story there, there's a deep truth in it. God, what's your name, he asked God.

And God said, my name is I am, the I am that I am. And he's very surprised. Oh, I am, it's the name of God, wow.

That's very strange. I'm sure that's what he said, it's not in the Bible, but that is so weird. And perhaps he realized something, when the essence, I am, it's not just your I am, it is the I am of the universe.

It is the being itself, the beingness of the universe itself. You can realize that within as your essence, and that connects you to the one, the God. If you have to be very careful with words like that, because they've been misused a lot and misunderstood.

But the way I see it, or perceive it, or sense it, is that the consciousness that is the hidden essence behind all the phenomenal universe that we see, with our perceive, with our senses, behind it, there is a vast intelligence operating that is not part of this dimension, but somehow flows into this dimension and gradually expresses itself more fully in this dimension. And it flows into this dimension from the transcendent one that we call God, but we cannot, of course, understand at all. God does not exist in space or time, but is transcendent to all that.

But just as the sun emanates light and creates life here, by the energy that it emanates continuously, and that could be used as an analogy, in the same way, this is my perception, and perhaps it makes, perhaps you can sense the truth of it too, maybe not, maybe yes. The emanation of God into this dimension is like the emanation of light that comes from the sun. And this emanation is consciousness.

And this consciousness is behind every form that arises here. It's an intelligence that operates. You could also call it the soul of the world.

The ancients had a term for it, that in Latin it's called anima mundi, the soul of the world, that everything ultimately is a manifestation of that deeper transcendent aliveness. And so what you sense in yourself, as yourself, as the consciousness, is the light of God in you and as you. It is the light of God in you.

That's how I sense it somehow. And so just as the light of the sun is not separate from the sun, it's somehow, it's an extension of the sun, one could say. In the same way, the consciousness that flows is the essence of what you are, is an extension of God, is an

emanation of the one source of all life.

And that is you. That is the essence. But that is the transcendent self, which the Buddhists call no-self.

That is the essence. So in essence, you are the light of God in this world, one could say, the light of consciousness. You are the light of, you are the light of the world as consciousness.

And that's exactly what Jesus said to his disciples. You are the light of the world. And he also said it of himself.

I am the light of the world. So what could that possibly mean? If not, I am the consciousness in which all this appears.

I am the consciousness of the universe. And this is not an ego thing, that realization can only come when the ego has subsided. And there's nobody who is not the consciousness of the universe.

They may not have realized it. That's the only difference. But everyone is the consciousness of the universe.

But the important, the destiny is, your destiny is to realize that. That's an enormous thing, this realization. And perhaps it's only a beginning of something even deeper for humans.

But I know that the next step now for us is that is an enormous leap forward in evolution of human consciousness. When humans can realize, a sufficiently large number of humans can realize their connectedness with the one. This is a traditional term.

We use the spiritual dimension of life. That's what it is. That's a traditional term.

And without that, a human life is frustrating and full of disappointment and suffering. Because if you only live on the horizontal dimension, inevitably, this is always, it's frustrating and it's disappointing. And circumstances and people let you down.

And it's Dukkha, Buddha said, Dukkha meaning suffering. If you only live there, then that's that. And then not only that, then you create this world of suffering where humans create so much suffering for themselves and others, far more suffering than natural disasters.

Look how many countless millions were killed last century alone. There's a deep dysfunction. Without the, if you lose connectedness to the spiritual dimension, then you cannot really survive for very, civilization will very soon collapse.

Without that, traditionally religions have provided perhaps some limited access to that

dimension. Although unfortunately, to a large extent, religions became misused by the human ego in their search for power. So almost all religions, this has happened to almost all religions, been misused by the human ego.

But there's always been, always some opening left here and there, a little opening where some humans were still able to use, through their religious tradition, they were still able to use that as an access to the transcendent. So there's little openings here and there remained. Now for many humans, now religion has become completely meaningless.

They don't, and that should, even that slight opening has disappeared. But now we have something else. We have now the arising of this, the arising of this is not a new religion, of course, it's just pure spirituality.

And we're no longer, perhaps we no longer need the mythological aspect, or if it works for you, that's beautiful. But perhaps we don't need the mythology anymore. In other words, needing to believe in certain stories in order to be saved.

I never could understand that in Christianity, you say, if you believe in Jesus, then you will be saved. I could never understand that. And then I looked at it and said, this cannot be right, it's just belief, because you believe in a story that they tell you, and then you say, I'm saved.

And you could see there were countless people who believed in this story and did very bad things. So that can't be it. Perhaps what it really means is if you identify, if you identify with Jesus, you can, and what would that mean?

If you identify with Jesus, then you identify with this human on the cross. There was an ancient belief that the spirit of the universe was trapped in materiality and in bodies. This is not completely true, but there's some truth to it.

So Jesus is nailed to the cross, which is a torture instrument. Then Jesus dies by facing the suffering of this world. It's the archetype of human suffering, is the man on the cross, the archetype of human suffering.

And Buddha talks about suffering as the one thing that pervades human existence unless there's an awakening. And again, in Christianity, you have the archetype of human suffering. Not to some people that say, oh, I don't like that.

Okay, but it's the archetype of human suffering. And then that leads to death and rebirth, which is transcendence. So there is a deep truth embedded in that.

And another strange thing about it is the torture instrument, which is a cross, is at the same time a symbol for transcendence and the divine, which is the vertical and the horizontal dimension of life. And that explains the function of human suffering in this world. The path is to go through the suffering that is inevitable for human beings.

And then through the suffering, you die to the egoic sense of self, and then you emerge as the transcendent being. And it's all really contained in that, the necessity, unfortunately, for suffering, and then the liberation from suffering. If you are here listening to this, you're already voluntarily embarked on the path of awakening.

You don't need the suffering anymore, necessarily. It's a deep suffering, because you're already on the path of transcendence. But suffering will still challenge you, because challenges remain.

But all that then happens is the suffering will bring about a deepening, of your deepening, and will quickly erode what's left of your ego. And then the ego has subsided. You still have a form identity, yes, but you're not identified with your form identity.

You are the essence identity, the deep I. And that's the, you have died on the cross, and then there's a resurrection. Then the cross, the very thing that seems the worst thing, actually, is the opening into the transcendent.

So there's, the story of the cross is there's a deep, when I looked into it deeply, closely, I confirmed there is a truth embedded in there. So if you identify with Jesus, I can see how that could lead to that liberation. But this is one path.

I'm just mentioning it, I attempted to understand the deeper meaning of it. Whether or not you have a spiritual tradition, whether or not you still feel you're part of a religion, you can always, you can deepen it and use that, or you can step out of it and into pure spirituality. But it is not necessary to, I believe, to abandon any religion.

The deep, look for the deep truth that is hidden in every religion, and go there, and that can also be your path. I talked about awakening a lot. One of my favorite sayings by Jesus, which is often overlooked, there are parables about awakening in the New Testament.

Jesus said to his disciples, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. And they don't, in the churches, I don't think they know what the deeper meaning of it is. Maybe a few here and there, because the way they read with it, when they read things in the church, I think, do they really understand it?

Because they would say, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. Okay. Stay awake.

But there was actual, there was power behind those words. There is still a power behind those words. Awake, again, the term, everywhere you find awake is the term that comes up in Buddhism.

Buddha means the one who is awake. That's what the word means. Jesus talks about awake, stay awake, awaken.

It's so simple. A more transcendent way of looking at this gathering is there are, yes, there are persons here sitting and listening, but really what's happening here, this is an event that is part of the awakening of humanity into a higher consciousness, deeper consciousness. The next evolutionary step is that awakening of human consciousness.

And we embody that here. And when you, in your daily life, realize that the main purpose of your life, in addition to the personal purposes, that vary from person to person, whatever purpose you have on a personal level, of course, whatever that is, but bring that together with the purpose of living consciously and being awake in the doing of what it is that you are doing in the various ways that we have described, to karma yoga and so on, to make any action into a meditation, give it your fullest attention. And again, return to the now, always back to the now, there's no problem in the now.

Challenges sometimes arise in the now, but the now is the access point into the transcendent. That is the secret of human existence here for us. And the rest is for each of you to live it until time erodes, dissolves your physical vehicle, because eventually it will.

And it will no longer matter because who you are is transcendent to that and not subject to mortality. Jesus, as you may know, talks about eternal life. He says, find eternal life, realize eternal life.

And that is a positive thing, a way of putting it in positive. The Buddha said, realize the deathless. So in Buddhism too, there is a dimension that is called the deathless.

Amara, amara, deathless. But in Buddhism, Buddhism puts everything in negative terms. Deathless, instead of saying eternal life, it says no death.

The reason why Buddhism puts everything in negative terms, the Buddha didn't want humans to create an idol out of mental concepts. So if you have a negative mental concept, it's much more difficult to create a mental idol than if you have a positive mental concept. Eternal life is something you can believe in, but deathless is kind of, what's that?

No death, but there's nothing there. And so this is just different approaches, but they all point to that. There's this wonderful ancient saying, die before you die and then realize that there is no death.

And the dying before you die is what you are doing and have been doing here and now during these two hours. Dying before you die, die to the fictitious self ultimately and realize that which is beyond death. That's the essence of all spirituality.

And with this, I thank you.

[Speaker 2] (37:39 - 37:58)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Purpose of Your Life Is Becoming Conscious [24439852-0b69-4549-a4da-1f5f2351195a]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:49)

The purpose of your life is becoming conscious. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about outgrowing unconsciousness. He says only awareness can free us of our resentments, judgments, and negative thinking.

Those deeply ingrained patterns that keep us stuck. He says as our awareness grows, we realize we have choices in how we respond to life situations and we are no longer at the mercy of our conditioning. When we finally recognize these patterns for what they are, we transcend them.

We don't have to be prisoner to a dysfunctional past. Eckhart says as we move toward greater consciousness, we are in deeper alignment, not only with ourselves, but also with the purpose of the universe.

[Speaker 1] (0:51 - 57:38)

It's a good thing the chair is still there. That's called mindful sitting down. I'm sorry that some of you have to let go of your seats.

And perhaps others have to let go of their resentment. Hmm. There's always something to let go of.

Sometimes thoughts, abstract thoughts, emotional thoughts, are harder to let go of than material things. Although ultimately, your attachment to material things is also really an attachment to thought form, because the only way in which you experience really a material thing is in the realm of the invisible, in the realm of the mind. Because you might think that there's a car there.

Let's say it's a material thing. Let's say it is a car that is favored by the ego. I can't think of a name.

Rolls Royce, Maserati, Lamborghini, Testarossa, Testarossa, something. But when you experience the car or anything, before you experience it, it becomes, well, on a physical level, there's a visual perception. And that's then, it's translated into impulses, nerve impulses that travel to the brain.

But these things, we don't really know whether they exist totally on the physical level, that we just don't figure out how or what it is. Then the brain somehow reassembles something. And then in the realm of the unseen, because nobody as yet, by cutting open somebody's brain, can find their Lamborghini, the image of the Lamborghini that the ego had identified with, because you experience it there, but where is it?

So you don't actually experience the material car, you experience a representation in the realm of the unseen of what you call my car. And philosophers have spoken about that and have even questioned and asked, is there actually, well, they didn't mention car, but is there actually a car out there? Is there a car out there?

Because you don't know what is the thing in itself. Who knows? Perhaps it's all happening in the realm of imagination, the entire life experience, but let's not go into speculation too much.

But yes, you experience everything as mental formations. So ultimately, even letting go of a material possession, is letting go of a thought, a thought form that represents this material thing. So it's always letting go of forms, thought forms.

And an important thought form, the importance of saying, I don't know. And that is an openness. And a very important thought form to let go of is the thought form that says, I know.

And usually, I know implies a certain mental position. And you identify with a mental position. That's how it is.

And the moment you do that, you're not really learning anymore, because you already everything is already fixed in your mind. When you know who somebody is, you've already come to a conclusion about another person. Because perhaps, yes, perhaps with some justification, because you have experienced repeated patterns of behavior in that person that may have taken you to that conclusion about that person.

Nevertheless, it is a kind of prison that you have formulated for that other person in your mind, because you've come, this is how he or she, this is how he is, this is how, and you have perhaps certain labels that are part of this mental conclusion of who this person is. And that means, when you have identified with a thought form of that kind, you're never really meeting that person anymore. You're only meeting that person through the screen of your conclusions, the screen of your judgments.

And whatever the person does, you will continue to focus on those things that the person says or does that confirm to you that your conclusion about that person is correct. And you would ignore any other behavior or words from that person that do not conform to that conclusion that you have already formulated in your mind about that person. But it also means that ultimately you're not only putting that person in a mental prison, you're also putting yourself in a mental prison in relationship to that person.

So the judgment always goes two ways. And there was somebody 2000 years ago, who also reminded us to let go of judgment, don't judge, otherwise you will be judged. You let go of judgment, then you free yourself too.

I think he said that it's not literally in the Bible. So this conclusion also about yourself,

that is a big one for many people. Some people become to a mental conclusion about themselves or their life.

And so you build up a mental image consisting of conceptualization that tells you you're telling yourself who you are or what your life is. So you come to a conclusion about who you are, that's another prison. In other words, you inhabit a conceptual reality, meaning consists of thought forms, without knowing it.

And the thought forms provide you with your sense of self. And that is, of course, ego, that's how it operates. And then it's hard to break out once you have certain conclusions about yourself or what you call my life.

Could be very negative, it could be positive, a mixture of negative and positive. Some people have a predominantly negative view of themselves, low self-esteem, bad body image, and all kinds of things that I mentioned earlier, don't feel good enough, not knowledgeable enough, not good looking enough, whatever it is, not intelligent enough. Or you can have the other, somebody who feels they are actually superior in most aspects to most people.

Now, this could be a total delusion. Some people live with a almost totally delusional self-image. They're bordering on crazy.

So there are people walking around that have a highly inflated image of who they are that does not correspond to reality whatsoever. And perhaps we have all met people like that. So they inhabit a universe that has lost really connection with the rest of reality.

But they seem to be happy in this world of delusion. Those are the more extreme cases, but there's a certain percentage of the population that manifests that kind of delusion. I don't know what the percentage is.

The extreme form, maybe it's 2%, maybe it's 1%, but even if it's 1% of people, it's a lot of people. But others have a mixture of, they may be deluded in their negative views too. They may be completely fooling themselves, they have holding negative, that they're not good enough here, not good enough there.

That may also be a delusion. In many cases, it is. In many cases, you can have people who are actually very good looking, and they think they're ugly.

And you can have people who have a great body, and they think they are overweight. And then they starve themselves even more, because there's a clash between the mental image and reality. So all kinds of strange things happen to humans in the absence of the dimension of awareness, presence, awareness.

Because it's only awareness that can free you from the entanglement in all kinds of thought forms, and be trapped entirely in those thought forms. And no matter what it is,

even if you're a relatively well-adjusted person, so say your self-image corresponds fairly well with what society thinks you are, and your function in society, and so on, even there you have identification with thought forms. So it's only awareness that frees you from this trap of being completely caught up in the formations of your mind.

Basically, it is another dimension of consciousness that arises. The moment you become aware of your mind, and you're no longer totally identified with whatever it is that your mind is saying, the moment that arises in you, then freedom comes in, the possibility of freedom comes in. A person who is completely unaware is totally at the mercy of their conditioned mind.

This person is then totally conditioned by their mind, the mind is conditioned by their past, whatever happened in their past, it totally is conditioned by that. And so an unaware person basically has no choice. He or she acts out, whatever action this person performs, whatever he does or she does or says, or thinks, manifests just that level of unconsciousness.

So a very unconscious person is basically forced to act out their unconsciousness, and in that way they create an enormous amount of suffering for themselves and others. Now the question arises, well, are you saying that a person who creates a lot of suffering for others, perhaps even inflicts violence on other humans or other life forms, are you saying then that this person is not, we should not hold this person responsible for what they do? Well, because that seems to be the implication.

If I'm saying that they have no choice because they're totally at the mercy of their conditioning, am I not saying then that we cannot hold them responsible for what they do? That's not quite it. So that would be jumping to a conclusion that is not quite correct.

Even though they do not have a choice, and they are compelled to act the way they act, they will, this is how the universe is arranged, they will suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness. Unconscious humans suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, and that is, we could call that, if we want to use an eastern term, karmic retribution, whatever we want to call it. Unconscious humans can awaken if they only suffer enough.

And usually the suffering is, in many many cases, self-inflicted through their unconsciousness, they didn't have a choice, but that's how the universe, this is one way in which the universe becomes more conscious. So by suffering the consequences of your unconsciousness, there's potentially, you can awaken. And there's a certain number of people in presence who are awakening in that way.

This is why it's very important to get more and more books and other stuff into presence, because a presence is an ideal place for surrender, for acceptance, for these very unpleasant places. If you can surrender there, then you have to surrender very deeply.

And if you surrender very deeply, you experience a deep and perhaps lasting transformation of consciousness.

So we get regularly correspondence from people who have experienced a shift in consciousness in presence, and they have experienced enormous suffering, so you only begin to have a choice when some awareness arises. And so they are no longer totally at the mercy of your conditioning, mental conditioning. And that could just, sometimes it just starts with being able to observe their conditioned behavior.

Perhaps it's not stopping yet, you can't stop it, but there is a witnessing presence in the background that is observing, for example, that you are going through an anger tantrum. And before there was nobody else, there was only you were the anger. The anger was you, and you were it.

The emotion and the thoughts that accompany, go with the emotion, got complete hold of you, and so that is complete identification. It's a inhabiting and hypnotic state, and you couldn't get out of it. There was no you beyond the mental emotion, and there was no you beyond the emotional pattern.

And then it is possible that even though you may still be going through that dysfunctional pattern, in the background there is a knowing that this is, there's a, there's an aware presence that has, it's looking on. And you can feel there's some witness in the background, and that is the beginning of an awakening. And then the witness grows, the witnessing ability grows, or rather it begins to manifest more fully.

And then you may reach a point where you encounter a similar situation that would usually trigger the reaction, the completely unconscious reaction. You may then reach a point that where awareness has grown to such an extent that you are able to actually have a choice whether you still want to manifest that kind of behavior or not. And then you can let go of it.

That's an enormous thing. When you recognize your patterns in this way and transcend them, go beyond them, in that moment you are fulfilling the very purpose of your life, because the purpose of your life is becoming conscious. But this is aligned with the purpose of the universe.

It wants, it is moving towards more consciousness, fuller consciousness. Becoming conscious in your daily life is the purpose of your life. The primary purpose of your life is to allow this awareness to come through you, and thereby transform the conditioned or the conditioned pattern.

Some may remain the relatively harmless patterns, there are certain idiosyncrasies, characteristics in people that even as more and more awareness comes in, they still manifest certain behaviors that are not not perhaps particularly harmful towards others,

hopefully not towards yourself, although there are accounts of people who became completely awakened and yet didn't let go of certain patterns, like smoking.

It has the one or two famous cases who they continued to smoke and they didn't care anymore. They just, it was a pattern so deeply ingrained in the body, but it didn't interfere with the arising of awareness. That's relatively rare.

No matter how hard I try, I cannot get drunk anymore. That's not totally, I don't try to get drunk. I do enjoy a glass of wine or two, rarely more, and that's fine.

I recommend though, just as the awareness is arising in you, that even relatively small amounts of alcohol could interfere with the arising presence, until the presence is deeply established and you're already embodying presence, in which case you wouldn't even want to indulge in that kind of thing. When I experienced some years ago this smoking, this adjoint, it's called adjoint, I said, oh well, that's interesting, but my normal state of consciousness is so much better. And so I'm peaceful already.

I don't need to dull my senses to feel peaceful. I'm not totally against it. If you occasionally enjoy it, it's fine.

After all, it's only a plant. Anything that you do in excess, of course, is no longer a good thing. Even a good thing is no longer a good thing if you take it too far.

I read about a woman a year ago somewhere who, she learned that drinking water cleanses the body and detoxifies the body, and this thought got hold of her in her mind, and there wasn't any awareness behind it, and this thought became obsessive in her mind, and she drank so much, she thought, if drinking water is good, then drinking more water must be better, and drinking even more water must be even better. So eventually she killed herself through drinking water.

And again, this can happen easily when you get into the grip of one particular thought form that gets hold of you, and then this is not all that uncommon, that this happens on a personal level. It can happen that thoughts, they are little energy formations. They are like little entities with a certain lifespan.

They arise, and then they subside, and they perhaps, they say, don't subside completely, maybe then they go back into some corner, and so on, and other, and you can have strings of thoughts arising in your mind. Now it sometimes happens that just as a viral infection can take over your body, so the virus multiplies quickly, and then you are infected by this virus that is taking over, and then the virus is being fought by antibodies, whatever, the body has enormous intelligence that's in every cell. In the same way that this happens on a physical level with a virus, a thought can infiltrate your mind and have basically the same function as a virus on the physical level.

So some thoughts are mental viruses that take over almost the entire mind. And this, for

example, is the case with people who develop obsessive ideas. The internet doesn't particularly help with that either, because there could be a person who is watching something on YouTube, and so he's taking in things, taking into your mind, and suddenly there's something, something there, and suddenly you take in this mental formation which becomes a virus in your mind that says, wow, now I know how the world works.

This is, they are all doing it. There are many kinds of conspiracy theories are viral infections, mental viral infections. I'm not saying that some may not be actually true, that's another matter.

Because the world is a crazy place. Some may, let's put that aside for a moment. This thought creates other related thoughts, and then whatever they look at, they look at through the screen of that particular thought formation, and they can immediately interpret everything.

Even people who are ideologically possessed by a religion, which means not people who are spiritual in any way, because you can be religious and spiritual, but you can also be religious and only ideological. So the religion becomes only a thought form, and some people are possessed by their religion as a certain thought form, and through which they can look in any situation and immediately interpret it according to this very limited thought form. They know immediately the answer, and mostly the answer of course implies, if you don't believe exactly the same as I believe, you will go to hell.

I know that for sure. And in many cases, these people are already inhabiting a mental hell without knowing it. So be careful.

It's very unlikely that anybody here, and maybe one or two exceptions, would get infected by a mental virus in that way, but you have to be any kind of obsessive thoughts that don't go away. On a relatively insignificant level, it can happen even a simple thing like obsessively thinking one particular thought, or a tune, you can't get rid of a tune that's in your head. It is also a temporary mental virus that you can't let go of it.

Shut up. Other relatively minor forms of this dysfunction are, for example, obsessive kinds of behavior, like you have to go to your light switch or the electricity switch to make sure that you've switched it off. You switch it off when you're about to leave the house, get your key.

Did I really switch it off? Obsessive behavior, again, that's viral infection through persistent thought forms. And again, it happens in the absence of awareness.

So you're at the mercy of thought. Dreadful thing. This is all, this is the downside.

This is the price we have to pay for the amazing thing that is the ability to engage in conceptual thinking. It's an incredible step forward in the evolution of consciousness on

this planet, and yet we can now see, yes, there is a heavy price to pay, and everything has its evolutionary lifespan. So the way I see it, we've come to the end of the identification with thought.

It's gone on for thousands of years. Steve Taylor, in his first book, it's called *The Fall*, which is a history of the human ego. So it goes back thousands of years.

And more and more have we lost touch with that connectedness with who we are beyond this form. So am I saying then that there was a time when humans were enlightened? No, I'm not.

I'm not saying that. But there was a time before we got taken over by this great thing that is thinking, before we began to derive almost our entire sense of identity from the movement of thought. There was a time before that where we lived in a state of much more, in a state of oneness with nature, with ourselves, that there was, we were not anxious beings, anxious about tomorrow, or regretful about yesterday, because there was no tomorrow and yesterday.

Why was there no tomorrow and yesterday? Because tomorrow and yesterday are thought forms. Now, in some minds, you might think, well, if tomorrow and yesterday had an absolute reality, you could go there, you can experience, let's say tomorrow.

Tomorrow is a thought form, because if it were a reality, you would be able to reach or some great explorer at some point would have reached a place called tomorrow and said, I have arrived at tomorrow, it actually exists. But it doesn't, because the moment you arrive in tomorrow, it's today and it's now. So although we need the thought forms of past and future in order to operate in this dimension, of course, that's fine, there's nothing wrong with it.

But ultimately, they have no reality except as thoughts. So for the animal doesn't have that yet. It doesn't think about tomorrow.

It doesn't think about, yes, there is a memory there. But it doesn't operate like the human memory. Many, many ancient cultures have a myth of the Golden Age.

Paradise in the Old Testament is just one manifestation, one version of that myth. They have it in India, they have it in many, many cultures that had no contact with each other. There's a myth as if it were a distant memory, a very distant memory of a time when life flowed with ease and humans were happy.

They sometimes called the Golden Age, the myth of the Golden Age. And I believe there's some reality, it's not just fantasy. There's some reality and there's a distant memory there of what human life was like before the humans began to be dominated by thought.

They were perhaps free of thought, but it was a lower stage of development. They were closer to the animal at that point. And just as your dog is, the dog is usually more joyful than the owner of the dog, because the dog does not think about yesterday and tomorrow and is present.

So the original time of humans as they began to evolve out of other levels of consciousness, so it's not that they were enlightened, but they were relatively free of psychological suffering, or perhaps completely free of psychological suffering, because they had not yet formulated, created the psychological me entity. The Narcissus thing, which is the myth of Narcissus, the man who saw his reflection in a pool of water and then developed an image of who he is, and had a relationship with the image, that had not happened yet. And so that's because it hasn't had not happened yet.

Humans were relatively free of all this turmoil and mentally created, mental emotional suffering. There was some, undoubtedly, there was physical, there may have been some physical suffering. And this is similar to humans, unevolved humans exist even to this day, whose mind is so undeveloped, that they haven't really created an ego yet.

Their mind is not developed enough to have become an egoic identity. And nowadays, because we are, we have more empathy these days, or we can become politically correct, whatever it is, that we say they are mentally challenged, some of them. But there are many kinds of mental challenges.

There's a particular kind of mental challenge that I'm talking about here. And that is a person who doesn't do much thinking because the mind isn't developed enough. So the person goes through life kind of, and some of them are very happy.

In the past, they were called the fool. And every village had a fool, or two or three. And fool would go just smiling and happy.

How are you? I'm great. I'm feeling great.

No problem. No, no problem. Of course, he had no problem because in order to have a problem, you need to start thinking.

So, if you're not thinking, where's your problem? A challenge? Yes, maybe a wild animal is running towards you.

It's a challenge, but it's not a problem. A problem needs time, and a problem needs thought to survive in you. What problem are you having right now?

Right now, what's your problem? What's your problem? Okay, let's see.

Well, it's not here. Yeah, but I have a pain in my knee. No, it's a pain in the knee.

It's not a problem. Yeah, but tonight, I have to make this phone call. No, no, no, no.

What is your problem now? It's very hard to find a problem now. If you're just present in the now.

Yeah, but you have to start thinking and revive all that to know all the challenges that you are going to have tomorrow and next week, and what's going to happen to me next year. Oh my God. What?

The heaviness of all that, the heaviness of that, of myself. You experience yourself as a burden. You carry yourself.

I often see when I look at people not here, and I mean that. I'm not joking. Not so much here, with one or two exceptions perhaps, but I see, I often see people that are carrying the burden of themselves, and it's a heavy burden of their heavy personality with all its conditioning, and they're not happy.

Maybe for very brief instances, after a big meal, maybe they say, ah, or you have a few drinks. Again, every human goes towards that in the brief intermediate state between wakefulness and sleep. As you go towards sleep, you regress to some extent to the pre-conceptual level of consciousness, and if you stay conscious for a moment, you can actually sense that as you are so tired that you can't think anymore about your problems.

Just can't. No matter how hard you try, when you're becoming really tired, I don't remember my problems. I'm just too tired.

And if you keep some alertness in the background, some presence that observes the tiredness, you also observe that you're, it feels as you move towards sleep, it actually feels delicious. Sleep, when you move towards it, has a sweetness, a deliciousness, an enormous pull to it, an enormous pull. It says, come here.

Come. Come. And so you're going, you're going, and so you're going towards the unmanifested.

You're going, it's, you return every night. You die, basically, into dreamless sleep. You, you go into the unmanifested.

It pulls you. It needs, you go, it's like the heartbeat. You go, you go out, the heart goes.

It's like the in-breath and the out-breath. And your consciousness goes out into the manifested, and then something calls you from the unmanifested. Come here.

Enough of that. Now, if you didn't sleep every night, as you know, you would go insane. You can't, you have to go back there.

You have to go back, and it's the same movement. There's the outward movement, and there's a return movement, in day and night, out and return. And most likely, because

the microcosm and the macrocosm are just the reflections of each other, and most likely, the entire universe operates in this way.

Source breathes out. The universe comes into existence, which is the vast time spans of billions of years, and life increases in its complexity and grows and grows. More and more manifestation, complexity, consciousness flowing into form, manifesting through form, dissolving forms, creating better forms, and continuously going out the entire universe.

And then, one, we can reasonably assume, because there's as above, so below, that then the universe experiences also return into complete oneness. So, but let's go back to sleep. So, for a short period of, for short moments, you kind of regress to the pre-thinking state of humanity, as you, in the intermediate stage between wakefulness and sleep.

And so, the fool, the traditional fool in mythology, also, because he has no ego, although he's not intelligent, but because he has no ego, he's more deeply connected with source than humans who have gone out further. And so, in many myths, the fool has an important function. The fool often performs tasks that more developed humans cannot perform.

And that, even in contemporary literature, we have the same with the hobbit, and so on, the hobbit, who is a relatively unintelligent, very cute being, but relatively unintelligent, very simple, a simpleton, but only he can do certain things that the more evolved, the more clever, intelligent, they can't do it. So, the great, the important task is entrusted to the fool, sometimes. And you may want to re-watch movies, like old movies, like Forrest Gump, or the even older movie, Being There with Peter Sellers.

They are about people who exist below the egoic consciousness, and the most miraculous things happen to them. So, life, they're kind of supported by life. So, there's the Golden Age, and now we've come to the end of an evolutionary cycle, and that's the end of the conceptualization cycle, where identity equals mental concept, because it's becoming more and more dysfunctional now, in the same way that the life of a caterpillar is becoming dysfunctional, when just as it's about to become a butterfly, there comes a point in the life of a caterpillar that, when it becomes more and more difficult to continue as a caterpillar, I can't crawl anymore, something's happening to me, I'm unhappy.

What am I doing here? Well, you're meant to be a butterfly, and it's going to happen very soon. What?

Huh? There, of course, the caterpillar doesn't have a choice. Now, with a more evolved level of consciousness that humans have, once a certain amount of consciousness has come in, you need to cooperate with the movement of awakening.

Now, in order to be able to do that, of course, you need to already have the minimum of awareness needs to be there, so that you even know what it is I'm talking about. There are still many humans, when I say awakening or awareness, what are you talking about, awareness? Well, but sometimes these humans, you just have to, you may encounter some of these in your daily life from time to time, humans who seem to be completely unconscious.

Well, it's not that you may encounter, you will encounter every day. And sometimes, be very careful with wanting to teach spirituality to unconscious humans, unless there's a little bit of an opening, a little bit of a question, there may be the right moment, maybe there, when you can say, do you have a voice in your head that never stops talking? At night, when you're worried, isn't that a voice in your head?

Yeah, is that who you are? What do you mean? It could be the beginning of an awakening, or a simple thing like saying, can you feel the energy in your hands?

What? Yeah, close your eyes, hold your hands, and how can you know whether your hands are still there or not without moving their hands or looking at them? Oh, yeah, I can feel there's an aliveness there.

Okay, and then you, this can be the beginning, you can do it to your parents or your whoever, your children, your friend, your ex-husband or wife even, who knows? Maybe they're not as unconscious as they seem to be, who knows? And you're not, you don't tell them you need to disidentify from the conceptual mind.

Feel the energy in your hands, now that works better. Can you feel the energy in your feet also, perhaps at the same time, and maybe even the rest of your body? Are you alive or are you dead?

How do you know? So if you're alive, can you feel that you're alive, or is it just an idea in your head that you're alive? Can you feel the aliveness that pervades your body or not?

Or are you dead already? You sometimes be a little bit provocative, it might work, and so the person suddenly, so instead of talking about mind or stillness, you just direct their attention away from thinking, because you cannot feel your inner body and do a lot of thinking, or really any thinking, at the same time, you cannot. And that's an amazing fact.

This is why the body awareness can be a powerful, very simple way for people who have no interest in spirituality, no interest whatsoever, can become an opening for those people. Or even your breath, take a conscious breath, avoid the word conscious, can you feel yourself breathing? What does it feel like?

This can be done, this should be done at school, every school should have that program. There's a lot that they learn that is useless, and what really matters is not rarely taught

yet, except for individual teachers so far, but it will and must become part of the curriculum as the most important subject, awareness, the most important subject. You might even find a different name for it for the school.

But I mean, there's so much, many children in this mind-dominated world, absurdly conceptualized mind-dominated world, many children at a relatively early age already exist in a state of mental confusion and turmoil. Many children have lost touch with nature, they no longer go out and interact with nature, which is the most vital thing for a growing human being. They spend hours in front of these little screens, a dreadful fate.

Many children don't play anymore outside. In some states of this country, I don't know whether here or it depends probably what area you are in, the world is so crazy. If your child plays alone in the street, they'll come and arrest the parents.

Well, in some cases I can see, yes, the world is a dangerous place, yes, but... So, then children suffer already obesity, because they don't move much anymore, and cannot relate to other humans, because it's all on texting, it's all on their games that they play. We need to counteract all this.

This is our challenge now, in this age, freeing ourselves from the complete dominance by the conceptual mind and the amplification of the conceptual mind through technology, which are these devices, because they are basically the human mind amplified even more, so it becomes even more challenging to deal with. So, we need to develop clear guidelines for bringing up children, so that they do not develop addiction to these things, because even before these things were created, these devices, the digital world, for years I've been saying one of the greatest addictions is not drugs, and so perhaps the greatest addiction is the addiction to thinking. You cannot stop thinking even when you don't need it, and in fact a large percentage of that thinking is of a negative kind that makes your and other people's lives difficult, incredibly difficult, through an excessive, an excess of dysfunctional and useless thinking about yourself, and this, and come to all kinds of weird conclusions about this and that, live inhabiting something, a conceptual reality that you call my life, that makes you unhappy, and you think the narrative that you call your life is your life, it's, so this is why I differentiate between your life situation and your life.

Your life situation exists in time, it has a past and a future, and it's whatever it is in your life that you're dealing with, that's your situation, but it's not your life. Your life is now. Your life is now.

Your life situation has past and future. Now don't let your life be consumed completely by your life situation, which is a conceptual reality. Yes, you need to deal with things in the moment when you can deal with them.

Sometimes you may need to think about them in a focused way, that's fine, but not to be

completely taken over by useless thinking about these things, and again, life situation, life, your life is now. But of course I would like to add one little thing, when you say your life, you say my life, the moment you speak, you create a duality, that's how language operates. My life already implies that there's two of you, there's you who has a life.

My life, there's me and my life, there's two of us here. That's a nice, you can title your autobiography, me and my life. How we get on together, or don't get on.

So you don't have a life, you are life. What are you apart from life? Nothing.

You are life, so you don't have a life, you are life. A manifestation of the one life, a brief manifestation in this form of the one underlying life, which is consciousness. Life evolves, life is the evolving consciousness.

As I see it, life is inherent, and consciousness is inherent in everything that we see, even in a rock. We could call a rock frozen consciousness, in the same way that water, when it freezes, becomes hard and solid, but it's still water. So the mineral realm, the realm of so-called inanimate matter, we could call it frozen consciousness, that vibrates at a different frequency.

Because if you look into so-called inanimate matter, if you're a physicist, and you examine what does this consist, this seemingly dead object, if you go into it, you realize it's not dead at all. There's continuous movement of molecules in motion inside the rock, inside anything, any inanimate object is full of aliveness, it's called, they call it energy, and in between there are vast spaces, there's just 99.9%, 999% empty space, including the physical body, because that's, that is the space between the atoms and molecules, just vast spaces. So everything is alive, solid matter, frozen consciousness, and then you get life, vegetable life, you could say, consciousness becoming like liquid, like liquid water, it's different quality to it, and then you get in consciousness becoming mind, even already the animal mind, the human mind, maybe that could be compared to becoming vapor, vaporized water, we don't want to go too far with these analogies, but just that, so there's only, there's only one life manifesting in different forms, and you are that, so you're not, there's me and there's the rest of the universe, that's the misperception of the ego, here's me, I'm, I've been put in this universe, I've been put here, by who knows how and what, by whom, or I have, accidentally I have appeared here, and here's the rest of the universe, and it's all, everything that I see is other, it's not me, it's not me, not me, this is me, and then you try to extend the me, identify with clothes and possessions, no, that's, my house is me too, I've grown, you are, there's a saying by, I believe it was Alan Watts, spiritual teacher in the 70s, 60s, 70s, he said something like, you are something that the universe is doing in the same way that a wave is something that the ocean is doing, in other words, you're not a noun, you are a verb, ultimately nothing is a noun, everything is an activity of the one life, the one universe, you are something that the universe is doing, just as the wave is not separate from the ocean, the wave is

something that the ocean is doing, so your consciousness is the consciousness of the universe, experiencing itself and experiencing this dimensional reality, there's no separation there, so in addition to being a person for a universe, manifesting briefly as somebody with a name, and a gender, you can change it, but it's still a gender, so manifesting briefly as this or that, and then that dissolves, and then perhaps the same ray of consciousness may persist for a few, manifest again, but ultimately if there's no separation from source, it all emanates from the one source, there's only one life, there's only one consciousness, humans are not autonomous entities, and the clock is at minus six, yes, I've gone beyond the allotted time.

[Speaker 2] (57:45 - 58:04)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle Essential Teachings, the podcast, you can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts, if you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast, join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle, thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The Secret of Manifestation [f81e2dae-2152-408a-82b5-a9662bf13c34]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:43)

The secret of manifestation. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about the aphorism, be careful what you wish for. He says, when we attempt to manifest certain desires in our lives, it's critical we discern whether the motivation is ego-driven or something more profound.

Eckhart encourages everyone to be who they are at the deepest level. He says, anything we achieve on the horizontal plane will also have a downside. Therefore, he encourages us to not get too attached to outcomes.

He says, as we reach a state of deeper consciousness, we learn to transcend the polarities of good or bad, and we simply align ourselves with what is.

[Speaker 3] (0:46 - 1:46)

Hi, Eckhart. Hi, I just, I want to let you know something. I've been visualizing speaking with you in person for many years now, so I've manifested.

It works. Yes, it does. So my question for you today is around the idea of, like right now in my life, I do feel very fulfilled to the point where, you know, I don't really need to manifest really anything, because I really want to be embedded in the being.

But I think part of it is also due to me feeling subconsciously scared to manifest anything, because in the past, when I have tried to manifest anything, most of it came true with a price that I had to pay. Tremendous amount of suffering and awakening to kind of get to where I need to get. So I think a part of me is also afraid to manifest.

So yeah, I just wanted to hear what your thoughts are on that and how I can reconcile that.

[Speaker 1] (1:47 - 13:28)

Yes, thank you. So really, it's two questions. One is the price to pay for when you achieve something.

And the other one is, well, it might not be a question, but a point worth mentioning, as you said, right now, you don't feel the need to manifest anything. Now, let's talk about that first. It's by no means the case that a human being should always be engaged in manifesting.

Sometimes your life unfolds quite well as it is, and you don't need every day to have some kind of new practice to create something new, unless you feel that is what you

want to do. So, and some people are actually, do not manifest consciously in the way that we are talking about here. They are engaged in some kind of activity that at some point, they enjoy it.

There's an enjoyment in what they do. There may be a, that enjoyment is, of course, always comes from a deeper place. And then the activity evolves and suddenly grows into something that bears fruit and grows into something big.

This can easily happen if you find something in your life that you enjoy doing, and that means you're good at it. It may also involve, you have to, of course, be dedicated to it if you feel there's something that you enjoy, whatever it may be, playing music, writing, or even some kind of business that you have, if you enjoy doing it. Then it's very likely that it will grow into something without you necessarily needing to sit down and do manifestation practices or techniques.

And this brings us to also a very powerful point, to be yourself and to know whether what you want to manifest comes from the ego, or whether it comes from a deeper level of yourself is important, of course. So important not to live through a mental image of who you are or who you want to be, and then try to, on the basis of that mental image, try to manifest something in order to make that mental image better. So don't have any mental image of who you want.

Be yourself at the deepest level. Then power is there immediately. Be yourself.

And I believe the same case is quite a few artists and so on, and others may have used manifestation techniques. I know of some sports people who have been very successful through using manifestation techniques. It varies.

So first of all, you don't always need to be manifesting. Sometimes just enjoy what's already here and what you're doing already, and just see where it goes. And that's fine too.

And enjoy the present moment, enjoy the doing, whatever you're doing in the present moment. It's perfectly fine to do that. And there may be periods when manifestation is called for, and then there are other periods when it's no longer needed.

And then a little later, there may be another period when you practice it again, or not. The price to pay is obviously, everything has a... We're in the world of polarities.

Any good thing that you achieve will also have a downside. That's just how it is. And so it's not to get too attached or to believe that it can only be positive.

Every person you meet or start living with, sometimes you have to start living with a person to see his or her downside. Sometimes you just go out on dates, you only see one side. Just the perfect, my perfect partner, quite obviously perfect until you start living

together.

And then you, oh, or any situation that you go into will have a downside. Fame, over the years, I've met quite a few famous people. And some told me that they become, after initial elation, elated at their fame, they became more unhappy than they were before because they lived through an image of they started to believe in the image that the media projected onto them.

It became more and more alienated from their true being. There's always a downside, as you may have read, many lottery winners became very unhappy. The majority of lottery winners, big wins in lotteries, after a few years became extremely unhappy and had very unpleasant life experiences.

So no matter what you achieve, it always exists in the world of polarities. The important thing is polarities are here on the horizontal plane, light and dark, and so on. Whatever the polarities, yin and yang, light and dark, high and low, here.

The important thing for us is to transcend the polarities. You are in a place where I often use the image of a triangle or pyramid. So good and bad are here.

When you are aware or present enough, then your consciousness is not tied to either the good or the bad. It's not reactive anymore. You're no longer identified with either the good.

Ah, I have achieved that me, look at me. You're not identified with the good and you're not identified with the bad. You say, oh, so dreadful, I'm totally, I'm just so devastated, devastated.

So you're identified with the bad, identified with the good. These are very unpleasant places, ultimately. Even identify with the good, it's not going to last.

Therefore, if you are present, your consciousness at the apex, like a pyramid, and here you have, here's the good and here's the bad, but you are here. Or you could invert the triangle in order, because I like the term deeper consciousness. You could say higher consciousness, it's just words.

I actually like the term deeper consciousness. I often talk about the deep eye as opposed to the surface eye. So let's invert this at the good, bad, horizontal plane.

And then you go down an inverted triangle and you are at the point here that is transcendent to good and bad. When you are aware, when you are present, you're at the point of transcendence, which means there's no need anymore to identify with the good when it happens and say it, because if you do, it amplifies your ego. You feel inflated.

Some people, you achieve things, experience actually ego inflation, I call it. And then you

get real. They become very unpleasant people.

They don't even know it. So you can get ego inflation. Or you identify with the negative, then you get ego.

You can either experience ego deflation, but not in a good sense. But many people, even when they identify with a negative experience and negative ego inflation, because the mental image of yourself as a victim of circumstances or a victim of other people or a victim of society or a victim of God, that mental image gets very strong. So you identify with a bad, something bad has happened to you.

You identify with that. That can also strengthen your ego enormously. So in either case, you're alienated from yourself through identification.

So when something good happens, to appreciate it is lovely. To say, oh, thank you, wonderful, thank you. But that's all.

It does not become part of your true identity because the identity you have found that already, even before the good thing happened. That identity is inseparable from connectedness with the present moment, with the presence of you here and now. So you found that already.

So appreciation, yes. Or even a possession. Let's say something is given to you or something beautiful and you buy it.

You can appreciate something, a beautiful possession without neediness or needing to accumulate vast numbers of possessions. No, but an occasional beautiful object or something that you appreciate it. Does it add anything to your identity when you appreciate?

Not necessarily. You can be transcendent to that, appreciate it. Oh, lovely.

Knowing that at some point it will probably leave you or at some point you may enjoy giving it to somebody else. It's easy to let go also when you don't identify with something good. You can easily let go of something that's good and give it to somebody else, which is always a wonderful thing to do.

And when you lose it or somebody steals it, you are not devastated and you tear out your hair. Oh my God, it's gone. I've lost this dreadful, awful.

And then a friend of yours comes to you and says, isn't this time for spiritual practice that you've been talking about for so long? And say, oh, leave me alone with that spiritual practice. Can't you see I've lost this thing that's so valuable?

Don't bother me in spiritual practice. No, this is not the moment. That actually happened to a friend of mine.

So that's transcendent. Transcend polarities. Don't identify with good or bad.

Then you have a point of freedom or let's invert it. Here you are at the deeper eye, deeper eye. Then that's, I assume that was my answer to your question.

[Speaker 3] (13:30 - 13:36)

Yes, yes. Wow. You gave me so much clarity as to what I need to do now.

So thank you.

[Speaker 1] (13:37 - 13:38)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (13:39 - 14:10)

Hi Eckhart, thank you so much for everything that you do and for taking the time to answer our questions. My question is sort of related to the previous question. Actually, I was wondering if instead of focusing on manifesting what I think is my life purpose, if I live a standard life and approach every action in accordance with karma yoga that I've heard you talk about, will my life purpose reveal itself to me?

[Speaker 1] (14:12 - 29:25)

Good, that's also a good question. Karma yoga, maybe not everybody will understand the term. It comes from the Bhagavad Gita.

Wonderful scripture, ancient Hindu scripture, one of the great spiritual books of the world, very deep. There are many translations of the Bhagavad Gita and some leave the term karma yoga untranslated. Now, karma, the Sanskrit term literally actually means action.

It's a law of action and reaction. Yoga is a spiritual practice. So karma yoga is a spiritual practice in action, in activities.

I have about six or seven different translations of the Bhagavad Gita. In one of them, karma yoga is translated as consecrated action. Consecrated action.

It's action that you do, not looking, as again, this is a quote from the actual Bhagavad Gita, not looking to the fruit of the action. The fruit of the action means the outcome, not to focus on the desired outcome, but to give your fullest attention to whatever it is that you are doing in this moment, to give it your fullest attention. So consecrate means one could say, you consecrate it to God or the higher power of the universe, you surrender, surrendered action, consecrated action.

And that is a wonderful way to live. Every moment is self-fulfilling. It implies that you are

not treating this moment or whatever you are doing at this moment as a means to an end, but as an end in itself.

It's radically different from the way most people act. For most people, almost continuously, the present moment is reduced to a stepping stone to some future moment that is believed to be much more important than this one. That's an unconscious mind pattern in most people who have not awakened.

So there's a continuous devaluing of the present moment to a means to an end, and people do it unconsciously. They don't know that that's what they're doing, but that reduces the quality of your life. It reduces the power that otherwise could flow through you into this world.

It reduces also your ability to really create from the deepest level. If you feel fulfilled in your practice of karma yoga, which is honoring fully the present moment and whatever action you're taking in the present moment, knowing, yes, knowing that every action may have a certain purpose, a certain aim, and of course, inevitably the aim of the action is in the so-called future, even the littlest thing, like going to the kitchen, get a glass of water out of the fridge, pouring. Of course, you're pouring the water. Of course, you know why you're grasping the bottle, and you know why you are, because you want to have a glass of water.

Of course, you know what the aim is, but it does not mean that you cannot be fully aware and honor the action that's happening at this moment. So it's a very different way of doing things. And on the periphery of your mind, you know what the aim is.

You know where you're going. You're on a journey. You're, let's say, walking from A to B.

Obviously, you're walking from A to B because you want to arrive at point B. You know that, but you're not focused on arriving at point B. You're focused on the step you're taking at this moment.

That's karma yoga. You're honoring each step, but ultimately, it's only one step. There's only ever the step you're taking at this moment.

You're honoring this step, and you give your fullest attention to this step. Peripherally, of course, you know point B. You're going to point B, but your fullest attention is not there.

Your fullest attention is on this step. So it's fulfilling in itself, and great power comes with that. If you can live like that, it is quite possible that something deeper will emerge from that, like what you call your life purpose.

But I lived like that for quite many years, and basically, I still live like that now, but there was a moment many years ago when I had a feeling that my work was not unfolding sufficiently or almost too slowly. I was practicing karma yoga, just living in the present,

but there was a sense of, okay, this, I knew there's a spiritual teaching coming through. There's a spiritual power coming through.

I also knew that I was only reaching a handful of people. I was seeing people in private spiritual sessions. Occasionally, I would do a workshop for 10 people or so on average.

Once I did a workshop in England. I was living in England. Only one person turned up.

I did it anyway. So I had this feeling that I needed to do something to enable this power to come through more fully so that, yes, I was surrendered, and then I found myself in a village church in England. I've told the story before.

In Somerset, in a little church, old, 800-year-old, this wonderful little church that every English village has, an empty church, and I sat there, and suddenly I felt inspired to say, to tell something to the consciousness, although not separate from consciousness, but it was manifesting something. I want acceleration, please, I said. Acceleration of the work was implied.

I want acceleration, acceleration. I meditated on acceleration in that empty church. And then this thought of acceleration stayed with me for a while, and then it disappeared.

And a few weeks later, a change happened, and I suddenly felt a deep impulse that I had to move to the West Coast of North America, and I didn't know why, but it was all connected with the power of now and so on. I didn't connect these things at first, the impulse to move. It came because I had made a demand, I had a request.

Otherwise, I was completely surrendered to the present moment, but I felt, so if it comes to you, to connect it with your question, if it comes to you, then you may feel inclined or not to contribute some direction to where life is going. It doesn't mean you're separating yourself because you are not separate from the totality. So if you feel totally fulfilled in your karma yoga, that's perfectly fine.

It is possible that something deeper will emerge that you might call your life purpose. It is also possible that your life purpose is to continue to practice karma yoga no matter when and where. That in itself is a wonderful contribution to human consciousness, because I call that a frequency holder.

Some humans are not interested in creating very much out there. They're not interested in, they don't feel any urge from within to manifest anything in particular, except what's already there in their lives. These are human beings.

I've met quite a few of them. Some live close to nature. Some work as gardeners.

Some are artists. They might do things with their hands, pottery, sculpture, other things. And they're fine with that.

Their function is to be present in what they do completely. And that is their life purpose. That is another life purpose, is to be a frequency holder, which is to embody presence in whatever you do, even if on the surface it looks like something small.

It's not small. Anything into which presence flows is not a small thing. Your so-called consciousness, which is not yours, let's just call it that, your consciousness is connected to the totality of human consciousness.

And human consciousness is one aspect of universal consciousness. So you cannot not affect other humans, even if you lived in solitude as a hermit, your state of consciousness would still affect the totality of human consciousness with which you're always connected. So there have been throughout history, humans who embodied this state of what I call frequency holder.

That means that what they do is they hold the frequency of presence. This has been a tradition, and unfortunately in the Western world, this has been almost lost because it's not regarded as anything that is part of the already existing social structures that we have in the Western world. If you go back a few hundred years, you had monasteries on convents and the frequency holders, people who felt they didn't want to go out into this world and achieve things, they would go into a monastery.

And some of them probably were present, not all of them. There were others who are very much ego dominated, that's always, but that's another story. But there were social structures like monasteries that gave people a place who felt they just wanted to be devoted to God or just to prayer and God.

And then very few monasteries actually survive in the West these days, convents, they're all closing down. So there's not an established place for frequency holders in the Western world anymore. In India, there's been an uninterrupted tradition going back thousands of years for people to recognize, society recognizes there and always has those humans who feel called upon to withdraw from the world and just embody consciousness or presence.

And they still exist in India and they're not regarded as crazy. Whereas in the West, they would probably regard it as crazy or something very wrong with them and they don't have a place here. So don't underestimate the importance of frequency holders.

And if you are a frequency holder, that's fine. Even there, you have a challenge. The challenge is to remain conscious and presence.

If your life becomes too regulated, if you've got too much into a daily routine, let's say you're a gardener and you care for your flowers and plants every day and you're present in everything you do, it's just wonderful. The challenge is to remain presence after a few years of not being challenged by anything. Without knowing it, your level of

consciousness could go down because nothing has challenged you.

But usually even frequency holders will sooner or later get challenged by events. If you practice, coming back again to your question, if you practice karma yoga, consecrated action, and you feel that it's fulfilling, then either this will continue or something will emerge out of that, which is also not uncommon, that something will emerge, something that suddenly you know what you have to do or create in this world. If you feel some kind of, something is still, something wants to emerge, but it's not emerging fully, you might give it some help with a few affirmations that you might have, that your purpose is unfolding beautifully and easily.

You have the purpose in this world and you can continue to be a frequency holder, to continue to practice karma yoga. And at the same time, you could have very gentle affirmations that your life purpose is unfolding and flowering. And so, you have to find your own affirmations.

This is not incompatible with karma yoga. So, would you like to comment on what I said? Does it make sense?

[Speaker 2] (29:26 - 29:58)

Yes, absolutely. Thank you so much. I guess I was sort of on the path of working towards what I taught, maybe my life purpose, but I came across a lot of obstacles.

I know you've talked about obstacles, but there were several obstacles over several years. So, I was just wondering, I wanted a sign, I wanted to kind of let it go and see if it comes back to me rather than kind of pushing, like going out and pushing for it again.

[Speaker 1] (29:59 - 38:12)

Could you give one example of such an obstacle? Oh, it's mostly other people. Oh yes, I'm sure many people are familiar with those obstacles.

That's one of the greatest challenges for most humans is other humans. One of the great sources of sometimes joy, but very often also suffering is other humans. Problems, if you ask, what problems do you have?

Many people, the first thing that comes to their mind is some other human or several of them. So, our challenges, good point, I'm glad I asked. Our challenges often come in the form of human beings, other humans.

And that is also very helpful. Sometimes the people that irritate you most are those that are most helpful to you in the evolution of your consciousness. It doesn't mean that you need to actually stay with every obnoxious person that you meet and you say, no, I can't remove myself from him or her.

Well, sometimes you can remove yourself from an obnoxious person and it's the right thing to do. At other times, especially if it's family members with whom you have this karmic link, that's good practice because family members, it's not so easy to say, oh, I don't want to see you again, go away. Well, some people do that.

But depending on your culture, the culture you come from, in some cultures, family is still sacrosanct. Family is very important. In the West, I know people who often they haven't seen their siblings in years because they can't stand them.

But it's more difficult if it's family members than very helpful, very useful for spiritual practice to stay conscious, stay present when you come together with family members, especially if they criticize you, as they may do or whatever it is that they tell you. Even parents, if you are grown up but then you still have to meet your parents and your parents may not agree with your life, may not constantly still want to interfere. Maybe your mother or father will still want to control you because they can't give up their role of mother and father.

All these things that you can deal with as part of your spiritual practice. And this is why Ram Dass said, as you may know, Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher said, if you think you're so enlightened, go and spend a week with your parents. Very good advice because that will give you feedback as to your state of consciousness.

How do you deal with your parents? For two weeks, you're stuck there. Now, of course, some people have very conscious parents, a few, I haven't met many, but actually it is more common these days.

I have met a few younger parents who are endeavoring to bring up their children consciously and to endeavoring to live together as consciously as possible. I've met quite a few because of the people I come into touch, into contact with. It's still a minority, of course.

But if I go back to when I was a child, I can't think of any conscious parents at that time. The people, parents who were consciously endeavoring to live consciously, that was unheard of when I grew up many years ago. People didn't even know what it meant to be conscious.

So be thankful to other humans for being difficult. If they are absolutely unbearable or they become violent or whatever, then of course you have to remove yourself. But if it's inevitable, then you be with them, practice or you transcend all reactivity and can be loving, being in a state of loving kindness, although they are not.

One last thing, often people tell me that, they complain that my mother, my father, they don't understand me at all. They don't understand anything. Whenever I go, they don't understand me.

And they suffer a lot because their mother or their father don't understand what they're, the complete separation. They're trying to explain what their value, what they consider important spiritual values or whatever. Parents just don't understand, they just criticize.

I often hear those stories. And of course my advice is, if anybody doesn't understand you, give up the assumption or the belief that you need them to understand you. And that it would actually make any difference to your life if they did understand you.

It's a thought in your mind that says, I need them to understand me. No, you don't. You can be, you don't need them to be fully, to understand you, to be fully yourself.

You don't need them to recognize who you are because you know who you are. So you're not dependent on anybody's understanding. It's an enormous liberation when you can give up the need to be understood by other people.

That need was actually always just created by the egoic mind. Imagine imaginary scenario, you're with your parents or your mother or whatever. And your mother traditionally always criticized you and said, I don't know what you're doing with your life or whatever.

And suddenly imagine your mother says, oh no, I really appreciate what you do. I can understand it now. Does it really make a difference?

A moment ago, let's say she said, well, all you're doing is wrong. Your whole life is wrong. And then let's say, then she changes her mind and then says, oh, now I understand you.

Makes no difference one or the other ultimately to who you are. And that's an enormous liberation of not needing to be understood. And that's only one aspect of course, of other people and the many challenges that can arise with other people.

Not surprisingly, I've quoted him before. What is such a lovely quote. I think I even wrote it in a book.

The philosopher example, Sartre, a French philosopher said, hell is other people. And that's the English translation. I think in the original French, he just, it reads as, hell is the others.

Les autres, hell is the others. So it was the others, hell. And of course to the ego, it is very often.

Heaven and hell, because to the ego, the other is sometimes regarded as heaven too for a while. And then you get married and live together and suddenly it's hell. Not always, but often.

Heaven and hell, the others. Let's have a moment of stillness. Thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 4] (38:14 - 38:33)

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Eckhart Tolle The Shift : From Thinking to Awareness [9fbddd3f-209c-4fdc-bce6-8916d8ea4b1e]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:29)

The shift from thinking to awareness. In this podcast, Eckhart asks a live audience, what are you certain of? After some discussion, they conclude very little.

He references philosophers throughout history who've said life is a dream and our individual lives fleeting. Eckhart explains there's a deeper consciousness beyond the dream and beyond the person. He says we will experience transcendence when we make the shift from thinking to awareness.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 28:47)

Thank you and welcome, everybody, wherever you are. Oprah, I don't know if she still asks that question she used to or still asks the question, what do I know for sure? She's been asking people that question for some years.

And usually, of course, people answer with their belief or conviction or some realization, whatever it may be. Ultimately, though, if you go deeper or higher, there's very little that you can be sure of, almost nothing. For example, is this world real?

Well, I'm not sure. Nobody can be sure. Philosophers have been thinking about this for centuries, millennia, since ancient Greeks even.

What is the reality of this world? Is it just a dream? An ancient theme of philosophers and writers, is this world a dream?

Ancient, the old Spanish writer, Calderon de la Barca said, La vida es sueño, it's one of his famous plays, life is a dream. And many have said that it is a kind of dream because everything that appears here now in your experience dissolves very quickly like a dream. So if you can't be sure even of the reality of this world, then what is left to be sure of?

Well, of course there is something left, and that is yourself, you. Or when you say I, you can be sure that you are. So talking in the first person, I can be sure that I am.

You cannot doubt it. You cannot doubt the beingness of you. Whatever arises in the beingness of you can be doubted.

It could be like a smoke or vapor, unreal, dissolves quickly. But even if it is a dream, there must be a consciousness in which the dream happens. There must be a light of consciousness in which the dream is known.

Otherwise it wouldn't be there. So even if the whole world is illusion, there must be a consciousness in which this illusion appears and disappears continuously. And that is the

being, and that is you as the perceiving and experiencing consciousness, presence.

You are, whether you are a person, that's already something that you can doubt. That could be part of the dream, of course. Being a person is perhaps a fleeting dream that consciousness is having, and it dreams to be Eckhart for a while, or whoever, name it, whatever your name is.

It has this dream, and then it disappears. It could be, I'm not saying it is, but it could be. It kind of is.

And so you can doubt that you exist as a person, that your existence as a person has any absolute reality. But you cannot doubt that that which underlies the person, the being of you, the presence, the conscious presence, you cannot doubt that that is there. Everything else can be doubted except I am.

And this is known directly. Here and now, it is known directly, becoming conscious of the fact that you are conscious, or not so much of the fact, because it sounds a little abstract. A fact is something abstract.

Becoming conscious that you are conscious, to know that you, right now, that you are conscious. You don't know what it is that is conscious. It doesn't really have a name.

The name comes later. And it doesn't have a form, really. The form comes later.

Prior to all this, there is a presence. When you look at something like here, then this is what appears in the visual terms in the presence. And sometimes when something disappears from your perceptual realm, some vision that you, something that you see, you close your eyes for a moment, and then your vision disappears.

Sometimes in the moment that something disappears from your sense perceptions, or you hear a sound and suddenly the sound stops. In that moment, when suddenly something disappears, it is possible a bit more easily to catch yourself as the underlying consciousness, which no longer has an object in it, because the object that appeared in consciousness has dissolved. You close your eyes for a moment and your entire visual perception is gone.

But then you can, in that moment, you can become aware that there is an underlying presence. Then when you open your eyes again, then you can easily lose touch with this underlying presence, because you are captivated, seduced, hypnotized by that which appears. So you lose awareness of the primordial reality of the being that is prior to all appearance.

So it's very easy then to, this is the world. The world draws yourself, draws you out of yourself. And then the consciousness identifies with all kinds of disguises.

It's disguised in numerous disguises. You yourself, the person that you are, are a disguise that consciousness assumes temporarily. So the world impinges upon you and makes demands and says, look at this, look at this, give attention to this.

And of course, continuously you're drawn here and there. And even when you're alone in your room, nothing happening externally, things are still happening in your mind. Thoughts come and say, think about this.

This is so important. We must follow up this thought. And then you lose yourself in all kinds of trains of thought.

And then again, seduced by the gravitational pull of thought and sometimes thought combined with heavy emotion, a huge, very powerful combination. So you're in the grip of an emotional, mental, emotional, gravitational pull. And you don't even know it because you're so identified with it.

So you don't know that you are anymore. You are completely identified with the appearances, temporary appearances. So when something disappears, there's a moment when it's a little bit easier to catch yourself as the presence, to become aware of yourself as the consciousness, as the presence.

Another example I could give, music is very interesting, sound and music. Sakuhachi is a Japanese bamboo flute. A very simple instrument is just a bamboo with holes in it.

But when it's played by a master, it's amazing. It's usually improvisation. Somebody is completely present.

And so he's playing this bamboo flute and there are gaps in between the sounds. Sometimes the sound arises, a sound subsides. And then if you learn to become aware of the gaps between the sounds of this flute, this is just one example, certain types of piano music can do the same, et cetera, et cetera.

But if you become aware of the gaps between the sounds in that gap, when the auditory perception disappears, it is easier to be aware of yourself as the underlying conscious presence in which suddenly the sound is dissolved and what is left, just the presence. So there are certain things that can help you in this world. And one of those things is the disappearance of things.

And on a larger scale, because we've just been talking about the temporary disappearance of little things, sounds and images and so on. On a larger scale, the disappearance is the experience of some kind of loss in your life. So when something disappears, it's not just a sound that subsides.

It's not just an image that was there a minute ago and the visual image disappears. Now, there are other kinds of disappearances that are much, much bigger. And that is the

disappearance of something significant that had been significant in your life.

For example, some big loss in your life of something that was extremely important to you as a person, as a human being. It could be the loss of your home or possessions. It could be the loss of your job.

Suddenly you don't have a job anymore. And then if you don't have a job anymore and your identity was to a large extent bound up with your function as this particular person, then not only the job disappears, but also your self-image begins to crumble because who are you without that function in societal function? And this is sometimes people experience that when they reach retirement age and suddenly they've been looking forward to it for a long time, but suddenly their entire function disappears, which they had given them their identity.

And who are they now? So they lose all that suddenly. Loss can also come somebody close to you dies or some big disruption in your life through some kind of accident, loss of abilities, physical abilities in the body and so on, big loss.

There too, this is usually regarded as extremely painful and extremely undesirable. But here too, there is something that potentially can open up when something that was important to you, very important, is suddenly removed. It disappears.

At first usually leads to some kind of suffering, sometimes intense suffering. And then it's possible for humans to surrender into that loss, no longer resist it because they can see the futility of resisting something that has already happened. It already is.

And they reach a point of deep acceptance. And then again, the disappearance of something, it could be even a person close to you, extremely painful at first, for a while perhaps. And then you may come to a point of acceptance and then this disappearance leaves behind an openness, an open space.

And that is the redeeming feature of all loss, the possibility that it can bring about a realization in you of that which is beyond form because all loss is the loss of some form. And if a form dissolves in your life, so we started with just a sound, even a sound is a formation, a sensory formation. But then we went on to something bigger.

So the loss of form opens up the possibility of recognizing or awakening to the formless transcendent dimension in yourself, which is also the transcendent dimension of the universe because you are a microcosm of the entire universe. So loss is something that you can't do without it on the spiritual path. And of course, everybody gets it sooner or later or from time to time, periodically, everybody gets it, but not everybody is able to recognize this as an opportunity.

Most people are not yet because nobody teaches that at school. And even in old people's homes and senior residences, they don't teach that, nobody seems to know about it.

When death approaches or you can see it approaching or even you become aware that you are mortal because many people don't realize that they are mortal except as an abstract fact in their minds, but it's not a living realization that they are going to die fairly soon because even a few decades is fairly soon.

So when you become aware of mortality, again, the possibility of loss, a big loss, the whole, your whole body is gone, that again, the approach of mortality can be a wonderful opportunity for awakening to the formless, the formless dimension. And this is the I am, this is what we started with, the realization of yourself as presence, has no form. Presence is, has no location, it's not actually in you.

It just seems to be. All the great teachings is about the transcendent dimension, discovering it as the formless, the kingdom of heaven, Jesus' kingdom of heaven. As you know, in my translation, it's translated as, I translate it as the dimension, kingdom, the dimension of spaciousness, like the sky, vast spaciousness.

It's a dimension of consciousness, like discovering that emptiness, the Buddha's emptiness, sunyata, same thing, spaciousness, emptiness, formlessness. And the discovery of that in yourself, so to speak, is what we call awakening, that's one term you can use, that is the awakening, that is in Buddhist terms, the end of suffering, and that's the psychological suffering he talks about, the suffering that is always there when you only know yourself as a person, a form identity. You have no other identity than this form identity, and that is suffering, complete lack of realization of the transcendent dimension within yourself and thereby the universe.

And this lack is a life of suffering when you only know yourself as this limited conditioned person, and you don't know yourself as the underlying consciousness or awareness, the formless. So the Buddha says, Dukkha, everything is suffering, no matter where you go and what you do and what you achieve and what you have, very quickly you will find Dukkha, it's hiding behind every experience, suffering, as long as you only know yourself as a person, which the Buddha calls the self, the delusion of the self. And when that delusion is removed, your identity is derived from the underlying presence or consciousness.

Then the person still has its ups and downs, and you have a little bit of emotion when things go well, and when things don't go well, you say, oh, well, that's sad that it didn't go well, but it doesn't go very deep anymore, the suffering. On the surface, you'd still have a few highs and lows, but nothing devastates you anymore. It's not when some big loss happens, it's no longer devastating, ah, real suffering.

So Buddha points to the possibility of recognizing the unreality of the self, which is the person. Same thing with Jesus. Deny thyself.

Recognize, in other words, that it is ultimately not real. That's the liberation. In Christian

Jesus Christ, it's called salvation.

What are you saved from in that salvation? You are saved from yourself. The troublemaker, the problem maker, the heaviness of the me, saved from yourself.

So it's all very simple. It's not complicated at all. The mind may try to make it complicated.

I haven't quite figured it out yet, how to transcend the self. I need to read a few more books about this. I've been thinking about this for a long, long time.

Can't quite get it. Of course you can't, because you're thinking about it. The realization comes when, and this is the most important disappearance, because we've been talking about disappearances.

The most important disappearance is the disappearance of thought as the primordial forms that arise, thought forms. But it is not a falling below thought where you become unconscious. It's rising above thought.

You become more present and more alert. And you discover in yourself the ability to be free of thought for moments that gradually become longer, although the moment itself has no time. You can be free of thought and be fully conscious, fully here, but no naming, no conceptualizing, no mental noise making, the ability to be free of thought.

This is the ultimate disappearance. It all comes down to the cessation of streams of thinking that for most people never stop, except in dreamless sleep. Fortunately, they still have that.

Of course, without dreamless sleep, humans would go insane, but in their daily life, there's not a moment of freedom. So the great disappearance is the disappearance of having to think all the time. Having to think, can't stop it.

Now, the thing is you can't exert willpower and stop yourself from thinking. That doesn't work, but you can be so present that thoughts don't arise. The example I gave in the power of now, it's just come back to me.

I gave the example of a cat. If you've ever observed a cat watching a mouse hole, the cat is watching a mouse hole because the mouse may come out any second now. So the cat is so alert watching this mouse hole, nothing else is there, just that alertness.

And so I use that example and then I say to them, let's, you can do it here. If you were that cat and you see you're so alert and say, let's see what the next thought is that's going to come into my head because the next thought is a mouse. What's the next thought that's going to come into my head?

And you're so alert for the next thought that the next thought doesn't come because

you're too alert for another thought to come until it does come at some point. But even just a few seconds of that is an interesting experience or realization. And it's such freedom to be able to just walk around this world and perceive things without interference of thought, except when you need it and it's there.

And even sometimes when you don't need it, it's still, yes, all kinds of thoughts go through your head, but they no longer have that grip on you. They no longer cause you untold suffering because the greatest part of suffering, if not all, is caused by your thoughts about things plus emotions, but thoughts about situations, not the situation, it's your thought about the situation causes the suffering. That was already discovered by the ancient little known, unfortunately, Greek philosopher Epictetus who said literally that, that what causes you suffering is your thought.

In other words, the unobserved mind, the unobserved mind, which means thought activity, but no awareness. Every thought draws you in completely, dreadful fate. And then you have to identify with one thought and you have to exclude others.

You cannot hold two thoughts because without awareness, you identify with one. Let's give one contemporary example. In America at the present time, a certain segment of the population says the whole history of the United States is just horrible.

We've done such horrible things. True. The other side says it's been the most remarkable and unbelieving thing that never happened before that people have shown many places have come together and created such a vigorous dynamic civilization that did so many things, brought so much creativity and so much good into this world.

My mother thought so because after the war, she met Americans who were coming into Germany and they were all wonderful. They were the best, the most wonderful soldiers. My mother, they were the Americans that were coming in.

They were giving out food. Everybody were kind and wonderful. You have that also.

You have, on the one hand, it's a dreadful place and the other one, it's a wonderful place. Both are true. And you have to, only if you're aware, you can hold two seemingly conflicting things together and see the truth is somewhere in between.

You don't have to identify yourself completely with one or the other and then derive some egoic satisfaction from that. And again, I gave the example of soldiers and Americans in Germany, and then you've got the destruction of Iraq and totally pointless, completely absurd. You have polarities everywhere in this world.

Without awareness, you're lost in thought and you're lost in mental positions. And then the mental positions become more and more pronounced and then they become collective mental positions and then people start fighting. So before we go on to the questions, if I had to summarize the entire teaching and everything, maybe all spiritual

teachings, it's discover in yourself the ability to be free of thinking for moments, certain moments and gradually longer moments, and being aware.

A shift from always thinking to awareness, shift from thinking to awareness. That's the whole essence of it. Polarities are everywhere, good and bad, light and dark, polarities.

The polarities cannot be transcended. Here, you've got yin and yang, good and bad, whatever it is, any polarity here. Now, how do you transcend?

You're either here or you're either there. The line becomes a triangle. The apex of the triangle is awareness.

Then you have transcended the polarities and you can allow them to be, but you're not tied to one or the other. Let's have the first question.

[Speaker 3] (28:49 - 29:12)

Thank you for all the teachings. You know, now I go in little bit deep into this knowledge and what I am wondering is the consciousness, does it live in your body or it just come and go? Like just you said, presence is not in you, it seems that way.

So I was just wondering.

[Speaker 1] (29:13 - 41:00)

Thank you, thank you. I understand the question. Now, ultimately, although this may not be immediately understandable to everyone, ultimately, what we perceive as inside and outside is not actually the reality.

Ultimately, it would be more true to say, and this is an interesting way of looking at reality, to say that there is nothing outside of you. I suggest this as a kind of experiment. How does that change the way in which you perceive the world and people?

I'm not asking you to answer the question, it's just a question that you can ask yourself and find out how does it change the way in which you have your experiences if everything that you experience is actually inside of you? Or there's no inside and outside, it's only consciousness. But temporarily, let's say, as it does, for example, in the course in miracles, it says there is nothing outside of you because everything that you experience as a world appears in consciousness and you are consciousness.

Is this consciousness confined to this body and this brain? It seems to be, but it is not. Many people believe that consciousness is a by-product of brain activity, that brain activity produces consciousness.

And our civilization mainstream believes that mainstream belief is that the material world is all that it is real. And people don't really know what to say about consciousness.

Even many scientists do not have an answer.

They do not know what consciousness is, but they do believe that whatever it is, it's produced by the human brain. But the greatest scientists actually did not believe that from Albert Einstein to other scientists like Max Planck and Heisenberg and many others, actually, they saw how enigmatic and mysterious reality actually is when you go into the atomic and subatomic realm. And they assumed, they said this literally, that Einstein, that there is an intelligence behind the world of appearances.

There is an overriding vast intelligence behind, this intelligence is the organizing principle behind the arising of form. And Einstein said, this intelligence is so, of such vast superiority to anything that humans could think of or do, that all human thinking and human doing is only a pale reflection of this vast intelligence that analyze everything. And Max Planck said, the physicist said something similar.

There is an intelligence behind existence, he said, that is a matrix of all existence, which means that it is the source of all existence. So the organizing principle behind the arising of all life forms. So it is not confined to the brain.

It is, in fact, the way I see it, consciousness has manufactured this physical brain in order to use it as an avenue of expression into this dimension. It's like a focal point of consciousness. It focalizes consciousness.

And every living being is a focal point of, billions of focal points of consciousness into this dimension. So when you make a huge tragedy in our contemporary world, which has come about through certain discoveries, which were probably, you could say, misinterpreted. For example, the discovery of the evolutionary theory of Darwin.

Darwin was right when he discovered that life forms evolve. That is, there's a huge evolutionary process on this planet which started off with lifeless rocks. And then gradually, life forms began over millions and millions of years.

Life forms began to evolve. And the misperception is, which is still, everybody has seeped into everyone's consciousness almost in this contemporary world, that this process of evolution was entirely random, a blind process of trial and error where the strongest eventually survives. But it's all, according to this theory, it's all trial and error.

There is no intelligence behind it, according to this theory of evolution. And this is a tragic mistake because it has removed from human beings the possibility, from many human beings, the possibility of experiencing this universe as a living entity and everything in this universe as having a life spirit within it. Everything, ancient people still had their perception, although they might not have perceived it quite correctly, but the universe was still alive when ancient people in, no matter where, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, wherever, when they went out into nature, nature had a soul.

Everything in nature was perceived as conscious beings. And that is closer to the truth, although not entirely true in the way in which they perceived it. It's closer to the truth in which modern humans experience the world as ultimately devoid of soul, devoid of intelligence.

It's lifeless matter, ultimately. They cannot feel the aliveness of the universe anymore. This is why humans have lost touch with nature because they have lost the ability to empathically connect with nature and sense the inherent aliveness in a flower or a tree.

They could not sense that behind the sensory perception of this tree or the sensory perception of this flower, that is not the ultimate reality. Behind it, there is a living spirit, which is consciousness, which has assumed the form of this entity, a temporary form. But they cannot sense this anymore, that behind the word of appearances, there is a living intelligence.

Ultimately, it's one living being that incarnates through countless forms. And when you can no longer perceive the universe as being essentially alive and vastly intelligent, then you inhabit a dead world that has become dead and you become dead inside because you can no longer feel that in yourself either. You cannot feel that there's more to everything that you perceive than meets the eye.

It's an English expression, English language expression. There's more to it than meets the eye, which refers to sensory perception. It's not just the eye, it's other sensory perceptions too.

So there's more to everything that you perceive than meets the eye. There's more to you than meets the eye when you look in a mirror, or than that meets the eye when you think about yourself, that's the inner eye of the me. So there's infinitely more in a way one could say, all you perceive with sensory perception is a surface layer, surface level of reality.

And behind that, there is, as Max Planck, the physicist said, a intelligent and conscious spirit. And he said, then that is the matrix of all matter. Even matter arises out of that.

So it's not my consciousness. It does not originate in me. There's only one vast consciousness.

There isn't my consciousness and your consciousness. There's one consciousness. You are, I am a temporary disguise of this one light, the light of consciousness.

And therefore one could say there's nothing, there's nothing outside of you, because whatever you perceive in this so-called reality is perceived in the light of consciousness. Everything is happening in the light of consciousness. And you are that, you are that.

So essentially, and that's another interesting way of looking at it, essentially you are

invisible. You are not, the essence of who you are is completely invisible. No scientist could find you if the scientist cuts open your body.

The scientist is not going to find you. The scientist, by cutting open your brain, is not even going to find a single memory. Whereas you have countless memories.

You remember your mother. You remember your father. And a scientist can cut open with the most powerful microscopes.

You cannot find your mother or your father in your brain. And you yourself, if you can sense that, you begin to lose your fear of death. If you can sense that your essential reality is invisible, and you can sense that as the invisible presence that you are, that is the beginning of becoming free of the fear of death.

Because that does not die, it's not subject to birth and death. It's wrong to say life and death. Usually people say there's the opposite, it's life and death.

That's not right. The opposite of death is birth. There's birth and death.

There's not life and death, because life does not have an opposite. There's birth and death, but there's not life and death. Life is eternal.

And you are an essential part of that eternal life. You are that. I am that, as the ancient Indian knew.

I am that.

[Speaker 3] (41:02 - 41:04)

Thank you. Feel more alive.

[Speaker 2] (41:05 - 41:27)

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Eckhart Tolle The Soul of The World [38b5cbd0-ddc4-41b8-b55e-75675a2494da]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:01)

The soul of the world. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the soul of the world, which in Latin translates to anima mundi. He says when we awaken to the transcendent dimension within ourselves, we are then able to discover the soul of the world as our own soul.

Eckhart says that's the essence of all spirituality and is the primary reason we are here. Eckhart then answers questions on a variety of subjects. A woman asks, what is the functional purpose of becoming more aware?

Eckhart explains there are many benefits to awakening. The most obvious is that our lives get easier and more enjoyable. Another audience member asks about the states of consciousness generated during dancing, drumming, and meditation.

She's deeply aware of the inner world, but not the outer. She wants to know if that is the same transcendent dimension Eckhart discusses so frequently. He says we must keep a foot in both worlds because the art of living requires this balance.

[Speaker 1] (1:03 - 40:09)

So this soul of the world anima mundi, there's another word for it that is in Greek philosophy, ancient Greek philosophy, logos, logos, l-o-g-o-s, logos. Logos is, again, refers to the underlying intelligence in the universe. It is unfortunately translated in various places, including the New Testament, as the Word.

You may, if you, I don't know how many people these days read the Bible, or if you, right, at the beginning of the Gospel of John, it says, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was, I actually have the Bible here, I might read it to you, and the Word was God, and the beginning was the Word. So people, nobody really knows what that is, the Word of God, okay. It all started with a word.

It's a little strange. Where did that word come from? I mean, what is a word?

It's a thought that you utter, so why not say thought? That might be a little bit closer to the truth. So the logos is, in ancient Greek philosophy, points to the same underlying reality or intelligence.

It's not, it doesn't mean logic or anything like that. These are relatively superficial things. I'm going to read to you my translation of, well it's not in here, I'm just changing it as I read it, which is the beginning of the Gospel of John.

If you read it rightly, it's quite powerful and deep. I haven't done this very often before, reading from the Bible. I mean, I read it at home, so quite, I've been reading it for 65 years, but, so here it says, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

So what happens here is, he refers back, he takes this term logos, which is translated as a word from ancient Greek philosophy. So the author, John, obviously was familiar with ancient Greek philosophy, so he used that term that was already known to philosophers. And then it was translated into various languages, first into Latin, it was translated as verbum, which means word, and then into other languages, word.

Then, after this short chapter that tells you how the logos operates, I'm going to read it to you in a minute, then the next step is the logos, the underlying intelligence that gives rise to everything, is then personalized and equated with Jesus Christ. Christianity then comes out, was originally Greek philosophy, he established a connection, and so then Jesus is then regarded as the personification of the logos, the consciousness of the universe. Now I'm going to read to you, substituting word with consciousness, and see what it, whether it makes sense, better sense than the word.

In the beginning was consciousness, and consciousness was with God, and consciousness was God. It was in the beginning with God, all things were made through it, and without it was not anything made that was made. In it was life, and the life was the light of man.

So the consciousness underlies all creation, everything that ever came into existence arose out of divine consciousness, that is the creative principle, that is the emanation of God is the creating consciousness. That's quite simple. And then I looked around in the Bible for a few more years, and then after a few years I came across this passage.

I don't read it all the time, that's why it took so many years to find. There is a term called wisdom in the various places in the Old Testament that is used in a deeper sense than what we conventionally understand as wisdom. And wisdom in that sense is the same function, the same thing as the consciousness or the logos.

Wisdom as something not in something in human beings that leads to wise actions, wisdom as something as a force that exists in the universe. And so, just to end this peculiar discourse of mine, wisdom here in the book of Proverbs, wisdom is speaking, wisdom itself speaks as the consciousness. God possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.

Ages ago, so it's personalized wisdom, ages ago I was set up at the first, before the beginning of the earth, and here it says earth, but it refers to the entire universe. I was set up at the beginning of the earth, when there were no depths, I was brought forth. When there were no springs abounding with water, before the mountains had been

shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth.

Before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world, when he established the heavens, I was there. When he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limits, so that the waters might not transgress his command, he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was beside him like a master workman.

I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world, and delighting in the children of man. Like a master workman, so that is the creative principle that emanates from God and brings about creation, that here it's called wisdom, but again comes back, it is again according to this also, it's quite like that, it is your task to find that, to access that, to realize that within yourself. It all comes to the same thing, there's so many pointers that sound different, all pointing to the same.

So it is your task, our task, the human task, to discover, awaken to that dimension within themselves. Then you discover the soul of the world as your own soul. And that's the essence of all spirituality, and that's the essence of why we're here.

And it all comes back down to the cessation of thinking without falling asleep. To achieve mastery in any endeavor, you have to have some access to that state, if only briefly, because there are many, there are masters in various fields. If they are masters, there is an element there, they're not just good in terms of technique, or whatever it may be, there is a creative element to what they do, something almost miraculous.

And every creative human, truly creative, not just pretending to be creative but thinking up some weird thing, things that you find in art galleries these days, not that kind of creative, but something true, I mean there are some wonderful creative artists, but they don't, most of them, they don't sell for 30 million dollars a piece, no, but only the absurd ones do, but that's another story. Anybody who is creative in any field has access, if only briefly, to that state of connectedness with the deeper dimension where they can go from. And sometimes it doesn't come until you've practiced something for very long, and then at some point an additional element comes in, and that is that deep sense of connectedness, and then it acts through you.

This is the intelligence that is beyond the human mind. In other words, universal intelligence, you connect with it, the one intelligence, it takes over and it does something that then was regarded as, wow, how could a human being achieve that? Great creations, works of music, of art, and even the deep insights in science came out of moments of revelations.

After a lot of thinking, thinking stopped, there are many accounts of people arriving at deep insights, sudden realizations, when not through thinking, although thinking was

preliminary, then they came to a point of, ah, and then suddenly it came. So every creative human has some access to that, but we need to go further than that so that we are not confined to one particular activity where we have access to that. And even then, of course, that would be very few humans actually, relatively speaking, have that, but we need, it doesn't really matter whether we, what or whether we create a particular thing, more important is in daily life that we are connected with that dimension within ourselves.

So humans who have created these wonderful, great masterpieces of art and music and they all had, many of them reported they almost received, many great composers, for example, reported that when they were composing, they almost received, it arrived almost ready-made, and then there it was, almost like taking dictation, many reported that. And often you need, before that happens, you need to be engaged in something for a long period of time. So I could not, for example, I could not say, okay, I'm so present, so I'm so creative, I'm going to sit at the piano now, and something miraculous will happen.

It won't. Or I can say I can play golf now because I'm really present, I think I can do it. I don't think so.

Or anything that I haven't practiced. In order for that to come in, it does need preparation. And, in fact, there was this writer who figured out by observing many creative people, was it Malcolm Gladwell, I think it was the writer, he figured out approximately, I think he said 10,000 hours of practice, or something like that, 10,000 hours of practice, and then there's a possibility that this deeper dimension could, I don't know if he puts it like that, I don't think so, but the deeper dimension can be accessed. So he figured out, for example, that the Beatles, not the insects, the music group, they, before they became famous and starting their great, because they're incredible creations, it's relatively simple compared to classical music, but they have something, every song of the Beatles has an essence, comes from a deep place, and he figured out that they actually, before they started becoming creative, they played thousands of hours in traveling, they were in little beer cellars in Hamburg and everywhere, they played and played and played and played, and at some point, something happened, they connected. It doesn't happen to everybody, but to some, but that is the connectedness with a certain power that indwells.

But that is not the main thing. The main thing is when you connect with that, whether or not you create something specific is secondary. Perhaps you will, if you give it some time.

As I said, you cannot sit at a piano and become creative. Nowadays, they say, they give children a little, some colors, this is very different from the past, they say just splash around some colors and be creative. Okay, well, yeah, maybe.

It's finding a middle way between the way that was treated in the past, very regimented way of learning the craft, very copying the old masters and learning and adopting and spending many hours, instead of saying, okay, just be creative. No, you learn, you spend many hours, and then perhaps finally you find your own way after you've mastered all that. Or you get stuck in imitation, and so on.

It seems to me that the middle way is the way between the extremes of adherence to a discipline that was already there, so that you learn from the oldest, from your elders, other masters, and to have the courage to create something new, and to let go of the old, so that something new can come. Either extreme would not be helpful. You get too bound up with a tradition, or you want to be so creative before you've mastered anything.

Well, some modern music is like that. I could probably, if I sat at a piano and just started, I could probably create some modern music that might be revolutionary. Wow.

And then all you have to do is find some incredibly intelligent words to explain it. So the creativity then is truly dependent on that, but it's secondary. When you access that, you will change the world to some extent.

When you access that dimension within yourself, even if you do not specifically create something, because every human who comes into contact with you, you will affect, whether they know it or not, you will affect every human you come into contact with, even just buying a coffee in the coffee shop. If every time you interact with another human, that dimension is present, that makes a whole, a huge difference to the world, because there's a kind of transmission happens, one could almost say. It's minute, but it's there.

And any human contact then becomes an opportunity for you not only to do whatever this human contact is, whatever the purpose for this human contact is. So that's the external purpose. But then there's a deeper purpose of human, the recognition of the other in their being.

Can only about two seconds, three seconds, maybe. It makes an enormous difference. And then each time you interact, that dimension is present.

And that becomes the main reason for interacting with other humans. So every practical situation that leads you to that particular interaction, buying or selling something or asking for information, or as a teacher, teaching or whatever it may be, hopefully you're good at what you're doing. If you're a hairdresser, it's important that you have learned your craft and you do a good job.

But when you discover that there is something more important, even than that, let's just take one example, your hairdressing craft is important, because people will feel better

when they do a good job, and they probably will be unhappy when you don't. So that is of relative importance, but was of absolute importance, the connection on the being level with the other human while you are talking to them, doing something. And again, never tell anybody this secret and say, do you know that I'm connecting with you at a deeper level?

Not a good idea. It just happens. And even if they don't notice it, that's fine.

Perhaps something within them does notice it. Also, you become more popular in whatever you do if you recognize the other in their essence. In addition to having the interaction on a personal level, you recognize the other in their essence.

Then you will become very popular because humans love to be recognized. They can sense it. They love it.

Please recognize me. They all want it, but it happens very rarely. They want to be recognized.

There's something within them, most of them, unless their ego is incredibly dense, can happen too. Something within them responds, and all they know is that they like you. They don't know why they like you.

Of course, it's not the person really that they like. It's something deeper than the person. They get self-reflection back from them.

And so, for example, if you're a salesperson, let's say you're selling a car, cars, second-hand car salesman, they don't have a good reputation, but let's say you're a good one. How do you interact with the other? Are you excessively focused on the outcome?

That means you get upset if they don't buy the car. You get upset. There are many people like that.

If the deal doesn't happen, they don't like you anymore because you were only a means to an end to them. You were not even there as a human being. You're just a means to an end.

And if the end is not fulfilled, they don't like you anymore. But a good one, if you're present, you love this person regardless of whether they buy that car or not. And if they don't, that's fine.

You just spend an hour talking about it. And then they say, well, no, I don't think I'll get it. Okay, that doesn't make any difference.

You're fine. That's fine. You're perfectly fine.

If you change your mind, let me know. And most likely, the person will change their

mind. And the next day they call you and says, because they like you so much.

They say, okay, I'll buy it. But that is not why you do it. You don't do it to achieve something through it.

That's just a secondary thing that happens. That is not the purpose. I could do a workshop, how to become a good salesperson.

And of course, the answer is self-realization. Oh, okay. Enough reading from the Bible today for the day, but that's fine.

More people have submitted questions from streaming audience. Let's start with a difficult question. Eckhart, you said we cannot deny the world.

The world has a function and a purpose. You also said the world will challenge us to become more aware. What is the function or purpose of becoming more aware?

Oh, how does that emoji go? I like these emojis. I like the ego emojis, the one with sunglasses.

So what is the purpose of becoming so? The purpose of the world is to awaken you, bring about awareness. But what's the purpose of it?

Well, we start at the simplest level. It makes your life more pleasant and much easier. I thought it was going to be a profound answer.

Oh, yeah, well, let's add by making your life more pleasant and easier, it makes other people's lives, people around you also more pleasant and much easier. Let's add another one. It sounds a little bit like a cliché, but it's true.

It makes the world a better place. One could go on and talk about the ultimate purpose of the universe and the ultimate destiny of human beings in a transcendent dimension. But perhaps we don't need to go there right now.

It's quite good enough for the time being. There's more to it, of course, awareness. Sometimes my answers are too long, so it's good to keep it a little shorter.

There have been times when the answer took an hour to one question. It's a funny story. I was interviewed just before Covid, and recently again, but just before Covid, this very popular man on YouTube, Russell Brand, and he's a great talker.

He's great at using language and talking. And I'm told, well, he noticed it too. He said, I asked you a question, and the answer took 40 minutes.

But he's a lovely, lovely guy. This is by Sue. So Sue asks, when you talk about going deep, really deep, but not so that you are asleep, I'm wondering where trance states fall

into that continuum.

Dancing, drumming, deep meditation states can put one in a deep state where one is highly aware of the inner state, but not of the outer reality until returning from the trance state to waking consciousness. Is this state touching the deep state that I'm talking about? So is that like the trance state when you become unaware of the world?

There may be different kinds of trance states, so perhaps one cannot generalize, but it is true that one can sometimes go so deep into presence or pure awareness that the outer world falls away, and all is left that would be in deep meditation. And all that's left is then this, we cannot be described, it's a, just what's left is presence. That's all, just intense presence.

There's a deep sense of aliveness in it, also joy. And that is why in Indian spirituality, that state is described as sat-cit-ananda, three words, you string them together as one, which means, sat means being, cit, c-h-i-t is consciousness, ananda is joy or bliss. So that state when you are one with the one, so to speak, is being, consciousness, bliss, sat-cit-ananda, it is the deep realization of being itself, which is consciousness, and that is inherently joyful realization.

That can happen if you can sit anywhere, close your eyes, go deep, go within, let go of all thinking, remain alert and present, and then what remains is just pure consciousness. Is that a trance state? I don't know, if you want to describe it like that, you could.

Often I, in nature, when I, when I first experienced it many, many years ago, I would sit on a bench, let's say it was in London, or, by talking about it, I'm going into it, so I said, I don't want to disappear, but it's happening. It's so nice, I don't want to come out of it. And then after a while I came out, opened my eyes, and was again conscious of whatever was here, there, and I had the impression that all the sense-perceived world was a diluted version of what I just realized within, in its pure form.

So there was a pure form of being, and then all the world is a diluted version of the same thing. And I even had this weird thing that came to me, I said, this is not a good analogy by people who are vegans, or who are lactose intolerant, but I'll say it anyway. This is the cream, and this is the skimmed milk.

So is that a trance state? Perhaps it could be described as trance. I don't know what people who are engaged in dancing, for example, Sufi dancing, whirling dervishes with their long skirts, it looks wonderful, and I'm sure it stops their minds.

You can't go whirling around for an hour and still be thinking, so it certainly stops your mind. Or drumming can also, drumming, if you keep drumming, that will also stop your mind if you just go. And who knows where you go, I haven't done, I haven't tried that.

So, but it does sound like, yes, depends how one uses language, you could describe it as

trance, but then the main thing is then not to be confined to the realization of presence by going so deeply within that the world disappears. The art of living requires you to have one foot in both worlds. You have one foot in the being dimension, but you have the other foot in this dimension here.

So you can have, you are balanced, you don't lose yourself out here, and also you don't disappear in there, at least not yet. You don't disappear there into being, and you don't lose yourself in the doing dimension. And so then you can be, one could say, you can then be present within and without.

And that is the art, is to be present within within and present without. And so when, as you're present within and without, when you are engaged in the outer world, first step, simple perception of the outer world, like a passive observer, then it's still relatively easy to feel the awareness behind the perception or, or one could say to sense the essence of yourself as a consciousness that is perceiving this world, it's a good practice. And then you are in a relatively passive state, you're just contemplating, that's easier than when you start doing things, then that is a bit more of a challenge to maintain the, the balance between being and doing, because the more you're engaged in doing, the more the gravitational pull of doing will try to pull you out of your connectedness with the being dimension, and so you can lose yourself in, for example, doing through speaking. And you can easily see how people, the moment they start talking, something else takes them over, which is the conditioned mind, the moment they start formulating sentences, and especially if they talk about something that you feel is important, some matter that's really important, this is so important, and then you can see that they're being taken over completely by their mind, and then they're like, you know, they're not there anymore, it's just the egoic mind talking, and amplified by some emotion, usually not a pleasant emotion. So easy to lose yourself when you start interacting with other humans.

So the easiest is, and it's a good practice, contemplating the world around you. The next step is while you are moving, walking, presence through movement, walking, doing this, then simple actions, stay present while performing simple everyday actions. That's good, you can do that.

And then the next step is simple human interactions, buying something in a store, going to the cashier, asking somebody for information, oh, that's not too bad. And then you go on to more difficult things, when things are being discussed at work, or you're having a discussion with a friend about politics, okay, then it's getting more difficult now, but you've been practicing already before, so it should be a little easier. And then you're trying to call, you're trying to call the airline because your suitcase hasn't arrived, and you cannot speak to a human, so that's a good practice, you're waiting, can you still get connected there without, okay, yes.

And then the most difficult is meeting your family members at Thanksgiving Day. Not for

everybody, but for quite a few, because there you have the old patterns, the past that people carry, that they project onto you, old responses, and so on. People with whom you share a lot of past is often more of a challenge to stay present with people with whom you share a lot of past, rather than a stranger that you meet in the street, that's relatively easy, because the person with whom you share a lot of past, this person will project the image they have built up in their minds of you, unless they're really present, they're probably not, but they will project the image they've built up in their minds of who you are, or the image built up over 20, 30 years or more, and so they're not, in many cases, they're not really seeing you anymore, they relate to you through the mental image they have of you. And until recently, perhaps, you had a mental image through which you saw them, and perhaps remnants, even though you are present, remnants of this mental image and the patterns associated with it is still active, so you have the past trying to reassert itself when you interact and trying to obscure the present, when you interact with people with whom you share a lot of past, the old wants to take over, and that's a good challenge, a wonderful challenge, when you meet difficult family members, perhaps everybody has some, so Thanksgiving is a good one, Christmas is another, or some people with their parents, or parents with their grown-up children, my mother doesn't understand me, they say, well, if she did understand you, would that make any difference to you? I need my mother to understand what I'm all about, well, do you? That reminds me of Byron Katie, is that thought true?

Do I need my mother to understand me? She said, maybe not. I became very happy when I let go of the need for my mother to understand me, then it was fine, I could allow her to be in a state of not understanding me, we could still be loving, I just had to listen to her constant words about, you should sort out your life.

And you had so much, you threw it all away. Why didn't you complete your PhD? It was stupid, and you inherit it from your dad, I know that.

But the end of the story is a happy one, because my mother was still alive, when I, in the eyes of the world, became successful. And suddenly, oh. So I'm very glad my mother died, knowing that her son had succeeded in the world.

Thank you, with that, I will leave you.

[Speaker 2] (40:17 - 40:37)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle The Spaces Between Thoughts [59c1bedb-d31d-4aee-a141-2b86b547048c]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:31)

Spaces between thoughts. In this podcast, Eckhart leads a live meditation on pausing our thoughts without suppressing them. Eckhart says it's more important to be aware of one's self as presence than to get lost in the mind.

With practice, gradually the spaces between thoughts increase and more spaciousness grows within. Our lives become more peaceful and we move closer to a feeling of liberation.

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 19:14)

Welcome. Let's see if you can let go of thinking without suppressing thinking, but simply treat any thought that may arise as just a thought while we're here during our live meditation. Treat any thought that arises as just a thought and no more than a thought.

In other words, don't become too interested in any thought that may arise. Become uninterested in thought while we're here. Or in other words, don't go along with every thought.

Don't get drawn into every thought that arises. Don't follow it where it wants to take you and then you go, and then internally you're off. The thought comes in and you follow it.

It has a pulling power and then it pulls your attention into it, which is conscious attention. It goes into thought and off you go. You might still be sitting here.

You will still be sitting here, probably, but internally you go off into following some kind of thought. You lose presence. You're not aware of yourself as the presence anymore.

You're only aware of the thought and you go off. And if you don't follow every thought, but just if it does arise, there it is, you remain aware as the observing presence, which is more important than the thought. The awareness, the presence, which is who you are in your essence, is more important than the thought.

It is more important to be aware of that awareness, to be aware of yourself as the awareness, as the presence, than to get involved in thought. And then you may find that sometimes, or increasingly, the space, spaces, I prefer the singular, the space between thoughts gets longer. There's more space.

There's more spaciousness then within you. More spaces between thoughts. And of course, we are practicing that here, but it should not be confined to a time period when you do your meditation.

But throughout your life, you can become aware of spaces between thoughts. And you can become aware of those moments, which may be getting longer when you're not thinking. Your ability to perceive clearly without interpretation, attaching labels, labeling things and people, this ability grows.

And then you can find that in your daily life, you're partly engaged in thinking and partly just dwelling in the awareness. And ultimately, they don't have to be separate states. Even while you're thinking, there can still be an awareness in the background.

And there's a noticeable difference in the way in which you deal with things, talk to people, between those two states of being totally drawn into thought and being able to, in daily interactions, being able to use the mind, which you need to speak and so on. You use the mind, but you're not totally 100% identified with it. So when you are engaged in a conversation or a discussion, you put forward your point of view or whatever it is, but you're not totally drawn into the thought.

You express what you have to express clearly and strongly if necessary. And yet you still know yourself as the awareness behind the thought. So there's no self-identification with thought.

You don't get upset, disturbed by your thoughts or somebody else's thoughts. You no longer get aggressive or defensive when somebody questions the validity of your thought, thoughts. You no longer identify with mental positions, but you can still have mental positions.

You don't necessarily say, I have no opinions anymore about anything. I'm so advanced spiritually that I have no opinion about anything anymore. That is not necessary because you exist both as the form, the human form, physical and mental form, and more fundamentally, you exist as the formless consciousness presence.

So you don't need to totally deny your form. It has been tried in some spiritual traditions. The Buddha tried it for several years, the story goes, and it's probably true.

He virtually tried to annihilate himself by eating almost nothing, spending long, long periods in silence, having no interactions on a personal level, no longer being there as a person. And then after a few years, he realized that's not the true path to enlightenment. Then he started eating again, function more normally.

And out of that realization came his famous teaching of the middle way. Buddhism is sometimes described as the middle way, which is more than just the middle way between asceticism and sensory intelligence. The middle way is also, and more fundamentally, the middle between form and formlessness.

So you're halfway honoring your form, but not deriving your identity from your form. Form includes thinking, thought forms. It's the body and it's the mind, the thinking mind.

Not deriving your identity from your body, from your whatever mind activity in the form of thought is happening in you. Realizing who you are beyond form and honoring the form as long as it's there, knowing full well that it has a limited lifespan. The physical form has a limited lifespan.

And if you survive on some other level as a soul presence, a form of consciousness after the body goes, it's still form. The realization who you are beyond form is available here and now. Don't have to wait until you die because then you still exist on a level of thought form formation.

Death does not bring you to the realization necessarily of the formless. Although you might get glimpses of it, but then you run away. Being in touch with the formless dimension, the stillness, presence, the thoughtless awareness, being it also changes who you are on the level of form.

It has an effect. It affects that also. It affects the way in which you engage in activities.

It affects the way in which you interact with other people. It affects the energy field that emanates from you because if you are completely identified with the form, physical and mental form of a personality, then your life is not going to be all that fulfilling, pleasant, peaceful, happy, never happy for very long, easily upset, easily disturbed, easily anxious and depressed, never fully here, always looking to the next moment to be better than this moment, looking for salvation in the future, which never comes because when it comes, it's the present moment. All those are the characteristics of a person who is completely identified with form.

I forgot to mention also there's a need for enemies that's part of that unconscious, ultimately unconscious state of being identified with form. You need enemies in some form in order to keep up and strengthen your form identity so that other people, you can unconsciously seek conflict. You don't know.

You're not going to say, I'm seeking conflict. You say, no, no. But when you observe yourself or somebody else, you can more easily see it in somebody else, how they often seek conflict, how they complain a lot about other people, what they did or failed to do or should have done.

It complains about situations so you can make a situation into an enemy also because it's all bad. And by doing that, you strengthen your form identity, ego, and you don't know that that's what you're doing. That it becomes your reality.

Nations do it. Politicians do it. You can look at it on the collective level.

Politicians of one country demonizing politicians of another country, or even demonizing an entire country. It's well known that often dictators and, but also other politicians, they need to have the external enemy and they need their people to believe in it in order to

remain in power. So again, that's identification with form.

Form is not only the individualized form. There's also identification with a collective form and the collective ego. And the collective ego has similar characteristics to the personal ego.

And it does the same kind of thing, except with more disastrous consequences. So just as with the individual, the middle way applies, and that's wisdom to live in that way, to honor the form that you are, might be even improve it. For the individual, that means acquiring new skills, learning new things, exploring, looking after your body, nutrition, exercise, having a shower in the morning.

It's honoring the form without being identified with it because you're identified with the essence. You are the essence. In the same way, a country or collective does not need to completely deny its form identity.

It's a middle way again between honoring the form, your own culture. You can honor your own culture without making others into enemies. And of course you can appreciate other cultures in the same way you appreciate other people and their achievements, what they can do.

And they know the middle way. Essentially, we are here. Our meditation is of course to deepen the awareness, to deepen our realization of who I am.

And I speak for the one I, to deepen the awareness of who I am beyond form. So that when you say I, when you use the word I, it has two meanings. It can either refer to the person or it can refer to the essence of who you are, the timeless being, the unconditioned consciousness, the transcendent I.

To bring it to very practical, the great practice, as I've mentioned before, is to look around wherever you are and perceive whatever is there without labeling it mentally. That requires an alertness behind your sense perception. An alertness that could be compared to the state of listening to a faint sound that's somewhere and you would go.

In order to perceive a very distant sound, I gave an example in the New Earth. I won't tell it now. Some of you may remember it.

When the master asks the disciple to listen to a distant sound of a mountain stream, and at first the disciple can't hear it. And then he becomes more alert and finally says, yes, I can hear it. The master told him to do that in answer to his question, in answer to the disciple's question, what really is Zen?

And the master said, listen to the sound of that mountain stream. What mountain stream? I'm thinking about Zen.

And by asking him to do that, he forced him, so to speak, or the question forced him to step out of thought into a higher alertness. At first, he didn't hear the mountain stream because he was thinking. Most of his attention was absorbed by thought.

And then when he couldn't hear it, and then the master said, listen more carefully. And then he had to step out of thought. He had to become more alert.

And there it was. He had risen above thought. There's no tension in that.

You don't go, it's just like turning up the light on a dimmer switch. And of course, then the disciple realized, well, that's the essence of Zen. The master just explained it without any word.

And so in the same way, because in that state, there's no ego anymore. There's no unconscious thinking. Use that in the same way.

You can look around the room, or whether you're inside or outside, and there may be a moment when you don't, you're not engaged in any kind of doing. You can just look around, or look and listen, take in the sense perceptions, and realize how wonderful it is to perceive things without attaching labels. How alive, how unusually alive things are, including inanimate objects, but even more so plants, flowers, the sky.

How unusually alive these things are when you're not perceiving them through the screen of conceptualization. And there's a deep knowing behind the awareness. It's very different from how the mind knows things through thinking.

So there are two modalities of knowing. One is through thinking, conceptual knowing, there's a place for that, you need it. But there's another way of knowing things.

You can look at a plant, you can know it conceptually, and you can know it through awareness, in which case sensing becomes something that you cannot necessarily explain in words. You can sense its aliveness. You see, or you know, its beauty beyond a superficial sense of beauty.

Beauty as the essence shining through, something that's beyond the sense perception is shining through, so to speak. Sometimes people who take certain drugs get glimpses of it because the drug switches off the conceptual mind, but then you always fall back to your usual state. So those things can be an opening for people who are very much mind identified, but then you have to do away with the crutches and just become aware.

So another way of putting it, sometimes you are a person and then you shift more to the awareness and you become the awareness. You can look at any scene, a room, or whatever it is, as a person, in which case you have a certain mental commentary about what you see, mental associations, you like or you dislike something, that would look nice in my place, or oh, my aunt gave me that. Oh, that's a lovely plant.

Oh, does it have enough? Do I need to give it water now? All those things are fine.

You are there perceiving as a person and then when there's no thinking, just an awareness behind the sense perception, you're not really a person anymore. There's no past. There's a shift from being a person to being the awareness and that liberates you from being trapped in the person.

You can still honor the personal sense of self without being obsessed with it, identified completely with it. We'll have some questions.

[Speaker 2] (19:15 - 19:33)

So I understand that our primary purpose is to dwell in the unmanifested more frequently than in the manifested. I guess my question is, if we successfully do that, how does that impact the events that occur on the manifested level?

[Speaker 1] (19:34 - 34:21)

Oh, thank you. To rephrase the question just a little bit, in what way does the connectedness with that dimension change the way in which I live my life, which I act in this life, and in which I interact with other people? Because it really always comes down to you.

You are humanity. So if you look at how does it affect me? How does it affect one person?

And if you already have had some openings into that dimension, you might already have had some glimpses, certain changes in which manifested in your interactions with others. I don't know, I may ask you in a minute if you have already experienced some changes in your life through becoming more conscious in that way of that depth dimension in yourself. You're no longer dominated by the ego, which means the reactivity on which the ego thrives begins to subside, which means when things happen, people do this or that around you, you no longer react in the old way, which comes from your conditioning, which means other people's state of consciousness can no longer control your state of consciousness.

When you're unconscious, you're dependent on what happens around you for your state of consciousness. When somebody is unconscious around you, is angry, you become angry. That's a reaction.

If you feel offended by something somebody said, or somebody did not respect you enough, the ego is very anxious about being respected. And so you feel somebody ignored you or disrespected you. There's enormous reactivity in the ego.

Some very unconscious egos might attack you physically if you don't respect them.

These are people like who will say to you, hey, I'm talking to you. That's an ego.

And you know, the next step is going to hit you. That's an, no, I'm talking to you means you're not giving me, I want your attention. I need your attention.

You better give me your attention because otherwise something's going to happen. These are very unconscious egos, but slightly less unconscious versions of the same ego exists in every ego. That's the reactivity that subsides.

So you're no longer at the mercy of another state of consciousness. So an angry person does not make you angry or whatever behavior somebody manifests does not cause a reaction in you. And it improves your ability to respond.

However, the difference between reaction and response is, as you probably know, reaction comes from the conditioned self, which is the ego. It reacts according to its conditioning. Response is the ability to be present in a situation and then to take appropriate action by facing the situation.

Remember, I use the word looking at the situation and then action comes, responding to the situation, not out of the old conditioning. So that's one way. Something else happens around you.

You lose something, you miss the train, you miss the bus, something goes wrong. Your inner state is no longer at the mercy of external conditions. So you might still have a slight fluctuation.

Let's say a pleasant event makes you happy. And when something very unpleasant happens, you feel that you feel, oh, it doesn't touch the deepest level of your being. It doesn't touch the essence of who you are.

So your inner state becomes no longer subject to the changing world of external conditions. You're not at the mercy of what happens or doesn't happen. In the egoic state, you have expectations.

You go into every day, into every situation, you'll meet somebody, or you have a business situation. The mind has expectations. And the expectations are very important to the egoic mind.

It wants things to be in this or that way. And usually there's a clash between the reality of what is and the expectations of your mind of how things should be, how people should behave. And then you have the reality of they do behave.

That clash between the expectations in your mind, which in the egoic state you are identified with, and the reality of what is, is very painful. And people experience every day the painful gap between what they experience as their reality and what their mind

says how things should be. People shouldn't be like that, but they are.

And so that disappears so you can approach things in that openness, your interaction with every human being. And this is perhaps the most important thing. When you no longer come from the egoic, mind-made self, you will experience, and many of you know that, not perhaps as a permanent experience, but you have experienced it from time to time at least, that you can have a general sense of goodwill or benevolence that flows to everybody that you meet, that the ego does never have.

When the ego meets another human being, it either wants something from that human being, wants to use him for its own purposes, the ego's purposes, or the ego feels it needs to establish superiority. The moment it meets somebody, they say, am I inferior or superior to this other human being? The ego immediately judges itself.

If your ego feels inferior, you feel not up to meeting that person. You want to be superior, but you feel inferior, either because this person is more knowledgeable than you, or more famous than you, or is better looking than you, or is physically stronger than you, and you feel kind of, the ego feels diminished. But it wants to be superior, so it might try something else in some other area, it might be superior.

Even little children do that. When the ego begins to develop, the little child says, let's say one child's dad has a Mercedes car, and this child's dad has only an old VW, and this child brags about my dad's car, look, so this is the ego trying to diminish the other person in order to feel bigger. This happens already to children, but the little child, if the ego is clever enough, in the little child, the one whose dad only has the old VW, the ego thinks, okay, and then suddenly he says something like, well, my uncle knows somebody who has a Ferrari that's four times as expensive as your dad's car, and twice as fast, and I've seen it, I've touched it.

Okay, what, oh dear. And this is the egoic games, they're very obvious in the case of children, they're a little bit more sophisticated in the case of adults, but basically the same, so this, the search for superiority, the fear of inferiority when you meet somebody, wanting to use the other person, or feeling the other, threatened by the other person for some reason, because he or she might diminish you in some way, then you become antagonistic, but in whatever case, there's always some kind of business that you have with the other, there's never a true connection with the other, you might be play acting, you might be playing a role that I truly care for you, of course you have to say it, because it's not there, there's a reality, or in some cases, there's a complete lack of interest in the other, you completely ignore him, he doesn't exist for you, because he or she doesn't fit into your plans, the egoic plans of how this person cannot do anything for me, so I'm totally not interested in talking to you, you can't do anything for me, you can often judge a person's state of consciousness by how he or she treats people who can do nothing for them, and you can see the ego plays roles according to who they are

interacting with, I mentioned it in A New Earth, let's say, if you can observe it in yourself, that's a good thing, you don't beat yourself up, if you find yourself behaving differently when you speak to the CEO of this corporation, or you meet the Pope, or you meet whoever, you meet the richest man in the world, Bill Gates, and you meet him, how do you talk to him, and how you talk to the janitor in your building, is there any difference, or how do you talk to a man in the street, if there are differences in the way you talk, then you're playing roles, the ego is playing roles according to who it's interacting with, when the ego does not operate anymore, you operate from the depth dimension, everybody is treated exactly the same, and you no longer look at human beings as to whether they can do something for you, or how you can use them, or, and most importantly, you no longer compare yourself as either being superior or inferior to anybody else, and that's incredible liberation, I remember when I was in my 20s, I was so uneasy, my ego was so uneasy, a lot of the time I felt inferior, and I had to compensate with all kinds of things, quoting obscure books that others didn't know, I didn't have a lot of physical strength, so that couldn't, my ego couldn't identify with physical strength, for example, or good looks, I didn't have either, so that didn't work, but I could be, I could be more knowledgeable than somebody else, so if there was this big guy coming in, and I felt small, that I could at least show him that I am so much more intelligent and knowledgeable than he was, so that occasionally that worked, but nevertheless, I was in a continuous state of unease, that was my normal state, continuously feel threatened in one sense of identity, that's all egoic, that all changes, so your relationship with another human being is totally different, there is a true meeting, and since the larger section of your life is to do with how you relate to human beings, that makes up a largest percentage of your life, is how you relate to others, a fundamental transformation comes into that, in that sense that you are now able to truly meet another human being, and have a true interaction, whether you have a long lasting relationship, or just a brief interaction, doesn't matter, there's no longer the search for superiority or inferiority, you no longer feel superior to anybody, the ego doesn't like that, and you no longer feel inferior to anybody, when you come from your essence, so all personal relationships, or any kind of relationships with others, become much more harmonious, and then whatever you wanted, you want to achieve in life, is no longer dictated by the ego, the ego's neediness, but whatever you want to achieve in life, comes to you from a deeper level of your being, so you still have goals, but they are not egoically motivated goals, they are realizations of what it is that wants to be created through you, and the way in which you then approach these goals, and work towards these goals, is, as we mentioned before, in a state of enjoyment of the doing of it, which the ego doesn't, can't do, it can get excited about something for a little while, but as I mentioned earlier, the moment an obstacle comes in, it gets upset, and negative, and aggressive, or withdraws completely, so all your relationships flow harmoniously, there is a feeling of goodwill towards other human beings, no matter what their position is, no matter how they fit into your life, or whether they fit into your life at all, or useful to you, you don't even have these terms anymore in your head, are they useful to me, and so, when you love

humans like that, in the deeper sense, humans will do much more for you, but that's not why it happens, it's just a byproduct of being free of ego, humans will come to you, be as helpful as they can, because they can sense the benevolence that's coming from you, which is genuine, it's not an act, there's a genuine sense of connectedness, and you immediately connect with the other, so can you see now, how that transforms your life, when that dimension is present, my question to you, have you already had, if only small experiences of that, glimpses, glimpses, but it fades,

[Speaker 2] (34:22 - 34:43)

right, when you know, you get back out in the world, and things start to happen, and you interact with people, and you know, it's easy, and it's just like, you know, a lot of the things that you say, I know them, right, in my spirit, I know that they're true, right, but it's almost like, when you get out in the world, to some extent, you forget, it feels like you forget.

[Speaker 1] (34:44 - 38:21)

Yes, and of course, you forget, because you live, when you enter the world again, whatever it is, business, any business, you enter that energy field, which in most cases, is still ego dominated, so you forget, you get drawn back into the way in which everybody else interacts, so it requires great alertness, it's a big challenge, but we need the challenges, so to go back, some people might think, if I could live withdrawn in a little cabin, out in nature, this is a lovely, great fantasy, isn't it, and some people might achieve that, I could live in a cabin, where people leave me alone, I could only interact with people that I like, or nobody at all, and just interact with animals, they are much less problematic than humans, I'll just live with my dog, and the cat, and my flowers, and the fruit trees in the backyard, and I have just a regular, every month, I have an income that comes from somewhere, and then I could really get into the spiritual work, and make progress, and that is not necessarily true, and I would actually suggest it is untrue, now, you might make progress for a while, the first month will be great, the first six months will be great, but if there were truly an absence of challenges, except very minor ones, maybe an occasional mosquito, or something like that, in the absence of challenges, your level of alertness would decrease, most probably, unless you are one of the exceptions, there's always exceptions, so you would be like a flower or plant that grows in a greenhouse, protected in a nursery, protected from the elements, and of course, it grows faster, it can grow, but it doesn't have that inner strength, because the tree, even I hear from gardeners, that some gardeners, even when a shoot comes out, which is sprouting out of the soil, in some cases, they put more soil on top of it, and by struggling to get to the second layer of soil, the plant gets stronger, and so, it's only when you are forced through challenges, to really be present, you need the challenge, and your challenge is to go back into the world, and be surrounded by the egoic state, energy field, where you work, and bring in this new energy, and then, it may well, it's

spread, it tends to affect others in some small ways, at first, and then, sometimes, bigger ways, because state of consciousness spreads, an unconscious human being spreads unconsciousness, you can go to a committee meeting, or any kind of meeting, if there's one deeply unconscious person, pulls everybody else down into unconscious reactivity, and one conscious person can also make a huge difference, for example, in a group environment, so that's your challenge, knowing that there's a huge gravitational pull of the old consciousness still there, the egoic consciousness, it's been around for a long time.

[Speaker 2] (38:21 - 38:29)

It seems like part of the challenge is that operating in that way in the world, or in some personal relationships, can be perceived as a weakness.

[Speaker 1] (38:31 - 40:39)

Yes, that's true, but that wouldn't be a misinterpretation of somebody's ego, because you're actually connected to a power that's far greater than ego, when you come from non-ego, but sometimes, to the ego, that looks like weakness. I remember some movies, going back a long time, there was a series about a Kung Fu master, or something like that, and he was very meek and mild, he always went about like that, and everybody took him to be very weak, and he had a little flute, a little instrument, and he would play it, and in every episode, he would meet these big guys, and often he would meet evil big guys, and they all said, who is this weakling, and then he always resolved difficult situations, often involving violence, on the part of these unconscious people, and in the decisive moment, he would suddenly go into his Kung Fu mode, and he would go, and then immediately, he went back to peace, and he would play his flute. A similar device was used in the old, there was this TV thing about, he was a detective, maybe in San Francisco, he was always wearing this old raincoat, Columbo, and so he looked like he was kind of almost stupid, because he did not project himself, he did not project any ego, he just went about like this, and everybody thought he was weak and stupid, and the satisfying thing in every episode was, that these criminals all looked down on him, they were so superior to this stupid guy, and in the end, of course, he caught them, so he did not project an ego, so that is interesting.

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (40:43 - 41:03)

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listening.

Eckhart Tolle The Stillness Within [1f0accc6-c20e-48e6-a651-3708dc7b54d2]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:35)

The stillness within. In this podcast, Eckhart takes us through two live meditations about the stillness within. He says finding the transcendent dimension is the only thing that will satisfy us.

It's not something we can achieve. It's something we discover in the here and now. When we say I am aware of stillness, it means I am aware of the I am, which is the essence of all identity.

Eckhart believes it's stillness that will save the world.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 43:00)

I just want to remind you that we are not here to do anything. We are here to, one could say, experience something rather than do something. And what we are here to experience, and even that's not quite right, I'll come to that in a minute.

What we're here to experience is very subtle, but very powerful. Whatever name we give that reduces it. It's not that.

It's very vast. For the time being, let's just call it stillness. Now when I said we're here to experience something, that's not absolutely right, but whenever we use language, we are bound to falsify that which goes far beyond concepts.

It's not so much that we're here to experience something as to find that which underlies all experience, a dimension that is deeper than any experience, becoming aware of that within yourself. So some of you may have written down or have in your mind goals you want to achieve in life, and that's good. It's unlikely that achieving stillness will figure prominently as one of your goals or even number one, and yet it's the most important thing in your life.

But it's a good thing that it's not on your list of goals to be achieved, because if you make it into a goal to be achieved, it implies that you need the future to achieve stillness, which is of course true for all other goals, but not for that which we call stillness. Temporarily we just call it, for the time being, stillness. If you make it into a goal to be achieved, you place it into the future and you'll never find it, because it's inseparable from the present moment, the now, the now that usually people are not aware of as an actual presence.

And here we have another pointer we could use instead of stillness, and that is presence. And as the word implies, presence is inseparable from the present, the now. Now, for

most people, yet the now is not a living realization.

They're only aware of what happens in the now, and even that's not quite right. They're not really aware of it. They are reactive towards it, and they are identified with it.

They are identified with their thoughts that arise. They are reactive to what happens outside. So I'm here just talking a little bit, giving you pointers with every sentence.

Every word is really a pointer towards that. And I trust that as we sit here together, giving up the idea that we are here to do something, as we sit here together, a realization arises within you that is the living presence within. The thinking mind stops for a moment, and there's just spacious awareness, stillness.

You haven't gone to sleep. You've become still without falling into dreamless sleep, without falling into dreams, to just something has arisen that usually you would have overlooked. And our meditation here, if we want to call it that, is to become aware of the space within, another pointer, the stillness, the space.

Becoming totally at ease with the present moment, a very rare state for most humans. Usually they're only at ease when some desire has just been fulfilled, and then they're at ease for a little while, a few minutes, perhaps. Or they're at ease because they're so tired, they're moving towards sleep.

So I'm here to lead you into that realization of inner stillness, of that dimension within. Lead you through words, which are only pointers, and through the demonstration of presence, which you can sense if you pay attention to the underlying stillness that is here as I speak. Behind the words, between the words.

Tune into that. Nothing personal in that. Nothing to do with this person.

And as you tune into that, the same dimension arises within you, which again has nothing to do with that person that you think you are. So there is a dimension that transcends the person. It's in this person, and it's in that person.

The dimension that transcends the personal and the person, and everything to do with the person. The personal history, the personal problems, the life situation, the ups and downs of the life situation. There will always be there the ups and downs of the life situation.

But the miracle is finding the transcendent dimension within you, without which life cannot be a pleasant experience, not for long. It cannot be satisfying, not for long, never for long. So without the realization of the transcendent dimension, the formless, spacious stillness, nothing will satisfy you.

It's frustrating. Life is very frustrating without that dimension, if you haven't found it. But

of course the dimension is there in everyone.

It's not something that you need to achieve. You can't achieve it, let alone achieve it in the future. You can discover it here and now within.

It's lurking there underneath all the doing, underneath all the thinking. It's always there, but completely ignored by most people. If you're comfortable with theistic terms, you could say God is always present, but completely ignored by most people.

Because if God has any meaning, it is the transcendent dimension of life. It transcends, means it is beyond whatever arises in life, beyond thought, beyond physical forms, beyond form. It transcends form.

It is beyond past and future. It transcends time. It has nothing to do with time.

It is presence, eternal presence. And presence, eternal presence or eternity, is not some weird abstract philosophical concept. It can be, and it points to a living realization.

So the most precious thing to find in life is that there is stillness inside you, always. You just have to pay attention to it. But then the strange thing is that when you become aware of stillness, you realize that the awareness and the stillness are not two, but one.

So it's only when we use language, we say, I'm now, I'm aware of stillness. You put it into language. So when you're aware of stillness, there is a knowing where concepts are not needed, words are not needed, and there is no duality really.

It's only when you translate it into words, there's a duality, and you say, I'm aware of stillness. But what really happens is that awareness and stillness are a single realization. There is no subject and object in this realization.

When we talk about it, it sometimes seems that there is a subject, I am aware of stillness. I can feel the stillness inside me. When you put it into words, that's how it's, there's subject and object.

But when you look more deeply beyond words, you see that there's not me as an entity who is aware of stillness as something in me. It's only when we use language and that duality appears. When I'm aware of stillness, really the awareness and the stillness are one.

And the I am, when you say, I am aware of stillness, you could say, now in this moment, I am aware of stillness. That's through words. It's not the actual truth of it, not quite, it's not how it is, because the I am, the awareness, and the stillness are all one.

So when you say, I'm aware of stillness, it really means, I am aware of I am. I am aware of the I am, that I am. There's a hint of that in the Old Testament.

When God is asked, what's your name? God says, I am that I am. The essence of all identity is I am.

So you could say, instead of, I'm aware of stillness, you can say, I'm aware that I am. Or you could say, the I am that I am is aware of itself. So instead of saying, I'm aware of stillness, you can also say, the awareness that I am is aware of itself.

Because I am and awareness is one. And I am and awareness and stillness are one. The stillness is aware of itself.

The awareness is aware of itself. Duality collapses in that realization. Because duality applies to the world of form.

That which underlies the world of form, the transcendent, the divine, if you're comfortable with that word, transcends duality. Because duality is the beginning of multiplicity of billions of forms. But what is the source of the billions of life forms?

The one, the source out of which all life forms arise. And all life forms are an emanation arising from the one source of all life, the one life that transcends all forms of life. It's beyond all forms of life, the one.

The alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the timeless, eternal one. And that is not some abstract philosophical concept, although sometimes it becomes that when people only talk about it. It's a realization within yourself because the one is within you.

It is the core, the space that is the essence of who you are. The source of all life. The timeless source of all life.

So we could say then, we're here to, not to experience, but to realize the I am that I am. So let's stay with that for a moment. I am.

Can you become aware of the fact that you are? That's what it is. This is one way of realizing that stillness.

Can you become aware of the fact that you are? I am. Really, we're talking about becoming aware of the being, to be.

I am. Your presence. The presence that underlies the person at this moment.

Can you sense that? Feel that? We don't have words really that are adequate.

The spaciousness of being. The stillness of being. And then you get a sense that without needing to remember your past, you get a very strong sense of the essence of your being.

The beingness of who you are. Without remembering your past. So your past ultimately

has very little or virtually nothing to do with who you actually are.

Where your sense of identity arises. The sense of presence. Of aliveness.

So I am. How do you know that you are? Well, I know it.

You can't go beyond that. It knows itself. You know yourself as the very presence.

Which is not an object in your experience. It's the eternal subject of all experience. And that eternal subject of all experience knows itself.

But not conceptually. It doesn't know anything about itself. It knows itself directly.

And that is the transcendent dimension within you. Or the divine within you. And then you realize that everything that you perceive in the world of form is an emanation of that and is also divine.

But you don't know that everything in the world of form is also divine unless you find that dimension within yourself. And only from the realization of that dimension as a continuing underlying sense of presence of stillness then you can look at the world of forms and sense the divine in each form. But you can only sense the divine in each form because you sense it in yourself.

Only through the divine in yourself can you sense the divine in each form in each other human being. Including all the human beings that have no idea of the divine within themselves that you encounter. And any human being that has no idea of the essence of who they are are to a greater or lesser degree mad.

So this is the normal humans you encounter in the world. There's an overlay of madness but in essence they are divine. So that's what you see that's what you sense when you interact with them and that's what you truly relate to in others.

You can only relate to that in others because you can sense that in yourself. So to put it in very simple terms there is a stillness in you even when you talk to people and that stillness in you senses that underneath the mad mind of the other human being nothing personal in that there is also that dimension and that's what you sense in the other. But you only sense it because in the background of who you are you can sense an alive stillness.

While you listen even while you speak there's still an awareness of the I am the stillness the presence. Now many people are worried about saving the world and the only thing that can save a world that is otherwise somewhat insane is for humans to come to that self-realization the realization of who they are in essence the realization of the divine within and that's what will save the world because whatever you do then is imbued with that realization and in the absence of that realization as a continuing knowing in the

background continuing sensing of presence in the absence of that whatever you do no matter how good your intentions are will have unforeseeable consequences repercussions and will create new problems let's go back for a moment to I am aware of the stillness within those three words I am aware of the stillness are all one the I am is the awareness the awareness is the stillness the I am is the stillness the stillness becomes aware of itself God becomes aware of itself here and now through this form through this form welcome this is our live meditation one obstacle to meditation especially for people who practice formal meditation regularly they may not realize although whatever method they use whatever meditation practice they use may be good potentially helpful there tends to be however always an underlying unexpressed thought feeling perhaps that you are doing a meditation you do many things every day and one of the things you do is you are doing a meditation practice I am doing my meditation practice but what is the aim of meditation it is supposed to take you into a realization of being now we live in a culture westernized culture which is not confined to geographical so called west these days westernized culture many places of the globe we are predominantly focused many people exclusively focused on doing so it seems normal that you include when you start meditating continue that practice becomes part of the idea in your head that this is something that you have to do there is a doing idea involved doing involves time, doing has an aim I am here, I want to get there or I am doing this in order to achieve that, all doing involves time so with the idea of doing comes the idea of time that you need to get somewhere with your meditation practice for example I want to become enlightened or maybe you are not as ambitious as that I want to still my mind now meditation is a practice that is meant to give you access to a particular state of consciousness I call it presence to help you realize that apart from doing and of course doing is not just external doing, running around or on the computer doing also is thinking every thought you think you are doing something you are doing, you are thinking meditation the aim of meditation is to bring you to a realization of being so to help you access another dimension within yourself it is not thinking and it is not to do with external activities but you don't go to sleep either, so it is the realization of being to become aware of your own presence so to speak of presence or your presence these are just words right now, instead of thinking we are doing something I would suggest that an alternative access point to the state of consciousness that is presence is to let go of all doing or any idea that you have to get somewhere improve yourself there is a place for that that exists on another dimension that also operates in your life getting better at things but then there is something else where any kind of doing doesn't really help I am not saying let go of all your meditation practices, if they are used correctly they can take you into being also, but for many people there is an underlying continuously arising obstacle created by the idea that you are doing something and need to get somewhere so instead of taking you into being it just creates more doing being and doing, those two dimensions need to be present and it is not just meditation is there to help you access being but in the rest of your life which is most of your life 98% of your life if you meditate a lot 95% of your life is still something else it is not the meditation

there, there needs to be a balance between being and doing not as separate things but coming together and this is why here I am not using any technique and I just want to invite you to become aware of the fact that you are I wouldn't say that you exist of course you exist but exist the word itself comes from Latin ex means out exist means to stand out now that is your body exists your psychological self with its conditioning and thought processes and emotions exist, it is there it manifests whatever is manifested not necessarily just through the senses because the more important part of you you can't see the invisible self the psychological self exists, stands out is manifested so it is not so much becoming aware of the fact that you exist but becoming aware of the underlying being that gives rise to your existence something deeper becoming aware of yourself right now as I speak of the essence of who you are not as a physical body not as a psychological entity with a past a personality conditioned by the past but is there anything deeper than your personality that is conditioned by the past, consists of all thought processes and emotions and opinions and viewpoints likes and dislikes and so on is there something else something deeper something without which all those other things could not manifest yes, you can't define it you can't understand it there is nothing to understand there if you examine your historical self, your psychological self then you may need understanding you might need to go to a psychotherapist to figure out things that you had not been aware of, your psychological self but here in that immediate realization of being I am there is no doubt about that that there is a consciousness here prior to whatever arises in that consciousness there is a presence a consciousness even when I don't think in exact it's only really when there is a moment of not thinking that I become aware of that consciousness that I am I become aware of awareness which is not how it is it's just language awareness which is who you are consciousness which is who you are becomes aware of itself there is no duality anymore can you feel yourself, your consciousness your beingness the I am without adding anything to the I am which would be your name your age, your gender your position in society, your knowledge your memories these are all things you add to I am I am is the essence if you can sense that in your daily life, in the background then you are always connected with being you are rooted in that deeper dimension then all the comings and goings in your external life and all your doings may still be important are still important, whether you gain something, you lose something whether you are healthy or ill rich or poor but then there is always something deeper and from that deeper dimension of beingness where you can sense your essential reality as that and not the psychological personality that means you have found that which is of primary importance then you deal with all the things that are of relative or secondary importance, which is everything else in your life, so you are both who you are in this world the person the historical entity the physical, psychological entity, yes you are that but more fundamentally you are the consciousness without which the person would not even be would there even be a world without a consciousness perceiving the world molecules, atoms and empty space make up this body, this room everything, wherever you are molecules, atoms and mostly empty space it is not a world at that level, it is not a room and then consciousness comes and

suddenly there is a world but molecules and atoms themselves may also be just primordial manifestations of consciousness and ultimately humans will realize, first of all through spirituality your own spiritual realization at some point, perhaps even through science we are not there yet that all is consciousness that the entire universe is an expression of the one consciousness vibrating so to speak at different frequencies from so called inanimate matter to plant life to animal life to human life and other dimensions of existence in the same way water that can be solid as ice seems to have nothing to do with water it is very hard then water exists as a liquid water can also exist as a vapor the same thing at least at different frequencies one could say in consciousness, this is just an analogy for consciousness you are essentially consciousness and then there is a temporary appearance of you as a person and that is fine that is part of miracle of manifested existence where consciousness breaks up into countless streams coming all continuously from the one source to realize yourself as consciousness you need to become aware of the space between thoughts when I stop speaking for brief moments are you able to stay so present that you do not add any thought to this moment you add nothing to it there is just a sensation yes there is still if your eyes are open you can still see the screen and can see me or the image of me and hear the words or if your eyes are closed you can still hear the words but what else is there something deeper, more vital than whatever appears in your sense perceptions something without which there would be no sense perception oh yes, just a stillness at last a seemingly nothingness I like that English word nothingness the word nothing consists of no thing an apparent no thingness when you are not thinking and if you were in a place where it is totally quiet nobody is speaking and your eyes are closed you can become even more aware of the no thingness it is just a presence an underlying presence it has nothing to do with who you are on the level of the person an alive stillness and as you become familiar with that, it is not even confined to the so called inside of you you may notice that it seems to be both within and without, so the difference between within and without disappears mystics would call that the presence of God that they can suddenly sense and what is God well, you can't even speak about that ultimate source of all things but the best analogy for what God is and what your relationship with God is the best analogy for that is the sun which continuously gives forth life energy sunlight an outpouring the sun is just an analogy even the sun is not entire but it is the closest you can get it lasts for a billion years it is closest you can get to that which is eternal the sun is the source of the very warmth in your body if the sun disappeared everything would immediately within a few hours would die here so the consciousness emanates from the one source so to say I am God is both true and not true you are an extension of that one consciousness like you are a ray of sunlight temporarily appearing as a person and probably even this particular ray that temporarily appears as a person, the personal sense after death goes through a metamorphosis you don't stay as the same personality after death I would suggest that something of this particular ray survives beyond death it is not the personality and it survives until it completely merges the source itself is experiencing something through the manifested universe everything brings back something to the source like a bee

brings back something to the bee hive I don't want to become too one could talk I would love to talk about it for another hour or two but it is not necessary here with the realization of yourself as consciousness in that space between two thoughts and perhaps might even be a longer space you meditate, you become aware of being and you stay aware you can look around the room your eyes are open, you are perceiving sights and sounds and yet you are not interpreting them as you would habitually do you are just there as the perceiver as the consciousness in which these things are perceived and if you can both be aware of what is there around you and of the deeper space of awareness itself then your life can be balanced between being and doing, between the manifested and the unmanifested between the world and God this presence that you sense is enormously liberating it frees you from the prison of believing that who you are fundamentally is the person to be trapped in a personal exclusively personal sense of self personal selfhood it's a terrible way to live and if you are connected with the depth dimension the being beingness presence then the person has its place can be honored and can experience and do things in this world learn new things have goals and ambitions why not?

but no longer looking for liberation through achieving this or that no longer looking for ultimate fulfillment through some idea that when I achieve this then I will be complete and happy no, just participate in the dance of existence the universe wants to create it wants expansion but why is it that so often it seems to put obstacles in the path of expansion things go wrong difficult situations difficult people loss confusion why do some people experience life as one damn thing after another why does all these things work why does life leave me alone why does expansion seem to be blocked so often if the universe wants expansion which it does the universe not only wants to expand externally it also expands internally so every obstacle potentially is a deepening within it goes in two directions so if somebody let's say a child grows up with a handicap or very difficult life situation it doesn't have to be a child or any human being encounters a huge obstacle either they overcome the obstacle on the external level or they transcend that obstacle on an inner level so this is a universal thing just to give one example let's say a child is weak gets bullied at school very unhappy because of that then that child could generate so much energy that he or she would take up martial arts go to a teacher just as it's shown in those movies and then eventually he or she can defeat the bully the energy that would not have been generated if the bully had not been there so it becomes stronger that's expansion in a way or the child is just too weak it doesn't generate expansion on that level it can never defeat the bully but the energy goes within develops other abilities perhaps the ability to be creative to think, to create and twenty years later the child that was the bully works in some menial job and the child that was bullied is a great creator that's expansion too or becomes a spiritual teacher so the universe wants to expand but it also wants you to experience obstacles to expansion which are part of the expansion it goes in two directions so welcome all the obstacles in your life the obstacles to whatever and collectively if you listen to the news continuously

things go wrong dreadfully on the planet it happens to be the case that the news focuses on all the things that go wrong it doesn't focus on the things that don't go wrong so of course it's a distorted version of what life is like but undoubtedly things do go wrong humanity is being challenged sometimes through factors that seem to have nothing to do with things just come at you and other factors created by humanity's unconscious mind dysfunctional, egoic thinking and so it's only through experiencing the effects of that unconsciousness collectively if you look at humanity as a whole for a moment as one single expression of consciousness divided into billions of little entities, one huge array of consciousness divided into billions of smaller rays of consciousness one of them is you so humanity is evolving one consciousness expressing itself as a human being undergoing a process of evolution it's like birthing and gradually becoming more conscious seems to take a long time but every human being reaches a point where the consciousness accelerates and that's when you become you consciously embark on the spiritual path as you are doing that means you no longer your primary teacher is no longer suffering it may still come in but it's no longer your primary teacher you grow you awaken voluntarily without being pushed into it but you have been otherwise you wouldn't be you've had your suffering maybe a bit more but not like before and for many of you suffering is coming to an end it doesn't mean that you don't face problems anymore but you don't transform them into suffering the I am practice I am there's no doubt about that everything else could be an illusion and one way of looking at it is to say well it is a kind of illusion because nothing lasts for long everything here is impermanent be aware in your daily life of the gap between two thoughts so that your mind doesn't drag you along in an incessant stream of involuntary and compulsive thinking invite these gaps into your life by looking at something without interpreting it by listening to something without interpreting it by taking conscious breaths occasionally observe the air flowing into the body out of the body no thought you become aware of the underlying presence and only then do you become a true human being so humans are still undergoing evolutionary processes they are not finished they are not even fully human yet most of them you are fully human when you are conscious not only of your humanness but also of your beingness when the two come together you are a human being before you are only a human unaware of being only a personality a human being lives in two worlds the manifested and the unmanifested and that would mean when humans more and more humans begin to live like that of course the world would look very different what did we create so be not only human but be the being so you become a true human being

[Speaker 2] (43:05 - 43:25)

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Eckhart Tolle The Time is Always Now [d80fea39-e896-4a34-a876-ad490176ef3d]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:37)

The time is always now. Eckhart Tolle and I have spent many hours talking about what it means to live in the now. He's taught me not to linger on past mistakes, but to learn from them and then let them go.

But in this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about the importance of living in the now. And I appreciate his sense of humor about it because he jokes that he has a collection of watches that have been given to him over the years that just say, now. Another reminder to us that the time is always now.

[Speaker 1] (0:48 - 27:07)

It's working. It says the time is now. Totally accurate.

Over the years, many people have sent me now watches. I have a collection of about 10 with different dials. But some dials at every hour, it says now, now, now.

And then I have others that you have to press a button and then it says now. And then another button that gives you the time. In our kitchen, we have a clock that somebody sent.

It doesn't say now, but it shows all the numerals, the numbers in a pile at the bottom of the clock. And on the dial it says whatever. It's easy to forget that it's always now and only now.

And if you could remember that, not as a memory, but have that as a live realization, every moment, or to put it more accurately, in the moment, because there's only really one moment, although what happens in it changes. If you knew that, that's the awakened state of consciousness. You would be in alignment with whatever happens.

So the ultimate spiritual practice is to remember that it's now and only ever now. And this is now. This is your life.

And you may remember from a power of now or somewhere, I talked about usually when people refer to my life, they say my life. I call that your life situation, whatever is going on in your life, connected with the usual things that are of concern to people, which is your health, your relationships, your work, or lack of it, finances, living situation. Usually those things make up your life, my life.

But I call that your life situation as opposed to life, which is only ever now. Your life situation exists in the mind. You have to keep it alive there.

It's important, of course, you have to deal with situations as they arise in your life, but they only arise in the present moment. And when you think about your life situation, you can only think about it in the present moment. It's important to have these two, your life and your life situation, and not allow your life situation to completely obscure your life, your presence, your sense of aliveness, your spaciousness.

And that's helpful to bring attention, to learn to bring attention to your senses. The expression we could use is come to your senses, those five senses. So you become more aware of what surrounds you.

Inhabit the body. It's another one that brings you, connects you with life. It takes you out of the conceptualizing mind.

Be here now. Come to your senses. Inhabit the body.

Be here now. They're all one. And then you don't carry continuously with you, like a heavy burden, your life situation.

Of course, you address whatever challenges arrive. You deal with them as they arise in the present moment. Occasionally, you might have to do some planning or some strategy occasionally, but also that happens in the present moment.

For the rest of the time, don't allow your life situation to completely obscure, completely stifle your sense of aliveness, your presence in the moment, because then you walk around with a burden of a very heavy personality, and you don't see what's around you anymore. You can't truly relate to other humans because you have the heaviness of your problematic life situation. And whose life situation is not problematic?

It's in the nature of life situations to be problematic. Of course, you arrange your life as best you can, your life situation as best you can. Yes, you acquire new skills so you can get a better job, or in whatever way you improve or attempt to improve your life situation, find a nicer place to live.

Why not? That's all fine. But the expectation that at some point life should leave you alone and not challenge you anymore, and that there's something wrong when life challenges you, that's a delusion.

That itself, the unconscious assumption that there's something wrong when life presents so-called problems to you, better word is challenges, there's an unconscious assumption and an unconscious resentment and negative reaction the moment you are faced with a new challenge because of the underlying assumption that these things should not be happening. But no matter how carefully you arrange your life situation and no matter how much positive thinking you do, which is a nice thing, you will still be challenged by life. You will still experience the polarities of life.

You will experience, for example, that every situation, every new situation, has its new set of challenges. And you will realize even when you achieve what you want to achieve, the very thing that you believe would lead to ultimate fulfillment, when you achieve what you want to achieve, when you finally get there, you will find very quickly that even that new wonderful situation presents a new set of challenges. So you're never left alone.

Life will not leave you alone. And so it's in the nature of life to give you challenges in your life situation. So if you could remove or realize the fallacy of believing that such challenges should not occur, then that will improve or enhance your ability to deal with situations greatly.

It also will remove the otherwise continuous arising of negativity when you are faced with life situations from big to small, with challenges in your life situation. If you assume that there shouldn't be any challenges, you become negative. You say, there's something wrong.

You resent it. If you believe in God, you can have an argument with God. This is, I can't take any more God.

This is, you've gone too far this time. Or you can draw the conclusion that there is no God because your life would be easier if there were an intelligent God. He would obviously make your life easy and everybody else's life too.

So therefore, there can be no God. And the strange thing is that every being, even a plant and every animal, the insect, other animals, any life form, they all encounter challenges to their survival, to their well-being. They all are faced with that.

And that's amazing that they are not unhappy. Only humans become unhappy. Animals may suffer, but they don't have the, on top of the occasional suffering, they don't have the unhappy me, which is a conceptual entity in the head.

So the unhappiness resides on the human level and the resentment to the challenges of life. And that is something we can go beyond because that is associated with the egoic self in the head that sustains itself, enhances itself through that resentment, through that complaining, through that negativity. It gets stronger through that.

Then you can make life situations and other people into enemies. Your present moment can become an enemy. I want to get out of here.

And the more you want to get out of here, the more you are stuck in it, stuck in your mind. So the challenges of life are an essential part of the evolution of consciousness for all species. You can verify that in your own experience and in your own life.

For most of you, perhaps all of you, if you had not had your particular set of challenges in life, you wouldn't be here. I don't know where you would be, but you wouldn't be here.

The challenges of life, it's important then to see that there is no end to it.

So on that level, life won't leave you alone. But on a deeper level, once you accept that challenges will come, you don't have to become negative when they do come. You can actually, oh, there's another one.

And then it's often through intense challenges, the bigger ones, they drive you deeper. Now the interesting thing is it's not the great things that happen to you that make you more conscious. It's in many cases the so-called bad things that happen to you if you deal with them correctly and come to a place of acceptance that make you more conscious.

So there's an ancient saying that says, when the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found. And so many times you may find that in your life you lose something, death, loss of security, loss of income, loss of health, loss of long-term relationship. When the ego weeps, because the ego weeps, it's terrible, but then something suddenly arises, something that had been part of your sense of self has been removed.

It leaves a hole, an empty space, such as when somebody close to you dies, you lose your livelihood, your home. It leaves an empty space which is painful from the point of view of a personality. It is potentially also able to drive you deeper into who you truly are beyond form, the unconditioned, and then you experience suddenly, how can I feel so peaceful suddenly if something bad has happened?

And yet suddenly you feel a sense of liberation. It doesn't happen to everybody who experiences loss, but potentially that is always there. So next time a challenge comes, it won't be long, then say, oh, there's another one, and then you go with it.

You look at it, is there anything I can do to change the situation? First, when you look at it, the first is always to accept the present moment as it arises. Now sometimes whatever arises in the present moment requires you to take action, and then you look at it.

Now this looking is an important part of it. To look at a situation is not necessarily visual looking. It means to give attention to a particular situation that has arisen or is arising in the present moment.

And then this thing that I call looking is you give it attention. In that moment it could only be a few seconds or a minute or two. You give it attention, and that is a very important thing.

At that point you don't think. If your thinking comes in too soon, you might come to very wrong conclusions about what action you need to take because that action will be conditioned by your mind, the old stuff. You bring in the old and try to deal with the

present moment by bringing in old conditioning.

So you will act according to your conditioning. But if you can give something attention, this giving attention, you face it, you've let go of the inner resentment, and this is the most important thing, you've realized it is in the nature of life to give you challenges. Then when they come, there's no resentment.

You just see, ah, there it is, another one. Okay, even if you say there's another one, you don't say, oh no, another one. There's another one, okay.

And then you look at it, and by looking I mean to be in that state of consciousness in which there is an alertness but not yet thinking. You don't immediately, unless it's a situation that requires immediate action, which is called an emergency situation, in which case you'll do whatever you do anyway. Often emergency situations cut your mind out completely, and something else takes over and you take action.

And sometimes people do heroic things, and afterwards, when they are praised by others, they say, I don't know, I just did it. And then others, it can happen that they become paralyzed in the face of an emergency. They cannot get out of their mind, and their mind doesn't have time to deal with it.

And suddenly the whole engine in the head gets stuck. What do I do now? And then it's too late.

It's happened already, and you're dead, or whatever it is. You didn't jump out of the way soon enough. And there the train was coming towards you.

What do I do now? The train is coming. So in emergency situations, you cannot think.

If you think, you're stuck. And so many people experience, actually, that the mind gets out of the way, and something else presents suddenly. And this happens to people who engage in dangerous activities and love it, climbing up a steep wall, mountain wall, driving dangerous cars fast, motorbikes, or whatever they do.

Anything, any dangerous activity forces you into the present moment. You don't need that. And it could, of course, dangerous activity means it is dangerous.

Don't get addicted to just one activity to take you into the present moment, because then every weekend you'd have to climb up this wall. And in the meantime, of course, you're still not present. So if it's not an absolute emergency situation, but a challenge, then it's important.

So that means you have a little bit of time to deal with it. Don't immediately go into thinking about it. So give it attention, face it.

And now this giving of attention, which I sometimes call looking, it might involve looking

or it might not, is this clarity of consciousness with which you look at something or an entire situation and don't immediately come to a conclusion as to what action you need to take. It's that facing it and looking that connects you to a deeper level. In other words, you become still, alert and still.

And then after a few seconds or a minute or two, it is likely that a thought comes in that tells you what the right action is. So that's not an emergency. It's just a challenge.

Or it might be that you still don't know what to do. Or it may be that you have to become still again after a while and look at it again. And then you may come to the realization that there's nothing you can do, at least for now.

There are certain situations that are problematic, and yet for now there isn't really much you can do. And then you leave it alone. And then you accept this is what is, the acceptance of what is.

So it happens very often when people are not able to really have that clarity of perception, a look into it. Often people take action when it would be better to leave it alone. Many situations, it depends, of course, on what it is.

Many situations are made far worse by taking unnecessary, superfluous, or excessive action. Balance in everything, there's a balance that you need to find. But the most important thing, challenges, accept them, even welcome them when they arise because they're a great opportunity, especially the little ones.

You might not welcome the big challenges, but they are great too. Don't resent the challenges. Get rid of the belief or transcend the belief that you should not be challenged by life, that these problems should not occur.

So, questions. It's still the now. And here too.

I'll start with just two or three questions on paper. When I'm accepting a person completely, isn't that kind of enabling them, that's a good point, if the behavior of another person causes you suffering, true suffering, not just the suffering that says, oh, he makes me mad, the way he does this every time, the way he eats makes me mad, the way the noises he makes makes me so mad, the way he walks makes me mad, the way he speaks, just why does he talk like that? Some people have those kinds of reactions and thoughts towards the person they're living with, and of course that causes you suffering. That is self-generated suffering, of course.

You cannot tell that person, I want you to eat differently, walk differently, behave differently, just do everything differently so that I can be at peace, so that you don't make me mad anymore. But then there are other cases where there's actual suffering inflicted. Your partner comes home once a week and becomes drunk and violent.

Now, there can be a misconception when we talk about accepting. Accepting is mainly an internal thing where you accept that the person is displaying this behavior that corresponds to his or her level of consciousness at this time. Whatever behavior this person displays, manifests, corresponds to his or her level of consciousness.

If he or she were more conscious, they would behave differently. So that is a good realization. So internally, there is a realization that the behavior people manifest corresponds to their level of consciousness.

Externally, it doesn't necessarily mean that you remain in the presence of that person because you have accepted that what he or she does is as it is. But it could still be that you may need to talk to the person if that helps. In rare cases, it may help.

And you say to that person, you come home once a week drunk and become violent. I don't want to live with that anymore. I know that you are unhappy and you drink because you're unhappy.

So he would say, when he's not drunk, I'm never going to do that again. And of course, that's not how it is because he truly means it in the moment of saying it because he's relatively a bit more conscious at that moment. But the moment he takes in that substance, his level of consciousness goes to the bottom again and he will do it again.

So if you speak to a person to explain that their behavior needs to change and the way you speak is based on an acceptance of this is what they do, this is what they do according to their level of consciousness, you don't make the person into an enemy. That's really the acceptance part of it. So you don't make the person into an enemy but you can clearly express what is wrong with their behavior and they need to change if that is possible or you remove yourself from that person.

Even if you might have a work situation where your boss or somebody you work with is very unconscious and I don't mean the superficial kind of suffering that is generated by your mind through excessive reactivity, but true, a person who truly is out to sabotage you in everything that you do because of his ego or her ego is so big, needs to feel superior and sabotage your work, talk behind your back to make people feel antagonistic towards you, all those things that unconscious egos do in order to enhance their own position or their own sense of self.

Again, you see that this person is the ego of that person that is acting, he or she is totally in the grip of their ego and you may try and talk to that person, this is not acceptable if you can. If it's your boss, you can't really say, well, you can say it's not acceptable and depending on how valuable your work is to him, he or she may change their behavior to keep you or may not, in which case, you remove yourself from the situation. It is not good to be in a situation where you're surrounded by unconscious people making your life miserable.

Even though removing yourself might lead to a period of... might be very challenging, it is better to go into the uncertainty or the insecurity and accept the challenge of insecurity rather than remain in a situation that does give you security but is a continuous source of suffering. So then you have the courage to step into insecurity and that in itself is a great thing to do.

The seeking of continuous security stops many people from taking the next necessary step in their lives because they have a fear of this uncertainty or insecurity in their lives. So if there's something, whether it's a relationship at home or whether it's at work and it causes you continuous deep suffering, unhappiness, change the situation if it's possible or remove yourself. If there's more, if there's deeper unconsciousness, that actually impinges upon your freedom and your ability to enjoy life, they actually cause you suffering, then without making them into enemies, first speak to them if that's possible.

And if that does not work, if their behavior doesn't change, remove yourself. Embrace insecurity if that's what it means and that in itself, remember, I'm sure you have experienced it already, or some of you may be in a situation, either at home or at work, that produces continuous unhappiness and then it may be time to step out. It does not mean you're responsible if you put up with a continuous source of unhappiness.

Yes, but I need to be responsible. You need to be responsible for your inner state. That is primary responsibility.

You're of no real help to anybody if you live in continuous unhappiness. Let's look at one or two more questions here.

[Speaker 5] (27:08 - 27:56)

I have a question about stages that we go. I read the first one, Power of Now, changed my life and then I came to a new earth. Thank you for paradise.

The stages, the truck, you get stuck, you either accept and then the next one is you enjoy. I already went to enthusiasm. I found my enthusiasm, what I thought, but then it felt like the ego.

Is there a way to know which one is which? Am I enthusiastic because this is what the universe is pushing me to do or is it just me trying to be, oh, I'm the enlightened one, I'm the spiritual one or so on?

[Speaker 1] (27:57 - 32:04)

Okay, I understand. Yes, thanks. So that goes back to in the new earth, I think I wrote that the three modalities of being, if you're not in one of the three modalities, you're in a state that is not harmonious and egoic or dysfunctional.

So the three modalities, acceptance, you either, whatever you need to do or whatever the situation is, you accept it. If you cannot enjoy it, there's some things you can't enjoy, but you can accept that this is what is. Acceptance then is that important.

Others, enjoyment comes in, enjoy the work, see if you can enjoy it rather than just accept that anything you do with resentment is a dysfunctional state causing suffering without knowing it, you're causing it to yourself in any state of resentment. You're doing it, but you resent doing it. You are somewhere, but you really don't want to be there, but you are there.

So these are states of dysfunctional states that actually cause suffering. You cause it unnecessarily to yourself without knowing it. So acceptance, enjoyment, there's a flow in what you do.

You are present in what you know, where you're going, but you're fully present in the process of moving towards there. The movement is more important than where you want to get to. And then the enthusiasm is the stage that I describe as happening during the creative process.

When you are giving birth to something new in whatever form, there can be an enormous influx of energy that I call enthusiasm, which is the ancients believed that there was a higher spirit moving through you at that time. I mean, literally, enthusiasm means in God. So enthusiasm is a state of creativity.

Now, your question is correct. It can sometimes, there can be egoic, excited egoic states masquerading as enthusiasm. And sometimes at first sight, not easy to tell the difference because you're on a high, you're on an egoic high.

But there are some signs by which you can recognize whether or not it's the ego or whether there's a deeper creative process, consciousness wanting to create something through you. One thing you can recognize the ego by is when you encounter obstacles to whatever your action is in that state of either enthusiasm or egoic excitement. When you encounter obstacles, if it's the ego, you will quickly fall into negative states the moment you encounter obstacles to what you're doing.

If it's true enthusiasm, you do not fall into negative states when obstacles arise. And obstacles will arise in any creative endeavor. It's something that doesn't mean you're supposed to stop when an obstacle arises.

You look at an obstacle and see either you can use it and transform it and incorporate it into what you do or you can bypass it. That's how true enthusiasm, but the ego gets resentful when an obstacle comes. It takes it as a personal insult.

So that's a good sign that it's egoic or not. And another sign, of course, is always, but that is more when you're getting towards the end of the achievement, when you have

achieved something and it does not satisfy you soon after achieving it, then you know it was the ego too. So you always know the ego.

There's a satisfaction, but not short-lived when it's ego. So the Course in Miracles actually tells you you can always recognize an egoic goal when you achieve it by realizing that it hasn't satisfied you.

[Speaker 5] (32:05 - 32:07)

Thank you. Of course it makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (32:07 - 32:22)

Thank you. We have plenty of time. We're in the present moment.

No need to hurry. No need to hurry. It's fine.

[Speaker 2] (32:23 - 33:27)

Hello. Hello. I've been to several of your retreats and my friend encouraged me to ask the question.

Both of my parents were Holocaust survivors. My mother was liberated from Auschwitz in 1945 and my father from Bergen-Belsen. And I had a brother who died in the Warsaw Ghetto there.

And I have this identification with this collective kind of unconscious where I constantly try to think about what you're saying and how to apply the feeling of there is no problem in the present moment. It doesn't happen all the time. But when you say that I think about them and I think, how could they have done that?

How could they have said in a state of terror there's no problem right now? And I think about it often. I was a little nervous to ask the question and even to make the statement but my friend was encouraging me to do it.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (33:27 - 39:58)

The main part of your question is how could they at that time have said there is no problem in the situation that they were in? That's your main question. In such extreme situations of such extreme suffering, concentration camp and so on, and even nowadays there are places on the planet where people are in these situations of extreme suffering where death could come at any moment.

There have been accounts of people who were in concentration camps who have actually broken through to a very deep level of consciousness by being in that situation. And it

doesn't happen in those cases by telling yourself that there is no problem in the present moment. That would be a very weak statement and it really wouldn't work.

But what does work is a situation like that can drastically burn up your ego completely so that there is complete self-annihilation before the body dies. There is complete annihilation of the egoic sense of self and all that remains is an intense presence of consciousness. You are not there as a person anymore.

I know that there are a few individuals who have gone there who have later been able to speak about it and I'm sure there are many others, a minority, yes, there are many others who never were able, they died there, they were never able to later on express what they actually went through, but I believe there is a considerable number of people who went through the deepest shift in consciousness that is possible in this possibly painful situation and actually became totally awakened as consciousness and realized that there is no death. And others, of course, went through terrible fear and died in terrible fear. But the essence of who you are is not subject to death.

When we see the dreadfulness of that situation, which is not to be denied, so we also have to see on a deeper level there is no death. And both exist, knowing that there is no death to the essence of who you are, knowing that from an inner realization does not mean that on another level the situation is not dreadful. One does not deny the other.

It has to be recognized in its dreadfulness. That's part, in the same way that I sometimes speak of how many people were actually killed by humans killing, murdering other humans in the 20th century alone. Nobody knows the exact figure, 150 million, 200 million.

Humans murdered by others. Natural catastrophes and so on are nothing compared to that, what humans do to each other. And that's a form of collective madness.

The Holocaust is one aspect of that. Another aspect of that would be what happened in Soviet communism. Millions killed.

Also in China, millions killed within their own countries, not even in the conflict between two countries. First World War, the madness of that. Second World War, the madness of that.

The bombing of cities and entire civilian populations exterminated. Complete madness. So we have to see that ultimately the dysfunctional egoic mind and what it produces, and this is dreadful.

You need to recognize the craziness of that, the madness of that. But at the same time, if we are able to go deep enough, we can realize that for a moment regard humanity of consciousness, there's human consciousness, which is a collective of humanity. And every human being is an expression of the collective human consciousness.

And the collective human consciousness is an expression of the universal consciousness. It's one strand, one ray in the universal consciousness. So you have universal consciousness, then you have the collective human consciousness on planet Earth.

The collective human consciousness is evolving gradually through continuously, through billions of manifestations. Humans, they're called human individuals. It's evolving gradually.

So another way of looking at it on a deeper level is the evolution of human consciousness is a very painful process. It goes to a nightmarish stage when the history of humanity looks like the history of a nightmare. But it is evolving.

So we ourselves are expressions of the evolution of consciousness. And knowing that, we can still recognize the madness of what happened and to some extent, it's still happening. But this is a long answer on two levels.

No, they would not have said there's no problem in the present moment, but perhaps the situation forced them into a state of consciousness that we call presence that they didn't have a name for. That is always the possibility when it happens. For you, it's important to derive your sense of self from the arising presence in you, not from the historical past, your own historical past or the historical past of your family, but to acknowledge it, what happened, but not derive your sense of identity from it.

That is important. Otherwise, you get trapped in that sense of identity.

[Speaker 2] (40:00 - 40:01)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (40:01 - 40:02)

Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (40:11 - 41:04)

So my question is, I've been studying your way of living for ten years now and kind of getting better at it, I think. But as I get better at it, I find it to be, for want of a better word, sometimes lonely. I don't engage in conversations with people that I would have because I don't want to gossip.

And I find it sometimes, especially with my family, and this sounds funny, but if I sit down to dinner with my wife and her mother, I could quite easily be silent. And so I make conversation because I feel strange. And so where is the...

I don't even know quite what the question is, but where is the line between engaging in that conversation to be normal and sit there silent and everybody thinks you're weird?

[Speaker 1] (41:12 - 45:12)

Yes. Well, the way I deal with it, I must admit, and people who have been with me and on private occasions, like we used to have, not so much now, after events, we had dinners when people would sit around one big table or several tables and some of the volunteers or the organizers and so on. And often people were very disappointed because I sat there and said very little.

They thought, oh, dinner with Eckhart is going to tell wonderful things. And he just sat there and didn't say very much. And that's fine.

I was okay with that. I do sometimes engage in superficial conversation and actually enjoy it with people, just talk about the weather. But why not sometimes just go along with...

not the gossip kind of thing, which is egoically motivated. There it's better to, as the Buddhists say, keep noble silence, which means don't speak. When that kind of conversation is there, we're talking about others and how defective they are and what they did and didn't do.

There it's better to refrain and just be there and not even think you shouldn't be talking about that. Just don't feed it at all. Just be there.

And if they don't find you interesting, that's their problem. At other times it might be actually quite enjoyable to engage in just simple superficial conversations about everyday things, but superficial... It's hard to think of superficial things.

But in the moment I usually can. This is not egoic kind of talk, but just superficial exchange of ideas or thoughts or experiences. But you're right to keep noble silence when it comes to egoically motivated conversations of whatever kind.

There's negativity in the background and people just want to feel superior to others who happen not to be there. But try out in certain situations just engage in superficial chitchat and just enjoy that also you're skimming off the surface of life. And that can be quite nice too for a little while.

And while you listen you can sense there's something else in them, their beingness. Through your own you can sense that. And you feel when you finish, you feel it's been a nice exchange.

Nothing important has been said and yet two human beings came together. You looked at him or her. You looked into his or her eyes and touched the deeper essence of the other.

Even while you were talking about superficial things, it's more easily done one on one

than in a group setting. That's in a group setting that the group generates a lot of that mind stuff. So it's yes, if people find you boring, that's fine.

And you don't get invited to dinner parties anymore if that is possible. And there may be other people coming into your life with whom you can engage in other kinds of conversation. So try the chitchat.

Laughter Thank you. Applause Applause Applause Okay, one more question.

[Speaker 6] (45:12 - 45:31)

My question is about my mind. My mind is constantly fantasizing. My fantasies are like little movies with anger, desire, fear, and looking for someone's approval.

So I am very aware of that. So, what do you recommend me?

[Speaker 1] (45:32 - 51:19)

Laughter Yes, this is not uncommon to have, there are many people who, some of their mind activity, and that includes you from what you just said. It's an interesting phenomenon. They experience imaginary situations.

It's like a little, as you said, like a little movie in your mind in which something happens. It's not going to happen, it has never happened, but it's happening in their mind. So this is the mind going wild.

It just goes on and on. How do you step out of that here and now? Breathing.

Little portals, I call them sometimes, into presence. One is being aware of your breath. Now you tell me that you can't do that for just very long because the mind comes in.

I will come to that in a second. Being aware of your breath. Being aware of sense perceptions.

Being aware of your inner body. So stay with those three. The breathing.

I believe you are able to take one conscious breath. One conscious breath usually means in and out. If that's too long, try one half conscious breath, which would just be the in-breath.

Which means you observe with your inner perception, you observe how the air flows through your nose into the body. Also observe the out-breath. If you are able to observe the in-breath, now at that point you might notice your mind wants to come in with a thought and say something about it.

It might say I can't do it. It might say, am I really observing it? Or am I just fooling myself?

The mind has many strategies of fooling you into believing that you cannot be present. If you believe in the thought that arises that I'm not really present, am I? Or whatever the mind says.

Don't believe what the mind says. Just take attention back to the breath. Then you may be able to do let's do that now.

One full conscious breath lasting probably about ten seconds or whatever it is. So we can do it together. Your attention needs to be on the breath and it takes your attention into the body to some extent into your chest and then you feel the air flowing out again.

So here we go in and let's do it one more time. And one more time, even if the mind tells us you can't do it. Okay, that was three or four conscious breaths.

Now, were you able to do that? Yes. But your mind is particularly powerful so it has a very strong gravitational pull.

It can very easily demand all your attention back for itself. So you have to know that. If you can experience as now that it's actually joyful, very pleasant to be observing your breath, acknowledge that it is actually very peaceful and pleasant.

Then you will want to go there more often without and the seduction, the power of the mind to seduce you becomes less. So stepping out of the mind when you realize there's totally useless mind activity going on here, you need to realize that. But there's enough awareness in you that very often you do realize that is already a sign of awareness to realize that you're strapped in this noisy mind is a sign of awareness.

Because if you had no awareness you wouldn't even know it. You'd be so totally in it. You would be so identified with it.

You would be it. It would be all there is to you. But there is more to you.

So there is the awareness there. The moment you realize you have a choice of taking your attention out of the mind. And even if you cannot do it for very long that doesn't matter so much.

The important thing is that you can do it. And the process is there's a separation between mind activity and your consciousness separates from mind activity. Then mind activity weakens and subsides.

And there's consciousness. And then it grabs hold of consciousness again. And you're completely in it again.

And then after a while the moments when there's a freedom from mind activity the separation becomes a bit longer. And you enjoy it even more. And there's more of it.

But in the meantime for you is to engage in this process of separation. And don't believe your mind when it says things about it. It's not the truth.

[Speaker 6] (51:21 - 51:28)

Okay. The point is that it's very powerful so it's like I am so tired of hearing myself.

[Speaker 1] (51:28 - 52:02)

Yeah. That's good. That's a good point.

Oh, that's a good point to reach. To be tired of hearing yourself is a very good point to reach. Thank you.

Well, thank you. Engage in presence practice. Walking, sitting, lying, eating, wherever you are.

Be there as the presence more than as the person. So there's more of you as presence than of you as person. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (52:04 - 52:27)

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Eckhart Tolle The United States of Awareness [da59bffc-ff0e-476a-9f76-ad650140feee]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:41)

United States of Awareness. In this episode, Eckhart talks to a live audience with participants from around the world. He calls them the United States of Awareness.

He says awakening humans are experiencing a metamorphosis, like caterpillars becoming butterflies. He emphasizes the most important thing that we must tend to is our state of consciousness, letting go of our judgments and our reactivity. He urges us to make it a practice that whatever happens in our lives, accept that it's exactly what we need in that moment for our spiritual growth.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 44:38)

This evening, probably, I'm mainly going to talk about how to be here, about your state of consciousness here. I'm saying probably because you never know what comes out of the present moment. The most important thing here, which, by the way, is also the most important thing in your entire life, is your state of consciousness, no matter what's going on in your life, where you are, who you're with, or what you're doing.

The primary factor in whatever you're experiencing is your state of consciousness, because it is through your particular state of consciousness that you experience things. So if you are heavily identified with the conditioned thinking mind and all its preconditioned beliefs, opinions, judgments, then that's the way you perceive the world, through the veil of that. If there are turbulent or heavy emotions running through you that you're identified with, then you will experience the world around you, other people, situations, through the veil of those emotions, and you think that's how the world is, that's reality.

So as you know all that, and if you are present, then you experience people, situations, and whatever is going on in your life, places, very differently. This opportunity here is for you to practice being absolutely present and make that the main focus rather than anything else. Leave your mind as much as possible behind.

Easier said than done. Your state of consciousness not only determines your life, it even becomes 2, 3, 4, 5 times more important when most of you or all of you work with people in one way or another, and no matter in what capacity you work with people, whatever your state of consciousness is, it will transmit itself to the people that you work with. So here, as ideal as you can get for the practice of presence, but it won't be 100% ideal, there need to be little things to challenge you, and sometimes there are big things to challenge you, but little things are everywhere.

Little things to challenge you occur all the time. Make it your practice to say that whatever happens here is the perfect situation for you. So let go of the judgmental mind, the complaining entity, and see what happens if you approach each moment in that state of surrender, and then a depth will reveal itself to you that you hadn't noticed before because you were trapped in the veil of the judgmental mind.

A very wonderful thing is being here with many others from all over the world who are also awakening, or many of you are already awake most of the time, and I was asked not long ago, when you travel, somebody asked me, how is it that you go to different countries and you meet different people, different nationalities? Are there big differences in how people receive these teachings? And I was surprised when I answered because I hadn't known it before because I hadn't thought about it.

Actually, all those humans who are in the awakening process begin to resonate at a certain frequency that is the same for all of them. So you may find here, when you meet somebody from a very distant country, you find something that unites you, that transcends cultural conditioning and social conditioning, and that's a wonderful thing. So it's almost like a new species is coming out of the old, and you are part of that, and no matter where you go in the world, you will very quickly recognize those who are also in the awakening process.

That reminds me, I was going to put this on before coming on stage, but I forgot, I've had it for years, a badge somebody gave me. It says USA if you read it vertically, but if you read it horizontally, it says United States of Awareness. Now, that is a work in progress, of course.

For the awakening humans, as humans awaken all over the planet, that would eventually become the United States of Awareness. So let's focus on your state of consciousness right now. It's easy, relatively easy, to be present as you sit here.

So use every moment here, whether you're walking, sitting, standing, eating, to practice presence. First of all, nature. Nature that surrounds you here is remarkable.

There's a magic to just watching nature as you walk or sit or go to the beach. And as you watch nature, be there as, not as a person, but as a conscious presence that is perceiving all that amazing magic. So you go, you listen, all your senses are alert because that is part of presence.

And you can not only look, you listen, the sounds, the wind, birds, or the ocean. You can feel the breeze on your skin. You smell the air.

And you're practicing being in this world as a walking presence rather than as a person with a history that's still going to be there. Don't worry, you still have your history. You remember who you are or your past.

But the shift is that the formless you, the timeless you, which is consciousness itself, emerges more and more fully through the gaps in the temporal you, through the gaps between two thoughts. It emerges even through the cells of your body so that there's a lightness to who you are. This has nothing to do with your physical weight.

There's a lightness to who you are as presence emerges and you as the personality, the personality loses its opaqueness, its density. If you look at any human who has no access to the spirit dimension, has had no separation yet between who they are as consciousness and their thought processes and emotional processes, there is a density to those humans. And it doesn't mean that the spirit dimension is not present in them.

It is. But it's being obscured by the density of mental-emotional conditioning. And this density of mental-emotional conditioning is called a person.

And it has a name tag attached to it, and that's me. And all the things that make up the identity of the person consists of accumulations of certain predominant emotions and certain predominant thought patterns that go through their minds. So the combination of those predominant emotions and thought patterns make up the personality.

Whatever might be happy-looking or predominantly looking out for the next thing that's going wrong. It might be a fearful conditioning, emotional, mental. Where's the next blow that the universe is going to give me, going to come from?

Or predominantly angry, looking for another excuse to be angry again. Please make me angry. I'm waiting for something.

I'm waiting for something to react to. So you have the person. Some persons are relatively well-adjusted.

But no person is really happy for long. No person has really any depth to him or herself. Well, they do, but they don't know it.

So if you have a depth, but you don't sense your own depth, yours is a surface reality, then it's as if you didn't have it. But this is an experiential thing. And I believe that almost everyone here can verify in their own experience what it is that I'm talking about.

Because many of you will experience yourself, sometimes the personality predominates again. Sometimes in certain situations in your life, the heaviness, the opaqueness, the density of the personality returns when you become very reactive. It happens easily in family situations, which are always the most difficult training ground, but the best for staying conscious.

Relationships, close relationships, and then come work situations, and so on. You get challenged, and the personality reasserts itself completely, and you become just as unconscious as all the others who have never gone through any awakening process. And

then you wake up suddenly, after a few hours, or a day, or a few minutes, if you're lucky, and say, Oh, what was that?

And then whatever words you used to describe that, you said, I lost it completely. What did you lose? I lost it.

What? I lost, well, of course you lost consciousness, awareness. You didn't know who you were anymore.

You thought you were the little person again. Because the awakening humans are like transitional entities. They are hybrids.

The awakening humans are hybrids. We all know the caterpillar and the butterfly, the most incredible metamorphosis. When the caterpillar dies, and the butterfly becomes transformed into the butterfly.

So you, the awakening humans, many of them are like a butterfly that's emerging from the caterpillar. And then as it emerges from the caterpillar, it still experiences him or herself as a caterpillar. Although he or she is already emerging as a butterfly, then he still falls back into thinking he's a caterpillar.

And behaves like one. Although he's already become a butterfly. So then the butterfly starts behaving like a caterpillar again.

Can't fly anymore, it goes. And then you need something to remind you that you're not the caterpillar anymore. So the caterpillar in this analogy is the person without any awareness.

Now, as presence arises in you, it does not mean that certain aspects of your personality will not remain. Certain aspects of your personality will remain because you have a form identity. Everybody has a form identity.

There are certain ways in which you do things. Maybe ways in which you speak. And if they are not dysfunctional, but just certain characteristics, they may remain.

So if they are dysfunctional, that means there's an unconsciousness there. And those will dissolve as awareness shines through the person. So then what happens to us is, yes, you are still a person, but a different dimension of consciousness that is not conditioned shines through the personality.

And as that grows, the personality of the person recedes more and more. And just enough remains so that you can function as a form in this world. All that remains.

You can function well. You may find in your daily life fluctuations in the intensity of to what extent you are a person and to what extent you are the presence. And in your work situation, you will be of the greatest benefit if the personality can operate as little as

possible.

If the personality is in the background, so that when you work with people, you are predominantly presence. And that is a wonderful shift. I noticed that there was many years ago when I went through my shift in consciousness, people started coming to me to ask questions initially.

Later I said, okay, I'm doing counseling sessions. But at first it was just people asking questions and then I would give answers. But the important thing here is when you work with somebody, there is you, there is the other person, there is whatever modality you apply to that situation that you have learned.

You might be a doctor in which you spent many years accumulating knowledge and you apply that modality to this therapeutic situation. You may be a nurse. Also you have to study several years to be a nurse.

You apply that. If you are a therapist, you probably have gone to therapy training, university. You have certain modalities of how you approach the therapeutic situation, what kind of questions you ask, what you are supposed to say, what you are not supposed to say.

Or if you do body work, of course you have learned that. That is your modality. Whatever it is, that's fine.

This is what you practice. But if that's all there is, you, a person, practicing a modality, a therapeutic modality, then the most vital element is still missing. So there is always a third element there in addition to you, the person, practicing the modality.

But in between, there needs to be that alertness that you bring to the situation, which basically is, there need to be moments when you are not thinking. And that is how presence arises. If you are continuously thinking when working with somebody, what to do, how can I be helpful, it's what I say something that can really help this person.

If you let go of that and become comfortable with not knowing for moments, then this depth dimension begins to come into the room through you. And that really is the sacred dimension of two people being together. So you invite the presence in.

And the presence is what really matters there. Already many of you probably have been doing it perhaps for quite a long time, perhaps without even knowing it, that this is what it is. So we have a line in the Course in Miracles that says, a healer does not heal, he lets healing be.

So even though you practice a modality, it's a balance between still applying your knowledge to the situation, whether it's physical knowledge or whatever it is that you do, and yet not be confined to that in your interaction with that person. This is the balance

between what you know on the level of form and inviting the other dimension into the situation. And that is the real healing in a wider sense, which may result in physical healing, but there's a deeper healing that is much more important.

Because what that really means, the deeper healing is the awakening. It's the realization who you are beyond the person. And that can come to whoever you are working with, if you are not there predominantly as a person.

But that is the essence of the healing situation, no matter what you do. So here we practice being the presence rather than the person. This becomes challenging the moment you interact with people here.

But here the challenge is, I'd ask you to use that as an opportunity, because the moment you start to interact through your mind with the mind of another, you can very easily get pulled out of presence. And before you know it, after two minutes of talking, you're completely in the mind, which is your ego, especially if there's a disagreement or something like that about spirituality. And you know absolutely that you are right.

A particular skill is required, and I ask you to practice here if you interact with people, to stay present while you speak and listen to somebody, so that you don't get lost in the mental stream, which is often accompanied by certain emotions too. Don't get lost, because it can drag you along, that mental stream can pull you, and then you spout out all the usual stuff that you've been saying for years. All the old positions and all the things that you're so sure of, and that is how it is.

Now many of you are not that deeply entrenched anymore, but it could happen that you fall back into this caterpillar existence. So, to remain present when you begin to use the mind to interact with another, requires enormous skill and alertness. Now how does that look in practice?

Well, first of all, you bring an alertness to the situation. First of all, when you listen to the other, you're not preparing your next statement in the mind. There's complete listening, and that's, of course, in any client situation also, that is a vital practice, even though you might have an enormous amount of knowledge about what this person needs.

Before you apply this enormous amount of knowledge that you have, which is good, there needs to be a space where you're not applying it yet. There needs to be a space where you give this person complete and utter attention. So you are there as an alert, receptive presence with the other person.

Do not get buried underneath your knowledge that what you have learned to help others, but this can completely occupy your mind to such an extent that there's no space left to even realize that there is a human being there. We all know the cases of certain physicians and doctors, some of them who don't see you anymore as a human being.

They see you as a symptom.

They only address the symptom. There are some doctors, of course, they wouldn't be here. They're not coming.

But there are some, I know there are some doctors here, but they are different. They are conscious. Some of you may be here who are practicing spiritual healing, in which case, I mean, your natural state would be to be in that thoughtless awareness, and you wouldn't be thinking about, okay, what can I prescribe this person, or what is the case history, or there are many different types of healing.

So, as you are with the person, there needs to be spaces when you don't know anything. No matter how much knowledge you have acquired, you need to have spaces with that other person. They don't need to be long.

I don't really want to put a figure to them, but even if it's just 10 seconds, you have 10, 20 seconds when you're just looking and listening. And during that time, you're not searching your memory banks, or in your mind for the thing, how can I help this person? What do I need to do?

And after you've given that person your complete attention, then the mind may operate, and then you say, okay, this is... you may get insights, you may apply your knowledge, and then you do that. And then again, there comes a moment you give your fullest attention, and then you can, if you're a doctor, you suddenly...

there's a true relationship. You're not relating to a patient predominantly anymore. Yes, on the level of form, he or she is a patient.

But you are also there as a human being. The human being, the human is the form. Your person, your body, your mental conditioning, your mind, the being is the formless dimension in you.

So you are coming together of form and formlessness. So, as you practice, don't be a practitioner who is only human, without any access to being. That's a very impoverished life.

And a very impoverished therapeutic situation, too, when you're just there as a human. In the therapeutic situation, the presence intensifies. That is an interesting thing.

The moment a person comes, the session, whatever you call it, begins, the presence arises more than it would be in a normal situation. This is, I encountered as soon as I started many years ago, seeing people privately for counseling. The moment they came, they came into the room.

First they were on a park bench, and then eventually they came to a room. And the

moment they came in, they sat down, and the moment I looked at them, they started speaking, and there was not a single thought in my head. My mind was totally still.

And there was just, okay. And then they started to talk, and then I could feel the presence. And it was a wonderful intensity, but a peaceful intensity to it.

And out of that, usually, came the first things that came out of my mouth, and often it was an additional question. What about that? And another question.

Again, without any prior decision what I was going to say. It just came out of that field of presence. So I was lucky that I didn't know much about therapeutic situations.

So there was not that much knowledge that I had to relinquish for those moments. Simply by being so alert, raising the frequency through that alertness, that thought just doesn't happen. So you can start with, sometimes it helps to, you can say, okay, while I hold this, this represents the space between my two hands, represents the moment of no thought.

And you go like that. You don't have to do it now, but you go like that, and let's say, let's give it 10 seconds right now. Are you able to simply let go of thinking, and just remain as an aware presence here and now?

Start now. Now? Okay.

That was about 10 seconds. Now, you may feel it's almost like saying don't think of a white elephant or something like that. And the moment you say don't think of a white, are you thinking of a white elephant?

This is the essence, really, of all spirituality, is to be able to relinquish thought. And not by falling below thought, which would be getting sleepy and tired, so you can't think much anymore because you're too tired to think. This is your falling below thought.

We are rising above thought. This is the next step in human evolution, is transcend thought. Transcend doesn't mean it doesn't happen anymore, but you go beyond it.

You can use it, but you're no longer confined by it. Now, those humans who are not awakened are confined by their thinking. They are trapped in the conditioned mind.

And so, we are becoming free of this prison, which is the being imprisoned by your conditioned mind, and mistaking it for who you are. This is the essence of not knowing who you are in reality. So the practice then, practice it here.

When you're not thinking, you're still there as the essential you is still there, and it's there more strongly. I believe when I wrote in the little book, Stillness Speaks, I think in the first sentence it says something like, you're never more essentially yourself than when you are still. That is the true essence of your being, that you can feel that as

consciousness, as presence itself.

That is who you are. So stillness, really, when I use the word stillness, it means rising above thought. It doesn't matter right now for how long you rise above thought.

Little moments of presence are enough. And you will find, if you are able, in your daily life, and practice here, because here is a very conducive environment for practicing, practice rising above thought here in whatever city, walking, looking around at nature, perceiving nature. What do you need to think?

You don't need to know that this is called the Monterey Pine Tree. You know that already. And imagine doing that with another human being, where you can look at another human being without any conceptualization.

And then you can sense that this presence, that is you, also in them. It's the same presence. The same one consciousness.

You sense it in the other. If the mind is still, and then suddenly you have the true empathy, which means really, another word for it is really love, or lovingness, is to recognize that you and the other are in essence one. So, if you can practice that here not only with trees, but also with other humans, which is a little bit more difficult, because they have noisy minds.

The tree doesn't have a noisy mind, so it's easy to be still with the tree and present. You can even sense the stillness of the tree if you are still enough, because only the stillness in you can sense the fact that the tree is very still. But can you sense the stillness in another human who can't stop talking to you?

That's possible too, but you have to sense it within. So no matter where you go, if you look at teachings, Jesus' teachings, we only really have it as fragments. We don't have a complete teaching.

It's miraculous that these fragments survive, but in the fragments of the teachings of Jesus, you can also see that he talks about the importance of take no thought for the moral, but just give attention to what is here now. Don't be worried. Don't judge.

It's all the mind. We have it very clearly in the Buddha's teaching. The degree of absence of thoughts is the measure for progress on the spiritual path.

You can't start thinking about this answer now, obviously. This answer is a pointer, and you can only understand what he's talking about by not thinking. Oh.

And that is the Zen moment of Satori, when your mind stops and you go, Ah. Thank you. Thank you, Master.

Thank you. I got it now. Okay, that's good.

Not whether he still got it a minute later. It's secondary, but at least he got it now. Now, the greatest achievement, it does not matter your life situation, whether you consider your life up to this point a great success, or medium success, or not so good, or failed at most things that I tried, or never failed because I never tried anything.

Laughter. Now, these are all conceptual judgments of the mind, of course, whatever you say. All this is irrelevant if you consider what really matters is where you are in the evolution of human consciousness.

How does the evolution of human consciousness manifest through you? That determines failure or success in life. And of course, the world doesn't know much about that.

It doesn't know that. So if you are able to no longer be trapped in compulsive and involuntary thinking, then your life has succeeded beyond any measure, beyond measure. If you are able to transcend you, it means consciousness, not you the person.

The person cannot transcend itself. The person is the identification with thought. The person is consciousness dreaming.

The awakening is consciousness awakens, and then, yes, the person continues to be there, but you are then in lucid, the lucid dreaming, which is lucid living. If you are able to step out of thought by choice, then you embody the next step in the evolution of consciousness on the planet. And you are vital here, no matter what you do externally.

Now, in that state, which is a state of connectedness with Source, with the Source Consciousness, what repercussions that has in your life, we don't know. How it manifests, we don't know. It will manifest in different ways for different people.

I spent many years of my life before anything much happened after the shift in consciousness, just being. I did occasional jobs eventually. I had temporary jobs here and there, but the presence wasn't manifesting for a very long time.

Except gradually, I was helping people with becoming more present, but even that took a while. There were still huge spaces. I wasn't seeing five people a day.

I might at the beginning see two people a week. And there were these huge spaces of me just being there and think, OK. And occasionally the mind would say, what's your life all about?

You're not doing anything. Well, OK. That's how it is.

And that goes on and on. And then at some point something happened. It's almost as if I had to be in presence for a long, long time before it started to manifest first as a teaching to individuals and then it became a book and then it became this.

I'm not doing it as a person. It's presence operating. If I were doing it as a person, I

would become stressed.

It would be unpleasant. So see how much you can be in no thought while you're here. Don't overdo it, but...

... ..

Remember, no willpower. Don't push thought away. Just raise your frequency by being very alert and still.

Occasionally you might feel your mind coming and saying, OK, I'm not thinking now. That's OK. And then you let go of that.

It's a little cloud that comes and then it evaporates. And that is enormously satisfying because in that moment you are free of the person. The person is just relatively unimportant.

There is a presence. And you notice that everything that surrounds you is perceived differently because there's suddenly a depth to things. There's a depth to the tree.

You can sense its aliveness. You can sense its sacredness, even though the mind might not be able to explain what sacredness is in conceptual terms. You can sense the sacredness of the tree or the animal or the other human.

You can sense that presence only through your presence. But it's the same presence. You can even be present with inanimate objects and give them attention that otherwise you would not have done because most people treat inanimate objects as means to an end and that you never actually give attention to a pen that you use for writing or you might not give attention to when you're reading a book.

The book is there to enable you to absorb the text. But the book also has an actual physical presence and you can relate and you can sense the beingness of even inanimate objects. And you can do that wherever you are.

Pick up an object, an ordinary object, and just for a few seconds give it your attention. You're not thinking about it. Just giving attention.

Touch something. You can feel it and see it. Look.

Can you look at this plant without thinking is it real or fake? Another thing you may want to try is driving without thinking. Beautiful.

Many people, most people drive on automatic. They are thinking while they're driving. One small part of their mind is doing the driving and the rest of their mind is thinking about something completely different.

And sometimes they think so much that even the small part that's driving gets absorbed in their thinking and then the accident happens. But driving also, it's a beautiful thing. Your entire life experience gets transformed as you bring in more and more spaces of not thinking.

And then when you resume thinking, when it's needed, because at some point you have to think, you actually think much more clearly because you had spaces of no thought. Because the thought that you think, the thinking that then happens, you still have that connectedness with the depth of who you are, the source consciousness, which then inspires your thought processes rather than having thought processes that are repetitive as most people have. Same thoughts again and again and again, year after year after year.

So the inspired thinking can only come by bringing in no thinking. Inspired thinking depends on your ability to stop thinking. But stop thinking is an end in itself.

It is so satisfying in itself because you experience life in a much more joyful way through not judging things. It's an amazing thing. If you compare that with the so-called normal human state of continuously finding fault, complaining, judging, criticizing, what a nightmare.

And suddenly you go into that clarity of perception. That's again the entire essence of Zen. All the teaching is that.

And being totally present is no thought. And then the mind-made self, the person, is no longer the foundation for your sense of identity. Your sense of identity has shifted from being this limited person with its ups and downs and successes and failures.

Likes and dislikes, opinions, viewpoints have shifted from that. Your identity is consciousness itself. And that's the foundation for your sense of identity.

So you don't need the ego. The ego is the false identity. And the ego needs defensiveness.

It needs to be fed all the time. It needs to incorporate people and things into its sense of self. It feels always insufficient.

Not enough. Ill at ease. Irritated.

Angry. Sad. Complaining.

All the different states. Allowing this moment to be as it is is one of the doorways into the state of not thinking. If you just always work with the present moment, allow it to be because it already is.

So what else can you do? It is. So you align yourself with the is-ness of what is.

And then you realize a lot of the thinking is arguing with the is-ness. So when you align yourself with the is-ness of things then there's no need to think that much anymore. Unless there's a specific problem to solve.

But even there if you have a problem to solve to have fruitful thinking go into no thinking fast before you start to think. Become still. Present.

Alert. In that you don't need to do anything. You don't need to go anywhere.

You are still, present, alert. It's not a means to an end. You don't say, OK, I need to become still so that I can think better.

It's not a means to an end. It's an end in itself. But it happens that as you start thinking again your thinking becomes more intelligent.

And if there's a protracted problem to solve make it a habit to think what can we do these are the possibilities you might discuss it with somebody and make it a habit to periodically step back into no thought for one minute, half a minute step back into no thought two minutes even fifteen seconds can be helpful. Just hmm. And then thinking resumes.

You're more likely to find the solution to the problem in that way than only applying your analytical mind to it. Of course this applies to whoever you're working with also. Just always the stepping back.

The dance between form and formlessness in your life. So you will be lying in or on your bed tonight and see if you can just be there and enjoy the presence any difficulty you have in not thinking bring your attention into the body so you can feel the aliveness in the inner body while you're lying on your bed and you'll see no need to think and enjoy that moment fully if any emotions come allow this moment to be as it is nothing is rejected any emotion that comes just oh, there it is maybe some fear oh, I can feel a vibration there but you are the awareness around it so the emotion exists in that space of awareness which is you so it's like the awareness is the depth of the ocean and the emotion is the wave and the ripple on the surface you are the ocean you're also the surface but that is only the here's the emotion and here's the depth of the ocean you can feel your own depth and then you can allow the ripples and the waves to be there because you know you are not confined to that you can sense that which is deeper than that so that's good laughter laughter thank you be well and please remember practicing thoughtless awareness United States of Awareness thank you

[Speaker 2] (44:59 - 44:59)

thank you for listening

Eckhart Tolle The Unobserved Mind Leads to Suffering [871bed92-028a-46d3-96ec-abb6d1cc5a4d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:08)

The unobserved mind leads to suffering. In this episode, Eckhart talks to an audience in New York City. He reminds them of life's fleeting nature and that in 80 or 90 years, the names of people lit up by the bright lights of Broadway will be gone.

Success, fame, and fortune do not provide immunity from what Eckhart calls the burden of self. The identity we fabricate from our problems, including health, careers, finances, and relationships. Eckhart explains that the greatest source of suffering is not just created by the mind, but by our unobserved thoughts, because they drift in and out of our awareness, and we believe them without question.

Eckhart says over time, we weave them into a sad story called my life, and we become victim to these narratives. Eckhart explains that we cannot go through life without challenges. He says, even if we are awakened spiritually, difficulties will continue.

However, the difference is that we will no longer turn adversity into suffering because we have the awareness to liberate ourselves from the shackles of our thinking.

[Speaker 1] (1:10 - 45:13)

Our delay was a wonderful opportunity for you to practice presence. And it's wonderful to see so many awakened or awakening human beings, because you're all here, almost all, because what I call the awakening process, which is a shift in consciousness, is taking place in you. And if it's not yet, and you have come here either by accident, or you couldn't say no to somebody who said you should come, then either you are in for a wonderful surprise, or this evening will be excruciatingly boring for you.

And if the latter is the case, feel free to get up. You will not be judged, because most people here are very conscious. They don't judge anymore.

I think we're on Broadway here, aren't we? This is Broadway. A few days ago, I happened to see a clip on YouTube, a very old film clip, which said, Times Square and Broadway, it was mostly Broadway, in 1929.

And it showed like 10 minutes of people and cars hurrying along Broadway. Everybody in a hurry, trying to get somewhere. That was 1929.

I wonder where they got to. And you could do the same now. You could sit or stand somewhere on Broadway, and just for a few minutes, observe all the people and cars walking past you, and realizing in 80 years time, well, at the most 90, they'll all be gone.

And everybody in 1929, and everybody now, walking along Broadway, or any other street in any other city of the world, everybody carries a certain burden, which is the burden of their life, or as I call it, their life situation. And there's nobody who does not, to a greater or lesser degree, carry this burden with himself, with herself. And this is what the Buddha called the self.

That is the burden of the self. And you may find, periodically, you may still get drawn into this too, although you are awakening, you're coming out of it. Many people's entire life or entire consciousness is completely absorbed by their problems, by their life situation.

That is what fills their mind during the waking hours. And even while they're dreaming at night, still you have, it gets reflected even in dreams. And many people's sense of self, sense of identity, which is, of course, a fundamental thing, but your identities, you will be talking about that quite a bit, probably this evening.

I say probably because I don't know what I'm going to talk about. You carry the burden of this problematic identity with yourself. And so many people define their self, their identity, in terms of their problems.

And so this is what you take to the therapist. When you go to the therapist, you're taking with you your problematic self, an identity that is defined in terms of problems. You take that self to the therapist's office.

And then you say to the therapist, this is the riddle I'm presenting to you. Now solve this riddle of me. Give me the key to this solution of me.

Please show me how to get rid of my problems. Or if you already have some insight into yourself, you will say to the therapist, show me how to not make a problem out of my life. Show me how not to convert every challenge that arises in my life into a problem, and then incorporate it into my sense of self, so that the problem identity becomes you.

It's a very common thing. People don't know that this is what's happening. So they truly carry the burden of the self, the problematic self.

And what problems do they have? Some are very real challenges. They could be to do with your physical health, your body.

Could be to do with your financial situation, or your living situation. Your relationships, a huge source of problems you might have noticed. Your relationship, intimate relationship, even more problematic.

So you have all that, or you have somebody, a family member going through suffering. I already mentioned finances, work, professional, living situation, health situation. That's more or less it.

Relationships. So every human gets challenged in one or several of these areas in different periods of their life. You cannot go through life without being challenged deeply by life.

Life will present you with challenges. You can't escape that. And even if you awaken spiritually, it does not mean that you will no longer experience life as challenging.

The difference is you will no longer transform the challenges of life into suffering. You will no longer transform the challenges of life into a problematic me. And so that is the shift.

Now that I've talked about these challenges that nobody escapes. Now I forgot to mention, perhaps the most important source of suffering actually does not come to you from the external situation of your life, and not even from your physical body. For the majority of people, the greatest source of suffering is produced by their own mind.

But they don't know that. Once you realize that the greater part of your suffering is unconsciously produced by thought processes in your head that create certain emotions that are experienced as painful, not pleasant, any form of unhappiness, you will see that ultimately the mind is perhaps the greatest source of suffering in your life. But not just the mind, there's something that we could call the unobserved mind is the source of suffering.

What does that mean? The unobserved mind means that thoughts come into your head. They interpret what's around you.

They interpret your past. They project into the future continuously. They judge this and that according to the particular conditioning of your thought processes of your mind.

And you don't realize that these are all narratives. These are all stories that you tell yourself about yourself and about other people and about your past, about your so-called future. And the unobserved mind means you believe immediately in the interpretations that arise in your mind about life, about yourself, about others, about situations you find yourself in.

This is how it is. My life has been just so dreadful. I would have imagined it when I was 19.

I imagined something very different from what it has come. It wasn't meant to turn out like this. It's all turned into a terrible tragedy and has come to nothing.

My whole life is completely pointless. It's just one example of a narrative. There are many other more complicated narratives, but just as problematic and create an enormous amount of suffering.

The unobserved mind means you believe in every thought that comes into your head virtually. In other words, when I say you believe in every thought that comes into your head, it means you are in the grip of that stream of thinking that interprets people, places, situations, your so-called life for you. And you don't know it.

So you inhabit ultimately this mind that interprets things. And you actually, every person you meet, every situation you go into, your entire past and your so-called future is interpreted through the veil of this narrative. And the unobserved mind means you do not know that this is what's happening.

You mistake reality for the thought processes in your head. What's missing is what we could call awareness. Awareness of thoughts arising in your head.

A thought, for example, that says, I have failed at most things in my life. It's come to nothing. And perhaps you had wonderful successes and then they came to an end and now you have failed completely.

My life has completely become, what's the point of it all? What is the point of it all? Why continue?

I can't carry on like this anymore. And the future that you have all kinds of narratives of how the future is going to unfold for you. And the future, there's two aspects to it.

Hope, it's going to get better. One day I'm going to make it. That's an interesting expression.

Make it. Make what? I'm going to make it.

And perhaps you will make it, whatever it meant to you, perhaps you will make it. And it is something to celebrate. Suddenly you get the recognition you wanted.

Suddenly you get the material possessions you wanted. Suddenly you get the ideal partner. Well, at least seemingly ideal in the early stages of the relationship.

You find the ideal partner and then you're, I made it. So there are many ways of making it according to your personal desires. And very quickly, after a little while, you realize that even making it doesn't free you from suffering and from further problem making.

So there's no doubt that life is extremely challenging for, not only for every human being, for every life form, for every animal, even for every plant. Life is precarious. It is fleeting for every life form.

And yes, it's very challenging. An animal is born, a little puppy, what's going to happen to it? It's very fragile.

A human life is very fragile. And continuously you'll be set with so-called problems. And

then the point comes where you can't, suddenly you have a thought in your head, he says, I can't take anymore.

And if you completely believe in the thought, I can't take any more of this, you may draw the conclusion that it's better to jump off a bridge somewhere or a building. If you're in New York, buildings might work best. You jump off a, if you completely believe in the thought that this is just too much, like this, I can't take the, just one thing after another.

Why is, why is God or life doing this to me? God must be malicious, evil, just out to get me. Everybody else is fine.

I know it because I read the Facebook pages of all these. And I know they're all fine. They're doing great.

They're having wonderful meals because their photos are there. And they're all continuously in a state of ecstatic happiness. Indicated by the two fingers they'd have when they show when photos are, no, sorry.

My life is great. It's so great. So you construct then a, an avatar, so to speak, in your head.

And this is the Facebook avatar. And some people actually confuse that with who they are. And that becomes very problematic after a while.

So I can't take any more. This is it. You might as well.

And some people you might have noticed in yourself, you talk to yourself in the, as if you were talking to somebody else. I can't tell you. Why don't you, why don't you just kill yourself?

So you have a dialogue with yourself and then you get completely involved in this dialogue. And there is no awareness in the background that tells you that these are certain thoughts arising in your mind. This is a narrative that's arising in your mind, according to the conditioning of your mind that goes back to when you were born.

And if you don't know this, you believe in it. You're in the grip of the narrative that produces emotions. By the way, as I'm sure you've noticed, the body that produces emotions arise in the body.

The body cannot tell the difference between something that's happening to you and something that your mind is saying. If your mind is saying that your life is totally dreadful, then your body takes that as a real thing. The body doesn't know the difference between, if your mind says you're in hell, the body cannot tell the difference whether you're actually in hell or whether you're just telling yourself that you're in hell.

So the unobserved mind is something that we call, the term we have for this kind of

existence is unconscious. A human being who is spiritually speaking is unconscious, is completely unaware of the thought processes that are continuously happening to them. I'm saying happening, people say, I think, as if they had a choice.

Then you might as well say, I'm beating my heart. No, you don't. You are not doing it.

It's the heartbeat is happening to you. In the same way, you say, I breathe. Well, breathe, you can influence it a little bit.

You can take a deep breath. But again, it's not really true that you are breathing. The breathing is happening to you.

You can't even stop it, not for long. You can't just hold your breath and then die. There's something in you that wants to breathe and it's going to breathe.

Even if you're totally unhappy and you want to stop breathing, you can't stop breathing. There's something in you that wants to carry on breathing. So, I breathe is not quite correct either.

And certainly, I am circulating my blood. I am digesting my food. No, you're not digesting your food.

It's happening to you. There's an intelligence embedded in every cell of your body and that is doing all this. It's looking after that in the same way that now you say, I think.

And again, it's just as false in most cases, as to say, I'm beating my heart. Especially if you're completely unaware of your thought processes. You don't have a truth.

The thoughts happen to you. They suddenly pop up in your head. And you say, I think.

No, you don't. You are at the mercy of your thinking. So, once you realize that, isn't that amazing?

Thought or thinking happens to me, but I'm not actually doing it because if I had a choice, I would think more pleasant thoughts. And the fact that you cannot think more pleasant thoughts means you have no choice in the matter. Why don't you have a choice?

Because you're completely identified with every thought that arises. And what does identify mean? The noun is identity, which means there is a sense of self.

When you're completely identified with a thought, there's a sense of self in every thought. Every thought is imbued with a sense of self, me, a me sense. So the thought gets hold of you.

The stream of this continuous stream of thinking gets hold of you and you are in the grip

of it. And that becomes your personality, your person. That becomes who you think you are.

And that complete lack of awareness, which is a different dimension of consciousness, that is one could say a dimension of consciousness that transcends the thinking mind. And this is why we are here. I'm just, this is just the preliminary, by the way.

There is a dimension of consciousness in you, either already actualized or still latent and just a potential. There's a dimension of consciousness in you that is non-conditioned, unlike the thinking mind, which is the conditioned thought processes. So a human being who is totally identified with their continuously arising thought processes, we call that human being unconscious in spiritual terms.

This is not the conventional meaning of unconscious because in conventional terms, unconscious means you're... So when people who are not, don't know about this, they think when I say that all these people are unconscious, they, what are you talking about? They're not like they're, they're awake, they're not unconscious.

No, unconscious in spiritual terms is complete identification with every thought that arises, plus the emotion that accompanies the thought. So you have the mental emotional energy field that continuously operates in you. And in most cases, it's not pleasant.

There is a sense of self that is there embedded in this, an identity that is in there and that identity, although it has its happy moments here and there, although it pretends that it is quite good at pretending that it's happy, especially on Facebook, but ultimately that identity is not a happy one. Again, now we come to another word which is used in spirit, spiritually is ego. Ego is a sense of self that arises from complete identification with a stream of thinking and the emotions that go with it.

That is the egoic self. That's the me, a narrative based sense of identity. So narrative based means there's a story of me and emotions accompany it.

The story of me, everybody has a story. I'm not saying you should, shouldn't have a story. Of course you have a story.

You have your past. You have ways in which you interpret the world. You interpret your own life.

To some extent, you have to interpret your life situation, but you realize that these are thoughts. You interpret the past. And again, it's a very problematic interpretation because if you're, you might, if you're two siblings, adults, let's say they are 40 years old and you ask them about events that happened in their childhood and they have totally different stories about the same event.

This is not uncommon. It's a totally different interpretation. So you cannot even be sure that the way in which you remember or interpret your past is correct.

What you can be sure about is that it is a narrative. It may correspond to the truth come very closely or not. It's a narrative.

It's a narrative in your head. So we have an entity that pretends to be you, that consists of thought formations and emotions coming together. And this entity is the egoic self.

And this entity has certain needs and certain characteristics. And one of the main characteristics of this entity that is the false self is a sense of insufficiency, of not enough, and of lack. Something important is missing in my life.

There's something important missing. And also another thought is there that there are certain things that I need to solve. I need this, this.

I mentioned it earlier. I need to solve this problem of me. So many people, identity is, they regard it as a problem.

I am a problem to be solved. Are you ever going to solve it? No.

Not on that level. There is a solution. There is an answer.

But that answer is not in that dimension of consciousness that is thinking, unconscious thinking. That is, there's no answer ever to be found. Some therapists are good that they can perhaps enable you to access that which transcends thinking, the awareness dimension.

I sometimes call it the transcendent dimension. Other therapists may just keep you stuck for 10, 15, 20 years on that level of purely mind and emotion. And the more you delve into it, not that it is bad thing to delve, to see things more clearly, but the more you go into it, into your past, the more differentiated and complicated it becomes.

So again, there's no ultimate solution to the dilemma of your existence. And the egoic self, apart from the characteristic of always experiencing itself as lacking in something, it feels that ultimately it is insubstantial, the me. So you always need something to fill it, to add to your sense of self.

You need either, it might be a possession, it might be an achievement. There's nothing wrong with possessions. There's nothing wrong with achievements.

It might be a relationship. You need a person. There's nothing wrong with relationship.

It's great to want to achieve something, but that operates on a completely different level. It does not operate on the most fundamental level. No achievement, no matter how wonderful it is, and it is great.

Why not achieve something great? But if you derive your identity from whatever it is you achieve, you're still trapped on that level of consciousness. And that means very quickly, your flow go back into suffering.

Even after the great achievement, very quickly, you're drawn back into suffering. I've spoken to many people who have achieved great things in the eyes of the world. And they tell you, yes, always when they say, I made it.

And then one morning they wake up again and their mind creates more suffering. The problematic me arises again in a different form. Challenges I experience that are different from the challenges you experienced before.

You thought, when I have my private jet, I'm not going to have challenges anymore. But you will. I don't have one, fortunately, but I know people who do.

And they are deeply challenged. They are deeply challenged by their life situation. Again, very different from before when they didn't have any money.

That was a different challenge. So it is wonderful to achieve, to do things, to be active. That is a level that is to be acknowledged in your life, that level.

But it does not solve the fundamental dilemma of human existence. In other words, it does not enable you to realize your true identity. Because there is such a thing as your true identity that has nothing to do with the story in your head.

It has nothing to do with your past or your so-called future. I say so-called future because the future doesn't exist. You might have noticed.

I've never found it. I've never experienced the future. If anybody had, let me know if you ever do.

The future only exists as a thought in your head. And of course, it exists on a practical level where we need that kind of thing in order to do things on this level of existence. Of course, we need future.

We could never have met here, come together because we needed future and say, on this day, at this time, we are going to get together here. We could have said perhaps, let's see if one day we accidentally come together because there's only the present moment. So let's see if the present moment accidentally brings us together.

No, on this, on the practical level, it's all fine. You need future. But on a deeper level to know who you are beyond the narrative in your head, you don't need future.

And future is recognized as ultimately illusory. So there is in every human being the potential of realizing the transcendent dimension within yourself. And that is ultimately what spirituality means.

It's the realization of the transcendent dimension of consciousness. Until you at least touch that, glimpse that, your life remains a very frustrating business. And bitter and frustrated if you go through your whole life, never even having had a glimpse of the transcendent dimension.

And hopefully, of course, more than a glimpse is to deeply realize the transcendent dimension. At the moment, there may be one or two of you here for whom the word transcendent dimension is an abstract concept. And your mind might say, what are you talking about?

To some people, it may just sound like some obscure philosophical concept, transcendent dimension. What does that mean? Okay, I will show you.

There are many of you, by the way, who have already accessed the transcendent dimension, but you didn't have a name for it. But we are here to actually experience the transcendent dimension. I'm just gradually taking you there.

And most of you know where I'm going. So just be with me. We're gradually approaching it.

We're just, we've been looking at that which is not the transcendent dimension. So ultimately you could say, you need to know, it's knowing who you are not that is the beginning of the realization of the transcendent dimension. You need to know who you are not.

You need to recognize that the narrative in your mind is no more than narrative. It has a certain validity, but it's not to be trusted. And it has certain characteristics that do not make for a happy life.

I already mentioned sense of lack, sense of insufficiency, never enough, and a very deep desire to experience antagonism with others. That's built into the egoic structure. That's why it's so insane.

The ego needs enemies because it defines itself through the other. It enhances its ultimately illusory identity as a narrative of me by creating a sense of superiority, moral or otherwise, towards your enemies. And this is why people love criticizing others, love judging others negatively.

This is why people love complaining continuously about other people or situations, even situation can become your enemy too. There are people who are never happy where they are. They're never like where they immediately find something to criticize about people.

They immediately find something to criticize about their life. There's continuously complaining voice in the head. The complaining voice is a huge ego thing that

continuously feeds the ego loves complaining because then you emphasize your superiority.

Even if you complain about a situation, it implies that you are superior to the situation. You are judging it. You complain about a person.

It's usually you are right. And of course that person is wrong. If there's one or two people here who are still completely unconscious, there might be one or two.

You might want to look in here to see, isn't it strange that you are always right and everybody else is always wrong. Isn't that strange? That's strange.

I'm always right. Wow. In every discussion, in every encounter, I'm always right.

Oh, I never realized that. Wow. I must be great.

I must be wonderful. So occasionally you might still get this complaining thing in your head. It's not it complaining uselessly.

It doesn't change anything, that kind of complaining. It's just whining. Some people have the whining.

You complain about your life. The ego needs superiority. The identity, the false identity of the ego needs to be superior to others.

One way of being superior to others is to have an achievement that others don't have. Now, if you're lucky, you have a great body and other's bodies is not as good as yours. So that means for about, I don't know, for two decades or two and a half or three decades, that works.

And you can derive your sense of who you are from the image of your body and you compare to others. And of course, other bodies are puny if you compare to yours. So you display it with a, and why not?

It's something to be grateful for. But if you don't have a body, there are many other things you can be superior to others. You can be superior by possessions.

You have more than the other. It's a very favorite thing of the ego. You can be superior because your car is better than somebody else's, or you have a car and the other guy has a bicycle.

You can be superior in knowledge and derive your sense of identity from you hit other people over the head with your superior knowledge. Didn't you know that? Let me tell you.

That's how it is. And that gives a boost to the ego. Or you can derive it from your past.

Not necessarily your, but your family's past, especially in Europe. It still happens here and there in England, or you see where there's still a social classes in India still very strongly too. But what does the ego do?

If you don't have any of these things, you don't have superior knowledge. You don't have a great body. You don't have possessions.

You don't have ancestors. Oh, okay. Easy.

Says the ego. I'm a victim. I'm a victim of life, of other people, of groups of people, of people in my family.

I am a victim. And of course there are many people who are victims of other people. There are people to whom bad things happened in childhood, very bad things.

So obviously there are people who have experienced being a victim, but the fallacy is to build an identity around it, which becomes a narrative, which is a mentally emotional entity that then virtually lives in you, inhabits you, and you become the victim. This, by the way, as you know, the egoic identity can be predominantly personal. It can also be predominantly a group identity, a collective identity.

A collective identity is a tribe, or a nation, or a religion, or a race, or political thing. This is the collective ego identity. You have personal and you have collective.

Now the collective ego identity is even more insane than the personal. It is to a large extent responsible for millions and millions and millions of deaths in the world. A collective identity that pronounces the other group as the enemy.

It needs the enemy to define its sense of self more strongly. So to enhance the otherness of others, whether the others are a group or a single person, is one of the things that really keep the ego going. These are things that you need to, you may still experience from time to time remnants of this thing in your life, although you are awakening.

And if it happens, just be there and be aware of it so that you don't get trapped into that. What is the way beyond that level of consciousness, or as we call it, unconsciousness? And that despite certain spiritual teachers that have been around here and there, from the Buddha, from Krishna, others who have pointed to the truth, largely most of humanity has been trapped in the egoic consciousness for thousands of years.

And it has produced what we now know as human history. If you doubt that the normal state of consciousness of humans has a strong element of insanity, if you doubt that, you really need to read a book about, don't even go into distant history, there's too much of it. Just read a book about the first half of the 20th century, that wasn't that long ago.

Read a book about the first half of the 20th century and what happened in Europe, in

Russia, in China. Just read that and your mouth will drop open if you read it and see. That actually is insane.

That cannot be other than insane. So much suffering created not by natural disasters, but by humans creating so much suffering for other humans. And so many people, millions upon millions killed, not only in warfare between nations, but killed by their own governments.

Germany, Russia, China, in smaller places, Cambodia, just dreadful, unbelievable things. So there is a strong element of insanity in this, what is called the normal human consciousness, because these, all these atrocities, these millions upon millions of people killed, they were not killed by psychopaths, but the people, the number of people killed by criminals and psychopaths is very, very small compared to the number of humans killed by normal humans. Normal.

And this is why I've been saying for years, normal equals insane. It's a slight exaggeration, but there's a lot of truth in it. We are now again at a situation where you can see the same unconsciousness arising again in the collective, going in the same direction as before.

But what is different here is there's a certain segment of the population in whom a new consciousness is arising. So that is, that could save us, but I cannot guarantee that it will. In the long term, it's all beautiful.

I know that the evolution of consciousness will proceed. The only question is, are we going to experience a regressive period for a while? That could be, but no gain in consciousness is ever lost.

So what is happening here will become part of the collective human consciousness. And even if humanity has to go through a regression, as they did, for example, after the collapse of antiquity, after the collapse of Greek and Roman civilization, which was relatively advanced, humans had to go with the so-called dark ages for several hundred years. Some people say it was a thousand years, but a thousand years is very little in the whole of history.

So it's not important. What is important is that there is an awakening that is spreading. Still, a lot of it is underground.

It is not visible on mainstream television, newscast. You will, very unlikely that you will find an account tonight in the Situation Room of CNN about our gathering here. This is a Situation Room.

There was a meeting at the Beacon Theater today, and these people claim that it is possible to lead a peaceful and sane existence. What do you think?

[Speaker 2] (45:21 - 45:41)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

Join us next week for more enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle The World Is Not Here to Make You Happy [b0169b7c-8413-40a4-b85e-f4614e5a3059]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:39)

The world is not here to make you happy. It's here to make you conscious. In this podcast, Eckhart answers a question about overcoming suffering and finding happiness.

Eckhart says the world is not here to make us happy. It's here to make us more conscious. He says the beginning of awakening is the end of suffering.

He believes we should liberate ourselves from the demand that anything should make us happy. Instead, he says we need to discover a deep appreciation for everything that is. Eckhart explains the world does not have the power to make us happy, but it is a wonderful catalyst to help us awaken to consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (0:42 - 1:41)

Hello. I have a, well, I don't know if it's a question, but I guess to get to the point, nurturing joy, I think with things that have happened and gloom that's come over me because of some physical things. And I'm studying and working on bringing presence.

So any moment that I feel maybe a little bit of happiness or then my mind is looking for pointers, looking at, well, this is temporary. So I guess my question is, can you speak about joy? Because often we're talking about our struggles and how to become present and not have struggles, not have suffering.

So I'm thinking I need to hear a little bit about joy and how to nurture that. Right.

[Speaker 1] (1:42 - 1:56)

So what kind of give one or two examples of what kind of happiness that arises that you think, oh, maybe I shouldn't be feeling that or it's not, it's not going to last or what, for example, what kind of happiness?

[Speaker 2] (1:57 - 2:48)

Well, what comes to mind right now is, is when I see my grandchildren, I can also get really exhausted and frustrated, but yeah, there's that excitement listening to a song. I can feel something or also a memory of a song, what it brings up. Right.

Maybe for something that I'm going to be doing. And then with that too, another question I had, I find I can get very emotional. So if I get angry, I cry.

If I also, if I go out in nature and I just feel the beauty, I can cry. So I can cry with joy and I can cry with grief for things I've lost. So with that crying, that's my reaction to so many

things.

[Speaker 1] (2:49 - 12:08)

Yes. But if you're crying, for example, seeing the beauty of nature, is that something that you would rather not have or are you, would you be happy with crying? Because it's not a, it's not a sad crying.

It's something touches you on the emotional level, the beauty of nature. And then you, you cry a little bit. That can be, I, I have experienced that too, occasionally.

And it's a lovely experience. So the joy is an important part of being present. And it doesn't mean that the fact that all the things that you perceive with your senses are impermanent, it doesn't mean that you cannot enjoy them while they are there or that you should not enjoy them while they're there, but you can only truly enjoy them if you're in touch with the deeper level of yourself, the, the presence, the deep eye.

But if you're not in touch with the deep eye, then to derive your happiness from external things very often, and I think you're, you realize that very often leads to unhappiness because you're happy that there's something there, but it's not going to last. Nothing is going to last. Everything's going to dissolve eventually, sooner or later.

So if something makes you happy, it can also make you unhappy and probably will. Perhaps this is what you mean. So you are, you're aware of that.

And it is very true. Anything that makes you happy, because, because of the fact of impermanence, as the Buddha puts it, and in fact, the Buddha says, talks about the fact of suffering, Dukkha, and he says, even the things that make you happy are Dukkha. And perhaps this is what you're talking about.

Even the things that make you happy are a form of suffering, because if they make you happy today, they will make you unhappy tomorrow, or their absence or disappearance will make you unhappy tomorrow. People have experienced that in relationships, you meet a new person, this person makes you very happy. And the book, the Buddha would call that also Dukkha, because it is more than likely that this person is also going to make you unhappy doesn't necessarily mean that the relationship will dissolve, although very often it does.

But it could just mean that every relationship has is problematic in some way. It's not it's not always easy to live with a person. So there will be many instances when the person that makes you happy today will make you unhappy the next day, or the following week, or then the whole relationship will dissolve.

And then the person that made you happy last year, makes you very unhappy this year. It's called wedding and honeymoon and divorce, which 50% of people who get married,

get divorced. So does that mean that you should not allow yourself to be made happy by things that you experience in the external world?

And that is not the case. But these things, the Buddha talks about that these things make you things that make you happy will also make you unhappy. The fact of Dukkha or suffering as the Buddha calls it, only applies as long as you're not aware of the deeper dimension of who you are, and realize that all true joy arises from there.

And that is not caused by anything in the external world. It's a it is, it is not, you experience the joy of being satchitananda, the joy of being it arises from within you, it does not come from without. So it's not that the joy of being you experience because you're lovely environment, it's doesn't, it doesn't matter what your environment is, you can experience the joy of being wherever you are, whether you're in the middle of a busy street in a big city with all kinds of traffic noise, and so on, or whether they are out in the forest, there can be the joy of being.

And once when you're connected with that level, and realize that that's the ultimate reality is there, then you can appreciate all the beauty in the phenomenal world with your that you perceive with your senses, appreciate it, and actually experience it more deeply, because you can sense in all those things, lovely nature, or children, or other humans, or any experience that you have, you can sense that an underlying essence, that is the essence of who you are.

And everything, for example, that you see in nature, you can sense the aliveness of the tree, of the flower, of the forest, of the sky, as one could almost say, you can, you sense them as manifestations of the consciousness that you are, you can see yourself in all that, the beingness of the tree, there's more to the tree than meets the eye. There's more to the flower than meets the eye. But you won't know that until or unless you realize there's more to you than meets the eye.

That is the invisible presence, the essence of who you are, the consciousness that you are, the stillness to feel that, that is, when you've sensed that, then you can sense this as the essence in all phenomena that you perceive in the outer world. The essence of all those phenomena is that essence that you can sense within yourself. And then you can truly enjoy the beauty of this world, and the pleasant experiences without becoming dependent on them for your happiness.

In other words, we could say they are reflections of your state of consciousness that the tree is a reflection ultimately of the consciousness that you are in a different vibrational frequency, but it's the same consciousness. So then you can truly enjoy the world without needing to attach yourself to any condition. A condition could be anything, a situation where you live, a trip, an experience, a walk in nature, any, any, you can enjoy any condition without attaching yourself to the condition because you realize the enjoyment comes from within.

You don't need it to feel happy that happiness arises from within. It's not from without. Because as you know, it will disappear, everything comes to an end.

The most beautiful walk in nature at some point, you have to go home and prepare dinner, whatever. And then you have to, oh, that was so nice. To be able to be to be present in every experience, not lose yourself in the experience, but enjoy it deeply.

The ability to have a loving relationship with the things of this world that can only arise when your state of consciousness is not dependent on the things of this world. Then you can love the things of this world. It's not the attachment, loving attachment, then you can sense their inherent aliveness, inherent aliveness in everything.

But you can only sense it because you can sense the inherent aliveness in yourself. And then even the fact that everything goes eventually or sooner or later, everything dissolves, every experience has a beginning and an end. Every tree has a lifespan, it will die.

You can only love this world when you don't need it anymore for your happiness. Then you can appreciate things without the neediness and appreciate them much more deeply than before.

[Speaker 2] (12:09 - 12:21)

Feeling of love that I can feel. So just nurturing that by realizing that sensation of love and the emotion is just there.

[Speaker 1] (12:21 - 17:13)

Yes. And there is an indestructible essence in all life forms. And that is the one consciousness that appears or manifests in so many disguises of all so many life forms.

And it's all wonderful when you see, when you recognize that, and then you recognize your oneness with all these life forms. And that is love. Then you can love the forest, the tree, nature.

But what you love is deeper than what your senses show you. It's beautiful. The appearance is beautiful.

But beauty is something deeper than just a surface phenomenon. When you recognize beauty in something, something shines through that in the sense-perceived realm we call beauty. But the recognition of beauty also implies that for a moment, your mind was still, and there was just a presence.

There are still many people, there are many people in this world who are so immersed in their noisy conceptualizing mind that they don't really relate to beauty. They can't, they can't really sense it. And that's a great pity.

It's a great loss. If you recognize beauty, always in that moment of recognition, there's a stillness in you. If there were no stillness, you wouldn't recognize beauty.

Your mind might say, oh, that's a lovely sunset. But you haven't really seen it. You haven't really experienced it.

Oh, that's such a nice flower. What's it called? Oh, okay.

You haven't really seen the flower. You just experience everything through the concepts of your mind. Immediately you have a concept for everything.

Oh, that's what it is. Okay, now let me think about my problems again. So whenever you see beauty, respond to it.

It puts you in touch with the essence of who you are ultimately. Sometimes people can do that when they see great art. A lot of modern art, perhaps not so much, but great art, like a painting of a landscape, whether it's by one of the impressionists of the 19th century, whether it's landscapes of no particular, not spectacular at all, just an ordinary view of a hedge and a tree, and yet there's something there, and you can sense it when you look at it.

Turner, the paintings of the English painter Turner, who painted sky and light, just amazing. You look at that, and some people can, they go into a museum, and they look at the paintings. Perhaps in that moment they can sense something.

But when they go into nature, they can't sense it. I heard somebody a long time ago, it was, overheard somebody, there was a sunset, close to a sunset, and a man said to his wife, oh, look at that Turner sky. So he could see only the sky through the lens of the art that he had seen, no direct sensing of the aliveness of it.

So nature is, whatever it may be in this world, it's always lovely, especially if you don't need it to make you happy. Anything in this world, you'll appreciate it for what it is. It's lovely when you no longer need it to make you happy or give you a stronger sense of self or whatever it may be.

As I often say, the world cannot make you happy. Nothing in this world, it's not here to make you happy. My favorite saying, I've said it for years, the world is not here to make you happy, it's here to make you conscious, to awaken you.

It does not have the power to make you happy. But when you realize that, you drop the demand that anything should make you happy, suddenly there comes a deep appreciation of everything, which some people might call gratitude for everything, because you've dropped the demand that it should make you happy. That's an enormous liberation.

But when that demand is dropped, deep appreciation suddenly arises. So that's how it is.

[Speaker 2] (17:14 - 17:17)

Thank you so much. Thank you. And everybody else.

[Speaker 1] (17:17 - 17:18)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (17:18 - 18:30)

Thanks so much. Thank you. I feel so blessed to be able to come to you live from across the world.

So thank you. So my question today is, I've been in the spiritual closet for lots of years. Growing up, my mom was very, very spiritual.

And there was always books and I was always learning and I always, I just loved it all from, as young as I can remember, I was always interested, but always just kept that kind of private to myself. And then in the past five years, I've really kind of delved much deeper into my spiritual practice. And I'm a primary school teacher.

So I just love being with the children. But I must admit, now I feel at the stage where I would rather be teaching them life skills than maths and English. I really want to teach them awareness and breath work.

And I feel like I'm getting ready to try and take a new branch out and to transition into teaching meditation, becoming a meditation teacher. But my question is, how do I know when I'm ready to take that next step to go from learning my own spiritual practice to helping teach others the tools to be able to do that yourself?

[Speaker 1] (18:30 - 33:47)

Yes, that's a good question. Thank you. Yes.

Yeah. So you would rather teach consciousness than mathematics or whatever it may be. That reminds me of a funny event in my early life.

There was a time when I didn't know what to do. I didn't know at that point I was destined to be a spiritual teacher. I had already gone through a shift in consciousness.

But I didn't understand it fully. It was just a peaceful state of consciousness in the background. And I thought, oh, I have to do something.

So I applied at a job at a university in England. And they invited me to an interview. There were maybe five or six professors interviewing me.

And they asked me some questions about the subject matter. And towards the end of the interview, one of the professors said to me, I'll always remember, he must have had some insight. He said, and what do you really want to do?

He realized that I didn't really want to be teaching that. So he had some deep intuitive insight. But at that point, I didn't really know that yet.

What do I really want to do? But a little bit later, I was sitting on a park bench and still didn't have a job. And a man was sitting next to me.

It was so long ago, I don't remember the details of the conversation. But he asked me a question. And I gave an answer.

And he must have touched on something spiritual. And he suddenly, as he was waking up, he said, what do you mean by that? And I realized what I said to him at that point was the beginning of an awakening for him.

And that was the beginning of my career as a spiritual teacher. Many other casual encounters followed. So one interesting sign is that, are you already perhaps, in some non-formal ways, providing some kind of spiritual insight or teachings for other people, whether it's children or others around you?

Might not even seem significant. But do people sometimes come to you with a question or wanting to help? That's a good sign that you're meant to do this.

Another important point is that you have probably read quite a few books and have studied meditation deeply and so on. Important consideration is, especially for people who have read books and are perhaps very knowledgeable about spirituality, a question to ask yourself is to what extent you have internalized the teachings. There's a big step between having knowledge, spiritual knowledge that has come through workshops, going to talks, reading books, spiritual knowledge, and having internalized the teaching, which means really be able to live it.

And for most people, that happens when they encounter big challenges in life. I know some people, which is not uncommon these days, they lost their job. One person I know, they lost their job and are now in a state of fear.

Am I ever going to find another job at my age? And this person has been involved in spirituality for many years, has read many, many books, and yet there's a state of fear. Oh, my God, this is your point.

This is the opportunity to internalize the teaching and totally live it. Now, to some extent, you probably have done that already. I have that feeling.

So, the next step would be what do you do? What step do you take to initiate this

process of becoming a more formal teacher? The most important ingredient in any spiritual teaching situation is not your knowledge.

That's because the knowledge is fine, but then you internalize it, and then you can forget it. And the most important is your presence. Whenever you sit with another person, are you able to hold that space of alert presence?

That your knowledge is no longer important in the actual teaching situation. When you need bits of knowledge, it'll come. They will come.

But the most important ingredient is to be that spacious presence in the teachings. And you probably know that already, to be that spacious presence. So, if you're able to hold that spacious presence in the presence of another, then you provide that space for them.

You provide it for them. And in that space, transformation happens and awakening happens. Some people, when they feel they are ready, although ultimately you're never really ready as a person, the person is not ready.

But when you become a spiritual teacher, the transcendent dimension of who you are arises, especially in the teaching situation, and you're no longer there as a person. The world needs spiritual teaching desperately. There are some spiritual teachers who are able to hold that spacious presence in the teaching situation when they give a talk or they sit with an individual or a group of people.

And they are not yet able to continuously live it in their daily life. I don't know what applies to you. But even if you cannot yet be totally present throughout your life, it is still the case that you could be a good spiritual teacher and hold that presence in the teaching situation.

So one possibility is to find a modality that is relatively easy that you can use as a medium through which you provide spiritual teaching, a modality of some healing modality, some psychotherapy modality, almost as an excuse for spiritual teaching. We live in the world of form. The world wants some particular form.

Spiritual teacher is not always the easiest form when you explain what you do or who you are. So if you notice that it's already arising organically, then at some point, you may want to consider the possibility of whether you adopt some modality of so that through which you reach people, whether it's you call it psychological counseling or some body work or whatever it may be. That can be an entry point.

And from there, it will expand. And then at some point, you may well you drop the modality. And now as you teach, the teaching will expand and deepen as you will learn many things that you didn't know before when you speak to people from coming from that space of spacious presence.

And that spacious presence is you don't know the answers when you're in spacious presence. You would never feel when you're with somebody, a group of people or one person, you never feel that you know the answer, then you're not going to be a great spiritual teacher. The beginning for every teaching is the state of spacious awareness.

In that spacious awareness, you know nothing. But you're able to listen. The ability to listen is inseparable from the state of alert presence.

And in that out of that listening, occasionally, you will find you might ask more questions. Questions become very important. Just as Socrates taught, mainly by asking questions.

And Socrates said, they call me the wisest old man, because I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing. The beginning is the spacious openness for every spiritual teaching. So when you learn a modality, that's only an entry point, that's fine, maybe you like it, and you continue to practice it, and it becomes part of your spiritual teaching, or you transcend the modality and then just direct spiritual teaching.

So your accumulated knowledge is secondary. It's it has some perhaps some function, but it is secondary in any spiritual teaching. Your ability to be present is the most important part of spiritual teaching.

And in that state of presence, you don't know the answer yet. Then the answer may come through you, or it may come through the other person, or the problem will dissolve and be recognized unimportant. All these things can happen.

So once you take a step, and you can take a step probably as a part time part time thing first. So in my case, it grew very gradually and organically over a number of years. So it started with meeting people casually.

Then finally, I recognized this is my mission in this world, it seems to be. So I no longer applied for any jobs anymore. And then I announced that I would see people.

For a little while, I used the modality of spiritual healing, because I, some people actually experienced some spiritual healing when I gave them counseling. So for a couple of years, or two or three years, people knew me as a spiritual healer, and would come for spiritual healing. Then I dropped that label because I saw too many people just wanted to get rid of their physical symptoms, but they were not interested in spiritual awakening.

And spiritual healing became not that important to me anymore. Because after you heal a person a few years later, they die anyway, they all everybody dies. So there's something more important, or there's nothing wrong with spiritual healing, it's beautiful.

But there's something more important, and that spiritual awakening. So I dropped that. And then again, there was a, there was a chance encounter, I was invited to a dinner in

London.

And there was a man, at that point, I was seeing people for counseling sessions. And they, initially, they would just leave a donation. And then after a while, there was a charge.

I met a man at a dinner in London, while I was engaged in beginnings of spiritual teaching. And I talked to him, he didn't, he knew nothing about me. And there wasn't much to know about me.

But he worked for the Theosophical Society in London, Theosophical Society, you may know, they've been around for a long, long time. And he said, Oh, we need people like you at the Theosophical Society, you must come and give a talk. So she must have felt something or seen something.

So he invited me, that was the first time I ever gave a formal talk, was in the Theosophical Society in London, to about 20 people. And that was the beginning of a more clearly defined form. I still remember the title of that talk that I gave my first ever public talk.

It was called, they wanted an interesting sounding title. It was called spiritual dimensions in psychotherapy. And that talk, I found one interesting fact, I had, I would never have known.

When I did counseling sessions, of course, I had no notes about sometimes I wrote things down afterwards. Because I was surprised under what I said I did said things I didn't know that I knew them. But during this talk, I thought, Oh, I need to have some outline of what I'm going to talk about points 2015 points, something.

So I talked. And then I came to end of what I had to say. And then I looked at my notes.

And I noticed immediately the moment I looked at my notes, these 20 people in the room, the energy in the room got deflated immediately. When I talked freely, there was a collective presence arising. Everybody was alert.

I looked at my notes, and it went like like a balloon that was coming. And then when I started talking again, it took a while for the presence to return. And then okay, okay.

Then I looked again, same thing happened again, energy deflated. And that was the last time I ever had notes for talks. Even if I forget something important, it doesn't matter.

The presence is the teaching. It's not ultimately what you say. The presence is the teaching.

The presence is who you are. So you are the teaching. You're not the teacher, the essence of who you are as a teaching.

And you will reflect to people who they are. You awaken the presence in the other by your presence. And the other is not other.

It's the one presence arising. And that's the function of the spiritual teacher. All the stuff is secondary.

So words or what you have learned, etc. is secondary. Primary is the presence.

There's only one teacher. Presence is the teacher. And so that's how it is.

And the more presence shines through you, the more powerful the teaching. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (33:48 - 33:51)

That's fantastic. Thank you so much. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (33:52 - 34:06)

Right. So we've come to the end of our session. Let's conclude with a moment of stillness.

Thank you.

Eckhart Tolle The World Will Always Challenge You [27c17d1b-ff0e-43cf-90d9-b927661c802c]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:57)

The world will always challenge you. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the importance of remaining what he calls teachable. He cautions us to be aware of the stories, the concepts, and labels we use to interpret the world.

He encourages us to ask ourselves when we meet someone new, do we give ourselves space to just be, to perceive, or do we instantly judge and manufacture stories about this person? He ponders when we travel, do we experience awe or do we compare it to other places we've been? He points out that when we never experience anything new, the sense of aliveness is gone from our lives.

Eckhart says we must ask ourselves who are we without the old narrative, the mental and emotional conditioning, which is the result of our self-centered thinking. He points out the world will always challenge us. He says it's not here to make us happy.

It is here to help us awaken.

[Speaker 1] (1:00 - 37:15)

It's two o'clock in Europe and Australia. It's already tomorrow. It might be interesting to check in inside yourself right as we are sitting here, as you are sitting here.

Are you thinking all the time as you sit here, or are there spaces when you're not thinking and just an awareness? And by saying you're in spaces when you're not thinking, I do not mean drifting off towards sleep after this perhaps too heavy a meal. So I'm not referring to, okay, I'm not thinking because I'm too tired to think.

Yes, you have become free of thinking, but you're moving towards unconsciousness. But are you able to simply be alert? And are there spaces where you're not, you don't have to think, just be the awareness for whatever is being perceived in your consciousness?

It does not require effort, but it requires alertness. There was a Zen teacher who summarized the teaching of Zen in one word. He called it attention, and he'd raise his finger.

Can you explain Zen, please? They asked. Attention.

And in many humans, that spacious awareness does occur briefly throughout their day, but they are not, it's so brief that they don't know that it's happening. Every time you look at something, something new comes into your field of vision, or you hear something new, a sound. For the first few moments, it's just the pure perception against the

background of awareness.

And then the mind comes in. Or there's a sound. Before the mind interprets it, there's a space of perhaps two seconds or three, when there's the pure awareness and the sense perception.

Or when you meet another person here for the first time, you look at them, or maybe they say something, or they don't, and you look at them. And if you're alert for the first moment or a few moments, I don't know what is a moment, you're simply perceiving that human being. And then the mind comes in.

Or you're observing another human being, they're sitting at another table, and you're looking. Is there a space where it's just a pure perception against the background of awareness? Or how quickly do you interpret, formulate some kind of concept?

Be aware of the voice in your head, the narratives, the stories, the concepts that interprets the world. And be aware that often there are brief moments when that is not happening, and it's usually when something new arises. Traveling can be helpful in that sense, because whatever you experience is something new.

And potentially, it can help you to be more awake, because every impression is new. And unless you carry such heavy conditioning in your mind, that there's only a fraction of a second when you look at something new, and immediately you compare it to what you know, and judge it, oh, that's not, I don't like that, there's too many people here, that's whatever. It's immediately judged, so that you never experience anything new, because you experience everything through the filter of your conditioned mind.

Every situation, everything you see is through that filter. That is the unconscious state, spiritually speaking. Also, there's a reason why Jesus said, to enter the kingdom of heaven, you have to become like a little child.

And he refers, of course, to the absence of concepts, because a little child who hasn't learned the language yet is in that state of openness. Even a dog is in that state of openness, unless it desperately wants something, which is usually food. In that state of no self-concept, and doesn't impose a concept on you, either, because it has no self-concept, no self, the dog has no self, in spiritual terms.

The dog is itself a self, himself, whatever. The dog is itself, doesn't carry the burden of a concept identity, every human carries the burden of a conceptual identity. So the dog has no ego.

Or the cat. Although I have observed in rare instances, the beginnings of ego in certain dogs and cats, just little beginnings, because they've lived with humans for too long, so it rubs off on the dog, and then suddenly they have a bit of resentment. But that freedom of living without the burden of a self-concept is amazing.

It allows for a huge amount of joy in your life, and a sense of aliveness, without the self, as the Buddha would call it. No self. So the dog is free of inferiority complex, or superiority complex, free of negative body image.

Even the ugliest dog is okay with it. And even an overweight dog doesn't have a problem with weight. So there's not that image self in the mind, that you then split yourself into.

You live with an image of yourself, and you live through that image of yourself. And that is, that image consists of stories and narratives, and it's your life. Humans call it my life.

And of course, that is always there, but is that all there is? Or is there more to you than meets the eye? And of course there is infinitely more than meets the eye.

You just have to discover it, not achieve it. Because if you say you need to achieve this transcendent state, or you need to achieve the realization of being, that would imply that you are not there yet, and you need time to get there. But time doesn't get you there, because time is the obstacle to that realization.

Time is needed, of course, in this world, which is the horizontal plane of existence. Time is everywhere. Everything functions through time.

You can't have an appointment without time. We couldn't have come together here without using time to say, on such and such a date, at such and such a time, we're all going to be here. And it worked.

We're here. Now, if you confuse that horizontal realm with a transcendent realm, then you might say, let's not be the slaves of time, but just trust that one day we'll all come together here in the present moment, because that's all there is. And the universe will arrange it.

And perhaps if we lived indefinitely, then perhaps after one billion years, we all accidentally come together here. But that's unlikely. So time is here on this plane, cannot be denied.

It's everywhere. It gives you a lot. It offers you a lot of possibilities of growth and attainment and so on.

Every doing requires time. Every achieving requires time, and it has its place on this horizontal plane, of course. And of course, eventually, the time kills you.

So, okay. It gives you everything, and then it takes everything away on this horizontal plane. As a pessimist once said, life is a sexually transmitted disease with always a fatal outcome.

That's true, it seems. Can't be denied. And then there is another dimension that is accessible in human consciousness.

There's a potential of realizing the vertical dimension as opposed to the horizontal dimension. And the vertical dimension, you enter it as you become present. And as you become present, the stream of thinking subsides, is replaced with a space of awareness, awareness arises.

And so you exist as a temporal being. Yes, you have a certain age on the horizontal plane. But when I ask you, who are you or what are you on the horizontal plane, you will often, when you reply, you will refer to perhaps first thing, you might refer to your gender, and then you refer perhaps to your age.

And then you might refer to other things, race or the work you do, or your position in society, or whatever it may be. All these things exist on the horizontal plane. But one of the first things on the horizontal plane is you think you have a certain age.

And that, of course, is true as far as the body is concerned. And then when I ask you, who or what are you, without reference to any thought, what does it feel like to be you without reference to a narrative in your mind that you call my life? So for example, in this moment, you don't need to remember anything about your life.

But when you don't remember anything about your life, are you still there? And what does that mean? I am still there without reference to a narrative.

What is that I am that's still there, that doesn't seem to have any content anymore. Without the narrative, there's an I am without content. This is why it's so hard to describe it or to talk about it.

What is left is a presence. That's all you can say about it. It's an absence of thought, but there's a presence there.

Can't define it. And there, you have no age. It doesn't matter whether you're 20 years old or 100.

There's a presence, a beingness, a being. One could say, you know that you exist. Well, exist is the wrong word.

You know that you are in that realization in the vertical dimension. You know that you are, but that's all you know and all you need to know. Nothing needs to be or should be added to it.

The beingness itself. In ancient Greece, the temple of Apollo at Delphi had inscriptions. There's enormous wisdom arising in ancient Greece.

One of the inscriptions was, it goes back to Socrates or Pythagoras, know yourself, know thyself inscribed. And then on another side of the temple, there was a strange inscription, you are. And people didn't know later on when they looked at it hundreds of

years later, thousands of years later, what does that mean?

Maybe there's something missing. Let's look more closely. You are, maybe it got eroded by time.

There must be something else. But they couldn't find anything else. And a few people later realized the deeper meaning of it.

And they actually go together with know thyself and you are, go together. Know thyself does not refer to the personality. It does not refer to knowing the story of you in great detail, exploring perhaps hidden things that you hadn't known about yourself.

There's a place for that too, but that's not what is meant by the ancient know thyself. It's not the self that you get to through going through psychoanalysis for 10 years. Because there's always new layers of memories.

Oh, I hadn't realized that. That's so interesting. My life is becoming so complex and interesting.

The longer I have psychoanalysis, the more interesting it gets. It has its place. It's fine.

It's interesting. It's like a movie. That's an interesting movie.

And people like to see movies that are not only interesting, but interesting must mean things must, there must be things that go wrong in the movie. Otherwise it's not interesting. And in the movie of your life, there also there must be things that go wrong and they do all the time.

Otherwise it's not interesting. So know thyself doesn't refer to all the details of your life, hidden motivations, all those things, repressed desires. Know thyself doesn't refer to that.

That's a different, a different knowing and a different self, a different knowing and a different self. The knowing, the work to know here is not used with reference to conceptual knowing, analytical knowing, knowing through thought structures, thoughts, words, concepts. There is a deeper knowing that is non-conceptual.

And there is a deeper self than the conceptual entity that is the egoic entity. The self that the Buddha described as an illusion, that is the conceptual entity. There is a deeper self that in Buddhism is described as the no-self and in Hindu teachings is described as the transcendent self, the Atman.

So the inscription on the Temple of Delphi refers to that. So first of all, the knowing is not the conceptual knowing. There is another way of knowing and there is another self other than the self that you are familiar with that you call your life, me and my life.

So that's important to know. And the key is given in these two words, you are, that is the key to knowing yourself. And you are is the realization of being, which is the transcendent self.

And that knowing is very different from conceptual knowing. And this is a very important point, especially in our contemporary civilization, which is all over the globe now. We only know conceptual knowing, we disregard or completely forget there's another way of relating to the world, being in the world than the conceptual one.

And that refers to yourself also, but it also refers to the ways in which you experience the world. When you experience something new, let's you travel a completely different environment on the one that you live in. For some of you that may be here, this is very different from where you live if you live in Canada or Iceland or anywhere in England.

We visit many foreign places and sometimes a few days before or after an event we explore a little bit, we are transformed into tourists. And if you have a guide, sometimes you had guides to show us a city or to show us only maybe a very unusual area, the nature reserve or something like that. And what I noticed is the guides, because that's their job, they never stop talking.

It's going insane. But you can't say anything because they're so nice and they're so knowledgeable. It's rude to say, can you please stop talking?

I want to experience it. I want to experience this place without concepts. I want to really know it deeply.

I can have concepts too, but that's not the main way in which I want to experience this wonderful place. So I don't remember where we were not that long ago. It was some kind of tropical place somewhere.

And there was a guide, a lovely young woman, very knowledgeable. And we are walking through this forest, a group of people, maybe 12 people or so, they were following her. And she talked continuously because it's everything.

So this tree and this little thing and that, how it originates, how it interacts with other things in the forest, and so knowledgeable, you learn so much in this, there is a place for that. But I don't want to be confined to that way of knowing the forest. There is another way of knowing the forest.

So what I did is I stayed behind. And then the group was always far ahead of me. And I could hear her talking in the distance, but I couldn't understand anymore what she was saying.

And I was actually able to experience the forest in a different way. I admit I missed quite a lot of what I could have learned by listening to her, probably would have forgotten 90%

of it afterwards. But at the time it would have been so, and everybody else was so interested in asking questions.

But are they really there? Or are they in their conceptual mind and the actual experience of the forest is a peripheral event, mainly they are in the conceptual structures of their mind. Huh.

So that's how I avoided being trapped in that by staying behind. And I don't know whether our guide noticed it, she didn't say anything, she looked at me a couple of times, and wondering why is this guy staying behind, doesn't he want to learn things? I'm not against learning because there are the two dimensions, admittedly, you can learn many very interesting things about the forest, but there is the other also.

You cannot have just the one that confines you to a very limited way of experiencing reality, that reduces everything to concepts which are dead. So can you really sense the aliveness of the forest? Can you sense the sacredness of the forest by only applying concepts to the forest?

No, you cannot sense that when you are trapped in concepts. There is no space for the deeper experiencing of the forest. There is no space for it.

So I'm not advocating letting go of all knowledge, but finding a balance between one way of knowing and the other way of knowing things. Our civilization has lost the balance, it's trapped in one way of knowing only. And the deeper way of knowing which is associated with the vertical dimension, and is associated with the present moment, and associated with the absence of thought, but the acute awareness in the present moment, that nobody in mainstream culture teaches you that, or talks about it, or even knows about it.

They don't know about it. And again, know thyself applies here also. You can know yourself as a conceptual entity, which is your, sometimes I call it your form identity.

Your form is the physical form and the psychological form of you, the personality. The body and the personality is your form identity. Everybody has one, and it lasts for a little while until it gets killed by this horrible, criminal, we call time.

So everybody has one, but do you need to be one, or was it to have it? You have it, but you are not it. Essentially, you are not it.

What you are, the being, is realized not through concepts. It is much deeper than concepts. There is a knowing that is non-conceptual, and that is a higher intelligence than conceptual intelligence.

One could say conceptual intelligence is like the reflected light, like the moon reflects the light of the sun. In that same sense, the conceptual intelligence, yes, it is also consciousness. It is not separate from consciousness.

Perhaps a better analogy is, my favorite analogy for that is to say that compared to this conceptual consciousness is ripples on the surface of the ocean, waves and ripples on the surface of the ocean. If you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean, the question is, do you know yourself only as a ripple, or do you realize that yes, you are a ripple, but you are also, and more fundamentally, a manifestation of the ocean itself. So you are both.

The ripple existence is fairly short-lived, but what happens when the ripple realizes that it is not just the ripple, it is also more important, more essentially, the ocean. Now that would make a lot of difference to the life of the ripple, because if the ripple only sees itself as a ripple on the surface, the horizontal dimension, all it knows is other ripples, and it looks around, associating itself with other ripples. Let's get together.

Maybe if the two of us get together, we can become a bigger ripple. Okay, and then there are others that don't look, they are a bit threatening, stay away from me, I don't want to, I don't like the way you look. And then there's a little wave, not a ripple, there comes, who is that guy?

Well, his name is Bezos Ripple. Well, that's a big ripple, it's a wave. But eventually, its fate is the same as all the other ripples.

This horizontal dimension, it ends up where all the ripples end up. So if you are trapped on the horizontal, then the world, you're always looking for something that the surface dimension cannot ultimately give you a deeper sense of who you are, a sense of having arrived, a sense of being at home, where you are, a sense of connectedness, freedom from fear and anxiety, that the horizontal dimension cannot give you that. And so perhaps then the ripple suddenly realizes, when it stops looking around the horizontal for some kind of fulfillment, for a moment it goes, hmm, oh, there's a stillness there, and there's a, there's a sense of aliveness, what is that?

No answer, I don't know. And it feels a connectedness to something very deep, but it can't interpret it, and suddenly it's, wow, I'm actually being carried by this vast thing, and not only am I being carried by it, essentially I am it, and suddenly there's a sense of connectedness to something deep, which the ripple cannot interpret, and doesn't need to interpret. And if the ripple stays connected with that, the way in which it experiences the rest of its life on the surface changes also, it becomes more, much more enjoyable, more pleasant, because it's not looking on the horizontal dimension for something that the horizontal dimension cannot give it, in relationships, in acquisitions, in attainments, it can have these things and enjoy these things, but not expecting or demanding some ultimate satisfaction, or the absence of things going wrong, it's on the horizontal dimension. And so, when there's a state of connectedness, now, obviously you have realized by now that you are the ripple that I'm talking about, and it can even enjoy relationships, which before were always a source of conflict and problems, problematic

at best, and a source of horrible suffering at worst, and even that can be enjoyed, because you're no longer looking for others to, let's put it simply, make you happy. You're not looking for a human to make you happy, or a situation to make you happy, or some kind of acquisition or attainment to make you happy and complete.

You enjoy the relationship, you enjoy the attainment, you enjoy whatever it is that you get on this level, but you can only really enjoy it, because you're not dependent on it for your sense of your deep, your real sense of identity, of beingness. You no longer derive your sense of identity, your sense of self, from the things that make up your life on this level. You can enjoy them, you play around with things, you can even strive towards attaining this or that.

Without expecting something from these things that you can play around with, and that expecting something that they cannot give you, then the life that you lead on this horizontal level becomes actually quite enjoyable, because you'll have let go of the demand that you have placed before on people and situations to make you happy and fulfilled, and then you get angry or upset or irritated when they don't, because they can't. So whatever situation you go into, in the absence of the deeper, the vertical dimension, life is frustrating.

Every relationship turns out to be, well, it wasn't that great, I thought it would be wonderful. That's the key to having a life that is enjoyable, is to drop your demands before you had placed upon people and situations. Make me happy.

Tell me who I am. Complete me. That is realized in the vertical dimension of now.

You don't need time for that. Time becomes the obstacle. So as I've said before, an important realization is the world is not here to make you happy.

Because as long as you believe that the world is here to make you happy, you're not going to be happy, because the world can't do it. You've placed an impossible demand upon the world. Make me happy.

Fulfill me. And then you have resentment when this is an underlying assumption that it should make me happy, then there's always continuous resentment, which is all forms of suffering. But when you realize the world cannot make you happy, it's not here to make you happy, it has another purpose.

What is its purpose? It's here to make you conscious. It's here to awaken you.

It's here to awaken you to that deeper dimension, which we call the vertical dimension, which is the awakening of consciousness, the transcendence of ego. And the world is here to challenge you so that you awaken. If the world did not challenge you, and it does it all the time, you might have noticed, you can't get away from it.

Even though it's a wonderful thing to practice positive thinking, it works to some extent very well. You can change your life through changing your attitude, your thinking. But even then, the world will still challenge you.

No matter how much positive thinking you do, and you can achieve things through all the manifestation, but the world will still challenge you. You will move. Every situation, there will be a polarity.

You achieve something great, but there's a downside to it. There's always the other polarity.

[Speaker 2] (37:17 - 37:36)

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Eckhart Tolle There Is Something Beyond “My Life” [9a477e76-5fe5-4198-8c09-f31f488bbf94]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:04)

There is something beyond my life in this episode Eckhart explains that many of us have to go through a lot of Unhappiness before we awaken. He says he's never met anyone whose life is not difficult and fraught with challenges He believes it's actually a good thing when we become dissatisfied with what we call my life He says our spiritual growth often begins when we realize there must be something more and our suffering Pushes us to find it. He goes on to explain that our real life is actually in the here and now Separate from the past and the future in that way for Eckhart.

It is eternal and connects us to the transcendent He says we can become familiar with this divine aspect of ourselves through a state of no thinking free of the inner critic and false narratives Eckhart says when we discover who we are without our past what emerges is the profound presence of being

[Speaker 1] (1:06 - 6:16)

For most people they have to arrive at a place where the the sense of self they recognize it as painful ultimately Suffering a lot of unhappiness and that for many people the unhappiness the Dissatisfaction with their life what you call my life To become dissatisfied with my life Can be a very good thing Because that might take you to a questioning whether there's anything beyond my life And then you discover that there is something beyond my life me and my life and That's already here. It's not something you can attain in the future That which is beyond this limited thing my life that is so problematic The past has a heaviness to it There's regret and guilt and blaming and grievances for many people and the future The future is on the one hand holds a promise of Fulfillment and Unfortunately, it also holds the threat of destruction because you're going to die So the future is a strange thing that's You're on the one end you think it's going to fulfill you but behind that you also know it's going to kill you To get out of the conceptual sense of self is the great liberation That's a being dimension Then of course the self still operates on this level of reality the self the person continues to operate function in fact more harmoniously easily Effectively on this horizontal level when there is connectedness with being you're not dependent on this conceptual entity For your sense of who you are So the story of your life becomes secondary and something else arises and that is life itself I believe in the book maybe the power of now I said You have a life situation What people call my life when they refer to my life When they say my well, my life is how is my life?

Well It's hard I don't know whose life is not hard I've never met anybody except people were deluded And then they didn't last long I've never met anybody whose life is not

hard It's challenging. It's difficult. Of course it is But what people call my life is really refers to I could say that's your life situation my life situation That's not life.

Your life is inseparable from Present moment. You can only find your life in the present moment not in a narrative in your mind and So that's again another approach towards the being dimension. Your life is now Your life situation exists in time So find the life underneath that is underneath your life situation And that's in the present moment and you cannot find it through thought Which means you cannot find it in the future because the future is a thought which means the entire spiritual thing Trying to achieve a particular state for many people is misleading Because if you're trying to achieve something it implies time and future It's true that time is needed for virtually everything in life from building a house to making a cup of tea or learning a new language or traveling. Everything takes time except one thing Knowing who you are beyond the conditioned entity, the person, does not take time So spiritual awakening, spiritual realization, whatever you want to call it As long as you think it takes time that belief Prevents you from realizing it.

That's a very interesting thing Because the being dimension is already here. It's just obscured by continuous thought It's already here When thinking subsides for a moment What is left?

[Speaker 3] (6:19 - 6:25)

well You might want to ask yourself, who am I?

[Speaker 1] (6:25 - 9:08)

If I don't tell myself who I am, if I don't remember What happened in the past, because I mean most of the time you don't remember what happens in the past unless your Mind brings it up, which it likes to do quite often Well as a little exercise imagine for a moment that you don't have a past You don't need to think about it right now. It doesn't really matter Let's say it was just maybe it was just let's say it was all a dream up to now It was it was a dream. Okay, there was the dream whatever happened in the past.

It was a dream and suddenly You're waking up out of the dream and then you just look I don't let go of the dream Do you still have a sense of? Self a sense of identity without remembering the dream of your past which ultimately means without having any thought but simply a Sense of presence because that's what remains So there's a dream of your past And you put that aside And what remains are you still there without remembering who you are? well There's something there But it's very hard to describe it what's left when you let go of the dream of your past And there's only the naked Presence of being So who are you without your past without your past you are that The bare presence of being Can't describe it very well.

There's not much there Nothing there. No thing is there nothing no thing But all you know, there's still there's a presence there a being And not just that there is an awareness that there is a presence but these are not two things When we talk about it, it's two things. So when you let go of the dream of your past What's left of me what's left of me without my past or who am I without my past?

Okay, let's try again Another way of putting it. Who am I without any thought? Where am I if I'm not thinking?

What's left of you is a sense of presence beingness

[Speaker 3] (9:10 - 9:11)

And that is

[Speaker 1] (9:13 - 15:24)

What I call the deep I Sometimes I ought to call it your essence identity Is that Your form identity is the person thought etc Your life the dream of your life Your essence identity is that and ultimately There is only your essence identity Because the essence identity is a light of consciousness When you derive your identity from form the narrative the mental narrative those thoughts can only exist as Manifestations of the light of consciousness shining through this form.

It's a bit like a lampshade The person is a lampshade And Behind it is the light that shines through the lampshade So when you derive your sense of who you are and everybody has a sense of something. They absolutely Feels absolutely precious. I don't want to lose that.

I don't want to lose myself. That's why people have this fear of death I don't want to lose this me. Am I still going to be there?

When they die, am I going or am I just going to dissolve completely into some impersonal Consciousness or or some people say am I going to dissolve into just nothingness? Am I I want to I want to survive. I I'm so I And this I is the all the things that make up the person It's a lampshade and you derive your sense of identity from that But the real thing that is happening is the light it's light behind the lampshade That is the essence.

It's consciousness the light of consciousness itself So you you're mistaking something that is Filtered through thought the light gets filtered through thought filters through thought which is a manifest Just a bit like the surface of the ocean The the waves on the surface of the ocean are the thoughts Who you actually are is the vastness of the ocean. So the light you confuse The light with something that it shines through So you think you're the lampshade But really you are the light beyond it At first it seems like nothing

much perhaps because it there's an that state of pure awareness that you have in the absence of the person There's just a presence but there's Enormous intelligence in there. So intelligent is not confined to The conceptual mind.

It's a it's a small Manifestation of intelligence. It's a form of intelligence. Yes IQ tests and so on But it goes far deeper than that Anybody who has who does anything creative it means bring something new into this world Even if it's just a song that people respond to that has a certain essence to it that it survives many generations Or work of art or any great insight or realization anything you add Anything that brings something new into this world comes from that place that is beyond the conceptual mind It might then use this intelligence may use the conceptual mind to give something form But it is in itself far beyond the conceptual mind.

So any creative person Often they don't know it. It's just happens to them they Have access briefly in the area of their creativity They have access briefly to that dimension where for moments stop thinking subsides and Just a presence is there and they go into that presence and then perhaps They use the mind to give it form whatever form might be Every intelligent even great scientists. I mean science is just a systematic application of the power of thinking But even in science the great scientists who have great revolutionary insights It came in moments of no thought Einstein was famous for being able to relax into these states and and And Theory of relativity came to him also as an insight.

Yes, he had done a lot of thinking before but hadn't arrived at any conclude any real answer and Then thinking subsided and then the realization The great composers many of the great composers They say often things that they when they the composition that were taking down composition in many cases it was like a Dictation it came already out of this vast intelligence That's beyond the mind and then it used the mind as a form of expression. So our task then is not to Add anything to our knowledge. Everybody knows a lot already We're not adding anything we are Becoming Familiar with the dimension of awareness which means state of

[Speaker 3] (15:24 - 15:37)

Not thinking at first brief moments And then it becomes So wonderful that you want to go there more often

[Speaker 1] (15:38 - 15:46)

you invite The state of not thinking just pure awareness into your life for example right now

[Speaker 3] (15:49 - 16:00)

The personality isn't is afraid of that the person Because it says don't go there because

then you don't know who you are anymore

[Speaker 1] (16:03 - 21:59)

And that's true conceptually you don't know who you are when you are not thinking Can't say much And yet there is a knowing that it is non Conceptual, you know that there is a presence and you are that presence But it's no longer than after a while. It's no longer a question of Being able to have moments of pure presence when you're not thinking That certainly is important or to have meditation when you sit in formal meditation, perhaps you're able to just be present as long as you're not looking To the meditation to get you somewhere Realizing that you You cannot do a meditation Because you think you're doing a meditation you bring in future Meditation the purpose of it is the realization of being It's not a doing So that's all fine moments of presence In each moment of presence you become free of yourself You light up Because the burden of self lifts for a while and you light up You become like a little child again but with an added dimension of knowing Jesus talked about to enter the kingdom of heaven. You have to become like a little child. What he's trying to say is The conceptual mind cannot get you there Becomes an obstacle But then what happens is we even when you are thinking Speaking there is still a remnant of awareness in the background So and you're no longer completely Absorbed in the stream of thinking it doesn't drag you along Completely there's still part of you that is rooted in the witnessing consciousness the awareness Yes, you engaged in thinking but in the background there's a still a remnant of awareness Which you could say another way of putting it You're aware of yourself Even while you're engaged in conversation or discussion or Working on your computer Or whatever you may be doing. There's still an awareness of yourself as the underlying presence or field of awareness Whatever you want to call it even while you're engaged in thinking So ultimately it's not a question of either or you can either be you can either be engaged in thinking and have a conversation or discussion or You can be present Initially, you might experience it like that But our Task is to bring the two together So that we can operate in this world through the conceptual mind without losing ourselves in the conceptual mind And then the conceptual mind can work much more powerfully by the way because it's it's no longer Continuously sabotaged by the absurd human ego Which a lot of what the ego does is counterproductive So self-sabotage is a very common thing many people have that and that all these things don't no longer happen when There's a remnant of awareness even when you're operating in this world and so and then you will notice shifts Depending on the situation that you find yourself in Sometimes they will the mind will be engaged much more and there may just be you can't quantify but I'll just say it anyway Let's say there's 10% of awareness still left in the background even while you're having a conversation with Somebody about the political situation in the United States or wherever it may be at the moment Which is so problematic and you know that what you think this is what you think and you're explaining what you think But you're not totally Identified anymore just a little bit.

Yes We're not completely identified with your mental position anymore meaning You don't look to your mental position for your sense of self You still have a mental position. Of course, you're still at whatever you are Democrats Republican Whatever you can you're still that But you're not completely deriving your sense of who you are from that. You're not identified with it You still have it but not identified with it, which means the other who has a different mental position doesn't become your enemy Just as a different mental position if you're not Identified you don't make the other into an enemy and the ego loves to make the other into an enemy because then it feels Its own identity more strongly to the other the other defines who you are on the ego level You need the other because without the other you have no idea who you are Because the other is really other Sense of separateness So practice Thoughtless awareness As much as you can in in everyday life Even a few seconds are fine Observe something or feel the inner body just be aware of

[Speaker 3] (21:59 - 22:08)

Presence just be the presence and there may come a time when you don't want to think

[Speaker 1] (22:10 - 23:18)

You don't think Especially when there's nothing particular to do I think when you're going for a walk in the in the forest or on the seashore or in a park Do you need to think? No Some of you are not yet able to do that. That's that's fine to simply step out of thought But gradually you discover that you have that ability on the horizontal level It takes time it takes time to fully discover the timeless dimension within yourself it sounds like a paradox because we're dealing with horizontal and vertical dimension So do not think Without going to sleep.

It's not you don't lose consciousness. I'm not talking about that state. Of course when you're When you're about to fall asleep You stop thinking also, but this we're not referring to that where you go below thought referring to rising above thought alertness Attention

[Speaker 3] (23:20 - 23:25)

Breathing might help if you need a little bit of help Become aware of your breath

[Speaker 1] (23:28 - 28:08)

There's an association of breath and consciousness There's more to breath than just a physiological thing Breath is also formless like consciousness Breath and spirit are synonymous in some languages for example in in the Old Testament In Hebrew breath and spirit are the same word at the beginning of the Bible there's the the chaos of the deep and The breath of God has floated over the waters of the deep of the chaos In some Bibles, it's called the breath of God and in other Bibles, it's translated as the spirit.

I wrote somewhere perhaps in New Earth Somebody asked me which workshops to go to in a there was a selection of interesting workshops to go to for spiritual awakening or whatever And I suggested instead of going to any just For this period of time that the workshop it was a weekend workshop be aware of your breath As much as you can during that time. You don't need to go anywhere Just be aware of your breath your breathing, please consciously not you know, it doesn't mean you go Sometimes that's fine too, but just be aware of the breath that's occurring naturally Every time you're aware of the ingoing and the outflow of breath you are present and you're not thinking Can't do both Can either think or be aware of your breath?

So if you're aware of your breath as much as you can, which means you're not thinking during those times So instead of telling a person to not think which might be difficult Until you you have that ability. I have it I don't have to think when I don't want to and a lot of the time I don't think it's wonderful That's my main achievement in life, by the way. I Don't have much else.

I wouldn't even get a job if I put that in my resume. Would they give me a job? I don't need to think anymore Yeah, you are the person who have been waiting for I don't think probably not but it's not to have to think compulsively what a liberation that is But instead of saying to try not to think well That's not easy for many people be aware of your breath is the same thing You're not thinking you become aware of inner space.

Oh And you can still be aware of other things while you're being aware of your breath the for example the sky and Then you gradually become aware that to be aware of your breath ultimately really means To be aware of being aware You're aware that you don't wear self-awareness So your breath can be your most intimate friend they can free you from compulsive thinking Initially you might need little point little Reminders where you live in your in your house in your room I don't know what place little things where you often look on the wall on a mirror on Your computer a little sign that reminds you to breathe consciously That can be helpful except that after after a Week or two you may have to change the little point just because you become accustomed to them. You don't see them anymore but this can it can be helpful to have little little pointers off you can have anything you can start with a There's a lovely Egyptian you all know the ancient Egyptian the eye of Horus Let's see the eye of awareness or use any eye a little eye the eye of awareness and Then when that doesn't work anymore because we've used it for two or three weeks Use something else use the Sun little emblem of the Sun for example the light of consciousness in other words and every time you see it, ah Take it one or two or three conscious breaths

[Speaker 2] (28:09 - 28:29)

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Eckhart Tolle There Is a Self In Every Thought [e4903a25-5a94-43ad-a4b1-02564454786b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:41)

There is a self in every thought. In this episode, Eckhart explains what it means to be unconscious, and he says we all have inner scripts, those old dysfunctional patterns that are handed down generation after generation. He says eventually they crystallize into an identity.

Eckhart explains until we wake up to this, we remain largely unconscious. He says we don't have to remain hostage to our hard wiring. We can resist our thinking and stop mistaking it for the truth.

Eckhart says every human being is like a seed waiting to awaken. The potential may be buried under layers of ego, but it is still there. He says we find answers to the secrets of the universe when we look within.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 36:39)

If you are unconscious, which means, by the way, it means identified with every thought that goes into your head, and it's immediately taken for the truth. You're totally with your opinions. Vroom, vroom, vroom, vroom.

I'm not saying you shouldn't have opinions. Everybody has opinions, but the question is does your opinion become your identity? That's the unconscious state.

If opinion becomes your identity, this is then the thought that is the opinion becomes your identity. So in other words, there is a self in every thought, so to speak, using slightly Buddhist terminology. There's a self in every arising thought, and so that is the unconscious state, and that self, which we consider to be you or the person, is ultimately a delusion or a fiction, as the Buddha pointed out, that ultimately that is a kind of fiction.

So let's say a person in prison would normally be considered their very bad life circumstances, or if you have a narrative in your mind, you might say, my life has been all dreadful. Nothing makes sense anymore, whatever the narrative is, and then at some point, maybe if you're ready, you read a few lines in a book, and suddenly something happens in you, and we are now getting to the answer of who or what is it that is actually unconscious, because we are saying, when you're identified, you are unconscious. So, okay, now we know that the thing you identify with is the person, which is a mental-emotional accumulation, but who or what is it that is actually, spiritually speaking, asleep, unconscious?

And that's you, but not the person. So this means, and this is the message of all, if you go to the core of every spiritual tradition, in every spiritual tradition, and the core points

to this, the possibility and the necessity of awakening to who or what you are at this deeper level. So we have the person, of course, is still there.

I sometimes call the person your form identity, because you have a form, and this form, which begins with a physical form, the body, that you can see and touch, and you see it, and you see it in the mirror, that's the beginning of your form identity. The next stage of your form identity is the mental-psychological form, which is the person. But the personal sense of self is also, the body is a very important part of that.

So it's both the physical body and the mental conditioning, mental-emotional conditioning. So you identify with the physical vehicle and the psychological entities, that they come, they are together. So I call that form identity.

Everybody has a form identity. The question is, is that all there is to your identity? Is that all you know?

And for most humans, that is still the case. They are totally identified with their form, physical form and psychological form. Physical form is very important for large numbers of people.

Their body is a very important part of their identity, and the body is a source of either pride or shame for many people, these are the two extremes. And for many other people, they're kind of in between. All this is ego, of course.

Whenever we talk about identification with form is ego. That's the definition of ego in spiritual terms. I'd complete identification with their form identity.

And so the body is a very important part of that. And for many people, it's a source of huge problems. This body image that they have, and say, that's me.

And they're not happy with it. And it becomes a source of great suffering for many people. It's ego too, to be unhappy with your body.

And again, derive your unhappy identity from it. That's ego too. Or you're happy with your body because it looks better than other bodies.

And you do a few things to enhance the body that already looks good, but you do things to it to make it look even better, including certain clothes you put on or whatever you do. Maybe you do something to your face. And certainly when you use social media, which is externalizations of ego, when you post images of your body or your face, then of course you can make your body look much, much better than it actually does by applying the correct filters to the image.

And everybody looks great. Except when you look at other people's images, then you feel, oh, my body doesn't look as great at all. Everybody looks so beautiful except me.

And then you learn to abuse filters also. And you live in this... And you start to live in this fictional world complete where before the technology came with the devices and social media, you already, humans already had a big ego.

And now the devices make it even bigger. You can project the whole thing outward and say, this is me. It's a total image.

It's a total creation of technology and imagination. Nothing to do whatsoever with who you are. And yet, for some reason, you have 2,000 friends on Facebook and you've never met them, but they love you.

And then that becomes incorporated into your sense of egoic sense of self. So it goes even bigger than it used to be in the past. Now technology helps you to have an even bigger ego.

In other words, be even more deluded about your identity. Oh my God, this is what we are faced with and these poor youngsters, they grow up with that. And for many of them, this virtual world into which they project their ego becomes more important to them than the real world outside.

It's an enormous challenge for humans. And this is why it's so important for humans about to make this step out of the egoic consciousness because otherwise it will destroy us. Certainly will, it will destroy the world and us.

The good thing about the ego is it has built a self-destruct mechanism into it as part of the ego. Eventually, the ego blows up and self-destructs. That's the good news about it.

And so we have body identification, the part of your former identity. And let's put aside now the virtual world and all the filters. Let's say your body is better looking than most.

It's almost inevitable that a young person is good looking. This would become an important part of their ego identity and then become a source of pride, which means the ego feels a bit inflated when it compares itself to others. And then years pass, of course, and then gradually time begins to attack your body.

And then for people who had a strong body identification, that becomes very painful because it's not just, time doesn't just attack your body and begins to erode it. Because you had identified with your body, time is actually attacking you. That's how you perceive it.

Your whole identity begins to crumble because the body is becoming eroded with horrible suffering. So that is the destiny if you're particularly good looking, those of you here. And if you do not awaken by the time you reach, let's say, 50, 60 years old, then you are in for a lot of suffering.

Now, if your body is not great looking, then you're suffering already, so. So you can't escape. This is why the Buddha said, wherever you go, you will encounter suffering.

It's the essential teaching of the Buddha. But the implication is, if you do not awaken to who you essentially are, to awaken, if you do not awaken. So we've seen the delusion, the identification with form, the complete identification with form that most humans are still trapped in, that leads to suffering.

And there's the possibility of awakening out of that limited sense of self is there. And it usually comes through big challenges. It usually does not come while you're in your comfort zone.

Very few humans, I don't even remember knowing of any, well, don't want to think back into the past. Very few humans awaken while they're in their comfort zone because there's no pressure, there's no need to awaken because let's have another drink. Let's have another nice meal.

Let's binge watch Netflix. No particular challenge. And then if they are lucky, something bad happens to them.

And that could be the beginning of an awakening. The reason why the term awakening has a very long spiritual tradition, many spiritual traditions use this term awakening. And the reason is that it is such an apt comparison or analogy because every human knows what it means to awaken after a night's sleep, where you've slept and in the morning, there comes a time when suddenly you open your eyes and you go, and then you think back, oh, that was just a dream.

And then it's gone. But there's a fundamental difference between the sleep state and the state when you suddenly go, you're awake now. And that is a normal wakefulness.

And this normal wakefulness is for those who are not awakened to the deeper dimension, the spiritual awakening, that is a normal state, which means relative to normal consciousness, in other words, unconsciousness, to awaken spiritually is very much like awakening out of the sleep state into the wakeful state, but it's just a higher level. I can demonstrate quite simply one moment you're absorbed in the stream of thinking probably about your life and how difficult it all is and whether you're going to make it or not and all the problems that are waiting for you tomorrow and next week. And what might go wrong and what you might lose if you're not careful.

And the awful thing in the past, those people, the grievances that have accumulated. And the narratives go, the stories go. Stories that are being repeated many, many times.

And then something happens, maybe you're faced with a difficult situation suddenly or something happens and perhaps accompanied by certain emotions that go with it. Suddenly there's a, oh, and that is the step out of complete identification with thinking is

the beginning of awakening. For many people, it takes the following form.

They suddenly become aware that the thoughts that they have been thinking, perhaps repeatedly for years, are not who they are. They recognize them as thoughts. That is the beginning of an awakening, that you are not your thoughts.

I realized that when I was 17. I accidentally, somebody left a spiritual book with us. I'd never seen a spiritual book before.

And I read, and it said something about the nature of thought and being identified with thought and the possibility of stepping out of that. And I had a mini-awakening, as I call it at that time. After that, I went back to sleep, spiritually speaking.

But I had a mini-awakening that lasted maybe for a year or a year and a half. And it suddenly became aware of how negative my thoughts were at 17 years old. I realized, for example, that since the age of eight, at least, I had several thoughts that recurred again and again in my mind.

One of them was, bad things always happen to me, of course. Bad things always happen to me. And then, of course, bad things would happen.

And say, there you are, there's another one. Bad things always happen to me. Always to me, not to others, just to me.

Always. And for the first time, I became aware of that. Ah.

So, what arises is another level of consciousness. And we may call that presence, or we may call that awareness. And that, the ability to be aware of what kinds of thoughts go through your mind, and the ability to be aware of the emotions that you're feeling, instead of being the emotion.

A huge difference. If you are the emotion, if you are identified with the emotion, the emotion and the mind, they will go together. For example, if you have a strong emotion, and there's no awareness of the emotion, you are the emotion, then it takes over, it rises up into your mind, and it influences your thinking.

And then you usually become, the thinking becomes very irrational. Let's say the emotion is fear, or the emotion is anger, and then the emotion rises into your mind, and it makes you think certain thoughts, and the thoughts give even more energy to the emotion, and it's a vicious circle. When the emotion rises up into your mind, your thinking is no longer rational at all, and decisions that you take in that state, things that you do or say in that state, when emotion has invaded your mind, and it's even more unconscious than your normal unconsciousness.

Dreadful drama is created through that unconsciousness. Every difficulty is reacted to

unconsciously, and is amplified by reacting to a challenge or a difficulty in an unconscious way. You make it far worse, and you amplify it.

That's how humans create drama all around, not just in their personal lives, also collectively, entire nations can be trapped in the same pattern of anger or fear. Then comes the awakening, is the realization that is, oh, there's an emotion, and you can feel the emotion. That's a huge step forward in consciousness from being the emotion, to be able to say that that is.

So you no longer say, I am angry, for if it's anger, or I am fearful, you would say, there's anger in me, if you had to verbalize it, or you'd say, there's fear in me, there's fear. I can feel that, I can feel the fear, but you are not it. It exists in the space of consciousness, but you are not it.

That's the beginning of the awakening. And that is something that opens up here, is the vertical dimension to your life. All the things you've been talking about is the horizontal dimension, where the person or the personality exists in time.

That's all fine, but there's something else that's possible that can awaken in a human being. Every human being is potentially capable of awakening, but in many humans, this is a latent potential that is deeply buried, because there are layers of ego and consciousness on top of it. The destiny of humans is to awaken to this, what we could call it, higher level of consciousness.

That's the entire evolutionary destiny of humans. As all the ancient traditions point to that, the evolutionary purpose of humans is the awakening of consciousness in you. And every human being has the seed, the seed of awakening.

But the question is, has the seed sprouted or not? And it sprouts only if the conditions are right. It may not sprout in this lifetime, but there is the seed there.

And then Jesus often used parables to do with seeds. And there's the seed that then becomes the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of heaven that is within you, not here or there. You can't say it's here or it's there.

It's an inner state of consciousness. And that is the awakening of human consciousness. And the vertical dimension opens up in the, the entry point is always when you awaken, you become present to the now, both externally and internally.

Internally, you realize what your mind is doing or what your emotions are doing. And the thought is there is a knowing behind what's happening within you. There's a knowing behind what's happening externally.

And this is very different from reacting to situations, circumstances, and people through the veil of your conditioning, which is the person. As awareness arises, and we could call

awareness the unconditioned consciousness, whereas everything else is a conditioned consciousness. It has taken on a particular form.

But so that one could say, then let's temporarily put it like this. It's not the ultimate truth, but it's just a way of approaching it. You could say there is two of you.

One is the conditioned entity that is a person or the personality. Then there is a deeper being that is transcendent to the person or the personality. And that deeper being is kind of, let's say in the background, the deeper being isn't not manifested in this dimension.

It hasn't come into this dimension yet. Some humans talk of higher self. I try to avoid that term because higher seems to put it kind of up there somewhere.

So then you're looking for yourself there. And then you could have an imaginary conversation with your higher self. Hello, are you there?

So there is a deeper self. Now I use these two terms that I've been using the past few years. You have two I's, I meaning the pronoun I, when you say I.

As a person, when you use the word I, you refer to the conditioned entity that you are, I, I. I like, I don't like, I believe, I want, I don't want, I hate, I whatever. I, I, this is the surface I.

Then there is a deep I. And that deep I is who you are beyond the person. And that realization is the awakening.

And it begins with becoming, if you wanted to have an actual experience, of the deep I, rather than hearing me talk about it. Although if you have already had glimpses and experiences of the deep I, then you know what I'm talking about. And perhaps while I'm talking about it, you can sense that deep I, but not necessarily.

So let's go more, let's see what we can do to make it more experiential. Because there's an old analogy, I don't know where it comes from, maybe from India, that you may have heard. Honey, you can talk about honey forever and describe the nature of honey.

And then you say, I know honey very well. You can write a PhD about honey, probably exists, PhDs about honey. The question is, have you, have you tasted honey?

That's the difference of way of knowing, spiritual realization. You can ask, do you have a lot of spiritual knowledge? Which is, yes, I know a lot about honey.

But have you tasted honey? That's the vital question. So let's hear, let's not just talk about honey.

Although many of you, while we've been talking about honey, you have been tasting it too. But here, where's the honey? It is the direct knowing of what it is that these words

point to.

And the access point to this vertical dimension of the deep eye, the access point is, of course, in the present moment. If you feel lost in this world, which means ultimately lost in your mind, if you feel lost, then you suddenly realize that you've lost yourself again in your mind. Often, let's say you're upset about something and something goes wrong and wrong.

And suddenly you say, okay, I'm lost. I've lost myself again. Oh, that's, at least you know you're lost.

It means you're not totally lost. And so if you know that you are in the present moment, you're entering the present moment with your attention. So you know you've lost yourself.

Okay, how do I find myself? Become aware of the present moment. But how do I do that?

Don't listen to your mind when your mind says, no, no, no, I can't do it now. I have too much to think about. I can't, present moment, what is this nonsense, present moment?

I have so much on my plate. I mean, I can't be bothered with all that spiritual stuff now. I have to, this is so important.

Don't believe your mind when it says that. It's just thoughts. Okay, there's a thought that means you cannot be present now.

And then you can, you realize, oh, I can be present anyway. And then how? How do you enter the present moment?

There are various easy ways of accessing the present moment. You can start with becoming aware that you're breathing. Oh, you forgot about it.

You're actually breathing. Breathing happens all the time, but normally we're not conscious of breathing. But if you can be conscious of breathing, being conscious of breathing, you don't even have to make it into meditation.

Although it is a meditation method too. It's a very ancient meditation method called the Anapanasati yoga. The awareness of the ingoing and outgoing breath is a meditation.

It's wonderful too. But even if not just as a meditation, just as wherever you are, suddenly, am I breathing? Okay, let me find out.

And so in order to find out, some of your attention has to move from being absorbed in thinking into the observation of your breath, so to speak. You can feel your breath moving in and out of the body. And so your attention follows the breath, which means you're taking attention away from thinking, useless thinking.

We're not talking about creative thinking or thinking that has a good purpose. No, we're talking about useless, unhappy-making thinking, which is 80% or more. And breathing.

Ah, and that can easily lead you into the awareness of the inner body, which is you feel that the body is alive from within. But to feel that, attention has to move away from, you take attention away from thinking and it goes into the body. Are your hands, is there aliveness in your hands?

Do they feel alive, somehow? How do you know your hands are still there if you close your eyes? Do they feel, yes, somehow?

The very subtle feeling of an energy that pervades your hands and your feet and legs. And the entire body is an energy that I call the inner body. And so you can sense that.

Your breath can take you there and you can simultaneously sense the energy field of the inner body and your breathing also. They go together. If you follow the breath with your attention, that also takes you into the inner body.

And then there's the, you're out of your mind now, in a good sense, not the usual sense. In a good sense, to be out of your mind is a wonderful thing. So this is an anchor, as I call it, for presence.

An anchor for presence. And there you are. And then you realize that you can be, you don't have to have all your attention in the body.

You can have some of your attention in sense perceptions. And so that means visual and auditory and maybe other, some other sense perceptions. So you become aware of what you're perceiving and you look around wherever you may be and you listen to any sounds that there may be.

But the way in which you are aware of your sense perceptions, you are really aware of your sense perceptions, not through the veil of your conditioned thinking, where whatever you perceive is immediately named, interpreted, judged, labeled in one way or another. Everything immediately, you form labels and judgments for everything. Oh, oh, what a pretty flower.

What's it called? I wonder what it's called. It looks a bit like a tulip, but it's not a tulip, is it?

No. Let me see. What could that be?

I saw, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Are you really looking at the flower or are you looking, are you mainly perceiving the veil of your mental conditioning, of naming, of names? And then you do it to human beings and you do it to situations.

But now being present, the ability arises to be there as a space of awareness and

perceive the world around you through your senses without compulsively having to name and interpret and label what it is that you're perceiving. So you just go, hmm. And you see this.

Suddenly there's more to the flower than just a label. There is an alive presence there. You perceive it more deeply.

Even a so-called inanimate object, even that has a certain presence, a certain beingness to it. And so you look. The world is suddenly, it feels much more alive because you are not deadening everything through conceptualization, imposing mental concepts on everything.

So that is the space of unconditioned perception. And the question may arise, in that state of perceiving through presence, where is the person that you think you are or you were? In that moment of pure perception, are you still there as a person?

Not really, because in that moment, like now, the person has receded and something else has arisen or emerged. So the person has receded. And what is it that has arisen or emerged instead?

The unconditioned consciousness. The person was also consciousness, but has taken on a conditioned form. Now what arises is the deep eye, you as the unconditioned consciousness that is connected to the vastness of, it goes all the way to the one that we call God.

It goes, it's all the way, enormous depths to it. Person recedes and there's just this, wow. And there's no labeling in your mind, but everything is known.

You know it, but not through concepts. And of course the person will return after maybe very soon, but at least you have had a glimpse of what is possible that you can actually be in this world. You don't always have to be in this world as a person.

You can be in this world as a space of awareness. And then at first it's either or, at first. Sometimes you're able to go, wow, breathing, inner body.

And then the person comes back. Maybe your phone makes a noise and there's a text message coming in, ding, ding. And immediately the person gets back.

What's happening? Nothing is happening, but you have to look. Another Facebook post or something.

Okay, and the person is fully back. Okay. But so at first, yes, you have moments when you're able to be really present.

The person recedes and there's the deeper I is there. This may be called pure. This is real intelligence arises there.

The mind is a kind of reflected intelligence, secondary intelligence, like the moon reflects the light of the sun. So in that sense, the human mind is reflected intelligence of the greater mind, the mind of the universe, we could say, or the mind of God. Or another term you could use is the soul of the universe that you can sense because you are a microcosm of the macrocosm.

The deepest answers to the secrets of the universe you can find by looking within because you are a microcosm of this, of the totality. And you are in essence, and this is amazing to realize, you are the consciousness of the universe. In addition to being a little person.

So more fundamentally, and this is not something to believe in. I believe that I am the consciousness of the universe. For to know this, the mind needs to stop for a moment.

Like now.

[Speaker 2] (36:44 - 37:04)

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Eckhart Tolle This Moment is the Most Important [ad04a538-a1e3-4059-b37e-840e36e641c6]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:52)

This moment is the most important. In this episode, Eckhart describes the subtleties of what happens when we become present. He says the mind slows down, thinking recedes, awareness rushes in, and our preoccupation with the past and future fades.

He explains that some people are so obsessed by their history, it consumes their current life. Eckhart says the mind is a wonderful instrument if used in the right way, but if not, destruction often follows. He says most of us do not use the mind, it uses us.

Eckhart encourages everyone to practice moments of pure awareness. He says presence can be a powerful tool for healing because loving kindness then flows through us and affects everything we touch. He says we don't know yet how it will transform the world, but it most certainly will.

[Speaker 1] (0:54 - 1:15)

Make sure you're not waiting for me to start speaking. And if you give up waiting, which is a state of consciousness, one could almost say it's a normal state of consciousness for most people. They're always waiting for the next thing.

[Speaker 3] (1:16 - 1:25)

Now, to relinquish waiting can be a wonderful thing just as an experiment.

[Speaker 1] (1:28 - 1:50)

So let's just as an experiment, let's assume that the next moment is not going to be more important than this one. And let's assume that this moment is the most important moment, because obviously it's the only moment there ever is. So it must be the most important.

[Speaker 3] (1:50 - 1:55)

And it's always now.

[Speaker 1] (1:58 - 7:19)

The mind, the thinking mind makes something else more important. It's usually the next moment or the one after or after, whether the next moment means a minute from now when Eckhart is finally going to say something meaningful, or the next moment could be tonight, it's going to happen tomorrow, the rest of my life. That's a big next moment.

So you become present as you relinquish, give up waiting. But that may have to begin with yourself noticing that you are actually still waiting. You may be waiting for your ability to give up waiting.

I'm working on it, on giving up waiting. Just give me some more time. So waiting is a state of consciousness, the normal state of consciousness.

And as you give up waiting, you become present. That's an enormous shift in consciousness. The main characteristic of being present is the thinking mind slows down or dissipates completely or recedes.

Thinking is replaced with awareness. Before there was thinking, one thought after another, always to do with future and past and more future. Future for most people is more important, but other people carry so much past in their mind that the past is more important than the future, which happens also.

A terrible burden to carry if the past to you obscures the present, just as the future can obscure the present. For some people, the past has such a heaviness to it that it obscures the present and whatever they experience, they experience through the heavy, dense veil of the past that they carry in their mental, emotional field that makes up their identity. That's me.

So as you become present, awareness comes to the forefront. Awareness is conscious without thought or very little thought, occasional fragments, like you have a blue sky and occasionally you say little clouds floating by, but you allow the clouds, the thoughts to float past. When you practice presence, instead of becoming interested in the little cloud of thought that arises, and if you become interested and you think that's more important than being present, then the little thought, the little cloud suddenly becomes a big cloud.

It grows because you give it your conscious attention. You give your conscious attention to the thought. And then where before there was a little cloud that could have just passed by, now you energize it with your attention and it becomes a huge, very often a dark cloud.

And then other clouds appear that are attracted by it. And before you know it, where before there was a clear blue sky, there's now a heavy layer of clouds and you can't even see the sky anymore. You become immersed in mental noise.

So we are here right now to practice this. We are not here to figure out mentally, conceptually, what it is that I'm talking about. Please don't try to understand what it is that I'm talking about.

You can't understand it because it's non-conceptual. And it's too simple to even try to understand. There's nothing there to understand.

It's not complex. Being present is not complex. It's simplicity itself.

So you don't understand it, but you can know it in your own realization. Then while I'm talking, you know what it is that I'm talking about because you are realizing it in this very moment. And as a little help, become very alert, very conscious of the gaps between the words as I'm speaking now.

[Speaker 3] (7:20 - 7:31)

The silent spaces. Be aware of the silent spaces. Why is that important?

[Speaker 1] (7:33 - 17:07)

Every time you're aware of a silent space, your mind becomes still and silent. And what does that mean? What does it mean to become aware of a space, a silent space?

What are you aware of? If it's silent, there's nothing there to be aware of. There's no object in your consciousness.

You can be aware of the words. Every word is a thought that has become verbalized. Sound has become sound.

Yes, you're aware of a word. That's an object that you're aware of in consciousness. Not a material object, but an object in consciousness.

You're aware of the words that I'm speaking. That's fine. That makes sense.

But to be aware of the silent spaces between words, it doesn't seem to make sense. Why not? Because there's nothing there to be aware of.

There is no object that you are aware of. It's a silent space. So if there is no object that you are aware of, what is it?

What does it mean? And the answer is very simple. It's called awareness of awareness, self-awareness.

In some Indian traditions called self-realization. You're aware of being aware. You are conscious of being conscious.

You are the consciousness that is conscious of itself, that has awakened completely. Because before that happened, this consciousness was always identified with some object of consciousness. It was identified with the sense objects.

I want this. I like this. I don't want this.

I must have that. And it was identified with mental objects that to a large extent represent physical objects, the object of the thoughts and the object of the senses. It

was continuously identified with this, that and the other.

And running after this, that and the other. And that is called the unawakened state. Other words, you're asleep.

Not asleep in the conventional sense, but very similar. You are unaware of yourself. You seek yourself in the objects of the senses and in the mental objects.

Looking, you're really always looking for yourself in things and in thought and never really finding yourself. Everybody's lost. Amazing.

So, this is the dream of consciousness, that consciousness is dreaming. Consciousness is dreaming your entire life, the so-called life, all the things that happen to you and that you do and that happen to you and you make happen, is the dream of consciousness. It's dreaming you.

It's fine. But the important thing is, are you completely captured by this dream? Are you completely immersed in this dream?

Are you completely lost in this dream? Or is it the case that you know that this dream is happening? Is it a lucid dream?

There is a possibility for your life not to become, not to just to continue to be a dream. A lot of the dream, by the way, is not all that pleasant. And for some people or many people, the dream is very often is a nightmare and they're trapped in a nightmare.

But you may have experienced in an actual dream when you were in bed asleep and you were dreaming in bed, that's a dream in a conventional sense. Sometimes in the middle of the dream, you suddenly realize that you're dreaming. That can happen in time.

Many people have experienced that. It's called lucid dreaming. And that's quite interesting because then you go, oh, wow, this is a dream.

I can make anything happen. And nothing really matters that much because it's a dream. So even if you saw a monster in your dream, but suddenly you become aware that you're dreaming, the monster is no longer that threatening.

Oh, there's a dream monster. Isn't that interesting? And when you're no longer running away from the monster, usually the monster changes into something else that is not threatening anymore.

So there's lucid dreaming that sometimes happens, but more importantly, there's a possibility of lucid living. So that while you live this life and you participate in this life of the external world, the senses, while this happens, there is an undercurrent of awareness. So it's very important for us to be here, to become familiar with that dimension in yourself, the awakened dimension, become familiar with this awareness.

And once you had a taste of it, you can access it more easily and you will want to access that dimension. That is the awakened state. As you may know, when the Buddha was asked, who are you?

Or what are you? He said, I'm awake. That's where the word Buddha comes from, on the Sanskrit root to be awake.

That's all. I'm awake. When God was asked in the Old Testament, same question, somebody asked, I don't know who asked, was it Moses?

Asked God, who are you? Or what are you? The answer is, I am.

Or I am the I am. What is I am? I am is the first person singular of the verb to be.

Easy to forget that. The being that underlies all existence. The being that underlies all existence.

That is an infinite intelligence, just to use one word, an infinite intelligence that is the organizing principle behind and within all the things that appear as the world. So existence is an interesting word, to exist, comes from Latin, exist. Ex means out, just in the word exit or ex.

Exist, to stand out. To stand out is to exist, something is manifested, it has a form, existence. You exist as a person, but the essence of who you are does not exist.

It has no form, no manifested form. And this is why I often say the important thing, you are a human being. There are two dimensions to who you are.

There's the dimension of the temporal, of past and future, where our life unfolds, that's the human. And you are the being that is the transcendent dimension of who you are. And to become aware of awareness is to become, that's another word for being, to be.

You become aware that you are, and thinking must stop for a moment in order to become aware of that which transcends all form.

[Speaker 3] (17:11 - 17:14)

Another word for this is self-transcendence.

[Speaker 1] (17:15 - 17:54)

Self-transcendence, that is the liberation from a limited and ultimately fictitious sense of identity. As much as possible in your daily life, practice moments of pure awareness. It doesn't matter for how long, moments of pure, like now, this moment.

[Speaker 3] (17:55 - 18:12)

As I stop speaking for a few seconds, before I start speaking again, be aware that you are aware.

[Speaker 1] (18:15 - 24:53)

So one could say you disappear as a person, but you are there very powerfully as a presence. You disappear as a person temporarily, but in a very powerful way, there is a presence which you cannot define. You then access this dimension, that is one way of putting it, it's pure, pure power, pure intelligence.

All, anything created arises out of that. And as you invite that into your life, it can and will transform even the way in which you live as a person. And that happens without you thinking that you need to transform yourself.

A transformation happens even to the person, although the person obviously will always have certain limitations. You are good at this, but you're not good at that. And so on.

The person obviously cannot be perfect. There's always certain characteristics that define a person. It has form, that's understood, but that dimension as you access that flows into the conditioned entity that we call the person, and can even can use the personal mind and express itself through that.

In other words, inspiration can happen, will happen more easily, intuition happens more easily, a creative ability develops more easily. Obviously you need to have some mastery, some expertise in some fields, then it can be this creative energy from the unconditioned realm of being or consciousness can flow into what you do and transform and empower it. Of course, you need to already, in the case of activity, you need to have already developed something that it can flow into.

In my case, it cannot flow into becoming a fantastic swimmer or tennis player. It's not going to happen. It's not going to empower me on that level.

And it's too late for that. Nor is it going to come up in me with the creative realization, finding the unified field theory in physics that Einstein unsuccessfully looked for, the unified field theory. It's not going to come through this mind because it has not developed that particular avenue through which spirit or consciousness could express itself creatively.

But it is expressing itself creatively through these words, which is possible that as you access that dimension, the power of now, as you access that dimension within yourself, it may not even express itself through some creative endeavor. It could be something else. It could be the way in which you relate to other humans, changes, affects everybody that you come in contact with.

Perhaps you carry on with an ordinary activity and yet a new energy comes into that.

This came to mind just now because some time ago, I was at a toll bridge. There's a man and a little woman in a little booth.

And he or she says, one dollar, please. And there was one, everybody felt better after paying the one dollar because she was so present. And there was an energy flowing through her that every person who went through, I imagine, must have felt better because that brief interaction, there was an outflow of loving kindness, meta loving kindness that comes out of bliss.

This is another way in which presence then manifests itself in this dimension. I've already mentioned creative things, creative endeavor can empower many things that you do, or it may just manifest itself as what we could call loving kindness that flows through you as you go about your normal business. Perhaps you haven't developed any particular avenue through which presence could express itself creatively, whatever it may be, sports, dance, science, musical instrument, all the various things.

Maybe you haven't developed. Maybe you could still develop it or not. It doesn't matter.

In some way, presence will use you as a channel and then something will flow through you into this dimension. And it could be just your presence itself can be a powerful tool of transformation in this dimension so that this loving kindness flows through you into this world that affects everybody you come into contact with. So who knows how this will transform the way in which you experience life, but it will transform it.

[Speaker 2] (24:54 - 25:14)

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Eckhart Tolle Transcending Our Limitations [869634b7-c9bb-41b7-89b1-2a8cfb66a1f7]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:48)

Transcending our limitations. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions about transcending our limitations. He says every human has certain obstacles in their life and facing them as part of the path to awakening.

However, Eckhart warns that problems arise when our limitations become part of our identity. He believes we create a false narrative about who we think we are. Eckhart says while it's important to surrender and accept what is, we do not confuse deeper acceptance with the acceptance of the narrow concept we mistake for ourselves.

Eckhart says we reach transcendence by letting go of those concepts. We can embrace the isness of this moment and through that process transform into the realm of spacious awareness.

[Speaker 1] (0:50 - 3:14)

Hello, welcome. And I'd like to welcome you to our session and to the present moment. And so I suggest we start not by thinking that now we are going to do a meditation, but we simply start by becoming aware of what's already here.

That is you in the present moment, but who or what is you? Let us let go of memories. Without memories, who am I?

Ask yourself that question. But don't look for an answer in the realm of concepts. Be happy with not knowing who you are when you make no reference to your past or any past or future.

So without past and future, who am I right here and now? After asking the question, there comes a space of stillness, alert stillness. And that is presence.

And that is who you are beyond concepts, narratives, stories. And who you are is already always present, often covered up by mental noise or the fluctuating emotions or the seductive nature of sensory perception and gratification or the search for sensory gratification, all kinds of things covering up what's always already here. That is who you are in your essence.

So let's go on to the first question.

[Speaker 2] (3:15 - 4:25)

This is a written question we received. This person writes in, I've been legally blind since birth for 62 years and I relate very well to your distinction between overcoming and

transcending a disability. After decades of trying to prove how strong and independent I was, I chose some years ago to just go with it, accept my disability and see where it would take me.

The experience softened me greatly and brought greater connectedness with others. You might say there's no need to hold on to a story called disability, but it does come up very often and in many different ways, which makes it hard to ignore. So I would say there is something to accept, but then how do I reconcile this acceptance with the idea that my true essence is not and has never been blind?

Maybe your response could also help others understand their particular situation better.

[Speaker 1] (4:27 - 14:26)

The important thing is not to accept a concept that describes who you are on some level. Disability or disabled is such a concept so that the concept does not become a conceptual self, the conceptual sense of self. I believe you're already on your way to complete transcendence.

This is the beginning of transcendence, is to let go of concepts. Obviously other people may label you with concepts and that's fine. The important thing is that you do not confuse acceptance, which is always acceptance of the present moment, that you do not confuse that deeper acceptance with the acceptance of a concept.

So it would be misleading to say, okay, I need to accept that I am disabled. It's better than to live in a place of anguish or anger or some kind of extreme negativity created by non-acceptance. But even to say I need to accept that I am disabled, you're still to some extent equating the concept with who you are.

So when I speak of acceptance, acceptance refers to acceptance of in whatever way you are experiencing this present moment. With the limitations that may be there because of your condition, every human being experiences certain limitations in their life, certain obstacles, and they manifest in the present moment. The only place where the limitations can manifest is in the present moment.

For example, in your case, crossing the street is much more difficult in your condition than it would be for somebody who has eyesight. So it is a limitation and many other limitations you experience, but only in the present moment. As you surrender, you accept that this is what you need to deal with in this moment.

This is what is. So acceptance always refers to the isness of this moment. Then by doing that, this acceptance opens up a portal or doorway into the state of transcendence.

And that is then how you free yourself from inhabiting a conceptual reality, which is often painful, unpleasant. So you don't think of yourself as a sufferer of such and such.

I'm a sufferer of this or that condition or this or that.

Or I'm a survivor of this or that. Yes, you have survived. Perhaps people have survived many bad things.

But if you make that into your identity, you know that you have survived it, but you're not a survivor. It's temporarily pleasant perhaps to think of yourself as, but it's still a narrative. You're still in the prison of a conceptual sense of self.

So the letting go is always the letting go of labeling yourself and your condition. Unless on a practical level, you can say certain things to communicate with people. But you know, in the depths of your being, that who you are in your essence transcends all those limitations.

But only by accepting the limitations in the present moment, are you able to access a dimension within yourself that transcends those limitations, almost a paradox. Only by accepting limitations, and this applies not just to you, whatever conditions that any human being experiences, or is limited by, because we're here essentially, the essential part of life here is to face limitation. This is how awakening actually happens.

At first it becomes a source of suffering, and then you begin to awaken through it. So by accepting the limitation in this moment, not some idea of a limitation, or accepting that this is going to be, this is how it's going to be for the rest of my life, another narrative to do with the future, or, oh no, for the past 62 years, I have lived like that. All that is narratives, so that you don't, it's never a question of accepting a narrative, it's letting go of a narrative.

And when you let go of a narrative, which is self-identification with certain conceptual mindstreams, then you just come to the acceptance of this moment, the limitation of this moment, and you do what you can in order to, you're facing this moment, but no longer in a state of resistance, but in a state of openness. And then you connect with the power that is beyond the person, and that which you connect with that, the dimension that transcends all limitations, and that is the realization of who you are beyond that. So that's the beauty of the grace that's hiding beyond the restrictions, the limitations, the burdens that we seem to have to carry.

And that's already expressed in the idea of the cross in Christian terms, which you can understand even if you're not a Christian. And if you are a Christian, it can deepen your way of being a Christian. The cross is the torture instrument, the worst possible limitation you can imagine for a human being.

So there's a human being nailed to the cross, the cross is a torture instrument. That's very strange. But in a strange way, the cross has a double function, the cross is also a symbol for the divine.

Very paradoxical. The torture instrument is also a symbol for the divine, the transcendent. And so there is a deep message embedded in that, which is exactly what we have just been talking about, and it's through surrender.

Jesus is supposed to have said, not my will, but thy will be done, which is an expression of surrender. Then the torture instrument became a portal into the transcendent, and then the torture instrument suddenly became a symbol for the divine. So the cross is whatever you bear, there's a medieval, goes back to medieval times, the expression, carrying your cross.

Carrying your cross is to endure whatever suffering there is in your life, whatever limitation is in your life. And by willingly carrying the cross, which means surrendering to the condition of the present moment, you transcend and you become whole, you become holy. And that is a miracle.

So acceptance of whatever is right now, you don't accept or have to accept that for the rest of my life, I'm going to be like this. All these are narratives. So that you no longer inhabit the conceptual sense of self that goes.

Then who you are, beyond the limitations of your form identity, you begin to realize how deep you are. And you're already on your way, the questioner already, the question you hadn't understood completely, I believe the true meaning of acceptance and perhaps confused it with acceptance of a label. So it's a wonderful thing, the, I can see that this limitation in your life is already becoming or has already become an opening into the essence of who you are, the realization of the essence of who you are.

And whenever that happens to a human being, then the obstacle, the limitation, and that which for a long time, probably was a source of suffering, becomes a, one could say, a blessing. You recognize it eventually, as a blessing. And that's how it is.

[Speaker 3] (14:29 - 15:37)

Hello. I wanted to thank you so much for taking my question and for all of your teaching and for your staff. And my question is, I'm a veterinarian and I've been practicing veterinary medicine for about 14 years.

And during my time, I've had to perform many end of life services, euthanasias, and in many cases, especially with traumatic events, it is a true blessing to be able to end physical suffering. But on a deeper level, I struggle with me as one manifestation of the one consciousness and these other beings who we call dogs and cats, as also manifestations of the one consciousness. Who am I, legally, I'm allowed to do this, but who am I in the form of consciousness to decide to participate in the end of the physical life?

[Speaker 1] (15:38 - 19:32)

Right. Well, you can approach that with different narratives. You just mentioned one, you begin, you're questioning whether it is the right thing to do.

You're saying, who am I? You can also say that your function is one of compassion in that moment, because you have the ability which you accept humbly and gracefully. You have the ability to end the physical suffering, because that is normally the case of that being.

So it's more a question of accepting that life through you or the one consciousness through you is able to end in a gentle, compassionate way, the suffering of that being. So that would be a narrative that is more true. But in the moment of performing that act of compassion, you do not need any narrative in your mind.

You can even let go of that, because that narrative is the closest to the truth that you can get. But in the moment, you let go of all narratives, and you're just absolutely present. And often, perhaps, I would think the owner of the pet is present sometimes or quite often.

So they will be probably extremely moved and sad emotionally. But if you are present, the entire situation can become something that is ultimately holy and an act of grace and beauty. If you embody the presence in that moment, then this being passes away in a very, very gentle, very gentle and loving way, which is the most beautiful way in which we can leave this dimension in surrounded by acceptance, compassion and love.

So that, I would say, is your function in these cases. And it's a beautiful function that I'm sure there are other vets who do not have your level of consciousness. And they may not have a problem at all.

There's never been a problem for them, but they are not aware of the depth and sacredness of that moment. They can't be aware. So it's not a problem to them because there's not enough awareness.

Then as awareness grows, it becomes a problem as it became for you. And then the next step is you transcend that, you transcend that as a problem. So you're no longer underneath the problem where we are unconscious.

You rise above. It's no longer something problematic. It's something to surrender to.

And you have been chosen to perform this compassionate act. And that's really how I would say that's how you need to approach it and realize that that's how it is. Sure.

[Speaker 3] (19:33 - 19:37)

Sure. Thank you so much. I really appreciate that.

[Speaker 1] (19:38 - 19:39)

You're welcome. Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (19:41 - 20:16)

We have another question here, Eckhart. This person writes in, when we're living in a state of presence for the majority of our waking life, will we necessarily be called upon by universal consciousness to perform a certain outward purpose in the world? And would we be aware that it is our purpose at the time of performing it?

An example of this is when you, Eckhart, felt the impulse to move to Canada from England in order to write *The Power of Now*.

[Speaker 1] (20:17 - 31:39)

Well, it's not the same for everybody. It varies a lot from person to person. Your rising presence, how it changes your life, or it changes, certainly changes the experience of your life, how you experience your so-called life, how you experience reality, whatever you want to call it.

That certainly changes. For some people, it means they stay in their usual surroundings and continue to perform whatever work they are doing with an added dimension of depth. They realize that what really matters in whatever work they do is the state of consciousness that they bring to the action.

So their presence flows into what they do, and then it spreads to others. Some people may find that they are being removed from situations that are almost incompatible with presence. For example, you could be working in a company that is extremely dysfunctional, with continuous infighting and intrigues, and everybody hates everybody else.

And whatever the company produces does not really benefit the greater good. And you may realize that this is not the place where you can continue to work. So these are extreme cases.

And if that is so, then when you are as presence manifests more and more in your life, then those changes are not arrived at through mental decision making, should I or should I not carry on working here? As presence is present in your life, the realization sometimes of what you need to do, for example, remove yourself from a situation, has such certainty that you cannot even question it. It comes as a ready-made realization.

Or you may even find that you're walking out of the place, and you haven't thought about it before at all. But don't confuse that with an angry reaction. That does not arise out of presence.

So out of presence, there's a peace behind it, a peaceful knowing. And that immediately

transforms into action. Or maybe not immediately, it could be that you wake up one day and realize that this is not the place, but you're not sure you give it a bit more time, just to make sure it's not just a passing thing.

And then a few days later, a few weeks later, the same feeling is there and is growing in you that you cannot carry on where you are. And then you remove yourself. And if you don't remove yourself, then the people that you are, let's take the example of a company, they would ask you to leave, because if the gap or the discrepancy between your level of consciousness and the collective consciousness of wherever you're finding yourself is too huge, then the separation has to happen, like oil and water.

So if you don't remove yourself, they would one day call you in and say, I'm sorry, we'll have to let you go. And that would become one of the happiest days of your life. But there are other cases when you may continue in your usual surroundings, but because you can make a difference there.

So you may be working in your place of work, maybe to some extent dysfunctional, there's an element of dysfunction in almost every place of work. But it's not such that you can no longer endure it, you can actually be the presence in that place and thereby perhaps help transform how other people work there, how they behave, how they interact with each other. So it is possible that your presence transmits itself to others who then, and more likely in a smaller place, if you work in a smaller company, so all kinds of possibilities.

Nobody can predict how the arising presence will affect your life, but it will affect your life deeply. It's just a question of whether it affects it deeply, not only internally, which is always the case, but in many cases also externally. So when the realization, just you mentioned this example, in my case, although I loved England, I still do.

I lived for many, many years. One day I woke up and I realized I had to leave and I knew I had to go to the West Coast of North America. I had never been there.

No, I'd been there once many, many years before, but there was hardly a memory of that. So I didn't really have a mental image, but I knew for some reason, I didn't know the reason why. And that stayed with me.

I didn't act upon it immediately, but the impulse grew, actually became stronger and stronger. Weeks passed, I think, I don't know how many months, two months, three months passed, and finally I realized if I don't act now, I will become ill. I could almost feeling, I could feel the beginning of something going wrong in the body because there was the impulse and I was not acting.

I knew I had to act now. And if I had not acted, I would probably be dead now. Well, that's fine.

I would just appear in another form somewhere else, but a pity because I would not have fulfilled the possibilities of this incarnation. And so I moved. And only when I was there, I realized the writing after a few weeks started to happen and I realized I needed that energy field for the writing to happen.

So it was a, the impulse is very strong and you had to trust the impulse. And sometimes it means when the impulse comes out of presence, but you need to do something, just give it some time because you might be falling. If it stays with you and it even grows, then you need to obey it.

If not, something like an illness can easily happen. Now, this often means that there will be a loss of, a temporary loss of security in your life because you may have to move. Now, this does not apply to everybody, but to some people who presence arises.

And then you may have to step into the unknown in some cases, not everybody. You may have to step into the unknown to some extent. And so it's a question of also becoming comfortable with insecurity, not running away from it.

Sometimes it is the case that security is your prison. Security is not only the security of life insurance or whatever insurance you have, it can also easily become a prison. So don't be afraid of insecurity.

Often you have to step into a totally new situation and then just stay, stay present. So presence will guide you. Some people remain where they are, as I mentioned earlier, but the way in which they perform their work changes, it deepens.

And again, how present sometimes changes your relationship too. If the other person is, that if you may be living with someone, you are awakening spiritually, the other person is not. We don't, it is quite possible that you can surrender to the fact that your partner is not awakening and you can continue to live together relatively peacefully.

You are no longer reactive. So you're not fueling your partner's pain body in any way, which your partner, if he or she has a heavy pain body, would find quite disconcerting. But in some cases, it may be fine.

You can surrender to the fact that your partner is not awakening spiritually. In other cases, the discrepancy between the two states of consciousness becomes so great that separation is the only possibility. So nobody can predict how it's going to unfold in your life.

Just trust and realize that your main responsibility is to be present in the moment. And then out of presence, wisdom arises. This is one word we could use.

Wisdom means you can do the right thing. If you only use your mind, your rational mind, it does not necessarily mean that you will do the right thing, because the rational mind

only focuses on one little thing and pursues one little aim. It usually cannot take into account the totality of the situation.

And only if wisdom arises, you can see something that is problematic within the totality of the situation and then take action that you take into consideration many factors. It's interesting. We could talk about this for a long time.

But wisdom, yes, that's what the world needs. But wisdom arises out of presence. And that will guide you.

[Speaker 4] (31:41 - 32:00)

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Eckhart Tolle Transcending Our Stories [d170c348-c94e-4db7-b062-ad42015bf9dd]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:36)

Transcending Our Stories. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to a live audience about our tendency to manufacture stories about ourselves and others. He discusses our desperate need to be right and to make others wrong.

And while it may feel gratifying in the moment, Eckhart says having a story actually strengthens the ego, keeping us stuck. However, we don't have to stay in that negativity. He explains how we can learn to shift our inner narrative, release the ego, and align ourselves with the peace of the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 45:18)

I'm beginning to receive your questions. Thank you very much. If possible, write as legibly as you can.

Otherwise, I'll get really irritated and my mind will say, do they expect me to read this, to be able to read this? Why can't they write more legibly? Isn't it common sense that they should write legibly?

Why do people do things like that? That would be a normal ego reaction to something that in itself is perfectly okay, because you can either read it or you can't. But the ego adds a story to it, and behind the story is always an attempt to be more right than the other person.

There's always an attempt to have in some kind of superiority. It's unconscious, of course. Ego is always unconscious.

Alternatively, what actually I don't get irritated, as you might have guessed, if there's a paper that's not legible, I look at it, okay, I'll put this aside and give it more attention later. In the meantime, I'll read the legible ones, and then if there's time later, I'll give it more attention. There's no problem without a story.

You are not wrong and I'm not right. This is just what is. Just a tiny example of the difference between aligning yourself to the simple isness of the present moment and imposing a story on it in the service of the self that wants to inflate itself.

Indignation, irritation. They should. Why do they?

Don't they know better? Or they're all stories in the service of a false sense of self. And so in presence, all this, what I sometimes call unnecessary baggage that people manufacture mentally and emotionally, all that unnecessary baggage that really is a

heaviness to it that they carry around, doesn't arise anymore.

And there's the simple. This is what is. I can either do this or I can do that.

I can deal with it now. I can put it aside. No story.

But this is frustrating to the ego because when there's no longer any story where you oppose the other, where you make yourself feel superior to the other, then there's no food for the ego anymore. But there's an incredible lightness, the lightness of being comes and the heaviness goes out of situations. That's what the ego is.

The heavy me. And even when it attempts to make itself superior, what it doesn't recognize is that all these are really forms of suffering. The ego doesn't even recognize suffering as suffering.

It doesn't realize that when you get angry or irritated about somebody else's behavior and bring up a big story about it, you are actually in a state of suffering. If you were able to have attention in your body, you would notice that your body is suffering because those things affect the smooth, harmonious working of the energy field that goes through the body. So an angry thought has an effect on the body.

A small irritation has an effect and the body doesn't really like it. But the ego, the ego itself is not in touch with the body and it mistakes suffering for something good. Anger.

I can really get into this. So you can look at your own life and see where you are manufacturing unnecessary stories, both in small situations and in bigger life situations and in situations to do with relatives, family members, partners, ex-partners, a wonderful source of egoic stories. Can talk about your ex-husband or wife for hours, either to somebody else if they're ready to listen or in your own mind.

Or you had a confrontation or an exchange with somebody yesterday and you can go on, continue that in your mind and say so many hurtful things to the other person that unfortunately you couldn't think of in the situation. But you can relive it now and it's almost as good as the real thing. So in that fantasy world of the mind, you can be right again and again and the other person can be wrong again and again.

How wonderful. All this is what we call unconscious. So people don't know what they are doing.

For them that is their reality. Now can we understand why Jesus said forgive them for they know not what they do. They are unconscious.

It's an automatic process of ego inflation, of ego reinforcement. It's conditioned, learned. It's part of the structure of the mind.

So that is something important to recognize. Stories can be new stories like the one I just

talked about, a simple event. You get irritated about something because they are not doing it right.

They should know better or why don't they or whatever. Or it can be a long-standing story that has been going on in your life for years. A story about your parents, for example.

A story about somebody in your life years ago, what they did. Often people approach me with questions like, how do I deal with betrayal in relationship? How do I, what my husband, my wife had for a long time an affair with somebody else and then finally he walked off with her or him, he or she.

He betrayed me and how can I get beyond that terrible thing of having been betrayed by him. Much more terrible than what happened is the word betrayal because that is already a story. So if you remove that, what is left?

Just the simple events. He, while we were still, or she, while we were still married, was in a relationship with somebody else but didn't tell me about it. And in the end, he, she walked off with him or her.

And I felt very hurt. And I can still feel that pain inside me now. That's what there is to it.

But the reason why you still feel that pain is because you went beyond the simple facts of the situation. You added the betrayal story to it. And by dwelling on that mentally, it continuously renewed the pain, the initial pain of the event.

So it is normal when somebody you're close to walks off with somebody else that you feel emotional pain. But this does not have to be carried on from one year into the next and into the next and into the next. That is like a wound, like a physical wound.

A wound is inflicted on you and then the wound has a certain time span within which it heals. Yes, it may leave a scar behind, but it's healed. The wound itself is healed.

The scar may still be there. And in the same way, an event like that, yes, there may be some suffering there. But if you add the story to it, which of course is in the service of the ego, then it can go on.

The hurt goes on for years because you relive it by calling it the betrayal. You relive it continuously. The fact is, no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness.

So your husband, your ex-husband or ex-wife manifested the particular level of consciousness that they were at at the time. And that's what happened. So he didn't realize, she didn't realize that she was hurting you or she realized or he realized that he was hurting you, but something else was more important for him or her.

And so that corresponded to his or her level of consciousness at the time. But that's not

a satisfying perspective for the ego. But that's a simple fact.

Nobody can act beyond that. And of course, everybody has to suffer the consequences of their actions because most probably this new relationship of your ex-wife or ex-husband didn't work out either. Because again, the same level of consciousness or unconsciousness manifested in that relationship.

And the same thing started all over again, most likely. Or they became a bit more conscious. In fact, might be awake, let's say at least awakening now.

And you might meet him or her again accidentally in the street. And they might now manifest a completely different level of consciousness. But if you're stuck in the story about them, you won't even see that.

You will see the old person still, there will be no resolution possible. If you are not stuck in the old story, if you simply accept the facts of the situation, then you would be open to meeting this person again and realizing, oh, this is not the same unconscious jerk that I was married to. Jerk is of course the story again.

He is now much more awake than I knew him. What a pity. Why couldn't he be awake when I was married?

Why does the universe always does that to me? And this new person, she gets to live with a conscious person. So the two levels of story observe the spontaneous stories that arise when little things don't go according to expectations and in an unconscious attempt to make somebody wrong.

And the old longstanding stories that in some cases have provided you with a sense of identity. So longstanding stories that are frequently repeated in the mind about what you and somebody else and what happened and what they did or failed to do. It is not unusual for a human being to derive a significant part of their sense of identity from such collection of three or four of those stories or even just one big one.

We all know the expression victim identity. You cannot see yourself as a victim without a story around it. You must have a story.

And of course, people do bad things to other people. There's no doubt about that. But when you construct a story, you are doing something to yourself unconsciously that is often worse than the initial event that the story is about because it prolongs it indefinitely.

What otherwise would have a certain time span, the injury, the healing process, and the scar remaining and that's it. Then yes, you can still look at the scar and say that's metaphorically speaking. But it's basically you have gone beyond it.

So it requires vigilance to discover in yourself the arising of stories around things and the old stories that you may still carry in your mind that gives you a false sense of identity that strengthens the ego. It's so common that most people do it to a greater or lesser degree. So when you are present, gradually, perhaps even suddenly, you don't do that anymore.

You relinquish the stories. And then a certain simplicity comes into your life and your relationships become much easier. Stories are even little things when you tell somebody, oh, yesterday you did that, but you should have done that.

It can be expressed even without that, without the should. Yesterday you gave me that, but can you, could you from now on do that? The way in which you communicate can be done in such a way that you don't make the other person wrong.

That is a very helpful thing. And also things resolve themselves much more quickly if you don't add the story to the event without the baggage. The resolution comes about much more quickly.

The egoic self that adds a story to a simple event does not want a resolution. It wants a continuation of its assumed sense of superiority. In other words, you want the problem to continue unconsciously where consciously you say, I don't want this problem.

I don't want to have to deal with these people anymore. That's what you say, but you do because they help you feel superior. And of course, again, that's unconscious.

So it's amazing what mind patterns humans are trapped in. Forgive them for they know not what they do. So it's your job to identify stories.

If you have any doubt about what is a story and what is, where does the fact end and the story begin? Please ask. But I believe most of you are clear and you can identify stories in your mind, both the ones that arise spontaneously in situations and the old ones.

They are very important to identify. And there is a reluctance. If they have become part of your sense of self, there is a reluctance.

There will be a reluctance in you to let go of them. I'm not letting go of that one because then my sense of self will be partly collapsing. But that of course is a wonderful thing because that is a false sense of self.

You are not that victimized person and you are not superior to somebody else. You are presence. So don't attempt to strengthen your form identity that is there anyway.

You don't need to strengthen it. The form identity you might remember I wrote about and sometimes speak about, you have two identities. One is the temporal identity, the conditioned identity of you as a person, temporal of course, you have a certain lifespan.

You as the person who has a body and a mind that has been conditioned by your past and by your surroundings and the past of the world that you grew up in, conditioned by many, many factors, including even your native language is already a form of conditioning. So you've been conditioned by that. It's the temporal self and that's the form identity.

And there is an essence identity, which is the timeless, formless consciousness, without which the form identity could not even exist. The form identity is not separate from essence identity. It's just a temporary form that your deeper essence of which is consciousness itself has taken for this lifetime.

So your form identity is a ripple on the surface of the ocean. Your essence identity is the ocean. When your mind becomes still, the thinking subsides and only awareness is left.

That awareness is the ocean. Now sometimes people say, don't you need the ego? You can't live here without the ego.

The way I use the word ego is ego meaning complete and utter identification with your form identity. Nothing else. There's nothing else that you know about yourself.

Only you know yourself as the body and the conditioned mind. That's ego. Form identity itself is not the ego.

It's only form identity. So you don't have to get rid of your form identity and say, I want to be nobody in particular anymore. No, you don't.

That's not unnecessary. You can honor your form identity. It includes the physical body.

It includes what you have achieved in this lifetime. It includes all the relationships that you have and have had. What you have experienced is all beautiful.

You can honor and you can have plans for the future. What do you want to add to your form identity? I'd like to learn to play the piano.

Why not? You add this and that to your form identity or I'd like to achieve that on the level of form. That's fine.

But what is the foundation for your sense of self? The foundation for your sense of self, if that is the form identity, then that's ego. But if the foundation for your sense of self is your essence identity, which has no form and is timeless, and it is what the Buddha called formlessness, which is a better translation than emptiness, sunyata, that is your essence.

And you can know that here and now, the moment thinking subsides and you have not gone to sleep. Thinking subsides. There's this little gap that arises in the stream of otherwise continuous stream of thinking.

And this little gap is, there's a gap between this hand and this hand, so to speak, in your mind. And there suddenly you have this space of simple, what's left of you when you don't remember any story. You're not thinking about anything.

You're not even thinking about your name or how old you are. Why? And yet something is left of you.

How do we describe that? A spacious sense of presence, stillness, inner stillness, beingness, a sense of I am without anything added to it. Because usually I am follows, I am a man, I am a woman, I am a success, I'm a failure.

That's the form identity. So if you add something to I am, that's your form identity. But if nothing is added to that sense of beingness or presence, I am.

This is the I am that has no form. This is why certain teachers recommend it as a meditation to ask yourself, who am I? That meditation fails when your mind comes up with an answer.

It is not a puzzle that has an answer on a conceptual level. And you cannot solve the question, who am I, by thinking, hmm, let's see, I'll just start thinking about that. No, you need to allow the question and then the question can take you into beingness or presence because who you essentially are is consciousness itself.

Who am I? I don't know. And you don't feel that you need to know or should know, become comfortable with not knowing who you are.

If you are comfortable with not knowing who you are, then that makes it much easier to realize who you are beyond form. If you become uncomfortable with not knowing who you are, then you get fearful. I should know who I am.

So there is a level of not knowing that's extremely important in your life, and that the ego does not like to go there. It fears to go into that not knowing. And this also applies to a human being relating to other human beings.

When all there is when you relate to another human being is your perspectives, your judgments, your opinions about that human being, that's extremely limiting. You are not really relating to that human being. You're relating to the screen of mental concepts about that person.

And this is how this huge obstacle arises in many, many relationships because you never really meet the essence of that person. Why can you not meet the essence of that person? Because you have not met your own essence.

You identified only with your form identity as a man or a woman or whatever conditioning makes up the person. But if you have met yourself as the essence identity,

and it's easy here and now, what's left of you? A still space of presence.

It's your essence identity. And the more you surrender into that and allow it to be there, the more peaceful, deeply peaceful, but also there's a subtle sense of joy in that presence. To know yourself as consciousness is inherently joyful, not the ecstatic joy that goes, ah, I am consciousness.

It's a very subtle joy, like a distant sound. And this is the realization of being and the realization of being is the realization of consciousness, the self-realization of consciousness, consciousness realizing itself. And that is joyful.

So spaciousness, I've pointed out how important it is if you work with people in whatever capacity, not to become completely taken over by whatever modality you use when you work with people. Not to become completely taken over by the knowledge that you have about what you do, because obviously you apply your knowledge. There's nothing wrong with that.

That's part of the world of form. But if you get taken over completely by the accumulated knowledge, the forms, then what is lost in your relationship is that sense of spaciousness. So a vital question in any relationship, even more so in the helping relationship, therapeutic, whatever you want to call it, a vital question is always be vigilant and say, is there space here in addition to dealing with things on the level of form?

Is there still a sense of space within me and between us? And here the space between us is awareness present, is stillness present in some way? And that is vital in therapeutic relationships, but it's vital in any relationship to have not a one dimensional relationship with another human being, which is only on the level of form, but to acknowledge the form level, to honor the form level, but not be confined to the form level.

And that means in addition to your knowledge that you have in your whatever work you do with another person, in addition to that, there needs to be something else. And that is almost contradictory to knowledge, because you need to be able to enter the spaces of not knowing anything in between applying your knowledge. So you become still, even if it's just listening while the other speaks, you're not responding while you listen, you're not formulating the next question yet, there's open and spacious, attentive listening, and that is an energy field, that is presence, that is the the energy field of presence is suddenly there between you.

And that transmits itself to the other also. And that is more foundational than anything else that you do on the level of form that, yes, you can be helpful to a limited extent, even on the level of form alone. But if you want a true therapeutic relationship with another human being, the presence needs to be there, the stillness needs to be there as part of the relationship.

So in some kinds of work that you do, intuition may be important. After a while, you begin to go beyond what you have learned. And it takes sometimes years before a therapist has the courage to let go of what he or she has learned.

And then at some point, they just become present without even having a word for it. And then just go. Hmm.

And then they begin to say intuitively, out of that spaciousness, out of that stillness, they say things that they never learned. And then they never knew that they knew that, because they didn't know it until they said it until the situation required this knowledge come forth. And then you become a truly effective therapist when more and more intuition takes over, but intuition can only take over if you become comfortable with not knowing instead of thinking immediately that you have the answer, or you just applying the model that you have learned, becoming comfortable with not knowing gives you access to a much deeper knowing, almost paradoxically, it gives you access to intuitive knowing, which is primordial intelligence arising, and then it uses your mind and then you speak. But the important thing is how vital it is not to become completely identified with your knowledge so that you you have both your knowledge and the space of not knowing which is when the mind subsides and only this alert presence remains.

So that is space in the relationship. Is there space in the relationship and this really applies to any relationship. It is certainly important in your relationship with your partner, wife, husband, children, family members, colleagues at work in any situation, you have to bring spaciousness to the situation in addition to the things that you know you have to talk about and so on.

So that the two dimensions of you are always present in any situation. You as the form identity and you as the underlying unconditioned consciousness. The two.

There's a balance between form and formlessness. So both of you, so to speak, need to be there. You as form and you as your essence.

This requires vigilance. The normal thing to happen is that this the connectedness with your essence identity is lost very easily in human relationships because the mind is so active and we live in a civilization that provides continuous and incessant stimulus, stimuli, the plural, continuous incessant stimuli for the mind even more than even 30 years ago. 30 years ago, it was just radio and television and you would people would sit there for hours.

But nowadays you have countless sources of stimulus for the mind that draws you into continuously thinking about what's your next Facebook post? What's it going to be? And you look at the ones that are coming in.

All these people are doing these fantastic things. And me, I'm just sitting here and then

you have to pretend that you're also doing fantastic things. And usually it involves taking a nice selfie.

It's Narcissus. You might remember the myth of Narcissus, the Greek, ancient Greek myth. There was this young man who had never seen himself before because they didn't have mirrors at the time.

But one day he happened to look into a little pool of water and he saw himself and he realized that he was extremely beautiful. He said, Oh, that's me. And the story goes, he fell in love with himself.

Not in a good way. Not by becoming one with who he is, but the separation happened. This myth shows the beginning stage of the egoic sense of self expressed as a story.

The image that he saw of himself in the pool is the mental image of the ego. And stories are part of that image. That's me.

I'm me and my story. So you have the image of me and then, oh, so this guy, Narcissus, he experienced that separation. And then I think something bad happened to him, but I don't remember what.

It's like the civilization has made a great effort to come up with as many things as possible to prevent people from becoming still and spacious and taking a moment of looking at the sky and feeling the inner spaciousness arise and becoming aware of the leaves of the tree or the branches and the wind blowing and the noise of water. The simple thing becoming still, alert, sensing that stillness within. And of course, a minute later, another text message is coming in.

Of course, you have to look at it immediately. And emails are coming in, too. Oh, dear.

I must be very important. I'm getting all these messages. And some people are beginning to realize how dreadful that kind of life is.

And some more enlightened companies, they may not be totally enlightened, but their beginning signs of enlightenment, they even forbid you to answer emails after a certain time in the evening. Some have even disabled your phones. And that is very wise, because otherwise people will go insane eventually.

So there are great opportunities in this new technology also, but it's also very dangerous. There are both. You can spread messages of awareness, you can spread enlightenment through that also, it can travel and incredible madness, too.

So the essence then is the two dimensions. Let's just put it like that, of who you are, balance them in your life and at work. And you will find inevitably in certain situations, one will become stronger than the other.

And then the situation changes and the other will become stronger. So look at your own life and see how you and this is vital, can give you a reflection of where you are at in your spiritual life. How do you respond to the challenges when they come, from the little ones to the big ones?

Do things and situations and people have the power to upset you, to throw you off balance, to create negative emotions? Or are you able to become more present, more aligned with the present moment when a challenge arises? That's the critical line.

Only you can know that. That really gives you a reflection of how conscious you are, if you want to know. Because you could formulate in your mind and self-image of yourself as being so spiritual.

And some even suppress emotions because you're not supposed to have negative emotions when you're spiritual. So I'm not angry. I'm just letting you know what I think.

I'm not angry at all. Why do you always accuse me of being angry? You should look at yourself.

Denial, so that you can keep your self-image intact. So how do you deal with challenges? It tells you how conscious you are.

As somebody said to me on the retreat, I can be present when I'm sitting alone in my room. I can be really present and still. But the moment I go out into the world, I lose it.

This is why some people think if I could live in an ashram, in a community, in a protected setting, in a way it's like, imagine that we are here and we are not going home anymore. Why, let's live here. Let's all live together.

Wouldn't that be wonderful? I would come and visit you occasionally. Although compared to the mainstream population, it is true that there is this, our group here embodies a more awakened state of consciousness than the one that is still normal in the world.

That is undoubtedly true. But even though if you started to live together for a longer period of time, you would encounter many situations that would require you to be absolutely present because ego would still surface. The best situation for most of us is to be out in the world and face the challenges of the world.

Use the world and whatever the world presents you with as your spiritual practice, rather than hoping for ideal situations so that you can really start practicing spiritually. Because what the mind or the ego envisages as an ideal situation is not the ideal situation. The ideal situation is one that provides you with challenges.

Because without that, there is no awakening. That's the truth of it. So once you know that, you also know that life is meant to be challenging.

It's not meant to be, it's meant to be challenging because that forces evolution to happen. It's challenging for every life form on the planet. Every life form has its own challenge.

And there would have been no evolution without life forms being challenged and being forced to evolve. And so you might have noticed that the universe brings you one challenge after another. And some people get very upset and despondent of this.

Why can't life leave me alone? Why is there always the next thing? Just when I've achieved this and I thought everything was fine, something else happened.

Everything was fine here and then somebody crashed there. Every challenge gives you an opportunity to go deeper, to be more awake, to let go of ego. So you can welcome all those things when they arise.

That could be a significant shift in the way in which you experience life when you no longer get upset when the next challenge happens. Or if you do get upset, suddenly you notice that you're upset and then you go, oh, isn't that interesting? I just, I missed the bus or the plane and I got upset.

For what? How important is that whole thing, missing a bus or a plane, on a universal scale? It's completely unimportant.

I thought it was terribly important. Isn't that interesting? So sometimes being upset is fine too.

That's part of the learning too, because awareness comes in at some point and says, oh, I can feel the upset. Why? Because I missed the plane and I have to wait here for another three hours or another night.

And then you ask, I'm just giving one example out of hundreds. Does it matter where you wait, where you breathe? You can breathe at the airport for the next three hours or somewhere else.

We can sit on a plane or at home in a chair or at the airport in a chair. You sit, always sit somewhere or stand somewhere or lie somewhere. Does it really matter when the mind says, I should be home by now.

What would you do at home? Well, I would sit or lie or stand somewhere. Or I would check my email.

Well, you can do that now too. A certain independence comes, there's a certain freedom from externals that begins to come in as you live more consciously. You are free of being totally, your inner state being totally determined by external conditions.

And that's a wonderful sense of freedom. Otherwise you're at the mercy of whatever

happens out there. And things as the Buddha already realized and told us, things are unstable in the universe.

Everything is changing, impermanent and in flux, continuous flux. So if you're dependent on things being stable, you get upset a lot of the time. If you're dependent on your inner state on things going as they should, you get upset and suffer.

You suffer a lot. And the freedom comes when you can immediately go with what is internally. No longer construct a story about how unfairly the universe or somebody else has treated you or how dreadful they are.

None of that. Just immediately align with the present moment. Freedom from externals.

Wonderful. Especially from unconscious people, because otherwise every unconscious person makes you unconscious. Every angry person makes you angry.

So we transcend just a brief recapitulation in one minute. Essence identity. I don't know if it's going to be one minute or ten, but let's...

Essence identity, form identity. The two bring them together so that they are both there in your daily life. Form identity alone is ego.

Form identity with presence is just what it is. Form identity. Nothing wrong with it.

You can see how religious people fight different religions. Why? Because they're completely identified with their form identity.

So you find that the disagreement between religious people happens because these people are trapped in their egos. And the religion has become part of their sense of self. And you can still honor your religion, which is part of the form of life.

If you have gone deeper into the essence of yourself, then you recognize the essence in your religion. And then you can meet somebody else and recognize that no matter what the outer form of their religion is, you realize you truly meet the other. So moment of stillness.

[Speaker 2] (45:32 - 45:51)

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Eckhart Tolle Transcending The Self [566dc6ff-9f3b-4377-8a5b-6c3325bf1f58]

[Speaker 2] (0:03 - 0:40)

Transcending the self. In this episode, Eckhart reflects on his signature teaching, awareness of the present moment. He says when we focus on the here and now, our senses become heightened.

We smell a familiar flower as if it were the very first time, or we reread a favorite book and understand it in a whole new way. Eckhart says when we give any experience our full attention, that is the first step towards what he calls self-transcendence. He explains we release our limited perceptions and connect with the aliveness of the universe.

[Speaker 1] (0:42 - 37:03)

Welcome everybody in the present moment. Welcome to the present moment, in case you've been missing it. Easy to miss by too much thinking.

So we begin by, I'm not going to call it a meditation. Let's put that word aside. There's nothing wrong with meditation, but I'm just not going to call this meditation.

Let's begin by becoming aware of the present moment, more aware than you would normally be, or for some people the first time. Today you're actually acknowledging the present moment. Where is it?

Of course you can't see it, but what you see, you can only see it in the present moment. So you can't see the present moment, but whatever you see happens in the present moment. Seeing is inseparable from the present moment.

Now, I can't hear the present moment either, but you can only hear whatever you're hearing in the present moment. It's a prerequisite for hearing and other sense perceptions too. They all happen in the present moment.

They're inseparable from the present moment. So you cannot perceive the present moment, of course, but the entry point, a good entry point or portal into the present moment are sensory perceptions. To become more acutely aware, or for some people, aware of something that they had been habitually missing most of their life, which is the aliveness of whatever it is that's around them that is being perceived now.

And if you give your fullest attention to whatever it is you're perceiving, either your attention to one single thing that you're perceiving, hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, tasting, giving your fullest attention to one thing that you're perceiving, that's fine. To really look at something, to really listen to something, the sound, to really taste something, give your fullest attention, that's fine. And already it does something.

I'll tell you in a second what it does. Or you give your attention to the totality of the present moment without singling out one thing. So you are aware of your sense perceptions.

So right here now, whatever it is you're seeing, the screen, this person, or me on the screen. And of course, you're also aware of the, in the periphery of your vision, you see also wherever you are, the rooms, that's all around there. So you're aware of the totality of what you see.

And you take it in. And then you might be hearing certain sounds, or maybe it's only the sound of my voice. You're aware of that.

And it's perhaps not likely that you're aware at this moment of a particular smell. But maybe you're burning some incense, in which case you are, but maybe not. Or maybe it's springtime, and maybe you can smell the flowers, who knows?

Whatever it is, that's what you're aware of now. The totality of sense perception in the present moment. Now, that's already a step, an important step to be able to do that frequently, so that you don't continuously miss life, which is inseparable from now.

Because what happens in your mind is a secondary life. It's an abstraction of the actual aliveness. So be aware, acutely aware of sense perceptions.

That is already a step towards what I sometimes call self transcendence. Because as you're acutely aware of sense perceptions, which is the aliveness of the universe all around you, you are less aware or unaware of this entity that normally occupies, takes up most of your attention, which is the person that you are or think you are, the self, the entity, the narrative in your mind that you perhaps call my life, or perhaps call it me and my life. So when you give your, this, of course, is an abstraction, a narrative in your mind.

It's fine. And the tendency is for this abstraction to absorb a huge part of your consciousness. It gobbles it up all the time.

Because your life is so problematic, you have to continuously think about it for many people. And the more that happens to you, the more unhappy you are also. The more anxious you are, the more depressed you are, all kinds of strange emotions continuously arise that are due to the unsatisfactory and unsatisfying nature of this entity, the self, which is your form identity, as I sometimes call it, the person with a history.

You have a past and history that makes up the person. And that absorbs people's attention. They are continuously attempting to defend that sense of self, to add something to that sense of self, or even to get rid of something in that sense of self, or exchange it for something else.

It's a problematic, very frustrating way to live if you never even have a glimpse of self-transcendence. The first glimpse, and perhaps even more than a glimpse of self-transcendence, can easily be awareness of sense perceptions. Because then you're no longer, your consciousness is no longer being absorbed by continuous, compulsive thought processes.

So, it's a portal. Actually, you can feel a sense of, some sense of peace descends upon you when you become aware of sense perceptions. Whether you're in your room, and perhaps more powerfully, when you're out in nature, wherever it may be in nature, whether it's your backyard or whether it's a park or whether it's the shore, the seashore or a forest or mountain or field, doesn't matter.

Nature is very helpful. It helps you in that being aware. It makes it easy, easier for you to be aware of the present moment when you're out in nature.

In the middle of a city, a little less easy, because you're surrounded by human-made things, mind-made things, and continuously your thinking is being stimulated continuously by whatever you see around you. Nature does not think. Nature is, of course, there's a consciousness there that lives through every natural form, but those things, the animals and the trees, they are not engaged in conceptual discursive thought, and they don't have an identity based on thought.

In other words, they don't have a self. They are prior to the arising of self. Humans are trapped in self unless they are awakening, and then our journey is to step beyond ultimately the illusion that that is who you really are, to become free of that illusion.

So the entry point is sense perception. So what am I aware of right now, whatever it is, you don't have to label it. It's better not to label it.

It's unfortunately not taught at school that you can look at things or listen to things and know something without calling it anything in your mind, either out loud. And then you're touching upon something that is the pure, the awareness you can perceive through thought or you can perceive through awareness, the non-conceptual knowing, and how often you can know something deeply without needing to find mental labels, thoughts about it, and you just, you know. Part of the arising of presence or awareness is that increasingly that dimension of knowing comes into your life more and more.

So you look at things, including even human beings. You can look at them, perceive them, hear what they say, but you do not form any mental image about them, any conceptual image about who or what they are. And that deepens everything.

It deepens your relationship with you, another human being. The moment you formulate concepts about who they are, a sense of separation arises naturally. Concepts limit things or reduce things to something that you think you can understand.

And whatever concept you might have about another human being is only ever partially true if that, and often not even that. In many cases, it's a projection of something in yourself. So whatever concept you have could be at best partially true.

It's never the total truth because every human being is capable of change. It's not a fixed entity. So even the worst person that you would see now could awaken spiritually through usually very unconscious people, through suffering.

Suddenly, there's a shift. But if you are attached to a conceptual reality that you've created for the other person, then you've put this other person in a prison, and you've put yourself in a prison, a mental prison. So it starts with a simple thing, being aware.

When you look at something, be aware that of what it is you're looking at and not needing to comment mentally. It's not needing to. It's a different way of knowing.

You can look at a pebble, little, beautiful, simple, smooth stone. If you look closely, you can see tiny sparkles here and there. So it's already engaged in a process of transformation.

There's already a certain crystallization. It's a wonderful practice to have something like that and engage several senses. In this case, an important part of this is the sense of touch.

And give that your attention. And you can look and touch at the same time. A wonderful meditation.

You can use the mineral realm of our planet to take anything and see and sense the inherent aliveness of something that is habitually called inanimate, which means not alive. There are two ways of finding out that this is not inanimate. One is by becoming a scientist, physics, and penetrate so deeply into this with whatever they use, electron microscopes or whatever they use.

You could penetrate so deeply that it's no longer a pebble or a stone. It's swirling atoms and molecules with 99% empty space in between them. But this is no longer a stone or a molecule.

It's actually intensely alive. And the other way of knowing that it's intensely alive is to let go of all that and perceive it without conceptualization and sense its inherent aliveness. Anything like that can be enormously helpful in the awakening process.

It's miraculous. The moment you call it something, you've closed the door to any further deepening of your experience, the way you experience it. The moment you say it's a pebble, okay, the door is already closed.

If you totally believe that now you know what it is, the door is closed. You can still say, I

can say it's a pebble, but I know that it's not ultimately what it is. And ultimately, nothing is actually separate from anything else.

Therefore, as far as language and thought is concerned, any noun you use, a noun, pebble, table, tree, chair, flower, is actually a limitation because it is not a separate entity. The moment you use a noun, it gives you the delusion that there's a separate entity, separate from the rest of the totality of what is. So it's only a limit.

We limit ourselves by creating so many nouns, including for people, including for yourself. But to believe in nouns is to miss the vital important fact that everything is an intensely alive process. It's a happening.

It's not a static thing. So this pebble is a bit live process and you are on another scale, an intensely alive process of consciousness. You're not an entity as such.

Our ability to think has been enormously helpful in many ways for the development of civilization, et cetera. But it had a big downside to it. It would have been an enormous step forward and it presented, but at the same time, an enormous challenge because the very power that arose in humans through thinking also became an enormous limitation.

So they're now trapped in the power that came through them. That's us, humans. They are trapped in that trap of thinking, excessive thinking, overthinking, deriving your sense of identity from thinking.

That needs to be transcended because otherwise the ego, because identification with thinking becomes the ego, the ego will become more and more destructive. So here we are perceiving this and make it into a meditation if we wanted to use that word. You can use anything.

And then become aware how often you're actually perceiving something and you're not conceptualizing it. It does happen spontaneously, especially as you are awakening already spiritually. There are more and more instances when you perceive something and you know exactly what it is or you know exactly what you have to do, but you're not telling yourself anything about it.

It's that deeper way of knowing, unitive knowing, you could call it. So to lose that is that this is what happened to humanity through the proliferation of the thinking faculty. We lost that dimension, which we once had naturally, the connectedness with the totality.

And then we are now at a point of, for many humans, almost losing it completely. Losing it meaning being totally unaware of the dimension. And now we can regain it.

It's an ancient myth, paradise lost and paradise regained. But when you regain something, you regain it with an added dimension at a deeper level because there's a knowing now before it was natural. Humans in ancient cultures, they had a natural

perception that the world was animated, the world around them.

So they interpreted as spirit presences that you can sense everywhere. The ancient Greeks had it. In India, they had it.

The Romans had it. Every house had a spirit presence, they felt. Locations had spirit presences, objects.

And although there might have been a slight misinterpretation, but there was a deep truth behind it, that it's all alive. We're inhabiting a universe that is intensely alive. We are part of that aliveness.

And that aliveness is consciousness taking form continuously and metamorphosis of form, continuous process. And then something happened. It was not only thinking eventually brought about technology and science.

And then we learned about evolution. And we learned that we are not the center of the universe, not in the conventional sense. In a much deeper sense, you could be described as the center of the universe.

If you know yourself as consciousness, that has no space, it's beyond time and space. So to know yourself as consciousness is to know yourself as the essence of all things. So gradually, we began to believe that the entire world was interpreted as being became dead.

It was all a random development of life, everything. There was no intelligence gradually, that was the belief. When the theory of evolution came, of course, there's a truth there.

But the mistake was to see it as completely devoid of any purpose or meaning, completely devoid of purpose or meaning. Random process, pure chance that brings about that was the belief. And that's an error.

Evolution, of course, has a certain truth to it. But there is a something behind it. And intelligence inhabits every life form.

And you know that by going deeply within yourself, not through auto examination of phenomena. And that's what we're about here. You go deeply within.

And then you know yourself beyond conceptualization. And you know yourself right now. And this is the next step.

Let's come back to our big, we started with sense perceptions, and we're still sense perceptions. The next step is, when you're very much aware of sense perceptions, you become aware of yourself as a perceiver. And that is sense that it's not a thought.

And it's easier to sense it with the entire energy field of your body, the totality of you,

not the physical you, but that which is beyond the physical you, is aware. That is the, you're aware of yourself as this presence that inhabits every cell of your body. And that presence, of course, is the presence of consciousness.

You become aware of yourself as the consciousness that makes all sense perception possible. You're simultaneously aware, right here and now, for example. You hear me, you're aware of that.

Peripherally, you're aware of the totality of wherever you are, perhaps, yes. You're aware of that. And then you become aware of yourself, not the historical person, not that self.

You become aware of that which is beyond all that. And that is a silent, very still, intensely alive presence. So, the sense perceptions were the portal into that dimension.

But then you go through that portal. And then even sense perceptions recede a bit and become a secondary phenomenon, still beautiful, but they become a secondary phenomenon. And your primary attention is on yourself, but not the person, the consciousness, the stillness, the presence.

And then you could even temporarily let go of sense perceptions. You can close your eyes, whatever it is. If, let's say, you were looking at a beautiful tree, or you were looking at a beautiful sky, sense it, and then become aware of the presence that is perceiving.

And then you can even let go of that which is being perceived, so that only the presence is left. And then you return to the world of perception. But you're still, in part, aware of that underlying presence.

Simultaneously, you're in the sense-perceived dimension, and you are in the transcendent dimension, which is the essence of all spirituality. It's nothing else. And once you sense that, the door is open.

You know where it is. You don't have to study all kinds of scriptures anymore, although you might enjoy reading and say, oh, yes, yes. But you don't need to figure anything out anymore about spirituality.

That's it. A big obstacle in spiritual people is trying to figure something out. One thing that's helpful to figure out is how the many ways in which you unconsciously stop yourself from that deeper realization, which is an unconscious process.

That is something you can perhaps not so much figure out, but you can give some attention to that, how many times the mind takes you away from that. And the egoic sense of self that is inseparable from the unobserved mind, how many times it takes you away from that. That's good to know.

But as far as the spiritual dimension is concerned itself, there's nothing to figure out as

such. But sometimes pointers are helpful. These have been, when I speak about this, these are pointers.

When I say, be aware of this, look at it, feel it, then be aware of who or what it is that is aware, that is beyond all concepts. And that is the essence of the present moment. The present moment is consciousness.

And it's not only that. It's the essence of the present moment. It's the essence, it's consciousness.

It's the essence of who you are. And it's not exaggeration to say, and it's the essence of the entire universe. Because you're a microcosm of the entire universe.

The ultimate answers about the universe, you can find within yourself. And the ultimate answer is this. Many other insights can arise out of this deeper realization, because it can inspire the thinking mind that thinking can become helpful and you can have all kinds of insights.

So this is the only thing or no thing that is of absolute importance in what you might call conventionally your life. There's no such thing, but let's just call it that. Why is there no such thing?

Why do I say there's no such thing as your life? Why do I say you don't have a life? Because if you say my life, or if you say I have a life, you have created already a separation through conceptualization.

You've created my life. There must be two to say somebody says my. So there's one thing that you own or that you have.

Or you say to have life, to have a life, you have created a duality of somebody who has a life. And then you believe that you can lose your life. Because you've created a duality of me and the life that I have.

Now, if you think that you have a life, then you can also lose the life that you have, of course. But who are you separate from life? It's nothing.

So you create an entity that doesn't even exist. When you say I have a life, so there would be you and the life. But who are you without the life?

There is no life apart from you or separate from you. Which means there is no consciousness apart and separate from you. So the answer, of course, is the realization.

I am life. I don't have a life. I am consciousness.

I don't have consciousness. Now, this consciousness will not indefinitely manifest through this form. It only temporarily manifests through this particular form.

And then it withdraws from that particular form. At the moment it withdraws from that particular form, this particular form dissolves very quickly. A few days, a few weeks, depending on the outside temperature.

And of course, if your brain gets damaged, the consciousness can no longer fully or not at all express itself through this form. It withdraws. And it happens with some illnesses that affect the brain, like Alzheimer, that they cause damage in the brain cells.

So the brain loses its capacity to act as a transmitter or receiver of consciousness. And then it becomes, the consciousness manifests itself in a dysfunctional way. In the same way, if you damage a television set, then the picture will become distorted if you have a picture at all.

The consciousness, whatever, cannot fully express itself anymore. But it's there. But it begins to withdraw.

So in some people, it's seen as very tragic from an exclusively external point of view. When you see somebody close to you, it's beginning to lose their memory and they can no longer remember who they are. And it's happening to them.

It's very tragic when it happens from the, look at it from the outside. The process is a withdrawal. Consciousness, the vehicle, let's just call it that for a moment, is no longer capable of transmitting the consciousness.

So it withdraws gradually. So some people die before they die physically, not in a deeper spiritual sense. But it's a gradual withdrawal of the animating presence, the animating consciousness.

But that which makes every tragedy and every disaster and every death into something that, yes, it is tragic on one level, undoubtedly. But if you go deeper, then you realize the tragedy and the suffering existed on this dimension. It does not affect that which is beyond form.

The form is the physical and the psychological form of who you are. That is, of course, fleeting. It doesn't last long.

And it's also very precarious. All kinds of things can happen to it. It's fragile.

It's fleeting. It doesn't last. Impermanent, as the Buddha said.

That's undoubtedly true. And that in itself means that ultimately every life ends in some kind of tragedy because you die. And everybody around you thinks it's a terrible tragedy.

And sometimes the tragedy doesn't happen when you die. It starts years before you die. You lose certain faculties.

Things happen to the body. So there's the, from that point of view, I had a, I must have had some weird spiritual insight when I was 10. My father reminded me many years ago when he was still alive.

He said, do you remember what you said to me when you were 10 years old? I said, no. He said, you said to me, every life is tragic.

Where did that come from? I was 10 years old. I said, every life is tragic.

I must have seen something there. Then the insight disappeared again. From an exclusively, from our external, one-dimensional perspective, it is true.

Because no matter what you achieve, either it is going to leave you or you are going to leave it. No matter who you live with, companions, partners, either you leave them or they leave you. On this level, it's all, these are things that, this is the ephemeral nature of the world of form.

So if you attach yourself, meaning attaching yourself to any form means ultimately using it in your attempt to build up a sense, a lasting sense of identity, a sense of self. That to be attached means to use something or someone incorporated into your sense of self or who you are. That's the attachment.

And that leads to suffering because whatever you attach yourself to is subject to decay, to use a somewhat brutal term. Whatever you attach yourself to is subject to dissolution, to decay, loss. The Buddha, all the essence of the Buddha's teaching, Jesus talked about it too.

Jesus talked about, as I mentioned a few times before, it's the realm where moss and rust consume and thieves break in and steal. Moss and rust, moss and rust consume. Everything gets consumed by time, you could say, on this dimension.

So attaching yourself is seeking an identity through it one way or another. Now, to detach yourself without accessing the transcendent dimension means to deaden yourself. You say, okay, I'm not going to have a touch with any human being anymore because it's all leads to suffering.

I've had several relationships that didn't work and they made me suffer terribly. I've had enough of this. I'm not going to allow any human being to get close to me anymore.

And then I will be safe from that suffering. And so, yes, perhaps you will be safe from suffering, but there's a deeper suffering because you're deadening yourself to the aliveness of the world. So you cut yourself off from that.

So the detachment could be a detachment in a negative sense, in which case it would be much better to continue to be attached and suffer. At least you're still alive. And so the

detachment happens naturally.

You don't have to really be concerned about, I've used in spiritual terminology, the importance of not attaching yourself. But I would say, there's no need to pay too much attention to that or to attempt not to attach yourself because probably you will not succeed. If your spiritual practice is, an important part of your spiritual practice is to get rid of attachments.

Wow, that's a very hard job. And if you get rid of one, but without knowing it, you attach yourself to something else. If you say, I want to get rid of attachment to material things, physical things, I don't want anything to do anymore with possessions, cars and things like that.

I've gone beyond that. I don't want any expensive things. I don't want to own anything.

I don't want to have a house. I don't want to. Okay, then you get a bicycle because you don't want to attach yourself to a car because you could see that your ego was involved in owning a car.

And then you're great. And you think you're free of attachment because you're no longer attached to cars. You have risen above cars and you're on your bicycle.

That's fine. It's better for the environment and probably more healthier for your body. But you may not realize that you may have then attached yourself to a mental image of you as somebody who has gone beyond attachments and actually superior to anyone still driving around in their BMWs.

Much superior to all these people. But you might not even say to yourself, but you feel very much superior to all that. So you exchange one for something else.

[Speaker 2] (37:05 - 37:25)

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Eckhart Tolle Transforming Our Consciousness Through Adversity [260df1ce-7104-439a-b05c-ad2d0151ff5e]

[Speaker 2] (0:01 - 0:28)

Transforming our consciousness through adversity. In this episode, Eckhart reassures us that we should not panic when life's difficulties arise because they can become our greatest teachers. He says it's often hardship and suffering that play a critical role in the evolution of our consciousness.

Without it, we would not feel the urgency to change, nor would we learn to lead what Eckhart calls an awakened life.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 31:23)

Any kind of adversity in your life, whether it's personal, of a personal kind, of a collective kind, the only way for it not to become converted into suffering is for you to go deeper and realize who or what you are beyond the conditioned mind. And the strange thing is that adversity is absolutely essential for the evolution of consciousness. Although it seems to block what one could call perhaps the flowering of your life, it seems to, when you look at it superficially, all of the so-called bad things that happen to you that go wrong, they seem to block you from fully being yourself, fully expressing yourself, being able to do what you want to do.

And so this, what I earlier called sabotage, that is experienced as life or God, or whatever, trying to sabotage your life, that happens very frequently. But the strange paradox is if the human being did not experience adversity, the human would not evolve in consciousness. There would be no growing of consciousness.

And that's a very strange fact. But that does not only apply to humans, it applies to all life forms. Every life form experiences difficulties, adversity.

For every life form, life is not easy. Whether it's a blade of grass that's trying to come up, or a flower, or a fly, or a mosquito, or a fish, whatever it may be, every life form experiences obstacles. And the survival of every life form is precarious.

Many life forms survive only very briefly, and then they're gone, because other factors come in, and it's gone. A sapling grows out of the seed, or the acorns, the seed. The sapling grows.

The chances of a sapling becoming a huge tree are relatively small, because there's so many factors that could prevent the sapling from growing, and it would kill it. Lack of water, all kinds of insects could eat it. Somebody could step on it.

All kinds of things could happen. And yet, the world is full of trees, so many make it, and

many others don't make it. But for every life form, life is a challenge.

If it were not, they would not evolve. So I'm sure the reason why certain animals can fly is there was a need for them, because if they had not been able to overcome gravity, they would not have survived. There must have been situations when there was an absolute need to overcome gravity.

Fish, they say, life developed first in the ocean before there was any life on land. Why would a fish that's comfortable in the water, why would a fish decide to suddenly start crawling on land? My theory is there was a huge expanse of water that was gradually, over a very long period of time, diminishing, and so the fish could no longer survive in the water.

They had to develop the capacity to crawl on land. Must have been enormous pressure behind that to force that life form to make that transition. When you look at a bird, the alertness of a bird is so wonderful to see.

I love watching birds where they sit on a branch. You look in their eyes, there is an absolute alertness. Why is the bird so alert?

Because it could not have survived, but it needed that, because if it had been a little bit less alert, the birds would have been completely eliminated because they had so many enemies. There are many other enemies who would only be too happy to eat a bird, and so they had to develop this extreme alertness, and they had to develop the ability to fly. It's miraculous.

To the ability to overcome gravity, just amazing. But why did they develop? Because adversity.

You had to. Let's go to human beings. How do you grow a stronger body?

You need to exercise. You need to go to a gym or whatever you do. But what does that mean?

Okay, here's a weight, and you have to lift that weight, or whatever you do, you're on a treadmill. You are making life difficult for your body. That's what exercise is.

You are creating adversity for your body. That's how the body initially experiences it. It's not the comfort zone of the body to lift a weight or to go on a treadmill.

And so what happens? The body experiences it as a form of adversity, as life is suddenly become difficult. But now what happens then?

What happens then is that the body is making a demand in order to cope with the arising difficulty. It's making a demand for more energy. The body says, I need more energy.

And out of that need, which is created by the adversity, suddenly you experience an influx of added energy in the body. And then actually it can become enjoyable to exercise the body. Why is it enjoyable?

Because suddenly there is an added energy that has come in. And this added energy then strengthens the body. The energy would never have come if there had not been a demand for energy, a necessity for energy, because life was getting difficult for the body.

So there's an evolutionary principle hiding, and just giving one example, there's an evolutionary principle hiding behind there that operates everywhere and on every level. Life has to become difficult in order for evolution to happen. Let's say a child at school is bullied.

So there's the child experiences suffering, experiences life is getting very difficult. Now, what does the child do? It could perhaps try to learn a martial art in order to be able to defeat the bully.

But on the other hand, this may not be possible. So it could happen then that the child becomes much more focused on learning, focusing mental attention. So the child becomes much better at school.

It compensates for the physical weakness by developing a stronger, more focused mind. And so then the child would not overcome the adversity on that level where it arose, but overcome, kind of transcend that and overcomes it on another level, this adversity. It forces you to demand more energy.

The energy can be, there's only one energy in the entire universe. It can be a different vibrational frequencies. It can be physical energy that increases as a response to adversity.

It can be the mental energy that increases as a response to adversity, or it can be consciousness that grows as a response to adversity. And that is how humans awaken, spiritually awaken. Their consciousness awakens also usually as a result of experiencing adversity in their lives.

There's a famous Latin saying that goes back 2000 years, *per aspera ad astra*, which translates as through adversity to the stars. *Per aspera ad astra*. And so there's a deep wisdom in that, the vital function of adversity in the development of human beings, and ultimately in the development of human consciousness.

So to awaken spiritually, in most cases, humans awaken spiritually through suffering, which is encountering adversity. And that's an amazing realization. There must have been some intuitive knowledge of that in going back thousands of years, because in many ancient cultures all over the world, they had initiation rituals that normally

adolescents, sometimes also other age groups, but normally the adolescent, the transition from childhood to adulthood, all over the world, Africa, Australia, South America, Europe, everywhere, these ancient cultures developed for the adolescent, the one who goes from childhood to adulthood, develop initiation rituals. Now, there are countless forms of initiation rituals, but every initiation ritual was confronting this young person, often they were done for men, but sometimes also for women, confronting the young person with huge difficulty, a huge form of adversity, like to go into the forest and survive there with nothing for several days, confront a dangerous animal, and sometimes it would involve injury of the body, extreme forms of pain. There was an intuitive knowledge, knowing that it is important for a human to encounter adversity at this crucial age, so that he becomes a mature adult who has a certain amount of inner strength, rather than remaining a child into adulthood and behaving childishly, even as an adult, and not having been forced to go deeper by encountering the suffering. And it was a very useful, very extremely necessary function.

And after the initiation ritual, if the young person survived, he, sometimes she, was no longer the same person, was no longer a child. So in a way, what the initiation ritual did, it deepened, to some extent, your consciousness, not yet didn't lead to enlightenment or full realization, but there was a deeper human being there after the initiation ritual. There was a certain depth to you.

And this is the case in many humans who experience illness, some great loss in their lives, or some other extreme form of suffering. Very often, people have come to me and said, I understand what your teaching is now, but I only understood it after having gone through this suffering that I went through. Some say they became drug addicts, they became alcoholics, then they were led to Alcoholics Anonymous, and suddenly this huge difficulty in their lives suddenly was, it enabled them to go deeper.

And there was an awakening of deeper dimension of consciousness that is beyond the ego, because the ego, in the suffering, the ego experienced diminishment, sometimes even ego death. And that is why it is adversity so helpful. It's the ego ultimately gets eroded by adversity.

And there's a paradox here, because quite a few forms of adversity are created by the ego, whether it's a personal ego or the collective ego. For example, the collective ego creates the absurdity of huge warfare between nations. The warfare is collective, created by the unconsciousness of the collective ego.

And warfare leads to extreme forms of suffering for human beings. And quite a few humans through the suffering deepen, and the suffering diminishes their egoic sense of self. If it doesn't completely eliminate the ego, at least there is a diminishment of the ego, and then there's a certain depth to that human being.

The worst thing for any human being would be to be prevented from encountering

adversity throughout childhood and adolescence, into adolescence. As some parents try to do that, they say you have to protect the child from all possible forms of adversity or difficulty or suffering. And this sometimes is the case with children born into a very wealthy family.

So they can have anything, and they just express a desire. And the parents say, yeah, yeah, you can have it. No, I want this.

Yeah, sure, okay, have it. We want you to be happy. So the child reaches the age of 17, never encountered any obstacle, any adversity.

And this adolescent now has an ego that is entitled, completely unaware of the needs of other humans, completely devoid of any form of empathy with other human beings, completely unable to understand other human beings, to feel other people's emotions. Totally self-centered, completely superficial, never having experienced any that actions have consequences. And so you have a very low-level functioning human being because this human being has never encountered adversity in their lives.

And then, paradoxically, because it's not possible for a human being to go through life without encountering adversity, if that happens, then the very fact that this human being has never encountered adversity becomes this human being's greatest form of adversity. He becomes his or her own worst enemy and creates many, whatever relationship they have ends in disaster. They make everybody unhappy around them.

Every relationship becomes an unhappy relationship. So here we come to, when I was contemplating adversity yesterday, I suddenly thought of, I want to read to you, really, it encapsulates it all. In the Bible, there's a parable by Jesus which goes like this, which really is about the role of adversity and how it can be experienced in one way or another way.

So Jesus says, everyone who listens to these words of mine and does them, that's his teaching, it's a teaching about finding the kingdom of heaven, which is a dimension of consciousness that is within you. Everyone who listens to these words of mine and does them will be like a man building a house who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against the house.

But it did not collapse. It had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not do them will be like a fool who built his house on sand.

The rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined. So the house is, you are the house.

It's your life. The key words are here, listening to his teachings and practice. Seek the kingdom of heaven that is within you, which means the dimension of consciousness that is beyond the mind, that is the spacious awareness.

This man who builds a house, he digs deep. Those are perhaps the most important words in this parable. He digs deep until he finds the rock, the foundation.

He goes within in order to find that which is beyond the mind in him, in order to find the consciousness that underlies the mind. So digging deep is going deep within. You find that dimension that I sometimes call the transcendent dimension in you, and then your life is rooted in the transcendent dimension, which in this parable is compared to the, it's the rock.

It's rooted there. Then you lead your life. Then adversity comes as it inevitably will.

And that's symbolized by saying, and the rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against the house. Nobody escapes that. Nobody escapes in whatever form, it will come if it's not here already.

The adversity, the rain, the wind, it beats against the house, the floods come. And mostly not just once in your life, they come a few times in your life. And the one who built his house on the sand had no inner depths.

The house was built on the sand. So when the adversity comes, total devastation, it devastates you. And this is what it says here in the fool built his house on sand, it collapsed and was completely ruined, devastated by adversity because it lacking the depths.

You haven't found the transcendent dimension within yourself. And this is what all spiritual teachings are just about that. Find the transcendent dimension within yourself.

And then the rains and the floods come, but they won't devastate you. There's something in you that is beyond that. Yes, these things happen, but there's something deeper in you that gives you a permanent sense of peace and rootedness, even in the midst of turmoil, when turmoil is on the outside.

It's sometimes the case that even if you don't have it yet, it sometimes happens, often happens that when turmoil happens in your life, it eventually drives you deeper to that dimension because you have to go there because you can't stand it anymore. You can't take the suffering anymore. You have to go deeper, otherwise you just, you might kill yourself or you'd be completely unhappy for the rest of your life or complain about how unfair life is and how things should, this should not be happening to you.

So find that rock and so that your life is rooted there. And where is it? Well, it's in the present moment by going deeply into the present moment.

I already pointed out earlier that there's in the space of this present moment, a problem cannot survive. Your sense of self, the egoic sense of self, the narrative of me and my problems that you'd have to think about, what's going to happen to me or what did

happen, also doesn't really survive in the present. In the present moment, what survives in the present moment is your awareness, your consciousness.

The personality or the person recedes. Yes, of course, you remember who you are and if you have to remember your past and you can make plans for the future, but the personality or the person recedes and there's something else that's much more vital than the person. The person couldn't exist without it, is not separate from it.

It's the very consciousness that gives rise that enables the person to be, but is far beyond who you are as a person. It's consciousness itself. But the simple fact of becoming, if you become conscious of the present moment here, you also become conscious that you are conscious in this present moment.

It sounds a little weird, but you can sense if you don't remember your past or think about the future, what's left of you? What's left of you when you don't remember your past? And your future, right now the future is unimportant.

There's only this. Who are you without remembering your past? What's left of you?

In fact, what's left of you when you're not thinking really, you're just present. What's left of you is the presence. You can't describe it.

It's a sense of beingness, a sense of aliveness, a sense of I am, but not this or that, I just, I am. This being is a deeper dimension of who you are. This being is a transcendent you, that which connects you to the totality of all life, of all, of consciousness.

That is the rock described in the parable. That's the foundation for your life. So when you are rooted there, then the, whatever it may be, the pandemic, the whatever, any form of illness, the adversity, the adversity, yes, they still arise, but they're not transformed into these extreme suffering anymore.

There's a place, a deeper place in you where you're free of suffering. And there may be physical pain or physical discomfort. Yes, that can still exist, but you're rooted in the transcendent dimension.

That's liberation. And that means, yes, challenges will still arise, but your state of consciousness is very important. What is the state of consciousness with which you meet any arising challenge?

That's very important in determining how the challenge is experienced by you, or the adversity, the challenge, how you experience any arising challenge, whether it's financial loss or loss of a loved one or illness or financial ruin, collective pandemic. The consciousness with which you confront or meet this, with which you experience whatever it is, determines what it is for you. And the strange thing is, if you are present when challenges come, you're conscious that, and part of that is acceptance of this, whatever

is in the present moment, then you do not amplify the adversity or the challenge.

If you are reactive, you amplify it and it gets even worse. You can see that easily when you're confronted with a difficult person, because in many cases, the challenge or the adversity in your life is a difficult human. That's for many people to encounter.

They experience life as difficult because human beings are difficult. And they say, for many people, most of their difficulties are other humans. Now, if you are reactive, a difficult human is usually an unconscious human.

They don't know what they're doing. They don't know that they're creating suffering for themselves and others. They just can't help it because they're in the grip of certain forms of mental emotional conditioning, which is their ego.

So they can't help it. They don't know. But if you react against it, you amplify the unconsciousness and the difficult person becomes even more difficult.

And then the difficult person triggers your own unconsciousness. And then you have a huge situation. It didn't have to be, but it blew up into a huge confrontation.

Drama didn't have to be, but your reaction amplified the unconsciousness. And that can even happen when you experience an illness. If it leads to an extreme reaction of fear or even the feeling that you need to fight the illness.

When you fight something, you usually make it stronger. You give it added energy. Illness is best transcended by not developing the idea that you are suffering from an illness, but just be with whatever it is you're experiencing at this moment.

Discomfort, maybe pain, maybe weakness, maybe in whatever form you experience this, this is what is. And then you come to a point of acceptance of the is-ness of this moment. This is what I'm experiencing.

Rather than having this mental idea of your identity becomes the illness and then you're fighting yourself. By accepting this moment, you already begin to touch the deeper dimension of consciousness in you. By fighting this moment, you get trapped in the form that this moment takes.

By accepting this moment, you connect with the transcendent dimension. It opens up. The transcendent dimension opens up by that acceptance.

And very often healing happens by having access to this transcendent dimension in you. Then, ah. So when accepting an illness does not mean accepting the idea that you are ill, that you're an ill person.

It only means accept whatever symptoms you feel at this moment. It's important to not make sickness into an enemy and also not make sickness into your identity. Both are

illusions.

So when there is sickness, do not fight against it. Accept whatever you feel in the body at the present time, in the present moment. Do not accept the idea of sickness in your mind don't focus on it.

Yes, seek help, whatever help is required, medical help, but do not focus on the mental concept of sickness and then begin to fight that. A very powerful healing is initiated when you accept whatever you experience within you at this moment. Surrender to what is.

And in that act of surrender or acceptance, something deeper opens up, which is the unconditioned consciousness, the essence of who you are. When you realize your essence identity as consciousness, then the fear of death begins to dissolve because you're able to sense that in you, which is beyond death. It in Buddhism is sometimes called Amaravati, which translates as the deathless realm.

And Jesus speaks of it and calls it eternal life. They both point to the same reality, which is a dimension of consciousness within you that opens up when you accept this moment as it is.

[Speaker 2] (31:25 - 31:44)

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Eckhart Tolle Transforming Our Suffering into Awakening [965f2f51-dff8-40a4-a5df-2375c18ac16b]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:30)

Transforming suffering into awakening. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience about the paradox of suffering and awakening. He says the ego, in its attempt to strengthen itself, creates distress and eventually brings about its destruction.

For many, this cycle can be the catalyst to awaken. If we had not suffered, we would not find transformation. Eckhart says the paradox is a good thing.

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 37:49)

People have told me that they were given a book like Power of Now or New Earth by a friend or relative ten years ago and they looked at it and said, what is that stuff? Who writes this thing? And they put it on the shelf and then they got on with their lives and then they suffered a bit more.

They had another failed marriage and then they lost their job and then the stock market crashed and then they developed an illness and suddenly the pressure of suffering created a crack in the shell of ego. It became so much and then a day came when suddenly they were, oh god, and they picked up the book again and then they were, oh my god, now I understand it. That is the first spiritual awakening.

It would not have happened if this human had not gone through this period of intense suffering. A lot of it may have been and probably was self-created by the ego. The dreadful marriage, the continuous fighting in their job, at their workplace, continuous negative states towards other humans and so on.

All the suffering that generates whatever they experience as their reality, self-created to a large extent, and then an illness. Now you could say maybe the illness was not self-created. Maybe there is a correlation between their state of consciousness and the illness, which is sometimes the case.

It may not be every illness. But sometimes, of course, if you live in continuous negativity, in continuous stressful negativity, even mainstream medicine recognizes that stress and negativity is an important factor in the arising of illness. So the suffering is self-created.

So it's a little paradox here. The ego, in its attempt to survive and strengthen itself and enhance itself, creates suffering. That is the unobserved mind.

That is the ego. But the suffering that the ego creates eventually leads to the destruction of the ego. This is almost a little paradox.

So that's a good thing. So you could say that ultimately, and seen from a higher perspective, the fact that humans have to go through the suffering is actually part of the whole, which is ultimately benevolent. But when you look at it from only a lower perspective, it certainly does not look benevolent.

When you look at it from a higher perspective, you see that there is a reason why things happen. I can say that, and many of you know that. You don't have to believe in that.

Many of you can verify what I'm saying by reference to your own life. If you had not gone through the suffering that you have gone through, you would not be here. There may be a few advanced souls here who may be 20 years old only, or 18, or 25, and you're such advanced souls that you have not experienced significant suffering, and nevertheless, you're here.

Now, that can have two reasons. Well, maybe more than two. I can only see two at the moment.

That can have two reasons. Either you've already gone through intense suffering in many other lifetimes, you don't need it anymore, or you have some ego image of yourself as a very advanced spiritual being, and therefore, you would like to add it to your self-image. And you can then post to the world that you are now attending a spiritual conference.

Look at me, I'm here. I'm not implying that everybody who has mentioned in their Facebook posts or tweets is necessarily a reflection of that stage. It might just be an innocent fact.

Why not mention the fact that you had a conference? If there's no self-identification with it, it's perfectly fine. But the question is, is there a self-enhancement through it?

Does the conceptual image that you have and want to present to the world enhanced by that? Self-observation is vital because the new consciousness arises only if the individual recognizes that you can only change the world by changing the state of human consciousness. That's why all the communists went wrong, all the people who want to bring in a new government go wrong.

All these things will do nothing if there's not a shift in consciousness. You will only recreate the same thing again and again and again. And that change in consciousness must, there's only one place where it can happen, and that's in you.

And that implies that you practice self-observation. That is an essential part of the change in consciousness. To practice self-observation implies that there is enough presence or awareness in you from where you can self-observe.

And in almost all of you there is. Maybe not all the time, but there is enough to have

brought you here. And there's quite a bit.

So is there enough presence in you so that you can self-observe your own motivations, your own thought structures? What are the habitual thoughts that I think? So that you are not drawn continuously into every thought that comes and follow it where it wants to take you.

One little thought comes in about your life, oh, and then another thought and you follow it, oh, oh no. And then before you know it, more thoughts come and then other conflicting thoughts and no, no, that's not how it is. Yes, it is.

No. I can't take anymore. And you believe in that thought too, that you can't take anymore.

So the ability to observe non-judgmentally what goes on inside you. There is awareness. There needs to be awareness.

So that is self-knowledge. Self-knowledge means it's really not so much on knowing on a conceptual level what happened to you in the past and trying to understand the past, the story of me. I need to investigate the story of me.

There is a place for that in certain cases. You may want to understand what happened, why you acted or what your parents did to you and come to an understanding, your limited understanding of that. But ultimately the arising of the new consciousness is not a better conceptual understanding of anything.

It's not a better conceptual understanding of who you are. It goes beyond any concept. Awareness in itself does not necessarily imply immediately that you understand more about yourself.

In fact, as you become more aware in yourself, the need to understand my life and work it out diminishes. So the compulsion to also to understand every other human being that you meet immediately formulate certain judgments and conclusions about that other human being and the urge to immediately form judgments and conclusions about any situation that you encounter and then this is how it is. And then you have a narrative that develops in the mind and then you're telling yourself the narrative about who you are, who they are and how it all is.

You've all met people like that. And once you were like that yourself and perhaps still occasionally that that comes back and you go, it's good to act it out a bit because then you can recognize it. That's not presence, that's absence.

It's called absence. The opposite of presence of course is absence. That means you are not there.

You are not there. All that's there pretending to be you is the egoic mind, the conceptual mind. And the mind says, it's me and my life.

So what arises then is the awareness, which means as it arises, it seems at first that you know less than before because you no longer compulsively immediately interpret everything conceptually, every human being you encounter and your own life. The compulsion to judge continuously isn't there. And so it seems at first and the egoic mind may come in and say, oh, wait a minute.

You don't know what's going on anymore if you don't judge it. Who knows who that person is? If you don't judge it, he could be your enemy.

He could be out to deceive you. Better be careful. You need to judge.

But then, no. And so I understood when I was reading Plato's works, as you may know, I don't know how many people these days read Plato, but he reports in his works what Socrates taught. How faithfully he recorded what Socrates taught, we don't know.

But one, certain things seem to be, because Socrates never wrote anything, certain things, however, seem genuine. And there's especially one statement that Socrates made that's often repeated by Plato. And that is this.

When somebody went to the Oracle at Delphi in ancient Greece, and the Oracle said, who is the wisest man on the planet or in the world? The Oracle said, Socrates is the wisest. Okay, they heard this and they went to Athens where Socrates was and said, oh, listen, the Oracle at Delphi said you are the wisest all men.

Why is that? And Socrates said, I am the wisest because I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing. I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

On another occasion he said, I am wise because I know that I know nothing. And then people later, they read it over the centuries and most people interpret it as kind of a feigned modesty. And they say, of course he knows what does it, he knows a lot, but he just says it.

It's a feigned modesty. In other words, it's ego. But that's not how it is.

It describes a state of consciousness out of which his enormously creative teaching, his deep insights arose. It describes the very foundation of the state of what ultimately is the state of spacious awareness or presence. And that state is one of actually cessation of mind activity without loss of consciousness.

So every of the so-called dialogues of Socrates, and the way it's reported by Plato is not absolutely correct because I know exactly, maybe I was there, I don't know, but I know how Socrates always started. He started his Socratic dialogues with just not knowing.

And then he begins to ask questions and through questions the knowing gradually arises.

He does not start with already accumulated knowledge. So it starts from the, he was comfortable with a state of not knowing. In other words, he was rooted in the state of pure awareness.

In your pure awareness conceptually, of course you don't know anything when, when your mind stops. For example, now, if I stop speaking now, you're still here too. We can do it together.

I stopped speaking for a few seconds and as I stopped speaking, do you need to fill that space between me stopping to speak and starting to speak again? Do you need to fill that space with thought? Or are you able to simply be present in that space?

In other words, are you able to just simply be, don't suppress thought. It doesn't work. You can't hold your breath and say, I must not think that might work, but, but then thinking will come even up or even more strongly once you start breathing again.

So it's not that you can't hold down thought. It's a pure shift into a more alert state of consciousness. Alert.

Alert means, okay, now acting out alertness. I'm not just acting it out. When I look at you in this weird way, I'm not thinking.

And when you look at me looking at you in this weird way, you also could experiment with that and see whether as I stop speaking now for 10 seconds, you can just be in that space of pure awareness where you take in sense perceptions against the background of awareness. And you might notice that in that space, you don't know anything. You don't even know your name because your name is a thought.

You don't know anything in that space. And yet you are there, conscious, present without any movement in the mind. That's presence.

That was Socrates state. When he said, I know that I don't know anything because in that state, you know that you don't know anything and there are no words in it. Now don't confuse that, which is a state of rising above thinking.

Don't confuse that with falling below thinking, which can be nice too. If you are tortured on a daily and nightly basis by your mind to fall below thinking can be a relief, but that's not why we are here. Otherwise I would be offering you all kinds of substances to help you fall below thinking.

You can drink and smoke and go, ah, ah, feel so good. Don't have to think anymore. Oh, a bit more of that and a bit more of that.

So that's where eventually that takes you. That's a relief. You can experience the same

relief when you get tired at night.

There's a moment when you're still conscious, but when you're too tired to think about your problems. So you're not being tortured by your mind as it usually tortures you for most of the day. You're not tortured by your mind and the approach of sleep feels delicious and you are not thinking, I wish I could stay here is the last thought that you have.

Oh, and then you go off and then you wake up in the morning and your eyes open and for a few seconds you go 10 seconds maybe 20 and then the machinery of the mind starts creaking. What time is it? What?

What's my first appointment today? Oh no, no, I have to deal with that. Oh God.

And then I have to meet that obnoxious person at 11 and there you are gone. There was a moment of presence and perhaps in that moment when you woke up, you had risen above thought. When you went to sleep, you were falling below thought.

When you woke up perhaps for 10 seconds, you were on a level above thought and that is a level where you look at the world with that bright eyes and pure innocent perception and everything is alive. You can sense the aliveness in everything and the world is good at this moment and you have no problems. And then that's present moment.

Awareness is present moment. Awareness is always implied. When we use the term awareness, present moment is implied because you can only be aware in the present moment.

Awareness is presence and then you lose the present moment. You lose awareness because your consciousness is being absorbed by thinking. It sucks up all your consciousness like some parasite, psychic parasite living inside you that sucks up all.

I need more. I need to think more. And then you have this monstrous thing in your head and you think it's you and it talks all the time.

It's not necessarily out aloud. It talks in here and you can have discussions in here too and you identified with it. The unconscious state, lack of awareness, complete absence.

You are not there. So the revolutionary incredible thing that is the essence of the new consciousness that arises a new evolutionary stage for humanity, which we are on the way towards it. Even if just to come back to what I said earlier, I might've lost the thread.

Even if we have to go through another episode of intense self created suffering on a huge scale, which is not impossible. Even if humanity has to go through that, the awakening consciousness is not lost. It will then, when humanity regenerates, it will quickly arise again.

The same consciousness that's arising in you now and bring about the collective awakening. Are we going to experience another dark age? Maybe.

But what's a thousand years? Not much. Even 2000 years, not that much.

So I'm very optimistic. Consciousness will prevail because conscience is the purpose of the universe. It, the universe is, there's an impulse, an evolutionary impulse towards consciousness in the universe.

So all is well and now it's up to you. Now we come to the really what really matters to change the world. We've already seen it cannot be done unless there is that shift in consciousness in the individual human.

And that begins with you and it takes place every moment of your life and you use every opportunity and whatever arises in your life as part of that. And sometimes you forget, that's fine. Sometimes you get taken over again by the mind completely.

The ego arises again, that's fine. And then you wake up again. So for many of you, it's you, you wake up and you fall to sleep periodically.

It's the new, you're present. And then the old, you're absent. And then you wake up again.

And that's fine. That's part of the, for most people, that is part of the awakening process. And gradually the periods of time when you're awake, present lengthens, you're awake for longer than before.

And the ability challenges and other unconscious humans, to pull you into unconsciousness decreases. Always there are two ways. Well, maybe more than two, let's just say two.

There are two ways of finding out whether you are making progress on the spiritual paths, because it might be interesting to know because you could be deluding yourself. But there are two ways of finding out. One is how do you deal with challenges?

How do you deal with difficult people and situations that arise on a small scale every day on a larger scale? Occasionally, how do you, do they pull you into reactivity and ego? How do you meet the challenges of life?

How do you meet a difficult person or difficult situation? Do they pull you into unconsciousness into upset negativity? There's a line in the course in miracles that says, I'm never upset for the reason I think.

So when you're upset because you had stuck in a traffic jam, that's not the real reason why you're upset. You're upset because you're disconnected from yourself. You're upset because you're only up in your mind.

You're disconnected from the essence of who you are, which is awareness, which is presence. If you were connected with who you are and your essence, you would not be upset in a traffic jam. And if you were deeply connected with the essence of who you are, you would not be upset.

If you got home and you saw your house had collapsed, Oh, the house is gone. No, that would be a big test. If you pass that and now that life is great because life will not leave you alone.

You might've noticed when you think you have removed, you've solved the problems here. Another one crops up there. And then you deal with that.

And while you deal with that, another thing collapses here. And then why can't I ever, why can't things not always work? The thing, things should work all the time.

To some extent, you can improve your life. Of course, through changing your state of consciousness to living more positively through practicing gratitude, which brings you into the present moment, acknowledgement of beauty. And that will change your life.

There's enormous amount you can do and it works. But even then your life will continue to challenge you because life will say he or she hasn't gone deep enough yet. There needs to be more intense presence.

So I'll give him or her another challenge. And then the moment comes when you might say, I can't take anymore. Why don't you leave me alone?

Whether you call it life or God doesn't matter. God, you've gone too far this time. I can't take anymore.

And of course I can't take him or her is in a, is a thought in your head. And if you believe in it, it feels very bad. And if you don't believe in it, all it is, it's a noise in your head, which says, I can't take anymore.

And of course it's not true. You can take a lot more in the right way. If you're conscious.

So how do you respond to challenges? Observe yourself. What situations cause upset, big or small?

And that's a reflection of your state of consciousness. Are you able to stay present in certain situations? And if you notice that certain situations in the past that caused you to be upset or negative reactions or angry or despondent or whatever, no longer cause you to be in that state.

That is progress on the spiritual path. If you go to Thanksgiving dinner this year and the remarks made by your relatives, parents, uncles, aunts, and so on about politics or about you, no longer upset you as they did for the past 20 years. The same thing they say in

here.

Why do they say that? And suddenly you allow them to say whatever they say. It's fine.

That's where they are at. That's fine. What's wrong.

And when your parents can criticize you because you're not living your life that they imagined that you should be living, you no longer go, why can't you understand me? And you realize it matters not at all whether they understand you or not. Why not allow them to be as they are and you should stay present.

That's progress on the spiritual path. How do you deal with challenges and challenges will continue to come. That's the weird thing.

And that's a wonderful thing. Because if life did not give you challenges, you would not evolve. And that not only applies to humans, it applies to every life form on the planet.

Life is challenging for every plant and every tree and every animal on the planet. There's no doubt about that. It presents challenges for every species on the planet.

And that is how consciousness grows through being faced with challenges. And once you see that, you might recognize it in a movie. You wouldn't want to go to see a watch a movie where the characters are not challenged by life.

In other words, let's say you go to a cinema and the movie begins and nothing goes wrong. And then you would say after 15 minutes, this is not an interesting movie. There's nothing going wrong.

Almost any movie, something needs to go wrong. Otherwise there is no movie. Because it's only if things go wrong, the character gets challenged and then something happens.

Either the challenge is resolved on an external level, which is a not so good movie, which means the bad guy is finally eliminated or put away. Or if the challenge is, if it's a good movie, the challenge with which the characters are faced brings about a change in the character. And in a very good movie, then there are not many of those, but some the character becomes more conscious through the challenges.

And then you might even want to see that movie again and again and again. It no longer depends. You already know what's going to happen, but that's secondary.

You just enjoy the process of watching somebody awaken. And as you watch somebody awaken, you somehow participate in that awakening. And it could even be a funny movie in addition to that.

One of my favorite movies, I'm sure most of you know it, Groundhog Day. And I've watched that many times. And that shows somebody deeply unconscious and suffering

and suffering and suffering is stuck in the same day again and again and again.

And he can't get out. This is of course, the state of the egoic state. And then until finally something changes in him.

Finally comes to acceptance and surrender and becomes helpful by accepting and surrendering what is becomes helpful to other people. And then in the end, the same day, which is forced to repeat again and again, and he stuck in a place that he hates in a town that he hates doing what he hates, seeing people that he hates. And, and finally he can't stand the suffering anymore.

And then he's not hating anymore. He just accepts. And then suddenly experiences the same day differently.

He begins to awaken. And in the end of the movie, he says, Oh, this place is so nice. Let's stay here.

And then he's free to go. So that kind of more that you want to watch many times because that is a rare thing. It shows the unconsciousness and then how a character by facing challenges, ultimately self created.

And then there's a deepening that happens and that's reflective of life. You would not want to see a movie when nothing goes wrong, but when things go wrong in your own life, implicitly you think this should not be happening. The movie of my life should be such that nothing goes wrong.

I wanted to be totally boring. So people complain when, when what they love to watch in movies, when it happens to them, they complain and think this shouldn't be happening to me. So I'm talking about the challenges that are an inevitable part of your daily existence.

And even as you awaken, you get challenged by the gravitational pull of the unconsciousness within yourself, but also in the form of other people around you. And situations that you encounter, your workplace, family members, relatives, friends, you are challenged by the unconsciousness of the world that you inhabit. And that's how it's meant to be.

Now, you might develop a theory that if only the conditions in my life were more suited for my spiritual growth, all would be well. And then if you could devise a list of things that you need in order to be able to facilitate your spiritual growth, you would say, okay, I have enough money to go to the most exquisite spa places in the world where I will have massages two or three times a day, live in absolute bliss. They're the most pure food imaginable.

My needs are being met so that I can meditate. If I want to, I can exercise my body,

clean, pure air, not being disturbed by noises and things around me. Everything will be so beautiful.

I can dedicate myself totally to my, to, to being present. And if that became a reality for a while, you would be happy. And then you, after a while, you would find yourself, you would find your level of presence decreasing after a while.

It can be nice as an interlude in your life for a week. It might be great. It's withdrawal and so on can be great.

But if it's a, if you think that that will facilitate your spiritual growth, the absence of challenges will facilitate your spiritual growth. You would be very much mistaken. You would eventually find yourself, your level of presence decreasing because it is not needed.

Things are going too well. There's no challenge. Everybody's so nice.

Of course they're nice because you pay them. If you lived with them, they wouldn't be nice, but that's, so you have enough money to pay all the people around you so that they can be nice to you. And you're not being challenged by these obnoxious humans anymore.

And it would not ultimately facilitate your spiritual growth. And you may reach a moment after spending two years in this wonderful spa of longing to get back to your challenging life. If you even have enough consciousness, even too long for something at that point.

So the, what I'm really saying is whatever arises in your life is your practice. It is the practice designed for you. It is your spiritual paths and particularly the challenges.

So it's important to see that the importance of challenges, difficulties, so-called problems in the evolution, in your evolutionary paths, the absolute importance of that. So yet it's important to see it so that in your mind, you no longer have the implicit assumption that these things should not be happening. If they are happening, it does not mean that they should not be happening.

Only the mind can formulate that belief that something that is happening should not be happening. The entire history of the universe, since everything is interconnected, the entire history of the universe, since the big bang, if there was a big bang, the entire history of the universe has conspired to bring about the form that this moment takes for you. It's all connected.

It comes out of this vastness of the universe, the vastness that we call past, but it's not really past. It's interconnected. You cannot separate one event and say this event should not be happening, but the universe has brought it forth.

There is an inevitability in anything that happens in the present moment. If you cannot change, if it looks bad or undesirable, the quickest way to dissolve it is by coming into an alignment with the present moment. So you don't fight it.

And this is how the state of presence arises through coming into alignment with the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (37:50 - 38:09)

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Eckhart Tolle Watch Your Mind [8b0e29e6-1755-4331-b1bb-839e21728981]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:36)

Watch your mind. In this podcast, Eckhart discusses the path to awakening. He encourages listeners to detach from the mind instead of being the mind.

He says most of us get so enmeshed in our thinking, we mistake it for reality. He also believes the mind tells us we need a long list of criteria to advance spiritually. But Eckhart says enlightenment is not something we attain in the future.

In truth, full consciousness is closer than we think. We can break through our thinking to awaken right here, right now.

[Speaker 1] (0:38 - 34:57)

So welcome. I'm glad you made it. And also welcome to all of you, one could say, let's put it very simply, while you're here and hopefully after you leave also, the greatest advice I could give you is watch your mind, which means be aware of your mind instead of being your mind.

Be the awareness behind the mind. And in certain Buddhist monasteries that I visited a long, long, long time ago, the monks use that expression, watch your mind, when they say to another monk, and what it really means there is shut up. But they're too polite to say it.

And of course, watch your mind is a great way of saying it. But here you, of course, instead of saying it to other people here, you might be tempted, who knows, use it as a signpost, an inner signpost. So be there as the silent presence.

And that's already the entire secret, which isn't really a secret, but somehow it still is. To be aware, awareness or presence is a space of just being conscious. Not at some future point, when we've gone through the 12 or 25 steps, or many steps there may be to full consciousness, but right here and now.

Very important. Don't wait to achieve some kind of state. Don't wait to achieve liberation or enlightenment, or some kind of fireworks, or some kind of transcendent experience, which you may have, but that passes too.

The transcendent experience has a beginning and an end. And then you're backed with the, oh, I had such a great experience last year. I want to get back to that.

How do I get back, back to that? Don't try to get back because that's not the way, that's the wrong direction. And don't try to get forward to the expectation of an experience.

One of the great obstacles, especially for those of you who could be considered, or who consider themselves to be spiritual seekers, which this may actually have become part of your identity, because you've attended many talks, retreats, you've been, you've visited the ashrams in India, and the monasteries, and you're extremely knowledgeable, but you are seeking for that high. Am I going to make it in this lifetime? And then you go to some Buddhist or other teachers, and then somebody may say, you need about 15 more lifetimes.

Okay, well, okay, I can live with that. No, you can't. These are all concepts in the mind.

So letting go of any expectation of achieving a particular state, but becoming completely aligned with whatever is here now, whatever is in this moment, and the transcendent depths of this moment, then there's nothing to seek anymore. And your search ends the moment your mind ceases, and some stillness arises. And you know it's there without naming it.

That's the end of the search. Now, you may adopt the search again when the stillness gets covered up again by mental noise, because you have in your mind, there may be the, for some of you, the seeker identity, and that identity wants to carry on seeking. And that identity will tell you after a moment of stillness that that wasn't enough, it wasn't the fireworks, but it is enough, but at this deepens the state.

Now, this is a little paradox because the spiritual life is full of paradoxes and spiritual discourse. The timeless state of consciousness, which is presence, deepens. Now, you can see the slight paradox in that.

So over time, the timeless state of consciousness deepens. It manifests more and more fully through you, and yet it's timeless. So we are here to live this, and this is a protected environment, not without challenges.

Even here, this beautiful place, it's almost a kind of ashram. Even here, some challenges may arise because life is like that. It does that to you.

And some of you on your journey here and arriving here may already have experienced a few challenges. How did you respond to the challenges? Hmm.

It doesn't matter how you responded if you were not present and the challenge made you reactive and mentally, emotionally reactive movement. So that's fine. If you realize it now, it's never too late.

Oh, that was that. I was unconscious. Isn't that interesting?

But you can see it now, so you must be conscious now and then wait for the next challenge. You may have arrived in your room and it was very small and like a monastic cell, and mentally, you compared it to wherever you were on your vacation. It's not the

Ritz-Carlton, obviously, but a monastic cell is a lovely place for surrender.

And realizing that very little is needed for presence to arise, it's much more likely to arise when things are taken away from you rather than when things are added to you. The mind doesn't know that. The mind thinks something needs to be added to you in order to awaken an added experience, an added realization, an added, whatever it may be, a vision, angels, whatever.

So the mind expects to be added, by adding something, then I will arrive. Adding a future moment. So it expects that, but the realization is that nothing needs to be added for awakening.

This is not to say that on the level of your personality, the historical person, there are not things for you still, unless you are 95, there are not still things for you to do. There may be interesting things for you to add to who you are as a person. You can add new experiences.

You can travel. You can learn something new, a language, take up a musical instrument, read books, build up a business, whatever it is. Adding, on that level, there's nothing wrong with adding things to you.

And on that level of the personality, you're never really complete. There's always more that you could do. And if you pursue one particular avenue, that excludes many others.

You could add things by becoming a great sports person if you're young enough. So you train hard and you enjoy it. Of course, that excludes, and it's unlikely that you will develop into an intellectual because you don't have the time to read the books.

But if you read the books, then that excludes that you're not physically active for six hours a day. So you choose this particular avenue and you're never complete. There's always more you can do.

And life sometimes demands that you do certain things. It gives you a challenge or you choose a challenge. It's usually better to choose a challenge on the level of a personality, on the level of the person.

The person has its own life and they choose something, have a goal, I want to do this, that or the other, without the expectation that this goal, once you achieve it, will lead you, take you to ultimate satisfaction. It can't do that. Or will reveal to you who you really are, give you your true identity.

So when you're looking in this level of the person, when you're looking to the things of this world through achieving this, that or the other, that this will give you some very satisfying sense of identity, of being you, the sense of having arrived. Because almost everybody who is still trapped in ego has a sense of something that should happen

hasn't happened yet in my life. There's something missing.

So this can be very strong in the forefront of your mind or it can be in the background, the sense of lack, the sense of something is not quite right here, but you don't know what it is. You're not at ease in the world. There's an underlying sense of unease.

And for some people, the underlying sense of unease is so all pervasive that they don't even know it because since early, even childhood, it already started. And so they don't know anything else. There's always this underlying sense of unease, this underlying sense of either there's something not right, I'm not right, or something that should be happening hasn't happened yet.

Or even something that did happen should not have happened. Whatever it may be in whatever way you interpret that underlying feeling of unease, but if you're completely trapped in ego, it will be there. Sometimes it may surface very strongly, in which case you become very anxious or very sad or very depressed, or you can manifest in many ways.

You can even get angry, can be part of that. And if it's been there for many years, you don't even know it. It's unlikely that this is the case with anybody that's here, present here, because you would never come here if there hadn't been something that makes you aware, at least, that there is a sense of unease in you.

And you know that you begin to suspect that something else is possible, that there is another way of being in this world. There are still many millions, though, who don't know that. They live with constant unease.

Sometimes it manifests as fear, it can manifest as anxiety, or just a more obscure sense of something not quite right. And another way it manifests is that people see themselves as a problem. So your identity is basically, you're a problem to yourself.

You consider yourself a problem that needs to be solved. And then, of course, you go to a psycho something, and says, please solve the problem of me. I am a problem to myself.

And you are, you are a problem to yourself. It would be a great thing to realize that you're a problem. But if you're really deeply immersed in that, you don't even know that.

If you're really deeply immersed in that pattern, it's always the others who are the problem. So if you're very unconscious, you wouldn't even say, I'm a problem to myself. No, it's he, she, they, they are the problem, not me.

And so perhaps you wouldn't even seek a psychotherapist, because if you seek a psychotherapist, at least there is an admission that change is possible, and change is needed. But there are still millions who don't even know that the inner change is

possible and needed. It's all out there.

And these people are very active online. You might have noticed. Because that's an ideal forum for them to externalize their inner mental state.

And a lot of what goes on there is admittedly, I don't know if one can still use that word or whether it has become politically incorrect, but I'll use it anyway. A lot of what goes on there is actually crazy. I think if it's not politically correct yet, it soon will be.

So the, you know how a humming sound that something is like a refrigerator or some noise in the room is going on and on. You no longer know it's there in the background, but when it stops, then you suddenly know, oh, oh, it feels so good. There was this constant humming sound in the background.

I didn't even know it anymore. I didn't know it. And so for some people, the first awakening is to become aware of the humming, so to speak, their mind, the constant chatter, the constant dialogues and monologues that make life so hard.

And so you become aware suddenly, oh, for many humans, that's a moment of awakening. What is my mind doing? And then you begin to be able to differentiate between what is in this moment out there, what is, and your mental interpretation of what is.

If you're very unconscious, the way in which you interpret the phenomena that surround you and that constantly change people, events, situations, places, when you're very unconscious, the way in which you mentally interpret and mentally react and mentally, emotionally react to other people, places, situations, and so on, are perceived as a single phenomenon. You cannot differentiate between what is out there and how you see what is, how you interpret it, what you call it, the narrative that you spin around what is. They have a single thing.

You experience as a single thing. And so the way then in which a very unconscious person interprets the phenomena that happen around you continuously is determined by the conditioning of their mind, the mental, emotional conditioning. So they don't experience almost anything as it is.

They experience it through the veil of their mental conditioning. And a lot of that mental conditioning is verbal. It is, in many cases, an important part of it, is a narrative in your mind.

And so if you become aware of the narrative in your mind, that's a great step forward. It's a great awakening. And when you see that what you're, the way in which you're talking to yourself about something that's happening here and now, that's, and the mind says, this shouldn't be happening.

They should know better. Why do, why can't they do better? Why do I always encounter a situation like, why are people always so obnoxious?

I just can't stand people anymore. Why is this person, look how he pretends, he's pretending to be spiritual and just, you can see he's completely unconscious. What's this place?

Why did I even come here? I'm stuck here in this room and it's, is it even clean? I could be in a much more comfortable, if I hadn't left home, I could be in a much more comfortable place at home.

Why did I do that? Why would I always do things? It's completely pointless coming here.

I mean, this, what is this man even talking about? And so it goes on and on. And you don't, you cannot differentiate between what is and how your mind interprets what is.

It's crazy. So the moment you can separate, you see, here's the is-ness of things. This is what is, here I am, and there's that person talking about whatever politics.

And you can see, and you may find in yourself an urge to say something, but it could happen here, even here, because it's unlikely that you left your mind outside. It came with you, but that's a good thing because then you can become aware of it. And so life suddenly becomes much more simple and you begin to practice here, where you differentiate between the is-ness of things and your interpretation of it.

This includes people too. Every person behaves as they do according to their level of consciousness at this particular moment. In many people, their consciousness varies.

Sometimes they are really unconscious. And at other times, they're fairly present. You might have noticed that could happen to you sometimes still.

Sometimes you're very present and then something is triggered. I got triggered. He triggered me.

He always triggers me. So you got triggered and then you... So what happens when you get triggered?

That something takes you over. It's like you become somebody else for a while. And you might even say things that you later regret when you're a bit more conscious again.

You say, oh, I said something terrible. It's too late, you said it. Of course, then forgiveness has to come in.

Oh, there's another problem. You have to forgive yourself. No, you don't have to forgive yourself.

That's too complicated. You just have to see that neither you nor anybody else can manifest behavior or speech that is beyond their level of consciousness at that particular moment. That's obvious.

So if you get annoyed with people, of course, some things on a practical level can be, you can have changes on a practical level. You can say, don't do this. I don't, this behavior is not acceptable.

And that's a clear statement. It doesn't have to be reactive. But to learn to realize that, and this is a strange way of putting it, when you criticize other humans or you look at them and say, oh, the dreadful person.

I wrote that somewhere, I think in the book, Stillness Speaks. If you had the same personal history as this person and if you had the same level of consciousness as this person, you would behave in exactly the same way. Because that person is determined by his or her past.

But the behavior is determined by the conditioning of this person's mind. Now this, of course, we have to look very carefully. It seems to imply that people are not really, and this is a little problematic, people are not responsible for what they say or do.

Is that true? Is nobody responsible for what they say or do? Well, you can see that a very unconscious person, they cannot help doing what they do.

And even if they do dreadful things, if they were more conscious, they would not. However, the evolution of human consciousness happens gradually. And sometimes right now, faster than, much faster than before.

It happens through suffering. For all those who are very unconscious, they generate suffering for themselves and others. Suffering, when you're very unconscious, you generate an enormous amount of suffering for yourself and anybody who happens to be in your immediate surroundings.

And ultimately, although you're not responsible for what you do, you will suffer the consequences of your unconsciousness. And that's a karmic thing. It's only by suffering the consequences of your unconsciousness, you have an opportunity or a chance of eventually awakening.

So even the seemingly most adverse conditions and states of other humans that make them perpetrate dreadful things, ultimately, there's a larger purpose embedded in this. It's not immediately obvious. And that is the very unconscious humans.

And even if unconscious humans form a collective, an unconscious energy field, it could be a region or sometimes a whole country can become very unconscious. Everybody gets taken over by deep unconsciousness. It's happened even in the 20th century to

several countries that suddenly got taken over by an enormous collective unconsciousness that produces enormous suffering.

And yes, what Jesus said on the cross, forgive them for they know not what they do. They know not what they do, of course means they are completely unconscious in modern terminology. So it does not free you from the suffering, the consequences of unconsciousness because that is part of the evolution of human consciousness is up to a certain point, it happens through pain and suffering.

And it's self-generated through the unconscious state of humans. And then at some point, when you have suffered enough, there's a chance of awakening. It might be after 20 years in prison or it could be in some dreadful, totally violent surroundings.

And every day there's shooting and whatever way it manifests. So you see the reflection in the external world of your state of consciousness. And then you suffer and suffer and suffer.

And then suddenly something in you cracks open the hard egoic shell that was in many cases, a collective ego, that perhaps those collective egos are even more insane than individual egos. They can perpetrate it far worse crimes than personal egos. I mean, look at the crimes, the worst crimes of humanity are not perpetrated by the criminals or crazy people who are obviously mentally, totally insane, clinically insane or hardened criminals or they do bad things, but this is nothing compared to what so-called normal people do when they're identified with a collective ego.

Entire countries have destroyed in Russia, in Germany, in China, in the 20th century, normal people have killed millions even of their own people in their own country, not even talking about warfare between countries. So that's a gradual awakening happens through intense pain, intense suffering. You don't even need to, you can observe it just by observing yourself how up to a point you needed your suffering.

If you hadn't suffered, you wouldn't be here. If I hadn't suffered, I wouldn't be here. I know that.

I would be, don't know what I would be doing. Probably drinking beer and watching television. No need to do anything.

What's the point? The challenges come at you continuously, small and large. Up to a point, the challenges, the way in which you respond or rather react to the challenges create suffering to use that term, create unhappiness, misery, anger, many forms of suffering, but I'm using the Buddhist term suffering, unhappiness, you could say, and it's many, many forms.

So when the challenges come up to a certain point, the challenges make you unhappy. The challenges make you miserable, resentful, angry, dejected. All kinds of things

happen when the challenges come one after another.

Life never leaves you alone. Oh God, I want out of here. Just when I thought I've sorted out one area of my life, okay, I got the job and a great job and everything is, then something else goes wrong.

There's a relationship problem or then there's a physical problem or there's a problem in somebody close to you or something bad is happening to them or there's some death happening close to you, suddenly some great loss or whatever it is, unpleasant people making your life difficult, not unheard of, it happens. And so up to a certain point, the challenges of life are transformed into unhappiness. And then you reach a point where you recognize the challenges are inevitable.

They continue coming. It's like the waves and the, when you watch the ocean and the big waves come and break, they come and you can see when approaching. And first it doesn't even look that big, but you can see this movement of the water comes.

It's coming, it's coming. And then finally it goes. This is how challenges come at you, they're not always this huge, these huge waves, sometimes they are.

There can be little, little irritating ripples that come at you. Don't like that. And up to a point, you become unhappy, you're not happy and you complain about life.

You don't want it. I've had enough or you get very angry at everybody and everything because it's all their fault. Or you angrily deny the existence of God.

How would God allow a place like this? How, I would be morally superior, I could create a better world than this. How can, how can you allow this to happen?

This is a very common argument. We may address it again at some other point during the, and so you get angry at God. Some God in this case is of course a mental concept that you have of somebody who is in control of everything.

And so you get angry with God. And then you get angry that there is no God. And then up to a point and suddenly when you no longer demand that life should not be difficult, that these things should not be happening to you.

Then suddenly something shifts. Challenges keep coming. But they no longer make you unhappy.

They make you more present. So there comes the wave or the ripple and you perhaps you see it coming or it comes so suddenly that you don't see it coming. There it is and you go, ah, there's another one.

And as they come, they create an alertness in you that would not be there if the challenges were not be happening. In fact, you needed them because without them, you

would be half asleep. This is the human condition.

You would be in a somewhat lethargic state because it's fine, it's doing fine.

[Speaker 2] (35:00 - 35:19)

I'm Oprah Winfrey and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these Essential Teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle We Are Designed to Awaken [4e6c7e4b-ec9c-4791-a9f9-8b2f4d9efe8d]

[Speaker 4] (0:01 - 0:31)

Designed to Awaken. In this episode, Eckhart answers questions from a live audience on such topics as eliminating depression, dealing with a heavy pain body, and why enlightenment seems to be such a rare phenomenon. Eckhart shares the story of his own pain body and how it finally pushed him into a state of presence.

He says, we are designed to awaken. There is a flowering of consciousness in the universe, and we are part of that.

[Speaker 3] (0:36 - 1:57)

For many years now, I've kind of been dealing off and on with certain degrees of depression, sometimes more intense, sometimes less intense. Actually, lately, a lot less intense in large part due to discovering you and kind of reading your works and stuff, which has been super helpful. So thanks for that.

But one aspect of this is that my ability to feel things has, I feel, greatly kind of diminished over time. Things that I used to be excited about don't excite me anymore. I don't look forward to things.

When I, you know, kind of hang out with my friends and things like that, which is stuff that I enjoy, the joy kind of goes away very quickly. But what doesn't go away and what I can feel is the kind of negatives in my life, the sadness and the suffering and stuff. And it got to a point where I started to crave it in a certain degree, because feeling those type of emotions almost kind of reminded me of my ability to feel at all and sort of reminded me of my humanness.

So I guess my question is, how do you eliminate suffering when suffering in a certain way is all that you have left?

[Speaker 1] (1:57 - 8:30)

Right. What about your practice of giving attention to the present moment? Now, we give attention to the present moment, you first, you become aware of whatever it is that you feel within.

And then you need to be aware of within and without, that's part of the present moment. So that your attention is not completely absorbed by whatever it is that you feel. Because there's also the vastness of the outside world.

And so to be present means to be present within and without this, you're in both worlds.

So you acknowledge whatever it is you feel inside you at this moment, be also very vigilant to see whether there are any associated thoughts with that feeling. Are there certain thoughts that go through your head that reflect what it is that you feel?

For example, if you feel depressed, do you have thoughts that are telling you that life is after all, not worth living or whatever the thoughts are saying that people suck, life sucks, I suck, we all suck, I don't want to be here, that kind of thought. So you need to observe, be aware on both on the, as far as the inside is concerned, be aware on both on the level of the emotions and feelings, and the level of mind activity, what kind of thoughts, and so it requires vigilance, so that you don't indulge without knowing it in unconscious thinking. And you can't separate the unconscious thinking and the feelings.

So only you can know, I don't even know whether you can answer this question now, because you have to find out in the moment of it happening, what kind of mind activity accompanies those unpleasant feelings. And to see whether this mind activity actually feeds the unpleasantness that you feel, or the suffering that you feel, that's a very important thing. What role does your mind play in all this?

Very important. Is your mind feeding it? Because you have a big pain body there, which is not in itself a bad thing, because the pain body becomes a strong motivating force for you to awaken.

I also had a very heavy pain body, that's why I had to awaken, couldn't stand it anymore. And you at this point too, can't stand it anymore, that's good. So be very careful so that you examine your thinking.

Am I feeding the feeling? And if you are, that means there's enough awareness for you to realize it, then you let go of the thoughts. And one way you can do it by, remember I just mentioned, be present within and without.

You can use, for example, your sense perceptions, directing attention to your sense perceptions, that takes attention away from thinking. And then you experience, the next step would be, you still feel the unpleasantness, but you're also observing sensory perception around you. There's the sky, there's the flower, my hand, the hand.

And you don't have to, I'm labeling it now, but you don't have to label it. It's better not to label it, just to perceive it fully. Come to your senses, look around, there's an entire world there, and your suffering ends here, where your skin is.

The suffering that you experience is inside you, just one step next to you, there's no suffering. Isn't that strange? So the table isn't suffering, I'm suffering.

And this inch on the chair here is not suffering, it's just inside my, this bag of skin, I am the suffering entity, that's me. And then if you don't know that, then you identify with that feeling, then you call, and you still have the conditioned thinking that reflects the

suffering, and say, oh, it's all pointless, the trees are pointless, the sky is pointless, what's the point of it all? I don't see any beauty in this, and this flower is going to die soon, of course.

It all, everything dies soon, so what's the point in even living when there's a dog, he doesn't look that healthy. Whatever it is, then you would just look at the world around you through the feelings. So to be present, you have to not label, and just look, and take in auditory, visual perception, breathing.

If you give more attention to your surroundings, especially when you're in nature, but nature is everywhere, even if you're in the middle of Seattle, there's the sky, well, it's usually at this time of year, it'll be gray, but that's fine, too. There's sunlight filtering through the sky, and you have lots of trees, lots of trees, the evergreen state, Washington, as it says on your license plate, so that's good, you have that, and that takes your attention away from, you're not denying what you feel, but you're adding a dimension to it, the external dimension, and then nature has a very healing effect if you truly give attention to nature, and you're no longer fueling the suffering that you feel inside you. Of course, it doesn't go away immediately, or a miracle could happen, and it does, but usually not. It's just the beginning of it gradually dissolving or becoming transmuted.

Now, looking back retrospectively, if you even know the answer to this, what kind of mind activity accompanies the suffering that you feel in your body? What are the typical thoughts that go with that?

[Speaker 3] (8:31 - 8:44)

I guess it kind of depends on the situation, obviously, you know, it comes in kind of phases, but a lot of it is just kind of generalized self-loathing, I guess, I don't know if that's the right term, but...

[Speaker 1] (8:44 - 9:26)

Watch out for what kind of thoughts, it might even be helpful to write them down, if they're repetitive thoughts, see what kind of repetitive thoughts you can catch, because they can obscure your awareness so quickly, especially old thoughts that come again and again and again, they become part of your fictitious identity of the self, the egoic self. So you carry with you then the burden of an unhappy self. I remember that, I had that too, carrying the burden of an unhappy self, and that is what motivates you to awaken.

But there's already been a diminishment of your depression.

[Speaker 3] (9:27 - 9:27)

Absolutely, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (9:27 - 11:39)

So that's a good sign, that means presence is arising, and it is gradually dissolving this pain body in you. But your work is not to renew the pain body through unconscious thinking, so you need to be really alert and watch your mind, so that you don't create more suffering by unconscious mind activity. And if you no longer feed the pain body, now the pain body, of course, also feeds through drama in relationships, it has the two ways of feeding.

In your case, perhaps more through your mind, but I don't know, could be also enacting and reenacting drama, emotional drama in relationships with your partner, family members, whoever it may be, usually people you're close to or work with, but the closer the better. The intimate partners are the best ways for the pain body to renew itself through. So don't add to the pain body, it wants to feed, it wants your unconsciousness, but don't give it to the pain body.

You're not feeding it with your mind anymore, and you're not feeding it by being drawn into insane drama in relationships, so you're watching it. There it is, it may not be pleasant, but it's not that bad. Your presence is infinitely more powerful, and it doesn't even fight the pain body, it just by shining the light of awareness on it, it gradually dissipates, or a better way of putting it, it gets transmuted, because the energy is not lost, there is enormous life energy in it, but it's trapped, it's trapped energy, so it's felt as negative.

When that's freed, it becomes part of presence, it is fuel for presence. The pain body is fuel for presence, that's amazing, so you have plenty of fuel for presence, that's the good news.

[Speaker 2] (11:43 - 11:47)

If the body is not experienced, does the world appear?

[Speaker 1] (11:48 - 11:51)

Can you relate this to something in your experience?

[Speaker 2] (11:52 - 12:18)

Sure, if you don't experience sensations, or sometimes feel a hollowness, it feels like the is not experienced always, does it mean that this is headed where we say the world is not experienced anymore? And I want to know your particular experience right now of the world, in other words, how do you feel, sense perceptions, and what's the state of your consciousness?

[Speaker 1] (12:18 - 15:38)

Okay, I'll tell you, and then I'll ask you about yours. It's hard to find the words to explain it. Somewhat insubstantial, all the things that happen around me, it's a little bit like a light show or something, insubstantial.

I know that everything is continued in the process of disappearing and appearing and disappearing, so the world doesn't have that heaviness for me that it has otherwise in a normal, identified consciousness. A little bit like a dream, and there's something that is untouched by it, that's the timeless consciousness, and from there, I experience the flux of becoming, of being born, dying, forms appearing, disappearing. It's quite pleasant.

Well, there were two philosophers in ancient Greece who had contradictory philosophies. Heraclitus or Heraclitus said the famous saying, you cannot step into the same river twice because everything flows, and his main statement that he's remembered by is everything flows. In ancient Greek, panta brei means everything flows.

So he saw how the Buddha's teaching of impermanence, whatever you see is not going to last, everything flows. That is one truth, and then the next philosopher came, Parmenides, who said, nothing ever changes. They completely didn't like each other.

Nothing ever changes. The reality is unchangeable, the reality. So they were both right.

Parmenides was referring to the timeless realization of consciousness, and nothing changes there, and Heraclitus was referring to the flux of phenomena, the world of form, and so there's a detachment from things. I participate in the world, but there is a space around it, like, yes, I think the dream is the closest that comes, but it's a lucid dream, so I'm in it, and it doesn't mean that everything is, I don't see it as everything is totally illusory. There is something in the dream that is of the essence, and it is important that these dream figures that are sitting here should awaken out of the dream by realizing who they are beyond form.

So that's important. So I value the world in that sense. It's very hard to talk about, but one becomes so used to one state of consciousness, I certainly don't think about it, so it's very hard to verbalize.

What is your relationship with the world?

[Speaker 2] (15:40 - 16:38)

So there was a time where I awakened, and it appeared to be a dream, so illusory, and as you said, and everything had a relative quality, except from the place where I was watching. And over the course of time, there were many events that brought me back to the egoic consciousness and back out of it as well, that I feel like I'm witnessing right now. And sometimes the body not disappears completely, but is not felt and appears

again, and I believe that this means that the world is probably on its way out then.

So what does it mean? That means I want to know in terms of sense perceptions how it would appear, and also whether that means I would experience everything as consciousness, and probably no body.

[Speaker 1] (16:39 - 22:03)

Yes, but don't go into too much mental abstraction, just stay with your immediate experience. And I know that in the unawakened consciousness, the world has an enormous heaviness and an enormous seriousness to it. It is, everything is so serious, it matters.

Every tiny situation draws you in, and you become so serious, and you don't realize how insignificant most situations actually are. This is why I sometimes say, go to cemeteries and look at the gravestones. I love that.

You look at the gravestones, and you see the date of birth and the date of death, and between there's a dash, two inches long on a big gravestone, several inches long, and that was the life that was lived. All the anxieties, and problems, and suffering, and things were so terrible, the drama, and so heavy, and so important. What's left now?

The dash between the date of birth and the date of death. And that, if you contemplate that, it detaches you, and the world, they can bring about awareness. It's really a contemplating impermanence.

As you know, in some Buddhist traditions, the monks go to the morgue, where the dead bodies are kept, to meditate. And that is in order to contemplate, without flinching, to contemplate the fact of impermanence of all forms. And what better place to contemplate the impermanence of all forms than be surrounded by dead bodies?

Now, that would be, in a normal state of consciousness, very scary. You wouldn't want to do that. But it can be a very powerful thing.

In Western civilization, death is a little bit changing. Death is such a fundamental, primordial fact of life. It's the short-lived nature of the form.

It's even now, not as much as before, but even now, death is still a kind of taboo in Western civilization. So it's hard to see a dead body. If you wanted to see a dead body, unless it's a close relative or family member, it's almost impossible.

It's illegal. You can't say, I'd like to see a dead body. No, you can't see a dead body.

You have to travel to India if you want to see dead bodies, because it's not a taboo there. And it can be very shocking to see that a body is being, a few hours after death, the body is being taken to the fire and burned. That teaches you more about the reality of

the fact of impermanence than any scripture.

So there's, the world loses its heaviness and its absolute seriousness. The way I put it, things may still matter. They make a difference.

You'd say it matters whether your body is healthy or not, or whether you live in a tent and are cold, you live in a nice place that is warm. Things are still relatively important in this world. I wouldn't say nothing is, some teachers do that.

It's relatively important, but not absolutely important. You have to know the absolute, what is absolutely important, and that is knowing who you are. And then anything in the world of relativity, anything that you experience, you can actually still enjoy sensory experiences.

You can enjoy, I know there are certain teachers in certain traditions that they despise the world. These traditions exist both in India, and they also have existed for many centuries in the West, in Christianity, of despising the world and denying the world completely. This is, I believe, not helpful because you're doing something before it.

There's never a despising of the world. There's can be, there's an appreciation of the world, but without mistaking it for what it is not, fully realizing the impermanence of it, and yet enjoying that also. You don't need it, but you enjoy it.

We can talk about this for a long time, but the important thing is your state of consciousness, how you relate to everyday situations. It always comes back down to how conscious are you in everyday life? Do you still get seduced by circumstances and so on in your life that draw you out completely into reactivity?

Or are you able to deal and interact with situations and people, always having in the background an awareness of these, the spaciousness, the stillness, who you are, know yourself as consciousness? Or do you lose yourself in the world, which is also in your mind? This is the determining factor.

So that's your practice, everyday life.

[Speaker 2] (22:03 - 22:14)

Yeah, I think I'm not lost. I doesn't look like I can be lost easily. I just have a couple questions.

Do you experience your body visually? I mean, do you see it?

[Speaker 1] (22:22 - 23:39)

Yeah, I think it's here. If you go deeply into the body with your attention, then you go beyond the body. Going beyond the body can easily be done by taking your attention

into the body, and then realizing the animating presence is far beyond the body.

So you can go into the body, and realizing the animating presence, the consciousness, without which there would be no body, and you've already gone beyond the body. So you could use the body as a doorway. You just, you walk through.

So the body is not who you are. It's a misperception of who you are. It's a sensory misperception.

And that's fine. I know that this will dissolve at some point. And I'm perfectly fine with that.

The visible body is not who I am. So I'm not going to die. The body is going to dissolve.

That's fine. There is no death. There's only life.

And as I said before somewhere, the opposite, that life has no opposite. Death is not the opposite of life. Death is the opposite of birth.

[Speaker 5] (23:46 - 24:03)

I agree. If the purpose of the universe is that form awakens and consciousness becomes aware of itself, why is it such a rare phenomenon? It almost seems like we've been designed to not awaken, and we've been lost in that.

[Speaker 1] (24:04 - 28:37)

Okay, thank you. Well, as you say, it seems like you've been designed, not you personally, but not to awaken. But the opposite is actually true.

You've been designed to awaken in the same way that the seed that falls into the ground has been designed to become an oak tree. And whatever the little onion bulb that you put into the ground now is designed to become a beautiful flower in the spring. But not right now, because in this realm, where the consciousness that underlies the world of form that expresses itself through countless temporary formations, in this realm, it evolves in time.

It exists in another realm in the timeless. In this realm, however, time applies. The universe evolved from the state of oneness into multiplicity.

And even on this planet, there's an evolution of consciousness. Forms become more complex as consciousness moves into different life forms. And gradually, there's a flowering of consciousness in the universe.

You are part of that. And it all happens just like the seed. It's a process in time.

There's a paradox here. By the way, we need to be able to accept and live with

paradoxes. Because if it's not a paradox, it's not the truth.

The mind seeks the truth. This is how it is, or this, but it can't be both. Now, some physicists are beginning to realize that even there in the realm of science, is it a particle or is it a wave?

Well, it depends how you look at it. So you have to live with paradox. And the paradox also applies the moment we talk about finding the timeless dimension in yourself.

We awaken to that. And I sometimes say when I give a talk, we are here for the next two hours to find the timeless within ourselves. So you can see the paradox.

And people say, what do you mean? Why do you need two hours to find the timeless in yourself? But you do.

Not the moment of realization, of course, is timeless. But the realization of the timeless is always present in your life. That takes time.

That's the awakening. It takes time to awaken, but you're like an alarm clock. You have been set, to simplify it a little.

You've been designed to go off eventually. All we know is we don't quite know at what time. And when you go off, you realize time was never real.

And you might even think, well, I didn't really need to go through all that time. But that's how it is. So here, things evolve in time.

And every human is a seed for that, or more than a seed already, designed to awaken. That's why we are here, to express that, to be vehicles for that. And it's happening now, beginning to happen more.

In the past, it's been the privilege of very few individuals here. And there have always been some here and there. And now, many more are going through the awakening process.

And for most people, it is a process. Process means you awaken, and you go back. So back in time.

And that's why it takes time. So you go back, and then you gain something. Ah, great.

No problem. Peace, aliveness, presence, deeper relating beyond form, seeing the essence of life in all life forms. And then something happens, and the density comes back, the dream of form comes back, and you go back to sleep.

So it's a bit like somebody is asleep and dreaming. Even dogs do it. I watch my dog.

And then you're overtaken by the sleep, sleep again.

[Speaker 6] (28:40 - 28:45)

All kinds of things.

[Speaker 1] (28:45 - 29:54)

I would be wise to know what happens in a dog's dream. But it's probably similar to human dreams, except it consists of other concerns, bones and other dogs. So it's a gradual timeless and back in time.

So rarely does it happen as an individual awakens all at once, and then does not fall back into identification with form, with thought, and so on. It happens occasionally. But for most, it's a process.

So let's enjoy the process. And the more you ask, why is it taking too long? You're focusing on time.

And even the belief it needs to take long, it doesn't need to take long. It doesn't need to take time to realize who you are. That is just now.

But to have it as a continuous knowing in the background of your life may take a little time.

[Speaker 5] (29:54 - 30:01)

The gradual process, that is also fine. Consciousness is fine with the process being so slow.

[Speaker 1] (30:01 - 37:04)

Yes. Consciousness wants to experience itself as form. The universe, let's say, wants obviously to experience itself as form, because that's what is happening.

It produces forms. It expresses itself through form, as forms. That's the outward movement of the universe.

And it's a dream. It's dreaming that dream. It loves that.

And then there's the awakening. In the middle of the dream, there's a realization of the source where it all came from and comes from. The homeward journey, home to the unmanifested, timeless one before the Big Bang.

The nothingness that no physicist can understand. They don't even go there because you can't. The moment you go there, what was there before the Big Bang?

Nothing. Nothing. So the whole universe came out of nothing.

Yes. And of course, the greatest physicists cannot understand that. So every physicist's mind stops the moment they go to the Big Bang.

They can't go any further beyond that. Their mind must stop, otherwise they go insane. Because there you touch the unmanifested, the timeless, the eternal, the emptiness, the nothingness, which is also the fullness, which cannot be described with any word.

That is what underlies the universe. And that's never gone away. That is still the essence of every life form.

The emptiness, the formlessness that Buddhists talk about. The emptiness at the heart of all things. The form that really means the form.

It doesn't mean emptiness is a misleading term, probably. It is the formlessness, the spirit. But that spirit makes it into something again.

That which absolutely cannot be named. The moment you name it, as the Tao Te Ching says, the moment you name it, you've lost it. That's not it.

That can only be known when the mind stops and they realize that what's left is the light of consciousness. Just that in which all this appears. I am that.

So there's the outward journey of the universe into form, the dream of form. And then there's the awakening of suddenly who I am, because I am the universe, as you are. I speak there's only one I, essentially.

I am the universe. And then suddenly I know myself in my essence. I go home to the origin, my origin, the formless life that I am.

Then the universe changes. Because the way in which I experience the universe, the moment I know myself as the formless, then I'm home. And at the same time, there's still the dream of form happening.

But the dream of form changes when you are no longer totally lost in it. You can then enjoy the dream of form and even become very powerful as a co-creator of the creating process. Humans are going to learn, already they're doing it now, to create form simply by thinking certain forms into being.

But you cannot do that fully unless you're rooted in the formless. And then the ego is no longer operating. And then the formless can use you, the form of you, to express itself through.

And so a time will come when humans can create any form, external form, simply through thought. Thought is creative. Rather than having a destructive mind, you can just use the power of that.

When you're connected to the formless consciousness, it can use that through you. Of course, this irony is there's very little that humans would even want to create. When you're so deeply connected, you don't need much in the world of form.

So when you are able to create any form you like, you're going to just occasionally use it, but it's not that much that you need. Formless awakening to the timeless in you. Awakening to the formless in you.

That's happening now, and it's accelerating on the planet. I have no idea whether the whole of humanity is going to awaken, or only part of humanity, or a certain percentage will awaken, and then that will draw in the rest, or humanity will split into different dimensions or species. We don't need to know all that.

But we are part of a vast unfolding of cosmic proportions, and the more we are open to that and know that, the more quickly it happens in this world of time. So the timeless erupts into the world of time. It may eventually dissolve this entire dimension.

I don't want to speculate too much. Cause and Miracles, for example, seems to point to the possibility that the universe eventually will be, this dreamlike dimension will dissolve entirely. We don't need to speculate about that, because it's much more simple than that.

Awakening, disidentification from form, being the light that you are. What Jesus said, I am the light of the world, can be a very powerful pointer that you can sometimes use. Of course it's only a thought, but it's a thought that points to an underlying reality.

So it's a kind of mantra almost. I am the light of the world. So if you occasionally say it, and after that there's nothing to think, because if more thoughts come, then you're not the light of the world, you are something or somebody.

I am the light of the world, the light in which this room appears, the light in which every thought appears, that arises. So to know who you are, concepts need to disappear from your mind. A concept that you apply to yourself.

So you need to become comfortable with not knowing who you are, conceptually. I am the light of the world doesn't really say anything. It doesn't explain to you who you are.

It's a helpful pointer no more. It's not an explanation. As an explanation, it's not very useful.

But as a pointer, it's very powerful.

[Speaker 4] (37:06 - 37:25)

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Eckhart Tolle We Are Not Fully Human Yet [82111c6c-6504-4e9e-8a48-83abac84bf3f]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:51)

We are not fully human yet. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the spiritual evolution of humanity. He says, our development is far from finished.

In fact, he says it coincides with the transformation of all life on earth, because collectively, we are on the way to awakening, but we haven't arrived yet. Eckhart asks, what does it mean to be awake? In spiritual terms, he says, it's reaching the deeper dimension of ourselves that is higher than thinking.

He believes it's the secret behind all spiritual teachings. He notes, both Buddha and Jesus describe the state of heightened awareness. Eckhart says, we will find it when we relinquish our so-called normal state of consciousness, which he described as a relentless stream of compulsive thinking.

[Speaker 1] (0:53 - 44:23)

Let's acknowledge just this moment here and see if we can completely accept the way this moment is. So we are aligning ourselves internally with the present moment. We'll start with that because it's so vital.

Now, becoming aware of the present moment is the portal into a different state of consciousness. One could say the awakened state of consciousness. What does that mean?

Aren't we awake already? Unless you're asleep, what does it mean, the awakened state of consciousness? In spiritual terms, awakened means that a dimension of consciousness has emerged in you or is beginning to emerge in you, a dimension that is deeper, or we could say higher, than the thinking function.

And that is the secret, ultimately, of all spiritual teachings. The spiritual teaching, if it is a true spiritual teaching, is there to help you discover and experience this hitherto hidden or concealed dimension of consciousness. So awakening is actually an old term going back thousands of years.

It is related to the Buddha. To the Buddha is a title. It's not anybody's name.

It is a title that was given to somebody. And Buddha, the root of the word, means awake, to be awake. It comes from Sanskrit.

So Buddha means the one who is awake. But what does it mean to be awake? And what is the opposite of being awake when we use awake in a spiritual context?

The opposite of being awake is the so-called normal state of consciousness, which is a continuous stream of thinking, conceptual thinking, that never stops, that continuously operates in you as, as I sometimes call it, the voice in the head. And this continuous stream of thinking, all those humans who are not yet awakened, or at least awakening, and many of you are awakening, otherwise you wouldn't even be here. All those who are not at least awakening are completely identified with the incessant and, yes, we could say compulsive stream of thinking.

There's a voice in you and you can't stop it. It talks. It may not talk out loud, but sometimes it does.

But it's in your head, like people in the street, they're talking to themselves, and they say, oh, they're a bit crazy. They go on, and then I said to him, but he should have said, what, you should have been more careful. Next time I'm not going to do that anymore.

He's crazy. But most people do that in their heads silently. They're not talking out loud.

So there is this continuous stream of mental noise, a lot of which is actually not all that pleasant. A lot of it is of a negative nature. A lot of the thinking is not constructive thinking, because thought is a wonderful thing and can be a very powerful tool.

I mean, the evolution of thought in humans was an amazing step forward in human evolution. It got linked to language, the development of language. All that has been a wonderful thing, but there's been a heavy price to pay because we live in the world of polarities, so that what you gain here, you lose there.

So if you develop enormous physical strength, you can become a bodybuilder or whatever it is, but then necessarily you're not cultivating your knowledge or whatever. So you gain something here, you lose something there. So the complete identification with the stream of thinking is the unawakened state.

I want to make sure that you know what I mean by that, is whatever thought arises gets a hold of you, and immediately you identify with it, and you have an opinion, whatever it comes up. This is how it is. You have a judgment about somebody, people that you've known in the past.

You have certain thoughts that arise continuously, similar types of thought that never stop. You can experience something in the distant past, 10 years ago, and 10 years later, you're still replaying that event in your mind. This is just one example, and the likelihood is that it is more likely that this is an unpleasant event than a pleasant event.

A pleasant event is not all that memorable, it seems. You see, I saw a beautiful sunset two years ago when I was standing at the top of this mountain, and I'm still thinking about it. Well, maybe, but it's more like if you said, when I was climbing up that mountain, I ran into this awful man who started talking to me about his political views,

and he was just the most dreadful person.

Then he started insulting me, and then you're more likely to think about that for a long time than about a wonderful event. This is just the nature of the human mind. So it's important to realize that this is considered normal to be identified with a stream of thinking, but it is not the ultimate possibility of human beings.

The evolution of humans has not come to an end. The evolution of humanity is, the evolution of life on the planet is an ongoing process. So we are not a finished product.

We are a work in progress. Humans have not yet arrived, as Confucius said, the Chinese philosopher 2,500 years ago. Most humans are not fully human yet.

They are on their way towards that. And all the spiritual teachings, if you look at the essence of spiritual teachings, they all agree that there is something in human mind or human consciousness that is highly dysfunctional. There's also wonderful things there, wonderful things humans have created through the application of thought.

Undoubtedly, that is true. But with that came a very serious dysfunction that grew over centuries and millennia, and we need to look briefly at the nature of that dysfunction. The spiritual teachings, they call it by different names.

The Buddha called this dysfunction the state of suffering or unhappiness or misery. The word he used was the word dukkha, and the word dukkha can be translated as either suffering, misery, unhappiness, or unsatisfactoriness. So the Buddha said, wherever you go, whatever you do, whoever you meet, sooner or later, you will find dukkha.

You will find there's a flaw in the situation, there's a flaw in that person. And the person who makes you, just one example, because you were talking about weddings, the person who makes you happy today or this year, the very same person makes you miserably unhappy in two years time, three, four, seven, whatever the magical number is, then it becomes, it gets difficult. It's the very same person, you have the wedding, and a few years later, in many cases, unfortunately, the divorce.

Now that means you have a wedding and a divorce means the very same human being that made you happy, the very same condition makes you very unhappy. Isn't that strange? And this is an example of what Buddha was talking about when he said dukkha is everywhere.

But he didn't say that is the ultimate destiny of humans. What he's really saying is, unless you awaken, but he was describing the so called normal state of consciousness, where misery or unhappiness seems to predominate, not 100%, but a lot of the time. And Jesus talked about the state of sin, a state of sin, what's translated as sin originally in the original Greek in which the New Testament was written.

It means to miss the target, to sin, literally means to miss the target, like an archer who misses the target. So you miss the target, which is the very purpose of a human life. In other words, sin is a dysfunction in human beings.

And just as the Buddha pointed out the possibility of awakening, which he calls the end of suffering, the end of unhappiness, misery, however you want to translate the term dukkha. In the same way, Jesus talks about, he said, you are the slaves of sin. Now, if you if you translate sin as you're missing the target continuously, ultimately, what that means is, there is a dysfunction operating in you.

And this dysfunction makes you miserable and makes others around you miserable, and you spread your misery without knowing it. And so he pointed to that. And he pointed to the possibility of what is sometimes called salvation.

Sometimes he talked about it as kingdom of heaven, and we'll be coming back to that. Or he talked about eternal, finding eternal life. Interesting terms.

You may not know immediately what it is that he's talking about. But salvation, that's a very common term that he used. Salvation, again, means liberation from this dysfunction that we all inherit.

That is in our genes or is in the collective unconsciousness of humanity. Every human being, and there's a Christian term, it's original sin. That's interesting.

And many people say, oh, that's, I don't want to hear about original sin. That can't be true. But the baby hasn't committed any sin.

How can you say original sin? But if you reinterpret the term, it actually means that every human being inherits this dysfunction that is embedded in the human psyche. So Jesus says there is a way beyond it.

They all recognize, the Buddha recognized the basic fact of the dysfunction and the possibility of transcending that ultimately dysfunctional state of consciousness that has resulted in, on a collective level, the madness of human history. The unbelievable insanity, when you look at 20th century, you don't even need to go back very far. Read a history book of the 20th century, and I recommend the first half of the 20th century.

And it is so dreadful, so many millions upon millions, and they can't even agree on how many human beings were killed by other human beings, both in warfare and in countries by their own governments, in Germany, in Russia, in China, in Cambodia, all dreadful. Hundreds of millions killed. How can this not be insane?

So when you look at the collective manifestation of this dysfunction, you can only shake your head and say, well, truly, there is something very wrong. There's also something very right with humans. There is a sanity hiding in them, and with some people, the

sanity is more on the surface, and with others, the insanity manifests itself more strongly.

And millions are still in the grip of a very serious manifestation of this basic insanity. And you have similar in India, you have terms also, spiritual terms. We live in a state of delusion.

The Hindu teachings, we live in a state of delusion. We don't see reality as it is. And again, they point to the possibility of liberation from the state of illusion.

So you become free of, in Christian terms, you would say free of sin, which is all free of the dysfunction. So they all agree that there is something that needs to be addressed. The greater amount of human suffering on happiness arises out of the human mind and is created by the human mind.

And you can see that in one's personal life, and you can see it collectively. You can see collectively there's been far more suffering inflicted on humans by other humans than suffering inflicted by natural disasters, and so on. You can't even compare the millions killed by other humans.

Natural disasters is relatively little compared to what humans do to other humans. What they do to their fellow humans. And those are the extreme forms of the dysfunction, the collective manifestations.

And then there is the ultimately unnecessary unhappiness that we experience, well, unless you begin to awaken, on a daily basis that is ultimately unnecessary. So the thinking function, that goes back a long, long time when humans began to use language, and then they began to think. It was an enormous evolutionary step forward.

So at first it was great. It was wonderful. So they were able to speak, to differentiate.

Writing developed. You could gather information and pass it on to the next generations. All wonderful things.

Gradually, though, thinking became more and more overactive. The mind became more and more powerful and strong. And this is a myth in many cultures of the golden age.

This goes in many civilizations. You have a myth that tells the story of, we have it in India, you have it at the beginning of the Bible, paradise, and in other places, the myth of the golden age when life was good. When life was not problematic.

When suffering had not yet begun. And that points to something very real. That points to the state of humans before the arising of the conceptual mind with the thinking mind.

Because then they were still, had still a lot in common with the animals. And the animals do not have the burden of a conceptual mind that makes them unhappy. You can even

observe it with your dog.

Your dog is not burdened by a problematic mentally created self. You might have a problem with the way you look. Many people have.

You may have a problem with self-esteem. Your dog doesn't. No matter how the dog looks, the dog does not have an opinion of him or herself.

But you do. You have an opinion about who you are and what is an opinion about who you are. Many people don't have that pleasant of an opinion about themselves.

Some have a totally exaggerated opinion about themselves. They're all deluded. But what is an opinion about yourself?

It is certain thoughts in your mind. These thoughts that you identify with. The thoughts give you a sense of self.

You derive your sense of self from a certain narrative in your mind. And the dog doesn't. So the dog's life is much less problematic than the human life, which is the reason why most dogs are more joyful than humans.

And this is the reason why the tail goes wagging. Sometimes you just look at them and they are so happy to be alive and to be communicating with you that the tail goes. And if your dog would speak, he would say, life is good.

This moment is good. And so animals, yes, there is some physical suffering, but there's no psychological suffering except for a few dogs and cats that have lived for too long with neurotic humans. So that I have met a few, that is true.

And they even, some of them even have an ego that's already developing. But surprisingly, most dogs are still sane. And it's a miracle sometimes when you see who they live with.

So the golden age points to a time when the conceptual mind had not yet taken you over and you were in that state of what we could call rootedness in being. You were like an animal is when the animal rests. Look at a cat and the cat rests.

It's wonderful to see the cat is there. Dog too. And maybe even purring.

Purring is the arm of the cat. It's a wonderful, wonderful sound. And the cat is not thinking, what is going to happen tomorrow?

Or it's not thinking, well, yesterday, he said that. And then why didn't I reply? And I dislike this person so much.

Let me think a bit more about this. It's so, so awful. And I'm so anxious about next week.

No, the cat is rooted in a deep place of alive peace. It's rooted in something deeper. And the tree is even more deeply rooted in being.

And by contemplating an animal or by contemplating a tree, you can sometimes use it as a teaching tool and you can allow the tree to teach you how to be. Because the tree is just, it's totally itself. The tree is even more deeply rooted in, not just physically rooted in the soil.

The tree also has this energy field around it that is an energy field of stillness. And some trees live for hundreds or thousands of years and they just exist in this wonderful beingness. But you have to become a little bit still to be able to sense that when you look at a tree.

You have to become a little bit still for moments and then you can tune into the stillness of the tree. And then the tree is teaching you being. And being, this connectedness with being, to be, I am.

Through the excessive thinking, humans have gradually, they lost it more and more. And then came, of course, the focused application of thought that we call science. And then thinking became even more amplified.

We can now, science is the more focused application of the thinking function. That in itself, it's neutral. But most thinking is overthinking for humans.

And the important thing is identity. Most humans who are identified with their stream of thinking, so they're in the grip of it and they go, or isn't that awful? They simply, they can't even tell the difference between a situation and the interpretation of a situation.

Isn't that amazing? For example, you can say, oh, what an awful day it is again. The weather is awful.

Well, here it's not normally sunny, but we have to go to Seattle or somewhere. The weather is awful, but sunny could be awful too because it's too hot. This is just a little example.

The weather is, it's an awful, awful thing, an awful situation. You can't tell the difference between what is and the narrative that you impose on what is, which is overthinking. So you go into any situation, you become irritated.

For example, there may be one or two of you, probably not, but I'm just saying, who became irritated when we were delayed and we started 15 minutes late. So one or two of you, most were already spiritually awakening, so you wouldn't become irritated, but one or two of you became perhaps irritated. And was it, were you irritated because of the situation?

Yes, you said, yes, I was irritated because you kept us waiting. Don't you respect us? Don't you?

Whatever narrative your mind comes up with, it's a sign of disrespect, isn't it? You kept us waiting. The mind came up with a narrative.

Now, if you were completely identified with the narrative, then that became your reality. Then you looked at the situation through the screen of your narrative without even knowing it, because to you, the screen of the narrative was the reality. So you didn't know that there was a situation and the situation was neutral, which means Eckhart hasn't appeared yet.

He's not here. Well, there's no suffering or unhappiness in that. He's not here yet.

That is the bare fact of the situation. Then the mind comes in and constructs a narrative which is unconscious. So we call that unconscious thinking.

Unconscious thinking happens in the absence of presence or awareness, which is the dimension of consciousness from where you can become aware of what your mind is doing. And so if there is awareness in you, it is possible that your mind may have begun to construct a certain unpleasant narrative about Eckhart not respecting us or me. He's keeping me waiting.

And perhaps if there was some awareness, suddenly you might have become aware and said, oh, there was a narrative that's not necessarily the truth, because who knows? Maybe he's had to go to the bathroom. Maybe we don't know.

It's not necessarily an insult to you. He just had to go to the bathroom. That's an alternative narrative, but he can actually approach a situation without the narrative.

What about that? So the very same situation that makes you unhappy, if you say, what happens if I do not impose a narrative on this moment, my experience of this moment? How would I experience this moment if I did not add a narrative to it?

That's an amazing question, but don't stop there. Then you take the next step and you actually drop the narrative. You can always take it up later because you may want to be unhappy again.

So you drop the narrative and suddenly you sit there and it's perfectly fine. You're not interpreting the present moment. You're allowing it to be as it is and there's no irritation.

There is no unhappiness and it's actually good. Now, what happened in that? This has been a little shift in consciousness, but a very significant shift in consciousness.

You have stepped out of the narrative or you have, another way of putting it, you dropped the narrative and then what happens is you experience this moment through

your awareness rather than through the story of you or me. But humans have developed through identification with thinking over centuries and millennia, they have developed a sense of identity that is linked with thinking, is derived from thinking. And this is why they lost their deeper connectedness with being.

So there is something in you, this identity, which is a mental, a conceptual identity, which we call the ego. This identity actually does not want to drop the narrative. It wants to cling to the narrative because by clinging to this narrative, by interpreting a situation in a particular way, by clinging to it, its sense of self, its sense of identity grows stronger.

How does it grow stronger? When you complain about something or about what a person does or is not doing, you are establishing an ultimately fictitious, but to the ego, very real, sense of superiority. It's an unconscious process.

But this unconscious process sustains the ego continuously. The ego wants and needs to be superior. Now what is the ego again?

Let's go there. It's a mind-made sense of self and it's narrative-based. It's a story of me.

The ego always looks for some kind of superiority to others because that strengthens its own ultimately fictitious sense of self. So you feel a little bit stronger. If you can continue to complain that Eckhart isn't here yet, and you can say, and he's supposed to be spiritual, and he's keeping us waiting here, dishonoring me, and all kinds of weird stuff can go through.

And this is only one little example. Some people have one situation after the other that they experience in this dysfunctional way. Crazy.

But for millions, it's still normal. And what has not yet happened in them is the disidentification from this unconscious stream of thinking and the arising of a deeper or higher dimension of consciousness that we could call awareness, or we could call presence. And when you are present, the mind may still be constructing its stories, but increasingly, you become aware of what your mind is doing.

So there's a background. In the background, there's a knowing. And this background knowing is not thinking.

It can look at thinking without even judging it. It just sees what the mind is doing. For some people, it happens in this way.

They suddenly become aware that for the past 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, depending on at what age you begin to wake up or awaken, become suddenly aware that certain thoughts have been going through their minds for years and decades sometimes. Repetitive thoughts about life, about myself, about the world, about certain politicians, whatever it may be. These thoughts are continuously, and they are judgmental thoughts.

They are unhappy thoughts. They are very critical. They are complaining.

Complaining is a wonderful, wonderful tool for the fictitious sense of self that we call the ego. It is always superiority. Discover in yourself whether that pattern still occasionally operates.

And if you see it, you're no longer in the grip of it. Complaining strengthens the ego enormously. I'm not talking about complaining when something can be done about a situation.

Please, remedy this. There's something wrong here. Please, can you get this repaired?

It's not complaining. Or you go back to the store and say, I bought this here, but there's something wrong with it. It might be called the complaints department, but you're not really complaining.

You're just returning it. And that is, but of course, you could be complaining there too by making somebody wrong and makes yourself right. The ego loves that to be right, but somebody else needs to be wrong.

Otherwise, you can't be right. When you're right, you're superior. So what humans lost this rootedness in being, now they are in their mind completely, and their whole sense of identity is derived from mind.

And that is the unhappy state. That is the egoic identity that creates all the suffering in the world that is unnecessary. And so we need to look again a bit more closely at how it operates.

The ego then is an image of who you are. It's in the mind, and it's reinforced and created and upheld through continuous thinking about me and my life. That's what humans like to think about.

And when you start thinking about your life, you will immediately come up with the fact that your life is problematic. There's a certain heaviness to it. With some, it's more heavy than with others.

And every human inhabits, so to speak, a problematic life situation. Because life is so challenging, it's very unlikely that there's anybody here whose life situation does not contain certain problems or challenges. For some, they are big problems.

For some, they're just a series of small problems. But this is something you can think about. Your life situation is problematic.

And when you start talking about your life, you say, okay, well, it's not easy. I imagine my life to have been unfolded very differently. It's gone, something has gone wrong.

And if you think a lot of it, most of it has gone right, then either you have, this has taken you to a spiritual awakening, and then you're right, or you're deluding yourself. You just happen to be in a temporary space of having just achieved something. And then it's the same thing will make you unhappy, makes you happy today.

Think of the wedding. You developed an image of who you are, and that is reinforced through continuous creation of narratives, of stories. That's me and my life.

And this includes things, bad things and good things. Bad things that happen to you, they become part of the conditioning of your mind. What he did to me, what she did to me 10 years ago, oh, my God, I have to think about this every day, what they did to me.

And of course, I'm not denying that bad things are done to people by other people. Developing an identity on the basis of something bad that was done to you years ago, or even last week, but let's say years ago, to develop an identity on the basis of that is strengthening the fictitious sense of self, the ego. So it's important that we recognize the ego, so that when it comes up strongly in us, we can immediately be aware that this is the ego, and then we are no longer in the grip of the ego.

Then what happens is the awareness begins to rise more and more. And the pattern, the conditioned mental patterns begin to no longer have complete power over us. We are no longer completely identified with the fictitious self.

And the fictitious self is a huge troublemaker. It loves trouble, because it gets stronger through creating the other. It needs, it can only define itself through the other, what I am not.

And so it compares itself continuously to others, this mental image. Even a child would start with that already, like a four-year-old or three-year-old. It jumps over something, and then you ask the other child, can you do that?

Will you do that? Look, I can do that, but you can't. Oh, that's the ego.

Or a toy, another child wants to play with the toy. No, that's mine. And of course, as the child grows up, other possessions, then it becomes something else, the car, the house, whatever.

Body identification is one of the very first things that humans create, a mental image of me and my body. And then you see, this can be a source of pride. If you say, my body is better looking than most bodies, I'm better looking.

And then people who are very beautiful or physically very strong, inevitably develop a very strong ego that's associated with their body image, mental created sense of self. There's nothing wrong with being happy if your body is healthy and good looking. Enjoy it while you can.

Why not? Knowing it's not going to last, that's okay. I'll enjoy it.

But the question is, do you derive your sense of self ultimately from that? In which case you are in for a lot of suffering. But if you do not derive your ultimate sense of self from it, you can enjoy it.

Yes, in the same way that you can enjoy a possession, so it's always ultimately a thought that you identified with. My house, my car, my this, my that. In mythology, there's a figure called the fool.

The fool is a human whose mind is undeveloped, and the fool is quite happy because the fool is below ego. The fool exists below the conceptual mind. And so there the fool is.

In more recent literature, for example, the hobbit in Lord of the Rings is a bit, he's a simpleton. He, all the other characters are more developed, but the hobbit has something that is more rooted in being. He doesn't have too much of a mental image of himself.

And in mythology, only the fool can do certain things that the more mentally developed humans cannot do. And that's a very interesting fact because the fool is still more connected with being, hasn't left being completely yet. And that's a very interesting thing.

However, it is not our destiny to return to that state that we have left behind, which is the state that is below thinking. Yes, we would become free of a lot of unhappiness if we did, but it would be an evolutionary regression. And this is not the destiny of humanity to regress.

However, many humans are longing. They don't know it, but there's a deep longing in humans to become free of this Dutch problematic self that they want to get rid of this burden of themselves without knowing it, they wouldn't say it like that. And this is where, of course, the huge drug industry comes in because many kinds of drugs give you a little taste of self-transcendence.

Even a simple thing like a few whiskeys. If you pour yourself a whiskey and you go, I feel so unhappy, I need a drink. I've just so much on my mind or on my plate, they say, but they really mean my mind.

So, okay, you, oh, it's not so bad after all. Let's have another one. Oh, it feels even better.

I can't even remember my problems anymore. Let's sing a song. Well, if two are good, three must be even better.

Yeah, it is. Let's have another. You are moving towards unconsciousness.

You are soon going to join the cabbage, the evolutionary stage of cabbage, which is fine for the cabbage, but not for you. The cabbage fulfills its nature by being a cabbage, but it's not your destiny to return to the cabbage later. So, if humans exist on the level of thinking and derive that sense of self from thinking, and there is no way except drugs take you temporarily below thinking, and it can be a temporary liberation.

But there's a price to pay, as you know, if you indulge in drugs, there is a price to pay, and the deliberation is only temporary, and it does not take you in the direction of human destiny, which is, let's put it like this, rising above thinking, transcending thinking. It doesn't mean you don't think anymore, but a dimension of consciousness has arisen in you that is higher, or we could say deeper, than thinking, and that is awareness, and that is presence. And once presence is there, thinking becomes a wonderful tool.

You can use thinking to create. You can use thinking, or the human mind, for all kinds of wonderful purposes, but you are no longer used by it. Now, for the first time, you are using your mind instead of your mind using you and pretending to be you.

That is the awakening.

[Speaker 2] (44:24 - 44:44)

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Eckhart Tolle We're Born Connected To Being [d34d9548-4e43-461c-aa75-ca428102bff7]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:47)

We're born connected to being. In this podcast, Eckhart talks to a live audience in Hawaii. He says aloha to the crowd and then explains the spiritual meaning of the word.

He also mentions stillness, which he says is the essence of who we are. He defines stillness as the absence of internal noise and the incessant stream of self-centered harmful thinking that keeps us from realizing our being. He says looking into the eyes of a baby is a spiritual experience.

The baby looks back and the light of pure consciousness shines through. He says all who hold the baby are moved and something deeper awakens. Eckhart believes we are born connected to being, but we're not fully aware of it.

[Speaker 1] (0:49 - 39:28)

Aloha. Although I will probably be talking quite a bit, stillness is the essence of our retreat and also, of course, the essence of who you are. I wrote somewhere, you are never more completely yourself than when you are still.

Stillness is not just the absence of noise. In English, you have the words silence and you have the word stillness. We could say that silence refers to the absence of external noise and stillness refers to the absence of internal noise.

And what is internal noise? The incessant stream of continuous compulsive and to a large extent, not only unnecessary, but very often harmful thinking. Not the creative thinking, empowered thinking, but self-identified thinking.

But if we describe stillness as an absence of something, stillness is also the presence of something. Well, not of something, it is presence itself. So that's the essence of our retreat, which is identical with the essence of who you are in the depth of being, because you are all human beings.

The human is the person, that's how I use the words, the human is the person, the personality, the conditioned entity. Everybody has one and if you are completely identified with it, you don't have it, it has you. The personality, the conditioned entity is there and that's all you know of yourself.

And then you miss the most beautiful potential of human existence and that's the realization of being. And no matter what the person, the personality, the human, no matter what it achieves in this world, it's fairly meaningless, in ultimate terms fairly meaningless and also it won't satisfy you, not for long. As we are here, Aloha is the way

in which people greet each other and also say goodbye.

There's more to this word than meets the eye or rather meets the ear. There's a deeply spiritual meaning to it. Aloha also means kindness, compassion, loving kindness.

It describes ultimately a state of consciousness. And then I did some more research, extensive research on the word Aloha, in other words, I googled it. And I found the etymology of the word, the origin of the word is Alo and Ha.

And Alo, it seems, according to reliable sources on Google, Alo means presence and Ha means breath, the presence of breath. Now breath is a term that in many spiritual traditions, many different spiritual traditions, breath is a term that is equivalent to spirit. But Aloha points to what you recognize in the other when you greet the other is the presence of the indwelling spirit or being.

And that's beautiful. And this indwelling being or presence is what I sometimes refer to as the deep I as opposed to the surface I, I the first person, I. The surface I is the human and the deep I is the being.

So you are in the process in this incarnation of becoming a complete human being. You start with a being but you are not conscious of it, you are connected to being before conceptualization arises in your mind. There is a natural connectedness with being which you can see when you look into the eyes of a baby that hasn't learned language yet, hasn't learned concepts yet, and the baby looks at you and you can see the light of being or consciousness shining through it.

Not a thought in the baby's head, no judgment, just... And then when a human looks into the eyes and feels deeply touched, they don't know why, they say, it awakens briefly, it awakens something in them that deeper dimension. They cannot find this when they encounter a grown-up human or even a child that's already learned conceptualization, then it's not quite as easy to connect with a being because something obscures it, the stream of thinking and conceptualization, and an identity that is derived from the stream of thinking and conceptualization obscures that deeper essence.

So you are born with that essence, you are naturally connected to it and then you are destined to lose it, not lose it but become disconnected from it as if it were in the same way that if you were the richest person, it's a stupid analogy but analogies are always limited, if you were one of the richest persons in the world and you had all this, but you didn't know it. You have all these accounts in Switzerland with a billion dollars in it but you don't know that you have an account in Switzerland and so you are a beggar. So can we say that you are poor or you are rich?

In the same way we can say that to become disconnected from being is as if you were disconnected from it, because ultimately you are not disconnected from it ever, but you

are completely unaware of it. You have fallen into an unconscious state and then you begin to suffer. And then eventually, because suffering is everybody's spiritual teacher, even if they don't have any other spiritual teacher, suffering is everybody's spiritual teacher and eventually in this lifetime or some other, suffering brings about an awakening.

What the actual spiritual teacher does, on this level here, he, she, whatever, saves time. You don't need to go through this enormous amount of suffering because you begin to realize that, you begin to realize how suffering arises within you. It's the teaching of the Buddha, who summarized his teaching by saying, I teach suffering and the end of suffering.

That's the summary of the Buddha's teaching. I teach suffering means I show you how suffering arises. And then the end of suffering is I show you how suffering can end.

But no human comes to a teacher unless they have already had their share of suffering. And that's why you are here. If you hadn't had your share of suffering, you wouldn't be ready yet and I wouldn't be here certainly, if I had had a fantastic early life, first 20, 30 years of my life and great childhood and happiness and perfect environment, everything going great, great starting a career, nothing going wrong in the career, perfectly healthy, then you have perfectly healthy children and a beautiful, fantastic marriage and everything is wonderful. Anybody who has up to now lived through what I just described, is not going to be here. They may be busy on their couch, binge watching Netflix.

Then they hear about something about awakening, what's the point, I'm awakened already. So again, the Aloha greetings to be used respectfully and with awareness of its deeper meaning. In the same way that you have in India the Namaste greeting, which is also equally beautiful and meaningful and profound.

Namaste literally as far as I know means I bow to you. Now that you does not really refer to the person or the personality because on the level of the personality that you may be an obnoxious jerk. So you cannot bow to an obnoxious jerk.

The you refers to something deeper. I bow to the divinity in you, the essence of who you are, the being that is hiding underneath the surface of the personality, perhaps not able to shine through yet because the personality is too dense. It's a density to it.

And this total identification with the stream of thinking never stops. And the entire identity is derived from the narrative that continuously arises and is continuously reinforced in their minds. Now some of you still have remnants of that.

So as you come here, that conditioned mind-made entity, the self, that conditioned self, you probably haven't left it behind at home. It's hard to leave it. It always tends to come with you wherever you go.

Wherever you go, you find yourself. And sometimes people begin to notice that, for example, in relationships, they tend to encounter similar problems from one relationship to another and another and another. Why do I always meet these obnoxious jerks?

And then they may come to the wrong conclusion. All men are obnoxious jerks. Or the equivalent for women.

Whatever the equivalent of obnoxious jerk is for women, I don't want to go there. You need to be careful in these sensitive times. But I'm sure there is an equivalent term for it for women.

So why are they all like that? And then you draw a conclusion. That's how it is.

And from then on, this conclusion, which is a thought that gets lodged in your mind, this conclusion that this is how they are, becomes the veil through which you perceive every man or every woman. It's just one example. It can happen in many different ways.

Then it becomes a heavy veil that you can no longer perceive or relate to the reality of the other because it's obscured by this very overpowering judgment of a conclusion that you have drawn. This is how it is. This is your expectation.

And once you have decided every man is an obnoxious jerk or the other way around, then you seek that in the other. Every time you meet a man, the obnoxious is going to come out any minute now. And then you might even want to draw it out just to try.

So the conditioned personality, which is fine, everybody has one, as I said, it travels with you on planes and on boats and in cars. It's always there. Sometimes you think for a moment it's gone now and perhaps it is withdrawn.

And then somebody says something, a remark, something, you get triggered. And these personalities are becoming more and more sensitive these days, it seems. That's why young people are particularly sensitive.

Apparently, I read about it, they need trigger warnings. Any moment now something might trigger you is going to come up. They put trigger warnings in literature, in old books, because there's something that might upset you.

Be careful. And the trigger, of course, there's a reactivity. The reactivity strengthens the egoic self, which is the personality, the egoic self.

Now, as I said, everybody, of course, has a personality, but the question is, are you the personality or do you have it? Everybody has one, but are you completely identified with this conditioned entity or is there deeper awareness of something that transcends this conditioned entity? And that can arise in a simple moment of alert stillness.

So, in that simple moment of alert stillness, who are you without any narrative? Because

if there's no moment of alert stillness, there's no narrative that says something about me, my life. My life is a heavy thing.

It's what people call my life is a narrative in their mind. The title of it is my life. And people carry this heavy burden.

Many people have a fairly unhappy my life story. Unhappy is the burden of all the things that have happened to me, or maybe even things that I did or shouldn't have done. It's all part of my life, what people did.

My failings, my successes too, yeah, it's great. Some of it might be great, but then I lost it again. My life.

In the moment of stillness, the narrative subsides and there's not what is left of you when the narrative that tells you who you are subsides, even for a moment, like now. Now you cannot say what is left of you, but you know that there's something left. You cannot name it because it's beyond concepts.

However, it's a spiritual teacher's job to point to it, even with concepts. But they're just concepts, like little signposts. And one of these signposts is, for example, what is left in that moment of stillness.

The realization that you are, but not what you are, that you are. In other words, a sense of presence, one could say. Not just an absence of thought, yes, also an absence of thought.

But a presence, but not the presence of something. One could compare it to space. The space in this room allows all the content that is in this room to be here.

The human bodies, furniture, there's the ceiling and the walls and so on, there's this room. But the vital thing about this room is the space in this room. Because otherwise there wouldn't be a room.

So the essence of it, you cannot perceive, it is not something, but it enables everything to be. So in the external world we have this strange thing called space, which is not a thing. Nobody knows really what to do with it, does it ever end.

Outer space, because this space in this room goes on, there's more space than in this room. And then you look up into the sky at night, just vast space, nothing but space except some lights in space. You could reduce the entire universe, or reality so-called, as consists of two things.

The world, let's say, consists of two things, things and space. There are objects everywhere, there's the tiniest objects and the vast objects, the sun, the moon, the stars, planets, galaxies. But they exist in this vast space.

So the world consists of space and things in space, one could say. But space is the essence of this room. And when you look up into the sky at night, and you are overcome by a sense of wonder, and it might stop your mind if you really look into the sky.

That was my first ever meditation when I was an adolescent, maybe 15. I loved looking up into the sky, and it stilled my mind. I didn't know that's what it did.

But I looked up into the sky, and there went a sense of, this English word, awe, is very strange, isn't it? Because it's onomatopoeic, which means it imitates, the word imitates what it signifies. Like the word knock-knock, which is called onomatopoeic.

Oh, A-W-E, for those who don't, English is not your native language. I believe it is, A-W-E. Oh, wow.

Socrates said, philosophy begins in wonder. Wonder is you don't know. And wonder is awe.

So when you look up into this vast space, yes, it is filled with the most amazing things, galaxies, millions and billions of galaxies, and every galaxy is a universe. But even greater than the galaxies is the space, it's the vastness of space itself. And there is an equivalent to what we perceive as outer space within you.

And in the same way that this outer space enables everything to be, there is that inner space that enables every thought and every sense perception to arise. That is consciousness itself. That is the inner space.

And now when we go into that stillness, what is left of you is a sense of inner spaciousness, awareness. All we can say is, you know that you are. This is the I am.

But you don't add anything to it. In that sense of beingness or presence, you have no age. It doesn't matter whether you are 20 or 90, that in itself you have no race.

You have no gender. Sorry about people who are so interested in gender, but at the deepest level, the essence of who you are has no gender. No age, no gender, no...

And that is what the Buddha referred to as emptiness, sunyata, which I would prefer the translation of spaciousness. And of course Jesus refers to it as the kingdom of heaven, which is within you. And as you might know in my translation of this term, kingdom of heaven, my translation of it is different.

For contemporary humans, I re-translated it. Kingdom is dimension. And of heaven, heaven is the sky.

In most languages, sky and heaven are the same word. The dimension of the sky. But what is the sky?

Spaciousness, vast spaciousness. So he very cleverly or wisely used this thing in the so-called outer world. He used that which is closest to that inner realm of consciousness itself.

And that is the vast spaciousness of the sky. So dimension of spaciousness is kingdom of heaven. And it is within you.

And that's all. That is the essence of our retreat. In case you are in a hurry and want to get back home.

More important things to do. One thing after another. And everything demands your attention.

And you sort something out here. And then something goes wrong there. So, in the ordinary state of consciousness, which is a state of unconsciousness, the human is obsessed with objects.

Not only external objects, but objects of consciousness, of thoughts. Every thought is an object of form that arises. So the human mind in its unconscious state is cluttered with stuff.

One damn thing after another. That was Churchill's definition of history, human history. But it's also the definition of the human mind.

The unobserved human mind. And so that could be part of what travels with you. That could have come with you here.

So, something to look out for while you are here on this retreat. Your mind. Watch your mind.

That's a saying that I learned when I was many, many, many years ago. Visited a Buddhist monastery a few times. And the monks, when they get upset with another monk who talks too much, when they would like to say, What did you shut up?

They don't say that. You are not allowed to say that. But they say, watch your mind.

And if the person that they speak to is extremely unconscious, the person will of course reply, You watch yours. So here, a few practical considerations connected with this. Don't feed your mind with things that amplify the clutter, that add to the clutter in your mind that to some extent is already there.

And one of the things that adds to the clutter of your mind is the thing that everybody carries. Some people, their hand is beginning to adopt this shape, even when they are not holding it. I believe in a couple of hundred years, most hands will look like this.

And my suggestion or my recommendation is, because this adds unnecessarily to the

clutter of your mind, I'm not talking about helpful text messages that convey some interesting or useful information that you need. That's fine. But people get this thing out when there is no particular reason for getting it out, simply because they need to fill this moment with something.

You see people waiting for the elevator. Why can't they stand there for one minute in a state of peaceful beingness? No, they have to get out.

And if you are not getting out yours, somebody next to you is getting out theirs, and somebody there is there, then you get out yours too. And then randomly you go on something. Oh.

And more clutter, clutter. This is an amplification of the clutter that was already there, because before the clever human mind came up with these devices, the human mind was already cluttered. And now it's cluttered even more.

So I recommend that you refrain from useless use of the device, or use it as little as possible while you are here. Certainly not randomly get it out and go swiping. Another recommendation I have in order not to add to the clutter of your mind is please refrain from turning on your television.

Okay, I'll try. So if you substantially reduce the amount of time you spend with your device, that's a big gain, do not be afraid of nothingness, no thingness in your life here. Do not be afraid of sitting or standing somewhere, just contemplating the environment, or being in your room without the need to fill this moment with something.

The compulsion to continuously fill this moment with something. It is amazingly wonderful to be able to sit in your room, not for hours on end, you don't have to overdo the beingness, because life is a dance between doing and being. Now, I don't teach doing, because everybody is already great at doing.

They are overdoing and overthinking, because thinking is doing also, the thinking is doing, not just external doing. So everybody is great at doing. There are some workshops and teachings you can go to that teach you how to do more or better, that's fine.

But here the emphasis is on the being dimension. The human needs to find the balance between being and doing. This is the teaching of being, because being has largely been lost, the awareness of being, and that's a huge loss.

It's a critical loss. It makes the individual human unhappy, and it leads to the breakdown ultimately of civilization, because with the loss of the being dimension, no civilization can survive for very long if there is not at least some connection to being. Even though we are all aware that the established religions to a large extent have traditionally been taken over by the human ego in the search for power and control, we all know that, and

yet that is all true, but there has always remained a remnant of, a little bit of an opening into the spiritual dimension, just a remnant that there was still a possibility.

Maybe you go to church, and you hear the teachings of Jesus, and at some level something seeps in, and you go for a moment. Take no thought for the moral, for the moral will take no thought for the things of itself. The old translation is, look at the flowers of the field, how they live.

They are not anxious or worried about tomorrow, and yet look at all their glory, and so why do you? So perhaps they hear something like that in the church, for a moment, or in that beautiful space of a temple or church, for a moment they experience something. So religion, yes, it provided also some structure in the human psyche, that is on a more superficial level, that is not necessarily a bad thing either, but the connectedness with the transcendent.

In Buddhist countries you have still a little bit of familiarity with the southern Buddhists, the Theravada school of Buddhism. You have the monks, and not every monk is enlightened, and in fact most of them are not, but that's fine. They practice, some are.

Some criminals become monks to escape from the police, but that's another story. But they still practice the teaching of the Buddha, they chant the teachings every day, and they receive their sustenance by going on alms rounds every day with their bowls, begging bowls, and then to the people who live in the village or the town, they put a little bit of food, so there's a connection, and they have great respect still for the monks, and there's a connection to this, some opening into the transcendent dimension.

[Speaker 2] (39:29 - 39:49)

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Eckhart Tolle What Is Essential Is Invisible To The Eye [9036c9d4-274b-4266-91bb-ad5e015953f6]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:33)

What is essential is invisible to the eye. In this episode, Eckhart jokes with a live audience about a video game that's been reviewed in the New York Times. He wonders if his work could be having an impact on mainstream culture after all because the name of the game is stillness.

That's really funny. He goes on to answer questions about such topics as trusting our feelings and how to eliminate conflict in our lives, especially when the opinions of others differ from our own. His answers may surprise you.

[Speaker 1] (0:35 - 53:32)

I get the newspaper delivered to my hotel room and when I looked at the front page of the New York Times this morning, I thought something weird happening. It's not about fake news. Has our gathering manifested an alternate reality line, stream?

That's just a speculative thought. An article on the front page of the New York Times about a video game, the object of which is stillness. On the front page of the New York Times, why would they...

We must have had an effect on the collective consciousness to make this happen. I'll just read a few lines to you. The game is called Walden.

The video game based on Thoreau's 19th century retreat in Massachusetts will urge players to collect arrowheads, cast their fishing poles in the tranquil pond, perhaps even jot notes in the journal, all while listening to music, natural sounds, and excerpts from the author's meditations. The lead designer came up with the idea as a way to reinforce our connection to the natural world and to challenge our hurried culture. The object of the game is simple, stillness.

Thoreau was sitting in a moment when life was beginning to speed up and he identified that asking, are our lives better because we now live on railroad time? We have to ask ourselves the same question today. Are our lives better because we live on internet time?

Good, things are changing. Some questions that people have sent in. Can we trust our feelings?

Are you able to say something about intuition, which is not the same but interests me as well? Can we trust our feelings? Now often you hear people say, trust your feelings.

I would suggest, however, that that's not necessarily true. Acknowledge your feelings, yes. Be there as the observing presence for your feelings, yes.

Be aware of your feelings, accept that they are there. Trust, which means to take them to be the truth or the truth for you or using them as a guide to correct or skillful action that may be doubtful because it depends where these feelings arise in you. A little anecdote from my life to illustrate that, when I lived in England in the country in that alternative town Glastonbury for three years, I lived in a cottage and once a month I would travel to London or other cities in my beloved Russian made Lada car to do a workshop.

And usually a weekend workshop called things like transcending time or be here now. Nothing much has changed except that the average number of people I had was about 10. And since my income was not enough, I had to rent out a room upstairs in my cottage.

I advertised in the local paper, several people came to apply and finally chose a young woman who had just been offered a job in that town. She came, she moved in, and after the first night in her room, she came down for breakfast into the kitchen, which was a shared kitchen, and she said, I can't stay here. I said, what's wrong?

It's just a feeling. I always listen to my feelings. I just can't stay here.

There's something not right. So I was very nervous. And I said, okay, that's fine.

And she found that very disconcerting because she had expected a more conventional response, which would have been, what? I've interviewed all these people. I've chosen you.

And now what? You're doing this to me. You're not getting your rent money back that you paid in advance.

But I said, okay, I'll give you your money back. It's fine. So she was even more confused after that.

And he said, I'll spend one more night or two more nights. She spent the second night. And then in the morning she said, no, I think I'll stay.

I have a different feeling now. And I said, oh, that's fine. That's good.

And again, she was a little disconcerted because the conventional response would have been, which I did do, I just put another ad in the paper. And now you're telling me this? The conventional responses are how to make life complicated for yourself and others.

But it's normal. It's how the ego responds. And so whenever somebody does not respond in that way, life becomes simple.

But when life becomes simple, people who expect the conventional responses become confused. This is a weird person. And so she decided to stay.

And a few weeks later, when I got to know her better, she explained to me that that first night she was in her bedroom and she said, I found you so weird that I thought you might creep in in the middle of the night and murder me. And later she said, living in the same house with you is like living in a float tank. I think she learned a lot, not so much through me explaining things to her, just by being there.

So feelings. Now, where did her initial feelings that she experienced, that she then believed that they were a correct guide for action? Of course they were not, because they originated in fear.

And they also originated in a misinterpretation of reality, which is so easy to do for the mind, to misinterpret another person, to misinterpret a situation. You misinterpret because you see it through the conditioning of your mind. You see it through your beliefs, your prior experiences in childhood.

You see it through even other things that have conditioned your mind. Maybe even scary movies about weird people who don't say much. And then just when you're having a shower, they creep in.

Therefore, it's not that easy often to say, where does this feeling that I have arise? Where does this feeling originate? Now, does it come from a deeper, the intuitive place?

Intuition comes out of being present. Intuition does not come out of the conditioning of your mind. So if you have an intuition, also it is usually not tainted by negativity, such as anger or fear.

So there is something certain about it. There is a quiet strength behind your feeling, a quiet strength. There's not a nervous energy behind your feeling.

You just know this is right. You may not be able to explain to yourself or others why, as a different quality. There's a more peaceful quality to it.

Through life experience, you have to find out for yourself what a deeper feeling that comes out of presence and is a true intuition, how it is different from something that arises from the conditioning of your mind. Now, a lot of the time, people misinterpret reality because they look at reality through the veil of their conditioning. And that contributes to a huge amount of conflict in life, in relationships, and so on.

And not only they misinterpret, they add this what I call unnecessary baggage to situations through their reactivity, which is an ego device in order to strengthen the ego's always deficient sense of identity. So coming back again to that story, what had happened, if I had reacted in the normal way, becoming angry and accusing her when

she said after one night she couldn't stay, and that would have strengthened, it would have come from my ego, it would have strengthened my sense of self, the separate sense of self. And again, if the reaction had been when she finally decided to, after the second night, decided to stay, I could have again said, now I've just spent, I mean, it wasn't that much, an ad in the local paper is relatively cheap, but the ego would have dwelt on that and said, now I've spent that, and all these people that I already said they couldn't come, now they have already found accommodation, I would have again made somebody wrong.

And the ego loves that, to make somebody wrong, because when you make somebody wrong, and you would be, the ego could even explain, you're totally justified because that's not fair, the person shouldn't just change like that. But instead of saying how people should be, if you just, this is what is, you can either accept it or you cannot. I could have said also in practical terms, when after the second night she said, I've decided to stay, maybe I could have said, oh, it's too late, I've already found somebody else, or I'd said, no, maybe it's better if you do go, because tomorrow night you might again, after tomorrow you might again not want to stay.

All these things are possible, but the situation remained simple, because of non-reactivity. And this applies to so many cases, whenever things do not go smoothly, because a person does not do what they're supposed to do. And then immediately the ego constructs a narrative.

And you know it when you start telling other people about it, that strengthens it. So I could have picked up the phone and said, you know, this girl, I rejected five other people for her, know what she's done to me? And then listen and tell the story.

So satisfying to the ego. And then the person on the other end says, oh my God, you're so sorry. And then of course, I could have gone into thinking, oh, maybe she's totally neurotic, maybe she's a psycho.

All spinning tails in the head, all kinds of things. There's a whole fictitious narratives that are taken for reality. How simple things can actually be, if you don't add unnecessary reactivity to it.

But in order to do that, it requires you to be present, not to be there as a person, because a person feels easily offended. Vigilance is required in your interactions with people. Always the question, am I adding something to the interaction that is unnecessary, that is just there to strengthen my fictitious sense of self, to justify something, to make somebody wrong, big thing for the ego.

Because if I can make something wrong, there's always an element of victimhood. When I make somebody wrong, in relation to myself, there's always an element of, it may not be the main focal point, but there's an element of me being the victim, if I make you

wrong. And the ego loves that, because it strengthens itself through that.

And if I make somebody wrong, you know what he said and what he did then? Let me tell you about this. Oh, how can somebody do something like that?

And this means unconsciously, I'm always superior to the other when this happens. When you're telling the story about what somebody did and said to you, you do it because the ego, when you're telling, when you're making somebody wrong, because when you are right. Now you probably all know people in your life, when they tell you things, it's always others who are wrong.

It's never them. It's very strange. Why is it that I'm always right and others are always wrong?

They never ask that question. But it's a mystery of human existence. One of the great mysteries of life is why I'm always right and others are always wrong.

I think philosophers haven't explored yet in detail enough and nobody has resolved this mystery and everybody should ask themselves, how is that? I must be really superior to everybody. Weird.

So if you think back, the last year or two or three in your life, well, I'm actually talking to a group of people here who are much more conscious than the average human. But nevertheless, even here, some of you may find, if you look back the last few years, that whenever there was some kind of argument or conflict, perhaps it was, was it always the others who were wrong? It's very easy to deny somebody's perspective if it conflicts with your own and make them totally wrong.

You can also make a group of people totally wrong. An entire group, an entire nation, an entire religion can make everybody wrong. It's great.

You feel stronger and morally superior. Now, does that mean there are not people who are deeply wrong because they might be, there may be people out to deceive you. You might go and buy a secondhand car and the person is so friendly and kind and he sells you something that just breaks down the next day and it's clearly lied to you.

What do you do then? And even then it's important not to amplify what has happened by going into your mind and creating a whole string of narratives in your mind of what an awful person that is and coming to all kinds of conclusions about that and tell the story to yourself and to others and amplify it in that way. And then you go back to him and then you tell him really what you think of him.

Rather than keep it simple, what action can I take to remedy this? Even if you go to court, you can do it in a detached way. I'm not necessarily saying never do anything, just put up with anything and anybody.

It's just, that's not what it means. Even if you go to court in order to rectify a situation that is obviously wrong, you can do it in a way that is detached and just keeps it to the, just the essentials of the situation, practical without the whole superstructure of you are the evil one, you are wrong. So you can practice that in many, many situations in your life.

Refrain from calling up people or telling people what other people, and tell them about what other people did wrong or how they failed, how they were deficient, how somebody lied to you, was dishonest or expressed an objectionable opinion. And then conflict becomes almost eliminated from your life or 90% of it. We have some related questions, so I'll answer them as one.

How do you suggest one find balance and maintain presence regarding current political issues and situations that seem so dangerous to freedom and humane policies, both for our presence and when interfacing with others? How to deal with that within ourselves and when relating to others? And one or two similar questions, for example, any tips for how I can be a good citizen who does her part to stand against social and environmental injustice while simultaneously staying true to my own awakening and my need for tranquility?

What I've been talking about just now, and this, there's a relationship. When you communicate with others, let's say about political situation or whatever it may be, we communicate verbally or in writing or just have a monologue in your head. People have monologues in their head.

This is normal. The important thing to avoid so that ego doesn't come in is again to make other human beings wrong. To make wrong who they are.

I'm not talking about what they do, but to make wrong who they are. There is a difference. You can criticize what a person says or does, but if you then use whatever this person says or does and say that is his or her identity, then you've created an enemy in your mind and that is a dangerous thing to do because it strengthens the unconsciousness in the collective energy field and produces a corresponding reactive effect in the other, and then there's a mutual strengthening of that and that leads to huge conflict and you get more and more trapped in your ego and in being right. So if you can take action and communicate, take action, without having your sense of self invested in it so that you point out your perspective, you explain it, you substantiate it, you illustrate it. This is how I see it.

This is how the situation is. This is what we need to do or be careful of. All this is fine.

You can attack another person's point of view or perspective without attacking who that person is. You attack it by showing that it is not right and presenting an alternative so that your communication is not just pointing out what in your view is wrong, but also

suggesting an alternative so that there is the positive and negative both coming in. It's extremely satisfying to the ego to make people wrong and entire groups of people wrong.

So you have to be careful with that. The prerequisite for being able to do that is that you need to, and here we come again to the foundation for it all or conscious living and conscious doing. The foundation is that you derive your sense of identity from that deeper place of consciousness, of presence.

You are the awareness. You are not the thought. The thought is fine, but if there is self-seeking in the thought structures, that means you are identified with your thoughts, which being identified with your thoughts means seeking your sense of self in those thoughts.

So then when you present your opinion or your viewpoint, you are so identified with it that anybody who even questions, not even attack, anybody who questions your viewpoint or perspective, and this is unconscious, deeply unconscious ego, anybody who questions your perspective or viewpoint, which you don't know is a perspective or viewpoint, to you it is the absolute truth because you're identified with the thought.

Anybody who questions it will be regarded as somebody who is attacking who you are. He is actually an enemy, your enemy. And this is the essence of unconsciousness, to be identified completely with your mental positions.

But how can you not be identified with your mental positions if you have never known the deeper place within yourself where your true identity resides? So if you tell somebody, don't be identified with your mental positions and your thoughts, your perspectives, your viewpoint, don't mistake them for the absolute truth, they don't know what you're talking about and they can't do, what do you mean? That's all there is.

So the foundation for being able to use your mind consciously instead of being used by your mind, which is the essence of unconsciousness, the foundation for that is find out who you are in the essence of your being. And that is here and now, the consciousness that you are, the awareness, the presence. That's what's left when right now you don't remember your history.

Right now, you don't remember even your name, unless I ask you, you're not thinking your name, no, okay. So you can be yourself without remembering your name. And if I don't ask you about your history, right at this moment, you probably don't remember any of your personal history unless you go there, you have to retrieve it in your mind, but you don't need it now.

Now does it mean you cannot be yourself now? Does it mean if you don't remember your telephone number and your email address and your personal history, you can't be

yourself? No.

These are just things that are added onto you. But even without remembering any of these things, I don't remember my email address. I don't remember my name.

I don't remember my history even, but in here I am sitting and perceiving, can you feel yourself? Can you feel the essence of you right now without the memory of you? Yes, in fact, you can feel it more strongly, but you cannot define what exactly that is.

You can sense this inherent presence that you are, and you can sense it and that inherent presence is the same whether you are a huge success story in the eyes of the world, you are a big VIP and a celebrity, there may be one or two here, not that it makes much difference here, or you may be somebody who has failed in everything that he or she has done, a failed career, three failed marriages, many other failed relationships, bankruptcy, gone to prison, then come out of prison, then come back into prison, made a mess of the whole thing, total failure, and yet in the moment of not remembering your history, that sense of presence is exactly the same as that sense of presence of the VIP who has a big success story.

That is the unconditioned consciousness, the presence that frees you from your personality and your person, and also connects you to a much vaster intelligence, the intelligence that underlies the entire creation that is behind everything, the organizing principle behind the physical universe, the intelligence that gradually expresses itself more and more into this world. The light, I call it the light of the source, like the sun, the sun shines its light into this world, the sun is the source of the light. Now the source of the world, we could call, if God means anything, then God is the source of all life.

And of course, the source of all life has no location in space or time, obviously, it's not somewhere in the universe God lives. God is transcendent to the universe. It is the source.

God is the source of all life in the same way that the sun is the source of all light. And so the relationship between your consciousness, which is not your consciousness, it is universal consciousness expressing itself through you, the relationship between that consciousness that you are and the source is the same as the sun and the sunlight. So the consciousness in you is the light of the source or God's shine.

The source itself, you cannot know, it is totally beyond anything that you could possibly even understand or think about. And yet you are inseparable part of it in the same way that this ray of sunlight is an inseparable part still of the sun. And yet the ray of sunlight would be both right and not right in saying, I am the sun.

If the ray of sunlight says, I am the sun, in one way it is true, but in another way, it is not true because the sun is so much vaster than the ray of sunlight. And yet it is a

emanation of the sun and it is eternally connected to the sun. It is always one with the sun.

So as you know, there have been mystics in various traditions, in Sufism, for example, it's not uncommon, mystics have said, suddenly they realized after they went through their dancing, the mind stopped completely and presence arose. And of course they lived very simply. And they came to that realization of their essence identity.

And then they said to others who did not have the realization of their essence identity, they said, I am God. I realized it now. I'm God.

This was not well received. And many of them did not survive for long after that. So I don't recommend it either.

Although you probably won't get killed, but they will send you to see someone and be given some pills. So that is the foundation is to know who you are. Then you can use your mind in a way that is, that is actually very effective, but it's no longer egoic, no longer in the service of ego.

It no longer becomes the ego. The unobserved mind is the ego, the human ego. There's just the mind.

It does what it does and you think you are it. So the foundation for it all is consciousness becoming conscious here and now. Conscious of what?

Usually when you read about consciousness in normal discourse, it's always raising consciousness. You read about it in newspapers and so on. They talk about raising consciousness, but it's always raising consciousness about what?

So it could be raising consciousness about the environment. It's a good thing to raise consciousness. Yes.

Raising consciousness about certain political situations, raising consciousness about certain injustices here and there. It's all very good, but more fundamental is raising consciousness, period. I'm not talking about raising consciousness of something that comes secondary, secondary.

Raising consciousness of consciousness. Be aware that you are aware. Be aware of awareness.

And that is the light of God. If you're comfortable with that terminology, that is the light of God in you. And that is exactly what Jesus meant when he said, you are the light of the world.

The difference between a person like Jesus and the people he was talking to was he fully realized his essence identity and the others didn't yet fully realize their essence identity.

And yet their destiny is to also realize their essence identity. Now, in our mainstream culture and science, of course, they will tell you, well, first of all, we have examined the brain.

We know quite a bit about the brain, but in reality, we know very, very little. Scientists don't even know what a thought, what is a thought? What is the material, physical representation of a thought in the brain?

Nobody knows. What is the relationship between thought, between the physical brain and consciousness? Mainstream science will tell you that most of them, there are a few who are beginning to doubt that the mainstream narrative, it will tell you that consciousness, if they even mention the word, most of the time they don't even talk about it because they have no idea what it is and you can't examine it under a microscope.

And when you cut open the brain, you will not find consciousness. In fact, when you cut open the brain, you will not find nothing of you. 99% of who you are is invisible.

It does not exist in the physical realm. Only your physical body, but who you are, your thoughts, your emotions, and the underlying consciousness, it's all invisible. There's a lovely, I believe it is a little work of literature.

There's a beautiful phrase, what is essential is invisible to the eye. What is essential is invisible to the eye. Beautiful and very, very true.

But that means all the things that are essential in human life, of course, love, joy, a sense of aliveness, all your emotions, all your thoughts, they are invisible to the eye. Consciousness is invisible to the eye, which means you cannot find it with your senses. You can't see it or touch it.

So the big question about consciousness is what is the relationship between the physical brain and consciousness? Undoubtedly, there is a relationship. There's no doubt about that.

If you hurt the physical brain, you will lose consciousness. That's a conventional expression. As I often say, if a brick falls on my head, hopefully by saying it, I'm not manifesting it right now.

If a brick falls on my head, I will not be able to continue to speak. Is that proof that consciousness is produced by the brain? Many people will tell you that that is proof that consciousness is produced by the brain and the conventional expression is consciousness is a by-product or an epiphenomenon of the chemical soup in the brain.

Many scientists actually deny that consciousness even exists. I don't know where they're going with that because to be denied, to deny that consciousness exists, you need to

have consciousness. And they don't want to go there because it's so unknown.

They realize they cannot dissect it. So it's better to leave it alone and to say only we live, still live in a materialistic age. Materialism in its philosophical and deeper meaning doesn't mean that you're interested in money.

Materialism in the deeper meaning means that you believe that physical matter, that everything in this world can be explained with reference to physical matter, atoms, molecules, and basically matter. Of course, if you go more deeply into physics, materialism disappears because you realize that matter is a kind of illusion. There is no matter.

If you go deep into the atomic structure and beyond, you realize there's nothing. This is what I perceive as matter. It's just rapid movements of atoms and molecules giving me the illusion that this is matter and the same in my body.

Ultimately, there is no matter. And yet there's still within conventional science the belief that the universe is matter. It can be explained with reference to matter.

So does the brain produce consciousness? The other possibility is that the brain receives consciousness and channels consciousness into a particular form that then creates your experience of the world and creates you. That consciousness is the organizing principle behind the formation of the brain.

In the same way that a radio or a television does not produce the program that you watch, I can destroy the television set that happens to be showing an orchestra playing the Ninth Symphony. And then I destroy it. Have I destroyed the Ninth Symphony?

No. It's no longer transmitting. It's no longer functioning as a receiver.

Science will come to that realization and there are already some scientists who have enough courage to question conventional interpretations. And it's usually scientists who are approaching retirement age because before reaching retirement age, it would be too destructive for their career to go outside the mainstream interpretation. But once you reach retirement, you've got nothing to lose.

You can speak out. And so that's a good thing. So the greatest mystery in the entire universe is not the infinity of space, or magnificent as that is, or the infinity of subatomic space, the macrocosm and the microcosm.

That's mysterious enough and we know little about it. But the greatest mystery of all is the fact that the universe is conscious. That is so incredible.

The universe is conscious. How do I know that? Well, it's self-evident.

I'm conscious. If I'm conscious, it means the universe is conscious. So that is the self-

evident thing.

The one thing that you cannot question, the one thing is beyond doubt about you and me is that you are conscious. All the rest could be an illusion or a dream that you are having right now, that we are actually in this room. Somebody is talking and saying, maybe you're dreaming.

That could be a dream. You could be dreaming your whole life. And there's a way one could even say that you are being dreamt by the universal consciousness, that the entire universe that we experience is a dream that happens within the universal consciousness.

You might be dreaming, but even if you're dreaming, there's a consciousness needed for the dream to happen in. And so that's the very foundation for who you are is conscious. Your essence identity is timeless and you cannot analyze it.

You cannot know it in the same way that you know an object. Jesus used the word kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God to refer to it. What that is is consciousness, kingdom of heaven.

Heaven is sky and sky is an analogy for vast spaciousness. So it's a wonderfully adequate and suitable analogy for spaciousness, formless consciousness itself. So that's why Jesus used sky.

The dimension, the kingdom of heaven is the dimension of spaciousness, formless consciousness, timeless consciousness. And where is it? The kingdom of heaven is within you, in the midst of you.

There are various translations. Now, what does that mean when he says you cannot say, oh, there it is, or oh, it's over there. It means the kingdom of heaven cannot become an object to your consciousness.

You can't say there it is because if you're looking for the kingdom of heaven, as people have, they've projected mentally what kingdom of heaven is, although he said, don't look for it. He said, oh, it's going to come when we die or it's up there somewhere because he used the analogy of sky. So traditionally, people who have misunderstood, it's kingdom of heaven must be up there somewhere.

That's for sure. And since it's not here now, probably when we die, we go there and up there. If you're looking for the kingdom of heaven or you're looking for God, it's like you're shining a light and you say, where is it?

I'm looking for myself. I'm looking for God. I'm looking for the kingdom of heaven.

It's not here. Okay, let's look somewhere else. No.

And you can look in time. Maybe it's in the future. It's in the past.

No, it's not there. It seems to be nowhere. But where you haven't looked is that beam of light with which you are looking emanates from the kingdom of heaven.

It emanates from the source. It is an emanation of the source. And you were looking for the source and you were using the emanation of the source to look for the source out there.

But you have to, what you have to do is then stop looking and place your attention back in, go back where the emanation comes from. Oh, oh, that's it. There it is.

I am it. I was looking for it. And now I realize that I am it.

I was looking for myself, but in all the wrong places. So truly people who are looking for God, they're really looking for themselves and they're looking for themselves in the wrong places. If we say kingdom of heaven, that sounds a bit more inspiring.

Wow, kingdom of heaven on the other hand, it's very easy for you to project and completely misunderstand what that means. So it's so inspiring that it creates a mental concept or mental image, whereas kingdom of heaven is totally beyond any mental concept or mental image. So the very thing that was meant to point you beyond any mental images, that's why you used heavens, spaciousness, formlessness.

The very thing that was meant to point beyond it is then misused by your mind in its attempt to form mental concepts and images. So you use the signpost that says there and say, oh, I have it. So on the signpost it says kingdom of heaven that way.

Well, that way, kingdom of heaven that way. And then you pick up the signpost and says, I got it. I got it.

I completely believe in this signpost. But this is just to be aware of this, the light of consciousness in you, that's a foundation for sanity in this world and for bringing about a different world here. And only then can you be free of the egoic mind.

And instead of being used by your mind and mistaking it for who you are, your mind can be in the service of that greater consciousness that can flow through you. And that's called inspiration. You can be inspired.

You can speak in an inspired way. You can produce something in an inspired way. You're inspired to come up with a new idea for new creativity.

It is also an emanation that comes through you that affects people around you, even if you don't say anything, consciousness. There's a perennial question that comes up again and again and again. And it seems to be important to many people and it seems to present a dilemma to people.

You talk about being present and trying to quiet our thinking and stories we attach to

what is in front of us. I want to know how do we do this and still plan for the future? That's the perennial question.

How to be present and still plan for the future? Well, quite simply, you plan for the future in the present moment. You say, what do I want to do next year?

Okay, you take a calendar, a schedule and say, I have to do this. People come and say, what do you want to do next? Where do you want to go?

We've got an invitation to go there and there and there next year. Then I look at the calendar and look where are these places? How many places can I go to on this trip?

And then look, but it's all in the present moment. So that does not mean that I'm losing the present moment. But if I put this aside then, and then go into seeing myself traveling to this new country, let's say I'm going to Russia for the first time in September, and that's great.

But if I spend days thinking about me in Russia, and what will happen there, and seeking some kind of thing, oh, that'll be really great. Or, oh, I don't know what's going to happen to me. Are they going to like me there?

Am I going to get a good translator while I talk? What if they completely misunderstand me? What about the political situation in Russia?

I'm not sure about that. Or projecting some kind of fulfillment. When I get there, that'll be really great.

Who knows it'll be great or not great. That is losing yourself, going off, but making plans is fine. Projecting, there's an interesting thing that people are very interested in.

I don't know if there's enough time to address it now, but how to manifest things. Let's say when you are present, it may be that a vision comes to you, something you want to create or achieve. I'm going to set up a, whatever, or if you're here, perhaps, I'm going to set up a healing center.

Okay, this is just, it came to me. And then you can, the essence of manifestation, which I don't often talk about, because I talk about more fundamental things, but there is a, manifestation is a wonderful thing. If it comes not as an ego need to find some kind of pseudo fulfillment, but from a deeper place, and then you can actually visualize having a healing center in some detail and feel, but in a controlled setting for 10 minutes, I can feel that it's already there and it feels wonderful.

But really what feels wonderful is your presence now. And if you bring a mental image into the presence now that feels wonderful, and you bring the two together, that's the power behind manifestation. It doesn't mean that you need to achieve this image in

order to be fulfilled or happy, because you're already fulfilled and happy now in that presence.

Presence is the foundation for your fulfillment and happiness. And if you hold that presence and then you bring an image into it, and mix the two together, then that is the play of manifestation. You do not desperately need something to happen so that you can finally find some kind of fulfillment in this life.

When I have this healing center, then I'll really, I feel I will have achieved something. No, that's postponing and thinking something in the future is going to do something for you and make you feel more complete. You need to come from completeness already.

Then manifestation is a game, a beautiful game that the universe plays. It's the game of form. So you are present.

Then you have a mental image and it won't be egoic because when you are present, the ego subsides. If you then have an image, it's something that the universe wants to create through you. And that's a beautiful thing.

And then you bring the image and the presence that you sense together. That means, as Jesus put it, he only made one or two comments about how to manifest. He says, when you pray for something, feel that you already have it, and then it'll be given to you.

That's the secret of manifestation, but you can only feel that you have it through presence. Presence is already the fulfillment of everything that you could possibly want. But it doesn't mean you no longer manifest or create anything.

The universe delights in creation and creativity and it will delight in creation and creativity through you. It can also create without you, but there are certain things that you are required for. So you bring the mental image and the sense of intense presence together and that will produce the feeling that it's already there.

Whatever it is you want to create is already there and you feel the same satisfaction that you would feel as if it were already. In fact, when you do get it, you will feel exactly the same as you do now. And that's the secret behind manifestation.

And then you just hold that image. In addition, you may have to take some action. You cannot just sit in your room and not move.

No, that time may come when humans are more advanced as a species. It may well be that you can manifest instantly. Of course, you won't need a healing center anymore then.

You can manifest instantly the few things that you might still need. They pop up. In the meantime, however, you just create whatever wants to be created through you by

bringing presence and the mental image together and sense the intense aliveness that's there.

And then you take action. If you hold that image several times, then you will also find yourself taking action towards it, inspired action, without thinking, without ever going into stress about it. Never stress.

The moment stress arises, ego has crept in. Intensity, yes, but no stress. Huge difference between intensity, which is very joyful, and stress, which is not joyful.

So that's the secret. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (53:36 - 53:56)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle What The World Needs Is Wisdom [1ba331fe-2804-4d7d-9cfd-589afcb17327]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:55)

What the world needs is wisdom. In this podcast, Eckhart talks about the life-changing wisdom we acquired when we stop compulsive thinking. He says wisdom is very different from intelligence and that true wisdom arises from a place beyond the kind of intelligence that's generated by the mind.

Eckhart explains that even though thinking is a necessary function, we're too dependent on it. He says most of us learn at an early age to memorize, dissect, and label everything. Eckhart explains that this fragmented sense of knowing robs us of a more profound understanding of the world and stops us from honoring what is sacred.

He says wisdom cannot be measured by IQ tests and that the world will not be saved by more knowledge. Instead, he reveals that what the world truly needs is wisdom.

[Speaker 1] (0:57 - 40:09)

So you experience the world either through the conditioned mind or through the awareness behind it. And this is why I need to mention another important spiritual practice, especially while you're here, but hopefully also when you leave here after the retreat for the rest of your life, the spiritual practice of perceiving the world around you directly through awareness instead of through the mental faculty of compulsive naming, interpreting, and so on, which is quite normal for many people. The moment they perceive something, they call it something, classify it, name it.

But the spiritual practice is to perceive something visually, through visual perception, auditory perception, or other perceptions, and be so present that the perception arises in the space of awareness, the light of consciousness. In the light of consciousness, whatever it is that you see or hear or feel or touch or taste or smell, that you are the awareness for the perception. For example, you look at a flower, let go of needing to name it, relate it to something, wanting something from it, remembering something that reminds you of something, this or that.

And what is it called? I must know. All these things can be helpful and are sometimes necessary, of course, to be able to manipulate concepts.

It's necessary in this world, but I'm not teaching the manipulation of concepts because you're already, everyone is a master of manipulation of concepts already. That's not what I need to teach about here. The teaching is, we want to even call it that, is not to be trapped in conceptualization.

To transcend also means you no longer use it. The ability to use it is actually enhanced

when there is a deeper dimension. So you're not trapped in conceptualization, and when you don't want it, you let it go.

And there's a deeper connectedness to whatever it is that you are perceiving. For example, the flower, or many other beautiful things in nature, it's a kind of desert, but the desert is intensely alive. And so you're looking at something and you hold the perception, let go of the compulsive naming, and then there's a deeper knowing.

You can know this flower without calling it anything, but at a deep non-conceptual level, that's awareness. You become the light of consciousness rather than a person. There's a shift.

So you can either look at one thing like a flower, a tree, a cactus, incredible formations here, or you can take in the totality of wherever you are and take it all in and be the aware presence behind the perception. Stillness, again, we can use that word, you become, you're still. Then whatever it is being perceived arises in the light of consciousness.

You are the light of the world, as it's a quote from Jesus in the New Testament. You are the light of the world. You, in other words, you are the consciousness in which this world appears.

You're not really a person. You're not really a person. You are consciousness, a manifestation of the one consciousness.

That's an incredible liberation, the liberation from yourself. But you can still operate as a person. You still, all these things still happen.

Even, as I said before, your opinions, everything, you still have your opinions, et cetera, et cetera. You're not entrapped in them anymore. You even have likes and dislikes, but they're not all consuming.

You're not trapped in them. They don't have a hold on you. You're not the prisoner of your mind anymore.

So as a practice here, come to your senses, perceive through the light of consciousness. Let go of the naming. If a name arises, you don't give it any importance.

You drop it. And you bring your attention back to the perception. Something lovely you can do here at nighttime.

The temperature goes down a bit, not a lot. And you can, you sit outside and you can, the warm air surrounds your body like velvet. You can feel it like velvet on your skin.

Ah, sometimes there's a slight warm breeze. There's a wonderful opportunity for sense perception through tactile sense perception. Feel that, that air, be the presence for it.

Or certain noises that you might hear at the same time at night, in the night. There's an alert presence. You are there as an alert presence, not as a person.

The person is still there somewhere in the background, but it has receded. The person has receded and something else has arisen. Another of my favorite ways of describing it is to say, when you're only a person, the conditioned self, the conditioned entity, you operate exclusively on the human level.

You are a human. They're all you. Of course you're human.

They're all humans, but you're not a human being. The being is the transcendent dimension that needs to awaken. When the human has suffered enough, the being begins to awaken through the human.

That's basically how it is. When the human has suffered enough, something begins to awake. I use words to describe it.

Your destiny is to become a human being and you already, you are here because the beingness, the transcendent presence that says, I am without attaching anything to it, the bare, naked beingness, you can sense that, and that is the fulfillment of your life here, which is brief for everyone, the realization of being. The connectedness with the being dimension that humans most likely had before the arising of thinking was there, but not in a fully conscious way. When something is your natural state and has always been your natural state, then you have nothing to compare it to, but it was probably the natural state of humans, and then the thinking began to happen.

It was necessary, a necessary stage in the evolution. Our destiny, though, is not to continue to be trapped in thinking, but to transcend thinking and then actually be able to use thought as a helpful, wonderful, creative tool, but it doesn't give you your identity anymore. So the observation of phenomena without naming, sense perception without naming, it's a wonderful practice.

You can do it when you're, whether you're in your room or outside, be an alert presence. So what happens then, let's again do it here, you perceive the totality of this room without naming. Now, what is there?

You perceive the totality of this room, the people in it, lights, but you're also aware, you're not just aware of what's arising in the light of consciousness, what manifests in the light of consciousness. You're aware of yourself as the consciousness that is perceiving, and that you cannot define it. It's very hard to describe it.

I'm trying to use words as pointers, silent presence. So there's not only what you perceive, there's also awareness of the awareness that is perceiving, the consciousness that is perceiving. So you have these two worlds, the manifested world of things and the world of no thing.

And I sometimes call that space consciousness is the awareness itself, awareness of awareness. I am, that's another way of saying it. All you know is there is a beingness there.

There is a presence there. At first it may seem like not important, it's what is there, something. At first it may seem just like an absence of something.

But then you begin to realize in this absence, there is a presence. And there's a power that is, there's a silent power that is in you that far transcends who or what you are as a person. And when you sense that silent power that underlies everything, then you suddenly have what is conventionally called self-confidence.

Now conventionally that means you have confidence in your person, that your person is good enough or knows enough or is beautiful enough or is strong enough. Whatever it is, you have that self, I am self-confident. No, this is something, this is the Buddha would say, that's the no self confidence, the confidence in the no self or the confidence in the transcendent self.

So when you sense as habitual thinking subsides for a moment and what's left is at first an absence. And some people become uncomfortable because the first they notice it as an absence and then they immediately say, oh, I don't want that. And then immediately they go back into thinking.

But if you stay with that, what seems like an absence, it seems like you have disappeared. It seems like you don't know anything anymore because when you're not naming anything, what do you know? When there's no concept in your mind, what do you know?

On the level of concept, you don't know anything. And so the habitual egoic mind is afraid of that. And so many people jump immediately, jump back into the habitual mind.

And yet if you stay with that, what seems like an absence, there's a subtleness to it. It takes a while to notice that fully, for the awareness to fully arise. Whenever one talks about it, one creates a duality.

And then you begin to notice it's not just what the Buddha described as emptiness. This is one way of looking at it, which is the very secret of life is that the emptiness that underlies everything. But emptiness really, a better translation would be spaciousness.

And Jesus talked about it as he called it fullness, the fullness of life. I want you to have the fullness of life. Same thing, seems the opposite, but that is life prior to manifestation.

You can become still. It's not really becoming still, it's discovering the stillness that's always already there. So it's nothing to achieve.

It's not an achievement. It's a discovery. And somehow the state transmits itself to some extent.

And that is why it's helpful to be here. There's a transmission of that consciousness beyond words, especially in between the words. And it arises in many of you.

And that is very helpful in this as an energy field of arising presence. And we don't even need, don't need to call it meditation because meditation is fine. If you have a meditation practice, it's a good thing.

But this is the arising of a natural state without necessarily going to say, okay, now let's meditate. Let's do a meditation. But meditation can be very helpful as long as you have, do not have in your mind the thought that is something that you're doing because the moment you believe meditation is something that you do, you've created time because all doing requires time.

So if you're doing a meditation, you require time. You require a future. You will have a state that you want to achieve through time in future.

And that's, that's the obstacle to the realization. So there's nothing to achieve. There's only a discovery of what already is there within you.

So the realization of being cannot really come with doing because it's already there. This wonderful, the liberation from the person that you thought you were, this is why the word liberation is in spiritual traditions. They use that word liberation and it's inherently even joyful to know yourself as consciousness is joyful.

It does not depend on your life circumstances. If you're say happiness depends on life circumstances, then you're dependent on what's happening around you. You're at the mercy of what happens or fails to happen.

So we have the, while you're here, the practice of as much as possible, not naming sense perceptions, but just being. Easy awareness, one practice. Refrain from complaining internally and externally.

And another, I would add, notice that you're breathing. Breathing is always a very powerful portal into awakening. Just notice that you're breathing as much as possible.

Well, no matter where you are. Why is that important? You cannot notice that you're breathing and think at the same time.

The Buddha never said, stop thinking. He said, be aware of your breath. That's a cunning way of saying stop thinking, but it's an easy approach.

So there's only one thing that's the essence of this retreat, well, the essence of everything. There's only one secret. Well, it can't be a secret, I'm talking about it.

And that is the arising of awareness, cessation of thinking, arising of awareness. Then you drift back into thinking. Now, if you are able voluntarily to step out of thinking, that's an enormous achievement.

The achievement is to stop thinking. The realization in itself is not an achievement. People sometimes, I have been asked, what's your greatest achievement in life?

And I said, I don't have to think when I don't want to think. Is that all? Now, fortunately, I will never have to apply for another job again.

Not that anybody would, somebody who says, I don't need to think. You could add, though, if you add, and it would be true, I'm quite good at thinking, but I don't need to think. Maybe then you would get a job, I don't know.

But that is the transcendence of compulsive thinking. And only then can thinking become a wonderful tool. But you have to free yourself from your mind and discover who, or we could say, what you are beyond the mind.

And in some meditations, people ask the question, who am I? It's a, some recommend this as a meditation to ask yourself, who am I? But then not look for an answer on the level of concepts.

It might even be better to ask yourself, what am I? Because whose probably implies that you're still a person. Who is inquiry after a person?

Now, what you might say, well, that, what would be a thing? Well, it's not a thing, but it's not a person either. What am I?

Who or what am I? The answer is in the silence after the question. So there's no conceptual answer to the question, who or what am I?

So that's all the, if you, maybe some of you get it completely now, that what the secret is. Now it's only a question of living it. Everything changes with that.

The way in which you deal with things, with situations changes. When you're no longer trapped in the egoic self, it's a reactive mode of the egoic self that amplifies every problem that arises, gets amplified through the reactivity of the egoic self. This is why the world is full of drama continuously in people's personal lives and collectively.

Every reaction to an arising challenge just usually makes it worse. You amplify it. And then drama arises, which the ego loves.

It loves its drama and talks about it. So the way in which you deal with situations changes because you no longer oppose reality. You no longer internally and externally oppose the isness of things.

You're aligned with what is. That's why this practice of not complaining is also very important. To become aligned with the experience of this moment, the way in which you experience this moment.

You're aligned with that. Even if it's far too hot during the daytime, it's just so hot. Well, that's your experience of this moment.

You don't need to just be with it. We go in the shade or in the air-conditioned environment until nighttime. And then you go out and, ah, your experience of this moment.

You don't resist your experience of this moment. So the way in which you deal with things becomes more effective. But the key word here is what arises is wisdom, which is different from intelligence.

Wisdom arises from awareness. Intelligence can be the conceptual mind has been trained to classify, to memorize, to dissect, and to talk about things. This is the intelligence.

This thing you perhaps you can measure in IQ tests or whatever. But the much more important, a deeper faculty is the wisdom that arises, can only arise in those humans who have become human beings and thereby have accessed the dimension of awareness. That's where wisdom arises.

Wisdom doesn't attack one problem. It sees the totality of the situation. And then whatever solution it comes up with will take into account the totality.

Intelligence is a focus. It attacks the problem here. This is what we need to do.

But it disregards all the things around it that will be affected by whatever action you take. Wisdom always sees the totality of things. And wisdom is inseparable from presence or awareness.

It's not conditioned. The world is not going to be saved by humans becoming more knowledgeable in more information. Aren't you drowning in information?

So it's not, we don't need to become more intelligent. The world is full of intelligent people who are creating havoc. They're probably of all university degrees and they're crazy.

But what is needed is the arising of wisdom. It is inseparable from the awakening to who or what you are beyond the person, the conditioned entity. And because that is where intuition arises, where insights arise, where creativity arises, all from that deeper level.

Every creative person has some access to it, usually only in the area of their creativity. They have some access to that transcendent dimension. And usually most of them in the

rest of their lives, they are just as crazy as everybody else and sometimes even more crazy.

So there, for any creative thing to arise, you need to have some access, whether it doesn't matter what your activity is, whether you're an artist, or a musician, or even a scientist, to have a creative insight, a really creative insight that comes from a deeper place. It's a realization. You go, ah, that's how Einstein's theory of relativity came to him.

Yes, he was thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking. But he also had the ability to be still. He was famous for kind of drifting off into stillness.

He already did it as a child. He was always very slow, but there was stillness. Nowadays at schools, they want a quick reaction.

The people will say, I know, I know, yeah, yeah. What's the, I know the answer. And Einstein was not like that.

He was always, hmm, well, hmm. Any creative endeavor comes from there. So an important thing, what use this time that you're here, not just the sessions that we are having, but every moment, make it part of the retreat practice.

Every moment, bring awareness into whatever it is that goes on within you and around you. Step out as much as you can out of the habitual mind. Be the alert presence.

And when you go to sleep tonight, hopefully you're not going to look at your, and then you drift off from there. And then you wake up in the morning and you still have it in your hand. And then you need to know what's the latest thing that's happened.

So when you go to sleep, let go of your devices. Lie in bed, breathe, bring consciousness into the body, which begins with your breath. And then inhabit the body with your consciousness.

This is what I call, as you may know, inner body awareness takes attention away from thinking. And every cell is filled with life and aliveness. But what you sense is inner body is beyond the physical body.

That's a good practice of going into sleep without thinking. You're going to, and if you wake up in the night, which is problematic for many people, because that's where often despair arises and fear arises, anxiety arises. You wake up at three or four in the morning.

Oh my God, what am I doing here? What's going to happen to me? What was going to happen when I get home?

All that's all the bad things that happened last month and the last two years, that was horrible. It's all going to end. Are we going to have a nuclear holocaust?

It's all happening. It may happen, but it's not happening right now. It's not happening now, okay?

And my problematic situation, am I going to get another job? I lost mine. Is that a problem now?

Or do I really need to think about this now? Is there anything I can solve now by thinking about it? No, but I can't stop thinking about it because you can.

Don't believe your mind when it says you cannot stop thinking about it. Just choose to take your attention away from thinking. Become aware of your breathing.

Then the inner body. Hold your attention in the totality of the inner body. Many years ago, this inner body, I liked it so much.

I don't recommend it. I'm just saying what I did. Before in the past, when I woke up in bed with the moon, some of those terrible depressions and feelings of alienation arose whenever I woke up in the middle of the night and I could see the surrounding room and it all seemed alien to me.

It's this horrible feeling described, by the way, in a not very well-known novel anymore by the famous French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. And the novel is called Nausea. And it's about how you experience life from an alienated consciousness.

Everything is horrible, alien. And that was for many years until one night I woke up. I mean, really.

And then it was so lovely to feel the inner body. It was new to me to feel the inner body instead of thinking. I wanted to feel it longer.

So I had two cups of coffee before going to bed so that I could stay in this beautiful inner body for longer. Not to be recommended. So this is our first evening, but I have already conveyed to you the secret of life.

So if you want to go home, that's okay. Or we go again into it in tomorrow, which doesn't exist, but you just call it that. And so we return to it in the present moment tomorrow.

That's a contradiction. But it is true, of course, that tomorrow does not exist, that future does not exist, obviously. It only exists as thought in your mind.

If it existed, you would have experienced it at some point. But nobody has ever experienced the future because it becomes the present. It's a mental protection necessary for our practical purposes.

But ultimately, illusory. There's only the present moment. There's only this ever.

Only this, only this, only this. That's not so bad. If there's only this.

I thought there was so much more. There's all that stuff. No, there's only this.

There only ever was this. Only ever will be this. And usually, this is not problematic.

Occasionally, an emergency may happen, yes, but an emergency is not a problem. If it's an emergency, you do something. You deal with it.

But life is not as heavy when you are present. You realize it's actually not that bad at all. Because it's this moment.

And then there's a book. I think it's a novel called *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. So it's only unbearable to the ego.

So the lightness of being suddenly is there. You can enjoy life without the heaviness of being just a person. The heaviness of this personality.

The burden of yourself. You can enjoy life without that. That's the secret.

The rest now, of course, is it needs to be lived. And before we finish, just one more thing. It seems that life is full of obstacles to this realization.

Life is full of hindrances and limitations that suddenly arise. Problems of one kind or another. Losses.

Difficult people. That's one of the worst. They're everywhere.

They're everywhere. Difficult. And it seems that life is kind of sabotaging.

It seems some people have this feeling that life is attempting to sabotage your life. Or God, maybe. God isn't doing it.

And you feel, if only life left me alone and I could really practice. No, it doesn't work like that. But the thing is, you need the obstacles because without them, consciousness would not awaken.

It awakens through that which seems to prevent its awakening. A sudden loss. An accident.

An illness. A breakup. Mental problems.

Whatever it may be. Pandemic. Why is life doing this to me?

And consciousness evolves when confronted with difficulties. Even the simple thing of wanting a stronger body. You need to practice weightlifting and jogging, etc.

Which is very difficult for the body. I haven't done this in a long time. You might have

guessed.

But weightlifting is hard. What are you doing to your body? You're making life difficult for your body.

Yes, but it's only when life gets difficult for the body, there is an influx of energy. On a physical, that kind of energy, different vibrational frequencies, not necessarily consciousness itself. Well, consciousness in a lower vibrational frequency, which is physical energy.

The body cries out, says, I need more. And then suddenly energy comes. Muscles develop.

And suddenly you feel what before was hard and difficult is now wonderful. But life had to become difficult first for the body. If you had stayed on the sofa watching Netflix with a beer, nothing would have happened.

The body would not have become stronger, but it would have been your comfort zone. Great. So if little things, this is a final thought for tonight.

If little things here take you out of your comfort zone, welcome them. Welcome them. They're all important.

But know the difference between little thing that arises externally and other things arise only internally. So often your mind takes you out of your comfort zone, but there's nothing much happening, but it's thinking that something might be happening. So be the awareness.

Know what's going on in your mind and in your emotional field. What else could be the purpose of your life? But this evolution, this awakening, people are looking for their life purpose.

This is it. Everything else is secondary. What you do, but how conscious are you in the doing?

That's the question. Doesn't matter so much what you do, how conscious are you while you do what you do? Only this matters.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for sharing presence.

[Speaker 2] (40:14 - 40:34)

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Eckhart Tolle When The Mind Stops, Awareness Remains [9b9dc941-a939-4f3e-ab92-b71c7a19b51d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:05)

When the mind stops, awareness remains. In this episode, Eckhart talks to a live audience in Arizona. He begins by saying the mind can be a wonderful thing, that we have ability to think, speak languages and engage in creativity.

But Eckhart explains when we get too caught up in the mind, we lose touch with awareness. Eckhart cites moments in history like Nazi Germany, for example, when what he calls a virus of the mind took over and resulted in destruction on a mass scale. Eckhart warns when we create mind made concepts about others as different from ourselves, we become desensitized to their inherent aliveness and we cannot see that in our deepest essence, we are all the same.

Eckhart encourages that by learning from history, we don't have to make the same mistakes going forward. He says looking back at yesterday, he is the perfect catalyst to help us awaken today.

[Speaker 1] (1:07 - 39:03)

My script for today's talk, ladies and gentlemen, people who are joining us remotely have submitted questions. Another beautiful day. I've had an idea for a young person perhaps who is looking for a career, an easy one.

I would recommend study of meteorology. And then upon completion, apply for a job as a weatherman or weatherwoman at a local Arizona TV station. The least stressful job you could imagine.

The weather today will be about the same as yesterday, clear skies. And tomorrow will be the same as today, possibly one degree lower. And the long range weather forecast is very similar.

On a slightly more serious note, modern technology, which in many cases amplifies human unconsciousness is in itself neutral. So it can also be used to help in the shift to a higher level of consciousness. So if you feel a contribution may be happening through you, you may want to consider using a platform and disseminate in whatever form, spiritual teaching or consciousness, the infinite possibilities.

If you're too afraid to speak, maybe you should feel a little inhibited in front of a camera or your phone. You could just do meditations, gazing meditations. Make sure though you're free of thought, otherwise it doesn't work.

There's no predicting how many subscribers you will get on YouTube. Or if that doesn't

appeal to you, you could become what is known as an ASMR artist. Some of you may not know what that is.

It started a few years ago. I've spoken about it a few times. It's a phenomenon on YouTube whereby people often don't say anything, but they engage in seemingly pointless activities that make certain noises and that require the viewer's presence.

It's happened spontaneously. It developed. Somebody must have started it 10 years ago or whenever, and then it caught on.

Now there are hundreds or thousands of people doing it, some very successfully. The good ones have a spiritual dimension to it. And there's a need for it in humans, perhaps don't realize it, that there is a spiritual dimension and that need is to get out of themselves, to transcend temporarily the person or the personality by the act of giving fullest attention to certain sense perceptions, which in this case is also visual and the auditory.

People are encouraged to put headphones on while they watch these videos, and then you have people, the people who produce them, they may just have something here that they have usually very sensitive microphones, and they may, for example, be shuffling papers for 15 minutes that make certain noises, or they have a hairbrush, and they go shh, shh, or they make strange sounds with their mouth. It seems very weird. If it's done well, it puts the viewer into the state of presence.

Although some are actually designed to put people to sleep, so that would be the opposite. The whole phenomenon is called ASMR. People claim that it produces a certain tingling sensation in their head and back, and their back, and that is one phenomenon that happens, but the other that's not really recognized is that people become still while they listen and watch, and they have a state of attention. There's a cessation of thinking while they watch and listen somebody produce these noises.

So that was just a suggestion for you. Do you remember the story I recounted in, I believe, in A New Earth? The story of a Zen master who is on a pilgrimage, that's the ancient word for a hike.

He's on a pilgrimage somewhere with a disciple, and so they're walking in silence, of course, except of course a disciple hasn't quite arrived yet at the realization that Zen aims at, so the disciple is walking, but obviously thinking while he's walking. Finally, they sit down somewhere for a little picnic, a break, and then disciple says to the master, master, I've been thinking. I don't quite, still don't get it.

I've been here for five years, and I still don't get what is the essence of what you teach? What is that essence? I just can't get it.

I've been trying to figure it out, but I can't. And the master said, can you hear the sound

of that mountain stream? And the disciple said, what mountain stream?

I don't hear anything. The master said, listen carefully. And so the disciple goes, and then in a very far distance, the disciple hears the sound of water of a little mountain stream, very distant.

And then the disciple says, yeah, I can hear it now, master. And the master says, that is something like, that is the portal into Zen, or there is the beginning of Zen. That's it.

That's it. And for a moment, I don't know how long, the disciple actually gets it. Wow.

Wow. And he gets it because his mind stops and awareness remains. And why did that happen?

Because all his consciousness, conscious attention was required for the, in this case, auditory perception. There wasn't enough left, so to speak, to be consumed by thinking. So there was a cessation of thinking and the arising of presence.

The master very cleverly arranged it for him in that way, rather than saying, stop thinking, which wouldn't work. So the disciple got it. In some versions, there's a continuation of the story.

So they finished their picnic, they walk on, and an hour later, by then the disciple has fallen back into stream of useless thinking, of course. And the disciple says, I have another question, master. If I hadn't been able to hear that mountain stream, what would you have said then?

Okay, slight correction in how I told the story before I finish it. When the disciple originally says, yes, I can hear the mountain stream, yes, I can hear it. The master says, enter Zen from there, or from here, enter Zen from there, enter Zen from here.

In other words, that's the entry point into Zen, this one. And then hours later, when the disciple has been thinking again, they're walking again, what would you have said if I had said to you, I can't hear the mountain stream, what would you have said then? The mind is so weird, it never stops ruminations.

And the master raised his finger and said, enter Zen from there, from here. Every point is, these things cannot be explained, you spoil them if you explain them. I just explained it, unfortunately.

The mind, it doesn't stop. You have the mind, such a wonderful tool, such a wonderful instrument for creation, the ability to think that's inseparable from the arising of language, ability to use language. And thinking is a kind of inner talk.

And it grew and grew. And gradually it took over. And so humans lost their connectedness with being, which before the arising of thinking was unconscious, but

they have felt that deep.

They did not live in a state of, in a problem making state of anxiety, or if there was fear, it was short lived because there was immediate danger. But there was no anxiety or fear generated by the thinking process, because there was no thinking process. There was no identities that were before the time that Narcissus saw his image in the pool of water and became obsessed with it.

The first selfie, the world's first selfie, me, that's me. And then people began to have a relationship with themselves. I hate myself, I love myself.

Sometimes I hate myself and sometimes I love myself. Loving yourself is certainly preferable to hating yourself, I would recommend it. But it's not the last step.

It's an intermediate step. Beyond loving yourself is no longer having a relationship with yourself. I'm ending the relationship with myself.

Goodbye. This is it. After loving yourself, the next step is simply being yourself.

Oh, then you know that you don't hate yourself, you don't, you can't really say I love myself, because the moment you say I love myself, you have created a duality, I and myself. So who is that self that you either love or hate? And who are you?

And that's a very liberating to be yourself, to not have relationship with yourself anymore. It's just wonderful. And that also means you have let go of any conceptualization of who or what you are, deriving a sense of self from some kind of story you tell yourself, conceptual sense of self.

That's a wonderful liberation because the stories are never that great. Some people have a very sad story of what they call my life. Others have a more pleasant story, but it's still a story and an image in your mind, that's me.

And then you look for your self-worth, sense of worthiness, look for many things there, self-confidence, worthiness, and you try to bring it about. I'm good enough, and so on. And a time comes when you are connected to the being of yourself.

You don't need to affirm anymore that you are good enough, because you are in touch directly with the goodness of life, which is there. The ancient Greek philosophers called it the good, and many academic philosophers, of course, don't know actually what they're talking about. They cannot know what they're talking about because it was based on experience rather than manipulating concepts.

The good. It's strange that in the English language, by some weird coincidence, good and God seem to be very closely related. So awareness frees you from all that, and then the awareness becomes what it always was, but you didn't know it, becomes who you are.

The consciousness is who or what, and there's no duality in it. You can't have a relationship with your consciousness. Without the awareness, you're at the mercy of whatever goes on in your mind, including you have little or no immunity, depending on your degree of presence or awareness.

If there's little or no awareness, in other words, total identification with a stream of thinking, then you are very susceptible to mental illnesses and dysfunctions and even mental pandemics that affect large numbers of people. You may have noticed on a personal level, sometimes it happens that certain thoughts, usually there's a stream of useless thinking for many people, and it goes on and on. There's certain recurring patterns in it, yes, according to the particular conditioning of this person's mind.

And occasionally it happens that one thought or a couple of, a bundle of related thoughts get stuck in your mind, and they refuse to go away. They begin to influence and affect other thoughts, and they spread in your mind. Every thought that arises in your mind is in some way contaminated by one original faulty thought that may be totally irrational, but it has taken possession of your mind in a very minor and held relatively harmless way.

It happens that you say, I just can't stop thinking about this. It just goes, I can't get rid of it. And then you have certain ideas in your mind that are a complete distortion of reality.

And then you look at reality through the lens of, that distorted lens of your thoughts. Any kind of prejudice, for example, is of that kind. Let's say you have a racial prejudice.

Prejudice means prejudice, pre-judgment. So before you know the reality, the judgment has already occurred. For example, in the case of racism, you have a judgment that a certain race has particular qualities that are regarded as negative in some way.

And then that becomes a lens through which you can no longer meet any human being belonging to that race because the conceptualization in your mind has already deadened your perception to the aliveness of that human being. You're totally blinded by the concepts in your mind through which you look at reality. It could also be political.

You can have a certain political views of certain groups of people, as happened, for example, in communism, where suddenly the belief arose and millions of people got infected by it that reality or humanity can be divided into two groups, the oppressor and the oppressed. Now, oppression, of course, existed in humanity and exists to some extent in some places more than others, but it's only one of many factors that determine societies and how they function together. So if you take one and say, this is the only one, the only valid one, that means a huge section of humanity through conceptualization, conceptualizing that section of humanity, you say they are no longer human to you.

The moment you do that, you conceptualize other humans, you are completely

desensitized to their inherent aliveness, let alone the ability to relate to them and to relate to them and recognize the essence of who they are, that is the same as your essence. Then this belief takes a hold of your mind and you look, you classify immediately every human being that you come into contact with, is he or she oppressor or oppressed? Once you have deadened yourself to the aliveness of other humans, the next step is very easy and often happens, and that's violence and even killing them, because to you, they are no longer human.

And there is a dysfunction inherent in the human mind which can manifest itself collectively, and then it gets really bad, and it manifests itself, of course, on a personal level. And there are times in human history when this dysfunction becomes magnified. So there are times of collective mental illness that can last a few decades, that can last a few years, and then finally, just like a physical illness, finally it exhausts itself and comes to an end.

So the basic dysfunction that's already built into the egoic consciousness, then in a collective group setting, which could be a country or tribe or religion or a sect, it suddenly becomes amplified. And in a country, for example, millions of people can suddenly be trapped in exactly the same dysfunctional mindset. And usually violence happens then, as it happened, for example, under Soviet communism in Russia, national socialism in Germany, Mao's Cultural Revolution in China.

Millions upon millions killed and if you want to learn about human dysfunction, I recommend reading history books about that. Millions upon millions killed because they were regarded as not human anymore. They had been conceptualized as the enemy.

In a small country like Cambodia, it happened in the, I believe it was the 70s, under the dictator Pol Pot, and the army was called the Khmer Rouge Army. They killed one third of the population, exterminated, totally tortured, put in prison camps. Everybody who lived in cities had to leave the city.

If you had the slightest education, you were part of the oppressors. If you wore glasses, because it means you could read, you were part of the oppressors. If your hand did not show sign of manual labor, you were part of the oppressors.

Immediately sent to labor camps or out to the countryside to work in the fields and starve there, and they did. One third of the population starved to death or was killed, and that was regarded as necessary to bring about a more just world, all in service of the future. So you transform the present into hell in order to create a better future.

The means justifies the end. That's the belief. But unfortunately, that is not the case.

The means corrupts the end, and the end becomes meaningless if you create hell in order to reach it. So it's easily recognized as insane, completely insane. And then at

some point, it subsides.

It can't sustain itself for that long. It's an illness. So there are mental illnesses that can affect millions of people, and then they subside.

And sometimes it's smaller groups of people that get affected. You might be aware in Massachusetts in the around 1700, late 1600s, the famous witch persecutions and witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, and so on. If you look at that, again, there's a group of people there being affected by an absurd and totally irrational beliefs, and then look at reality through these completely absurd beliefs.

And so violence then happened. Many women got killed there. It was obviously a mental illness that affected thousands of people in those communities.

And I believe it was Voltaire, the French philosopher, who said something like, if you can make people believe in absurdities, you can make them commit atrocities. In other words, the belief in absurdities can easily lead to atrocities. That's how he put it.

And the belief in absurdities is a mental illness that distorts your vision of reality. And you're very susceptible to this if there's not sufficient awareness in you to know what's going on in your mind, so that thoughts no longer have the power to completely occupy your mental space. The awareness is that which provides you with immunity against the mental viruses.

And these days, mental viruses can spread very quickly through the media that we have. They can spread around the world within a few hours or a few days. And all kinds of weirdest things happen.

I can see certain things affecting the collective consciousness, which is the unconsciousness, even in our societies here. And you can say, this is crazy. But the people who hold those beliefs don't know that.

In fact, the moment you question it, you become their enemy. I'm not telling you what it is. You have to know for yourself.

I'm here to deepen, intensify the awareness in you, not to convince you that some things that people believe, some beliefs are crazy. You have to see that for yourself. The famous book, 1984, by Orwell, shows how this insanity can, it's a slight, perhaps exaggeration, but maybe not that much, how an entire country and structure of governmental structure can be run by that kind of mental dysfunction and create a kind of hell.

So we have some questions, quite a few submitted from various places around the world. Well, where do we start? Huge choice.

Susan from New Mexico. Hello, Susan, if you're there. I'm so glad to be here.

Oh, I thought you were there. No matter, you are there. My question is about rumination.

Daily, I keep having the same thought loop in my mind. Oh, we've just been talking about similar things. I keep having the same thought loop in my mind.

The theme is one of feeling betrayed, being mistreated, basically being a victim. With the thoughts and images, there's usually resentment and or anger. This thought loop has been occurring over a year now.

I'm having challenges with being the observer. The story seems to be so mesmerizing. I'm feeling frustrated that I'm continuing to have these thoughts about the past.

As I understand, holding on to the past is preventing a higher energy field to come through me. What recommendations do you have for working this issue? Any suggestions on forgiveness and letting go of the victim role so that I can express more of the deep I?

The deep I is the... I don't know if I actually use this term during our sessions here. I sometimes use it.

The deep I is the awareness deriving your sense of self from the awareness rather than from the surface I, which is the personality. So we have the surface I or the deep I. So the thought loop here that you are experiencing is to do with feeling betrayed, being mistreated, and being a victim.

I assume these thoughts and emotions that are recurring again and again refer to actual events that took place. I assume that here. So there is a reliving of the events in the mind and the feeling of being mistreated, betrayed, being a victim.

And there's resentment and anger with it. Been occurring over a year now, so I assume something happened a little bit before that, perhaps. And people did something to you or somebody, one person.

Now, some people have that not only for a year, as in this case, but some people have that kind of thinking, compulsive thinking going on for years and decades, sometimes going back to childhood, being badly treated in childhood or abused in childhood. So you have continuing to think about that. And the more you think about that, of course, the more you feel yourself being a victim of events or usually people, other people, who did something to you.

And you dwell on it and you can't stop it because the mind has a momentum. These thoughts refuse to go away. And if there's not sufficient awareness because of the continuously recurring thoughts, they become part of your identity, your sense of self,

and so then you become a victim.

To see the necessity and the possibility of going beyond a victim identity does not deny in any way that something painful happened to you in the past, that something was done to you, that some people did something to you. To see how important it is to go beyond victim identity has nothing to do with denial of what happened. You fully see what happened.

You know that and you know the emotions that it created. But the first thing is, how does a human being, how is a human being capable of inflicting suffering, for example, on a child or on another human? It happens all the time.

It happens on an individual level and it happens even more on a collective level. The ego, the human ego, is dysfunctional enough in the individual, but it's infinitely more dysfunctional and dangerous and lethal when it operates as a collective ego in a group. And the humans who participate in these dreadful things, the perpetrators, when they operate as a collective ego, not a personal, they are capable of far worse atrocities and acts than they would be as an individual.

So in other words, the collective ego is even more unconscious and violent and dangerous than the individual ego. Sometimes when you identify with a collective, my country, for example, fighting for my country, or the collective might be a political party or it might be a religious group. And so people who belong to these entities, sometimes it seems that they become free of ego because they live completely in the service of these collective entities.

I want to sacrifice myself for my country or my religion or whatever. It seems that they are completely free of the personal ego. And same thing happens in sects and cults.

Often people who live in cults, they're totally selfless. They don't want anything. They give everything of themselves.

They want nothing for themselves. They have identified with the group, but of course their ego has actually not diminished. Their ego has become enormously amplified because they now have adopted a group ego and the group ego can only survive and subsist when it has a sufficient number of enemies out there.

The group ego needs for its survival and its expansion because it wants to expand and survive, but it needs the other. In other words, the other is the enemy. So that is how humans are drawn into a deep unconsciousness by identifying with the collective.

You can belong to a religious group. You can even love your country without being identified with and then needing other countries to be the enemy. With awareness, you can appreciate your country and you appreciate other countries too.

They are different. So first you see the need to be a victim identity also unfortunately is a form of ego because any conceptual identity is a form of ego. And even though you seem to be amply justified in having a victim identity because of the things that other humans did to you, you yourself are finding yourself in a kind of prison created by your mind.

So there's no denial of that bad things happen to you. Yes. Now the question is, how do you exit this mental prison?

The first step is perhaps to see that unconscious human beings, unconscious human beings in the grip of their own conditioning, their own ego, they have virtually no free will. When you are unconscious, you are controlled by the mind patterns that are lodged in your psyche. You cannot really speak of free will by somebody who has zero awareness and yet their entire makeup is conditioning from the past.

The famous sentence phrase used by Jesus in connection with forgiveness on the cross, he said, forgive them for they know not what they do. Now these points put together, forgive them. Why forgive them?

They know not what they do. In other words, if he had spoken these days using our terminology, he probably would have said, they are completely unconscious. Because that's what it means.

They know not what they do. They are completely unconscious. So when you see nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness, then you see that it becomes almost like the evil that was perpetrated becomes almost like a natural phenomenon.

That is like you've been hit by lightning or something or lived in very unpleasant climatic conditions that injured you.

[Speaker 2] (39:05 - 39:25)

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Eckhart Tolle Why Awakening Leads to Freedom [f231b75d-21ee-47e9-a22d-749259f6dabd]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:42)

Why awakening leads to freedom. In this podcast, Eckhart answers questions about why it's important to seek awakening. He also addresses how we can learn to function in a world that seems often insane.

Eckhart says we must awaken in order to free ourselves of suffering. He explains why it's part of our legacy to realize a sense of peaceful aliveness that is independent of our external circumstances. He believes when challenges arise, we shouldn't spiral into unconscious reactivity.

He believes that only amplifies the problem. Instead, he encourages listeners to release their ego and move towards transcendence.

[Speaker 2] (0:44 - 2:24)

It's so good to see you. Thank you very much for this wonderful gathering. And the big thank you to all of you because that's really wonderful being there.

My question relates to the reasons of awakening. And can you comment a little bit on why actually being awakened is better as emotional state than something that is actually the most popular, which is the state based on thoughts. And when we are half asleep, a bit like this, the way I ask this question is, first of all, I love your teachings and it always brings me an important level of peace and it changes for the better my emotional state.

But I found myself in a difficult situation when the level of fear was very, very important. And at that moment, I was scared about being awakened. I mean, yeah, that was maybe just a moment.

Then it's just, it's not like this anymore. But I have to say that staying with my awareness was kind of too hard for a while.

[Speaker 1] (2:24 - 10:02)

Well, in a way, you have already answered your question because you mentioned that you experience more peace through this, more stability, perhaps emotional stability, not both. But of course, there are still fluctuations. There are still times when you experience fear that rises from time to time.

But the reason, of course, why anybody should be engaged in this, you already realize for yourself, because peace and a sense of aliveness and joyful aliveness, the sense of not being totally dependent on external conditions for your inner state to have a certain

degree of autonomy internally so that when you're no longer so reactive, when something challenging happens around you, it does not automatically create huge unconscious reactivity in you, thereby amplifying the problem that's happening.

All those things are part of the transformation of consciousness from the egoic state to the transcendent state, whatever you want to call it. And really, it is an escape from the unhappiness that is inseparable from the egoic state of consciousness. And that, of course, the egoic state of consciousness is still the predominant state in the world.

And so people are trapped in that. The Buddha said that even your happiness is part of dukkha, which is suffering, because the happiness cannot exist without, the high cannot exist without the low. So you experience elation, one day something good happens.

And then, as I said before, every condition, every person eventually lets you down. And so you experience this letdown, this disappointment in other people and the world and relationships and any kind of achievement or possession that you can have that for a while people think the answer is there. Oh no, the answer is there.

It's nowhere to be found. And so the reason why it's very simple, and you know it already, you've experienced in yourself, it's freedom from unhappiness, freedom from the burden of an extremely problematic sense of self, so that you become a problem to yourself. You're a walking dilemma.

When there's no awareness of the transcendent dimension. So it's an escape from suffering. It's an escape from a very limited existence, a kind of bad dream.

And for many people, the dream needs to deteriorate before they become interested in the possibility of something else. As long as the dream is relatively pleasant, you're still okay in the dream. But then the dream changes.

And so the one dream, you have the honeymoon, and then you have suddenly you have another dream that comes out of that one, and that's called the drama and the divorce, or whatever it is, and that it's terrible. And then some people go through that several times. I've met people who've been gone through it five or six times.

Marriage, honeymoon, loving, getting married, a year later, two years later, divorce, and somebody else getting married. Oh, big reception every time. And then everybody lets them down.

Isn't that strange? There must be something wrong with people. They all let me down.

So all this unconscious living, and this is only on the personal level, then you have the unconscious, the collective aspect of unconscious living, which is even more destructive, even more dangerous, and then even more insane than the personal level of ego, the collective ego that people have, that is the ego of groups of people, entities, nations,

political parties, religious groups, and so on. Not all, but many. The manifestations of this dysfunction that you have on the personal level, on a collective level, the way it manifests is extremely destructive.

It has manifested the history of the 20th century, just to take one century, look at the first 50 years of the 20th century, a nightmare, a collective nightmare, a collective hell for millions and millions of people. If an extraterrestrial came, maybe there were some observing us. Of course, they don't want to come in contact with the crazy humans.

If they had been observing the first part of the 20th century, they would have to say something has gone wrong there, the extreme collective psychosis. So definitely there's a deep dysfunction in the human mind, but that is part of the evolutionary process. The dysfunction has become more pronounced now because we are approaching, or we have actually reached the possibility of going beyond it to another level.

So that's why we are here. So it's wonderful, and you are part of this process of transformation. So the answer, of course, you already knew it, but now I just reaffirmed that that is how it is.

That's the correct answer, and you know why you're doing it. Sometimes the mind comes up with all kinds of questions. It questions something that you already know, but then it brings up some doubt, because the ability of the conceptual mind to understand the spiritual dimension is very limited.

It cannot really understand. It tries, but it can't. So it begins to question.

This is one of the hindrances that can come in. The questioning mind often attempts to take you out of presence, and it comes up with some kind of thought that questions it all. Maybe I shouldn't be doing all this.

Maybe I should be concerned with something more realistic, whatever the mind says. So don't believe in every thought that arises in your mind. Sometimes the egoic self wants to take you out of presence.

It doesn't like it. The egoic self being a pattern in your mind. So that's how it is.

[Speaker 2] (10:03 - 10:07)

It sounds true. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (10:07 - 10:12)

Yes, it sounds true. That's why we're here. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (10:14 - 11:14)

Hello. Hello, Eckhart. Thank you so much for everything you do to help us awaken.

My question sort of goes along with the last question. The world is insane, and I understand it's always been insane in an attempt to awaken us. But the issues are so serious today that to not do something feels like I'm spiritually bypassing, or I'm cold-hearted not to feel or take action.

The deeper part of me, though, really wants to be able to watch the insanity and know that everything is happening as it should, that I, Course in Miracles term, need do nothing. Can you help give me some guidance in how to function in this insane world?

[Speaker 1] (11:15 - 20:47)

Very good question. So this question is, instead of to be or not to be, the question is to do or not to do. What is primary is the state of consciousness that gives rise to the doing.

The doing can come out of a state of egoic sense of insufficiency, or anger, or many different egoic states are possible that give rise to doing. And often it looks good, but any doing that arises out of a state of ego usually creates more problems than it solves. It often looks as if the action that you're doing is a good one.

The intention is a word that comes to mind. The intention is often good in people, but they cannot see the wider implications and repercussions of what they do in this world. And the reason for this is the deeper dimension where wisdom arises.

Wisdom is the key word. Where wisdom arises, they'd have no access to it. So all the doing arises out of a limited egoic sense of self.

But even within the egoic sense of self, it may at first appear that this is a good thing to do. Like look at communism, for example. It looked like many people thought it was a really good idea to bring about when communism came into Russia and China.

Many people thought it was a wonderful idea to bring about more, get rid of the destructive system of government, the suppression of most of the populace. It all sounds absolutely wonderful. More equality, distribute, the people own everything, not the capitalists anymore.

All sounded great. Many people in the West, too many intellectuals, thought it was really a very good idea. And initially it seemed like a very good idea because anybody could see how destructive the previous system was that they were fighting against, both in Russia and China, just to take the two examples.

And then they finally came to power and it was great. And then something happened. The egoic sense of self, all the people who were in a position of power or most of them

experienced an amplification, an enormous amplification of their ego.

And so I believe that for many of them, probably their intentions were good. They truly wanted to bring about a better world. And then they achieved power.

And power is one thing that will show you something about your ego. Another thing is, of course, also to be challenged by great suffering. But let's talk about power for a moment.

When power comes, when someone is given power, the ego, the latent ego is suddenly blown up, becomes amplified to an enormous degree. And then you get rulers, as you did in communist Russia, who are actually quite insane. And the structures that they create, the Communist Party, for example, becomes an egoic entity.

It's an extremely ruthless and destructive ego. It's an amplification of the personal ego. And so you got this, the Russian Soviet government, they created famines, there were prison camps, millions were killed as part of the communist revolution in Russia and China.

Extremely destructive entities, the collective entities were created, started with a good intention, probably. I'm not saying this to say that no action should be taken, but you need to be aware of the state of consciousness out of which the action arises. If there's a lack of wisdom, then you would probably create more suffering and havoc than before.

So the state of consciousness is that I call presence, is the state of which wisdom arises. Wisdom enables you to see the totality of a situation, not just one particular aspect. And you see, if I do this, it will affect this and this and this.

Wisdom sees that it's not analytical. Wisdom is not analytical if you focus on one little thing, that's intelligence. Intelligence is analytical, you focus on one area that you want to change, but you don't see all the other areas that would be affected by that change and how it would affect the change.

So intelligence is focused, it attacks a problem. Wisdom sees the totality and then, if action is possible, it can take action that does not make things worse than they were before. So this is the challenge, then, to have the state of consciousness in you that is not egoic, so that you can look at a situation and then see what kind of action is possible or desirable.

There are many situations that you may not be able to do anything about in the world. So it's not possible, there are so many areas in the world that are extremely problematic. So if you take any kind of action, you'd already have to choose what area do I want to look at?

And you look at one, but if you take action in one area, it may affect others to other problems, because everything's interconnected. So you'd have to choose, first of all,

where you want to be active, and then how do you want to be active? What action can I take?

Or what words can I speak? Because that's action also, sometimes words can change things. So you'd have to see what it is that is possible to do.

And very important consideration, because you have to be extremely alert so that your ego does not come back in. You might start with egolessness, and as you become more involved in some kind of action, at some point, ego can creep back in. I've observed this many times, people start with a wonderful thing, a wonderful, maybe a new movement or something, and it's going, it's working well.

Then at some point, ego starts creeping in, and you know that ego is crept in when you have enemies. So you consider a certain group of people as enemies. That's already a danger.

The ego actually is looking for that. So whenever you see that there's enemies that I need to fight, there's already ego in there. The ego needs its enemies.

You can see how countries too, the entities of collective ego, a country is a huge collective form of ego. If they can't find an enemy outside the country, they will look for an enemy inside, and then this country splits into different groups, and each one considers the other as enemy. It might sound familiar.

The media participates in that, the politicians participate in that, wanting external enemies, demonizing other countries. If that's not enough, have internal enemies too, those that want to overthrow us or whatever it is. So you have to be very careful that you don't create the mental idea of fighting enemies.

And again, when intense negativity arises as you take action, if intense negativity arises, you also know that there's ego involved. The secret is, well, it's not a secret, but the answer is don't lose connectedness with the awareness, the transcendent dimension. From there, you can know what is necessary or possible for you to do.

[Speaker 3] (20:48 - 20:55)

If there's nothing to be done, how can I hang on to presence watching the suffering?

[Speaker 1] (20:56 - 33:43)

Right. Now, that's again, a good question, because quite often there are situations where you just have to allow the situation to unfold. You can see, and only wisdom can know that.

Through wisdom, you can look at a situation, then you know whether anything that you could do possibly would change the situation for the better. And you can see this has a

momentum of its own now, and anything that I do would only make it worse, or it would not be helpful at all. Then you have to allow it to play itself out.

The world still is in the grip of very heavy unconsciousness in many areas, many forms of suffering also through that. I'm talking about suffering that is created by the human ego on a personal level and the collective level. And so, this is not something that you can change as such.

It has to play itself out. All you can do is bring more consciousness into your world, because the world starts with you. It starts here.

But through technology, we can very quickly, we can reach out from our world through computer, media, social media, whatever. You can perhaps be in communication with many people in the world, and perhaps do some good by having a certain type of communication with people, perhaps help them that way. But on one extreme, you have, I don't know if you have, there was a French philosopher called Voltaire, and he wrote a book, *Candide*, which is a kind of novel.

He didn't write, I think it might be the only novel he wrote. *Candide*, it's a satirical novel. It's about a man who travels through the world, and the world is totally insane.

It's kind of exaggerated insane, but basically, he shows wherever he goes, it goes from country to country, and every country people are completely insane, and cruel, and malignant, and horrible. And finally, he comes to the end of his journey, and he's in Turkey, I think, and he meets a man who seems quite wise, and he asks him, what about the situation of the rebellion that is here, that's happening here? And he says, oh, I don't know anything about that.

And the man says, all you can do is cultivate, the man has a garden, all you can do is cultivate your garden. That's the famous phrase, cultivate your garden, which is make sure that there's sanity in your immediate surroundings. You can take the garden either literally, because of course, it's good to be in touch with nature, or you can take it metaphorically as the garden, meaning have an area of sanity around you that also affects the world to some extent.

So cultivate your garden is one way that would mean don't worry about the rest of the world, that is one extreme. The other extreme would be, I need to save the world. And then you can active, perhaps the answer lies in between the two extremes.

But not forgetting to cultivate your garden, even while you take, if you do take action one way or another, it's still very important how you conduct your life, your immediate surroundings, how you, your relationships, your close relationships, and then other relationships, all that spreads out from you. That's what you create. In a way, you have two kinds of worlds.

You have the world, your personal world, people you know, what you do, where you move your surroundings. Then there's another world that you mostly have access to through the media. Then you watch the news, then you get communication on social media, whatever.

This is a world that is the secondary world to you, that is happening elsewhere. So here you have your world, which is immediate sensory perception, not through screens, TV screens or other screens or phones. It's just your immediate surroundings, that's your garden.

And that's very important, is not to be neglected. Because there are people who want to make the world a better place, and they have horrible relationships. All their relationships are full of conflict and antagonism, and they want to create a better world.

So you have your garden, and then you have the other dimension of the world, which is what you see when you watch the news, and so on. Sometimes the two come together, because there could be something happening that you see on TV, like the virus, and then perhaps you may catch the virus. So if suddenly something that you only saw on TV suddenly comes into your garden, that can happen.

So they can intersect also. But it's important to be aware of the two dimensions, the world that you have mostly access to through the screens that you look at, and in the past for people that the only world they had was their personal surroundings. They didn't even know, in many cases, what was happening 50 miles away before modern communications.

So all that, and most people spend their life in their town or village their whole life. So we have a very complicated world, because we have all the troubles of millions of other people, we're aware of them through the screen. So it's an interesting situation.

And again, be aware of your garden, make sure that's the same place, and then if that's the same place, then most of the insanity you see on the screen, and sometimes you meet it, it comes into your garden too, that's possible. So you see what is possible to do, but wisdom is to not be reactive, not act out of anger or fear or any egoic motives. Only then can you do some good.

Some situations have a lot of momentum, and the momentum is sometimes so crazy that there's absolutely nothing you can do. It has to play itself out. In the same ways, you might have met some people who you're trying to help them, and you're trying again to help them, and they go through the same destructive patterns again and again, and you're trying to help again.

Sometimes it happens with people's children as they grow up and they do stupid things, and they're trying to help and support them and help, but nothing seems to work. At

some point, you have to say they have to experience the bitterness of suffering that they create for themselves. That may be the only possibility for their evolution of their consciousness and coming to the end of their insanity.

But that's perhaps a possibility if they experience... Some people are drug addicted, they reach a point where they can see that either they'll die soon or something needs to change. Some are put in prison, and in prison they begin to wake up and see this cannot go on.

And if you hadn't put them in prison, they would still be on the street. It's interesting. My father was in Germany as a young man.

He spoke up against the Hitler regime, and they put him in prison. Now, he was not... He didn't do it out of some kind of desire to change anything, but he was always very impulsive and got angry very easily.

And then he lost it. He lost... He didn't want to say it, but he had to say it, and then the next day they arrested him.

And at that point, nothing you could have done would have made any difference because the momentum of the unconsciousness was so vast and enormous. A few conscious people were able to leave the country. They removed themselves.

Some others were able to completely focus on their garden, and they survived in that way. And the majority of them got to get drawn into this huge unconsciousness, and then they had to experience the suffering that comes with it. Huge collective karma, collective ego.

And again, same thing in China and in Russia, the Maoist cultural revolution, completely crazy if you read history books about it. Millions were killed. Absolutely, absolute craziness.

And there was millions of people in the grip of psychosis, basically. It's an extreme form of ego, extreme mass psychosis. It can last for several decades or a few years.

And when that happens, there's nothing you can do except cultivate your garden. You cannot fight that huge wave of unconsciousness. But there may be other situations where you see perhaps something can be done here or there or there.

So you have to see how vast this movement is of unconsciousness. And it's happening in the US now, of course. As you see, there's a lot of craziness.

So what to do? Only wisdom can tell you what to do or whether to do anything. And in the meantime, always come back to your garden.

The garden is also your inner being at the deepest level. The garden is your inner state

of being, where you can be free. That's the important thing.

The craziness exists out here. But the awakening can only happen ultimately in the individual. You cannot awaken the world.

The awakening happens in every individual. When enough individuals transcend the ego, then the world changes. So my work is mostly concerned with a causal level, not the level of effect.

So the causal level is human consciousness, human unconsciousness, human consciousness. That's the level of cause. And that should also be your primary consideration, is the level of cause.

The next is the level of effect. The level of effect is dependent upon the consciousness that underlies whatever you do. So the world is the level of effect.

Consciousness is a level of cause. So at the deepest level, what Voltaire calls the cultivate your garden, at the deepest level, the garden is your innermost being. And that's primary.

When that is sane, that emanates from you also. Even if you took no action specifically to change anything, it does emanate from you into this world, because all humans are connected in consciousness. There is a collective human consciousness.

And whatever change you undergo in your consciousness is part of the collective human consciousness. So even if you didn't take any action, if you lived consciously in all your dealings in your world, that affects the world. Not only the people you come into contact with, it even affects people you don't come into contact with.

[Speaker 3] (33:45 - 33:49)

Thank you so much. You helped me so much. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (33:49 - 34:10)

Oh, thank you. Thank you. So let's become still again before we finish.

In fact, not so much become still, but become aware of the stillness that's already there in you.

[Speaker 4] (34:15 - 34:36)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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enlightened teachings from Eckhart Tolle. Thank you for listening.

Eckhart Tolle Wisdom And Stillness [63013faa-292c-485c-9b8b-ad960138dbc8]

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:35)

Wisdom and stillness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about the importance of wisdom. He says the first step is acknowledging the magnitude of what we don't know.

He encourages us to step out of our thinking mind with its relentless judgments and interpretations and step into what he calls aware stillness. It's there that we have access to a deeper intelligence, one connected to our higher purpose to realize our oneness with the totality of the universe.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 14:08)

I don't know if you remember reading about Socrates, a Greek philosopher who never wrote anything, he just talked. And Plato, who was one of his disciples, wrote about what Socrates said when he was asked, why does the Oracle of Delphi call you the wisest of all men? He said, the reason why I'm the wisest of all men is that I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

Not many people actually have understood over the centuries what I see as the deeper meaning of those words. Mostly it's interpreted as pretending not to know, feigning modesty, which is a disguised form of ego. It's like saying, I'm the most egoless person of all.

I'm the most egoless person of all. Nobody is more egoless than me, that's for sure. I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

I suggest it's not feigned modesty, there's a deeper meaning, and the deeper meaning is that all his extremely creative teachings, you might know that the teachings all are, he used to teach in the form of dialogues with people. So they would ask him questions and he would ask them questions and finally the teaching emerged out of the dialogue and often he showed that the original premise that somebody started with is erroneous, but it gradually emerges. So I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing means, as I see it, that he started every talk in stillness.

He did not begin his teachings with accumulated knowledge in his mind, which he then regurgitated. He was able to be so creative in his thinking, very creative thinking. In fact, many people say that we learned, Western civilization, at least, learned how to think through the ancient Greek philosophers and especially Socrates.

He taught us how to think. So he was able to think creatively, use of his mind, he had access to the creativity within him. And the only way you can do that is by not starting

from knowledge, but starting from ignorance.

Now, the ignorance, the way I use the term, is not the conventional meaning of ignorance. It's to step out of the thinking mind into just aware stillness. And in that moment, you don't know anything.

That's how I start every talk. It always starts with thoughtless awareness. In other words, I have no idea what I'm going to say.

That's another way of putting it. Thoughtless awareness sounds better, but the truth is, I have no idea what I'm going to say before I start. That is the most vital state for you to become familiar and comfortable with, that state of not knowing, which is there the moment you step out of the thinking mind with its continuous interpretations and judgments, then you're in a state of not knowing when you look at a sky or a tree or another person.

And there's just a background of awareness to your sense perception. At that moment, you don't know anything, not conceptually, you know nothing. Because without thought, you don't know anything, there's no knowledge.

And that is something that could hold you back, because the ego is afraid of that state. It feels, I become as nothing. I become stupid.

I no longer, I'm at the mercy of other people if I can't judge them anymore, and all kinds of things that are obstacles that can arise unconsciously. And they very quickly take you out again of that state of aware, spacious presence. So it's good to look out for that.

There is something in you that's not comfortable with it, is even afraid of it, feels diminished by it. And that's the ego. The ego feels diminished, of course, by not knowing.

The ego has to say, I know. Even to utter the words, I don't know, the ego, it feels like a diminishment to the ego. That space where there's no conceptual knowledge feels, of course, I'm disappearing, and in a way you are.

You're disappearing as a person, and where the person was, something else has emerged. The unconditioned consciousness has emerged. So as you practice with what I suggested here, when you sense perception without labeling, looking at another human being or listening to another human being without any judgment in your mind, in that space of open, alert presence, that's the state of not knowing.

And yet, that's where true knowing actually arises. The creative knowing arises out of there. And the moment may come when you suddenly, out of that not knowing, you say something.

Or out of that state of not knowing, a thought arises. And it'll be a creative, a new

thought, an insight. Any creative thought or any creative insight or anything new and creative that comes through you into your mind needs at least a tiny space of not knowing.

And there are many people who are creative in a certain area of their lives, and they don't even know that in that moment of creativity, they are able to be alert and still. It might only be for a few seconds, and then it comes. And anybody who has no access to it, and that is still the majority of human beings on the planet, they have no access to creativity.

Their mind is repetitive. All their thoughts are acquired from the collective mind. There's no creative thought.

They think, these are my opinions, this is what I think. But they're just repeating what they have read, what they have heard, how their minds have been conditioned by the environment, by the media, whichever media it is, doesn't matter. So becoming comfortable with that state of not knowing.

And that's the only place where what we call wisdom arises. Wisdom arises from that deeper place, and wisdom is what the world needs most now. Not more intelligence, because intelligence itself does not solve the problems.

Intelligence itself, without the deeper dimension of awareness, actually becomes quite destructive, self-destructive and destructive of others. So intelligence, you can have a highly intelligent person who does very crazy things with his or her intelligence. I call that intelligence in the service of madness, which is often the case.

You need to be very intelligent to manufacture atom bombs, you need to be intelligent to manufacture chemical weapons, you need to be intelligent to many, many things. There are probably quite a few people here with high IQs, and that's good, because you also have access now to awareness. Then intelligence can be a very fruitful and wonderful thing.

And there are many intelligent people who are tortured by their minds, year after year after year. A highly developed mind, totally tortured by their minds, always totally absorbed in their mind. And in one small area perhaps they achieve certain things, the mad, so-called the mad scientists from the movies.

So become comfortable with not knowing, and in that not knowing, you get access to a deeper intelligence that cannot be measured with IQ tests. Now this not knowing, of course, is a not knowing that has transcended thinking. You have risen above thinking in that state of alert presence.

There's another state of not knowing which is below thinking, and that's interesting too, and that is a simple, very, very simple person whose mind is relatively undeveloped,

could be at that state of below thought. That person traditionally is called the fool in mythology, many figures call it the fool. In more recent mythologies it's the hobbit.

The hobbit is a simpleton who, all the people that are with him, they are more intelligent than he is, they know so much more. And yet the hobbit is the only one who can perform this important task. So the fool in mythology has access to something that the more developed mind does not have access to, but the fool is below thinking, and yet the fool has access to that which also when you rise above thinking you have access to, but in a more conscious way.

Now you cannot, even if you wanted to, you cannot return to that state and become a fool. Your task is to dwell above thinking, where you transcend thinking, where you're able to use thinking, of course, but you're not used by thinking, you're able to use the mind. When I say you, it is the deeper you, the consciousness that you are, can then use this mind. Now there are stories from Zen and also in Sufism of spiritual teachers in disguise, a group of people, or a Zen teacher who is working in the garden, and there's several examples of this actually happened, the spiritual teacher by outside observers or visitors being mistaken as fool, because there are certain similarities, so those who do not have that insight will think, who is this fool, they were not told that he's a famous teacher. One person was visiting a Zen master and there was a guy working in the garden, he came in, he wanted to see the famous Zen master, there was this guy working in the garden, and yeah, where is the master, where is, where does, just go through there, through that corridor, and then you come around, and then you'll find him. So he walked into the house, and when he entered that room, the gardener was sitting on the chair of the master, and to his dismay, he realized that the gardener was the master.

There's another story of a band of Sufis traveling, and the Sufi teacher said, when we visit this next town and next person, let's pretend that you are the teacher and I'm just one of the servants, and so they went into the next town and they were received by a wealthiest man in the town, but this man had insight, and he looked around and said, well you may be the teacher, the one who was pretending to be the teacher, but this is the person who is at the deepest level, who is connected to God at the deepest level, and he chose the one, the actual master who was pretending to be just a servant, so he had, he could see immediately. All others would have said, yes, so very interesting. I've also occasionally been mistaken for a fool, and I'm very flattered.

If not a fool, a simple person. So let's see if there are any questions left, probably not.

[Speaker 3] (14:13 - 15:00)

Good to see you, Erkert. I was sitting there thinking that if I spoke with you, it would be much quicker to get out of my head. I want to ask you, because the thing that I've always struggled with since I was a little kid was who is God, what is God, and what's my

relationship with God, and obviously you've addressed that throughout this whole event, but one of the things that I miss is not having a relationship with that experience with God.

I'm almost thinking that there is no God other than who we are. So anyway, maybe if you could bring a little clarity to me on that, that would be great.

[Speaker 1] (15:00 - 23:16)

Right, thank you. It's comforting, of course, to feel that one has a relationship with God, and for a long time, until a human goes deep enough into the source of his or her own being, it can be a helpful and comforting thing, and you can even sometimes access wisdom through it. There's me, and there's God.

Now, how do they come together? And that duality has been around for a very long time, and only the mystics in all various traditions, the mystics in Christianity, Christianity was very careful to have you and God as separate. Its heresy, it has been in conventional Christianity to say that you and God are one, and only the mystics, the Christian mystics, said that, and they were condemned for it.

For you, it is like growing out of childhood, and you feel a little bit nostalgic, because you're leaving this idea that you have a relationship with God, which is a childlike thing. It's a wonderful thing for a child to feel that, but as you move out of childhood, so to speak, spiritually speaking, there is a nostalgia around this. You feel that you have lost something when you no longer have a relationship with God, but that is only the ego self that feels comfortable with having a relationship with God.

What we are doing here is deeper than having a relationship with God. It actually is realizing your oneness with God, and then gradually you move into that, and it's a little death almost, because what dies is your mental concept of God. Many people who worship God, I would say most in all the traditions, they actually worship a mental idol, because they have a concept of God, and then they worship, they speak to that and worship that.

They haven't gone beyond concept, and that is the fate of many, the majority of religious people, have concepts. Now, if you have a concept, then you become very defensive about your concept, because you cannot then tolerate, because a concept is a thought or a group of thoughts. A concept that you identify with becomes ego, so it gives you your sense of identity.

You identify with a thought or a group of conceptual thought, and then you feel immediately, because you've identified with it, you feel threatened by other concepts of God, and so you tend to make the other into an enemy, because their concept of God is somehow different from your concept of God, and because you're identified with the

thoughts, you feel threatened by anybody who questions that or who is different, and that's the dark side of a conventional religion, often, that all the others, and not only one religion and the other, even different schools and traditions in the same religion, even in Christianity, there are many churches who claim that they are in sole possession of the truth or true relationship with God.

All the others do not have a true relationship with God, so often these religious people seem quite egoless on a personal level, but they have given up their personal ego, but they have taken on a huge collective ego, which is their church, and as this collective ego, they regard all the others as inferior, if not enemies, so that's interesting. These people often look so spiritual or just very meek and egoless, and yet you realize very quickly that there is a huge ego there that they carry, and it is a collective ego of their group, so our destiny is to let go of a conceptual God that you have a relationship with, because a God that you have a relationship with is a concept in your mind. There are people who feel that they have a relationship with God, and yet, at times, they are able to drop deeper, and then they have this feeling of deep, deep inner peace and aliveness, and even perhaps some insights, and when they come out again, they still come back to having a relationship with God.

They still interpret it in terms of relationship. They don't realize that they're going deeper within themselves. There's no other.

It's the recognition of the oneness of all life, so I realize that you feel a bit sad of leaving that stage behind, and perhaps not even having a conversation anymore with God. You can have a conversation with yourself, but you don't really need that. It's going into stillness deep within yourself, and then whatever wants to emerge from there, then you become an instrument of God, so to speak, and what God, I don't use that word that often, what God does through you, which is the light of consciousness, not God itself, but the emanation of God that reaches you, what that does depends on where you are in your life, whether you become creative, whether you speak, whether you just emanate loving kindness towards other human beings and change the world in that way.

We don't know whether you write or create a structure that does something, even a business that actually brings consciousness into the world, even though you might sell something, but somehow it's associated with consciousness. I don't want to go into this too much. How it manifests varies from person to person.

It's the experience of something that transcends the person, the personality, something transcendent, the transcendent dimension, which is an alternative way of speaking about God, because when you use the word God, it is a closed concept, God. If I say, you can see the difference between using the word God, which is closed, and the transcendent dimension to the universe, the transcendent. Transcendent is an open concept, whereas God is a closed concept.

In that sense, the transcendent is a bit more helpful and less misleading than to say God. But of course, if you've grown up with the term God, then there is an attachment to that, and there is a reluctance to let go. It doesn't mean that you cannot use the term God anymore if you realize the deeper meaning behind the word.

So that's a transition for you to the dimension of depth within yourself. And then you grow out of a more childlike way of relating to God. And that's good.

[Speaker 3] (23:16 - 23:22)

In a more knowing way, correct? Yes. Yeah.

You know it. It's not a belief.

[Speaker 1] (23:22 - 24:46)

That's an important point. Traditionally, God is associated with belief. And the mystics of all the religions in Buddhism, the mystics would be mostly Zen.

But the Zen people came in when Buddhism had already become very much a mental phenomenon, and they wanted to get back to the essence. So when Zen arose, first in China and then Japan, they rejected everything. They rejected the scriptures.

They rejected all mental formations around the transcendent. And it worked. It was a very powerful thing.

And then, of course, when a movement like that is around for centuries, it itself becomes formalized again and mental. So the belief is a transition from belief to actual realization and experience. That is the important thing.

And the moment you experience, you no longer have a conflict with anybody else who has also experienced. And you recognize the truth in other traditions. You can see, oh, there it is, there it is, there it is.

As long as you only have belief, you're in conflict with anybody who has a different belief. Because a belief ultimately is ideology. Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (24:53 - 25:11)

Good evening. My first question is about NDEs, near-death experiences, and what your perspective on that is. And my second question is your perspective on the consciousness of a human being while in the womb.

[Speaker 1] (25:11 - 25:18)

So you're interested in the beginning and the end. Yeah. I didn't think there were.

[Speaker 6] (25:19 - 25:20)

Yes, I am in the beginning.

[Speaker 1] (25:23 - 36:20)

What's at the beginning? And what's the end like? Every human being is consciousness manifesting as a temporary form, taking form as what we perceive as a human being.

So the human being itself is a manifestation of consciousness, and ultimately no other than consciousness. The death experience, when you die, what happens? There's a question here that I might as well answer at the same time about death.

I laughed a little when I saw it. Why is it that we need to awaken? We all die anyway.

That seems to make sense. Is it that you are still awakened after death and the next lifetimes in eternity? Now, if you have experienced, I don't know if you have sat with somebody who died, who is dying, I don't know if you have experienced it, then you will have experienced if you're able to surrender to that moment.

It's a very sacred thing, a very sacred moment. And there's the moment when the transition happens between this body being inhabited by this field of consciousness. And then suddenly, the body is just a body.

And there's a huge difference. And you immediately see this body was never that being. It just looked like that being.

So that being, as I said earlier, we're all ultimately invisible. And what you see of another person is relatively insignificant, and not destined to survive. The person does not survive, the personal sense of self does not survive.

But that which is deeper than the person in you, as let's call it a spark of consciousness, that form, first you are the physical form, deeper than the physical form, you are the consciousness that inhabits the form. And that consciousness is inseparable from the one consciousness, there is no separate consciousness, consciousness does not have a plural, there are no consciousnesses. Consciousness is a singular, there's only one consciousness that manifests as we could call it a ray of consciousness, you are this ray of consciousness.

As a ray of consciousness, consciousness is not subject to birth and death, so it is timeless. This ray of consciousness that you appear as this particular person, does not necessarily immediately dissolve into total anonymity. It remains in most cases, as a particular ray, but it's not the person anymore.

What happens then, it returns briefly to the source, in the same way that a bee returns, goes to the beehive and deposits what it has collected. And every human is the one

consciousness experiencing and learning and evolving in some way, even the most insignificant life form is the one consciousness evolving and learning. And what it has learned, not the details, but the essence, it contributes something to the whole, that is an intuition that came to me some time ago, and I believe it, there's some truth in it, but we can only speak of it in terms of analogies.

So your growth in consciousness becomes part of the one consciousness. The one consciousness, which is the consciousness of God, we're talking about things that you can't talk about, I'll do it anyway. The transcendent of God is totally beyond time and does not evolve, because evolution would mean time.

So the transcendent does not exist in our dimension, it is in a transcendent dimension, so you can't even conceive of it or talk of it, and that is God. Then God, the emanation of God, shines into our dimension and creates our dimension. And then God is an evolving being when God enters this dimension.

And there's no doubt that there is an evolutionary process of consciousness happening in our universe. The ultimate, I cannot explain the ultimate purpose of it all, I don't know it, but the ultimate purpose of it all, you can only have little glimpses of it. You can never fully comprehend it with your limited mind or talk about it.

So who you are in your essence, survives, ultimately there is no death. And when you die as an ego, in this lifetime, which is called die before you die, then you already know that as a living experience, that you, in your essence, are beyond death. And that's a beautiful thing, when the ego goes, then you die before you die, and you can sense the essence that you are.

So I'm never going to die, and you are not either. But of course, the body dissolves, the body will dissolve. What is your level of consciousness throughout your life?

And as you die, that is an important factor in what happens after that. There are people who tell me that I don't want to reincarnate again. I don't want to come back.

It's so hard. Please, don't let me come back. And then there are others who say, I hope I'm going to come back because I don't want to disappear into nothingness.

I really hope I'm going to come back. Reincarnation, is reincarnation a fact? Yes.

But I would like to bring reincarnation into something that you can actually experience at first hand here and now. The deeper meaning of reincarnation, as I see it, is you identify with form, then you reincarnate. Carnate comes from flesh, flesh means form.

Carnate, silicon carnate, it's flesh. So you reincarnate, which means you identify with form, then you reincarnate into a form. So the Buddhists striving towards the end of reincarnation so that you no longer are compelled, the consciousness that you are is no

longer compelled to reincarnate into another form and have to go through another lifetime of problems and suffering.

So the Buddhists are striving, they want to come to the end of this cycle of reincarnation, where perhaps you're conscious enough to choose whether you want to reincarnate or not. You can say, no, I've had enough, thank you. Reincarnation is identification with form.

How do I go beyond reincarnation? You have to do that here and now, and that means, that is what we are doing here, do not identify with thought forms in your head. That is the most basic reincarnation that happens continually to human beings, is the complete identification with every thought form that comes into their heads, and then they become it.

But if you have gone beyond the compulsion to reincarnate in this lifetime, which means identify with every thought and every emotion that comes up, when you have recognized the essence of who you are beyond form, that realization does not leave you. When you die, there is a freedom that comes, but a freedom you have already found in this lifetime, because you have died to this identification with form. So it's very important how you experience the so-called afterlife is intimately connected with your state of consciousness in this lifetime.

So if you reincarnate, then another form comes into being, and then you enter the womb and start all over again. Buddhists say that if they are doing good things in this lifetime, they will have a better incarnation next time, but they're still compelled to reincarnate. But the important thing is for us, what we are talking about, to keep it practical and immediately verifiable in your own experience.

So your question really, the essence of this answer is, it is possible for you to stop the cycle of reincarnation in this lifetime, in a way that's what we're doing here. And then you will already experience yourself as that which is beyond form, and that takes away the fear of death, and that's a big relief. And then you can go on, and when death comes, you will almost welcome it.

And then the rest you will see. I can't predict what you experience after that, and what you're going to do with your enlightened consciousness. So liberation from death is the realization that the essence of you does not die.

And that's why we are here. And so I wish you well on your journey into the infinite.

[Speaker 2] (36:31 - 36:36)

I just wanted to start with a compliment that I find you very adorable.

[Speaker 1] (36:37 - 36:39)

Oh, thank you.

[Speaker 2] (36:44 - 37:13)

I've been in a situation where my own 16-year-old child has not spoken to me almost one year now. So when it comes to that intimate relationship, it's very easy, like I go into that pain body. Like sometimes I visualize that I'm back with my daughter, and we're having a beautiful, you know, we had a wonderful relationship.

And you said the answer for everything is in the present moment. I just wanted to, if you could more elaborate on that.

[Speaker 1] (37:14 - 37:17)

And she has not spoken to you in a year?

[Speaker 2] (37:18 - 37:34)

So it was a very complicated divorce we went through. And it was a custody thing. And so we shared like 50-50 custody.

And so I think whenever she's with the father, like you know, the child is used to get back, in my case.

[Speaker 1] (37:34 - 37:38)

So how do you, what do you experience? What emotion do you experience?

[Speaker 2] (37:40 - 38:05)

Emotions I experience is obviously, there is a lot of pain. And then again, I feel this, it's the attachment to her form. Like, you know, we used to be together.

She used to be in front of me. And so again, I feel that the connection is deeper, not at the level of the form, it's much more deeper than that. But there are times when I miss that attachment.

[Speaker 1] (38:06 - 42:17)

Okay, there's a sense of lack that is understandable, that you don't have that contact anymore. And that sense of lack, I'm just going to amplify it a little because there could be other things also that cause, I mean, not in your case, but for other people present here, who have this sense of lack, there could be a sense of lack, because you don't have a partner, you don't have a relationship with her, and you feel something vital is missing in you, or a child in your case that you don't have contact with, and you sense like a hole almost inside you, it leaves that eventually that will heal. So all you can do right now is to acknowledge that that's there, not fuel it too much with memories and

thinking.

But stay in touch with your daughter at a deeper level of pure love. Because the attachment is an emotional thing, that's fine. But love is not an emotion.

I mean, love often pretends emotion is interpreted often as love. But true love is deeper than an emotion. And so that true love is there in you towards her.

And although this sense of lack will continue for a while until either the situation changes, or some kind of healing happens, time can heal too. But more importantly, to focus on the love that you feel for your daughter, so that you can virtually feel her presence within you. You can virtually feel that she is here because in that love you are connected.

Love is the realization of oneness. So you feel at a deeper level, you feel one with her, and then the fact that she is not physically there becomes less painful. There's still some pain there, but you're no longer consumed by it.

So you have to go deeper where you feel that love. And then you can live with the sense of lack that still exists there. And that also applies to those who feel the sense of lack because of an absence of close relationship.

You feel, I need somebody, I feel this, the loneliness, I feel the something so important missing. And it is natural if you're to feel that. The secret then is connect with your daughter at the deepest level.

I would suggest to you that it's not just something that you do for yourself, you actually do reach her at the deepest level when you do that. Whether she knows it or not, she might not know it in her conscious mind, but she will feel that because space becomes irrelevant at that deepest level. It doesn't matter where she is, she could be on another planet, and she would feel that.

So you have to go there, feel that love. And that love is already, it's no longer the form, it goes deeper than the form. Because the form, of course, is not there, the form of her.

But the love takes you beyond form, within yourself, and you reach the essence of her beyond the form that she is. And there will be a connection, and you may find that in time, even on the surface level, there will be a reconnection. So that's the practice and the way beyond.

I'm not saying there will not be some pain anymore, but you will be able to live with it. Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (42:24 - 42:51)

Thank you. I'm actually on a journey to find peace of mind and deep connection. But

when I fired from a contract, or when I deal with the death of someone I love, I shut down.

And then it's more like, okay, how am I going to survive this day? I just want to get through it. But how do you get to that next level of mastery?

Where, you know what I'm saying? So yeah.

[Speaker 1] (42:54 - 51:51)

I would suggest you can use the present moment as a portal into the next stage. And it works like this. There are situations that when you're not absolutely present, you suffer.

This could happen, for example, if you go to the doctor's office, and he tells you, you only have a few months to live. Or it could be that you've lost all your money, no more security, no more investments, nothing left. And I call that allow the life situation, whatever it is, to force you into absolute presence.

And absolute presence is, if you ask yourself, if you think your life is problematic, your life situation and failure, problem, dreadful, to help you focus on the present moment, which after all is all there ever is, you ask yourself, what's the problem now? And now means now. What's the problem now?

This forces your attention. But you can only do it if you're really fed up with suffering. You don't want suffering anymore.

No matter what it is, you need to be fed up enough with suffering, that you go there to that place, which is total presence, where you say, what's the problem now? There is no problem now. I am breathing.

You're not denying anything. You're bringing yourself to reality. It does not diminish your ability to deal with situations and take whatever action is possible or necessary to deal with it.

That's fine. But right now, what's the problem now? You're breathing.

You're looking around. There's energy in your body. And you have to come to the conclusion that actually right now, I'm alive and I'm conscious.

And you can sense your own consciousness, which is one with that sense of aliveness. There's only this. And then you're walking somewhere, you're taking one step at a time.

Can you single out this moment so that you experience your life, so that your life experience, which is now, is not obscured by your life situation. You have the two dimensions. You have your life situation.

Everybody here has a life situation. And for many, many people in this world, the majority still, their life situation is problematic. For some, more problematic than others.

For you, sometimes you feel it's particularly problematic now. And others, there may be people in this room whose life situation is more problematic than yours. But everybody, there's not a single person whose life situation does not have its set of problems and challenges to do with relationships, with your feelings, your job situation, your health situation, your financial situation.

All these things make up your life situation. And you can never escape the problematic nature of a life situation. The spiritual practice is, you deal with your life situation, you do what you can, but you don't allow yourself, your attention, your consciousness to be consumed by your life situation.

And for you not to be consumed by your life situation, you need to make it your practice to single out the present moment and realize that in this moment, you feel alive. You go into your within and you can sense that you are aware and conscious at this moment. You can feel your own presence and then you can look around and you can see the sky or the lights and the flowers and the floor and any objects that's everything is as it is.

And it is not problematic. It is there in its bare, simple existence in the present moment. The world, that's sense perceptions that surround you.

You're breathing, you're perceiving what you're perceiving. And you're aware that there is a presence that is perceiving the world around you. And that presence you can sense as yourself.

That you have exited your life situation and you have gone to a deeper level within yourself. You have access and a new dimension within yourself where your life situation becomes secondary. And the more you do that, miraculously, your ability to actually deal with your life situation also improves when you do that.

Because you're no longer consumed by it. You have, so to speak, risen above it. You have risen above your life situation.

It is no longer sucking up all your energy, all your consciousness, which ultimately is your mind. That is where your life situation lives. Your mind is no longer sucking up all your consciousness.

And then it sucks the life out of you. It's like a parasite. So, you have to practice.

Ask yourself as a little pointer, a little signpost. Ask yourself, what problem do I have at this moment? And invariably, you will find that in this moment you have no problem.

If you're really in this moment. And that's the place that you become more comfortable

with and you go more deeply into that. And just reminding you one more time, this moment consists of your sense perception right now because everything is present in the moment.

Whatever you see or hear or perceive is present right now. And then the deeper part of presence is sensing the fact that you are conscious. Sensing your own presence.

And that requires, when you are in suffering, it requires a certain intensity. And therefore, this is why I'm saying you need to be fed up with suffering because only if you're fed up with suffering can you have that intensity that says, no more. I haven't used that expression in a while, but I used to call it the sword of presence.

It's like in martial arts, like you have a sword, you pull this sword and this sword, you hold this sword and you cut through time. And you say, now, what's the problem now? Nothing.

I have no problem now. That requires an intensity. It's not a denial.

You are accessing a deeper dimension within yourself. There's no problem now. And then when, let's say, let's come back to the example I gave, you're traveling to see your attorney to sort out the mess.

And then finally you arrive at the attorney's office and you're still, you're going into the elevator and you're still, you press the button and you're still in the present moment. There's no problem. And then you arrive at the floor of the attorney and then you open the door and then you sit down and then you start speaking.

Then you, of course, you have to enter, you have to address at that moment, you have to address your life situation. But this energy of presence will be still there in the background. So the way in which you deal with things will be different from the way in which you would have dealt with it in the absence of presence.

So whenever anybody who perceives they have a very difficult life situation, allow it to force you into the present moment. However, if you want to suffer a bit more, that's fine. Then you don't have to do it.

Do I want to be free of suffering? That's the question. Thank you.

Just a moment of silence, of stillness.

[Speaker 4] (52:00 - 52:27)

Thank you. Thank you.

Eckhart Tolle Without Consciousness There Would Be No World [495fb179-ca37-4722-bc64-9e9cf3cf5d4d]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:45)

Without consciousness, there would be no world. In this episode, Eckhart discusses excessive thinking as the source of enormous unhappiness for millions of people. He goes on to explain that it's not the circumstances of one's life that makes people miserable.

It's the overthinking that causes their suffering. Eckhart shares a story from his own life just after he experienced this awakening. He was homeless and spent many days on a park bench.

He admits he would have been justified if he were filled with anger and resentment, but he wasn't. Instead, he was deeply aware of the aliveness and beauty everywhere. He says it's possible to awaken even in the midst of extreme difficulties.

He says what illuminates the world without which there would be no world is consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (0:48 - 26:25)

So the present moment is a doorway that opens up out of complete identification with what has become excessive thinking, unnecessary thinking, because you think you need to think continuously in order to sustain your sense of identity. And so at night you wake up and you think about your life. There's no action you can take right there and then, but you're thinking about it, and usually it's not pleasant.

All the things that went wrong or could go wrong, and it hasn't worked out the way it should have worked. And you go, oh, it's so difficult, my life. And then the next day you say, let me tell you about my life.

You say to someone you meet, you think you had a difficult life? Now listen to my story. And then you tell and retell the story sustained by thought.

And so this overthinking, this excessive thinking is a source of enormous unhappiness for millions of people on the planet. They are not made unhappy ultimately by the circumstances of their lives. They are made unhappy by overthinking.

There was a time when I was homeless. Now one would have said, well, if a homeless person is fully justified in being unhappy, you might have thought, well, not so. I was not unhappy as a homeless person.

In fact, I was very happy being totally present. I'm not saying you should become

homeless to experience it. You don't need to experience it.

But if it should ever happen to you, it can be an opportunity for being totally present, totally in the present moment. I would sit on park benches, just looking around. Everything was so alive and beautiful.

And then my hand would go into my pocket. I would see how much money I'd left. Oh, I was in England at the time.

£3.50. That's just enough for whatever I could buy, a sandwich or something. What's going to happen after that? My mind didn't even go there because I had gone through this shift in consciousness.

So there was just an aliveness. And always at the last moment, something came to help. And then occasionally people would come and sit next to me on the bench and say, who is this strange person?

And they asked questions. That was the beginning of a spiritual teaching, a person asking me a question on the park bench. And I said, well, I didn't have any answers.

Well, occasionally an answer came, but it wasn't prepared. And I always surprised myself what answer came. Oh, I didn't know I knew that.

So even in extreme circumstances, nowadays there are many, millions of people are refugees these days. They lose their home. And of course, one would think, are they not fully justified in being unhappy?

I would suggest that even in limit situations like this, there is the possibility of spiritual awakening. In fact, particularly in limit situations, this is a term from existentialist philosophy, limit situation, especially in limit situations, when life challenges you in such a severe way that it removes many things from you that you had identified with, that gave you a sense of security, your home, your relationships, perhaps even your health, all your money. And sometimes life takes away several of these things at once.

And that's usually regarded as something terrible. And on one level it is, but potentially it is a way, and it has happened to many people, not the majority of people who suffer this, but certain percentage who experience an awakening through this. Because if life removes things that you had identified with, who are you?

Who am I without this? Who am I without my job, without my house, without my possessions, perhaps even without my relationships? Everything is gone.

Who am I now? Now the ego is extremely fearful of this moment and this enormous suffering there, but potentially there's also an opening into who or what you are beyond the mind created self, because there's nothing left. And then suddenly after going

through suffering, you may suddenly wake up and say, I don't know what happened and I don't know why, but I feel this deep peace and I have nothing.

Jesus called it the peace that passes all understanding, which means you cannot explain, although I'm trying to explain it, you cannot explain why this person should suddenly be so peaceful. So I believe that no matter whether you are a Christian or whether you are not a Christian, there is a deep truth embodied in the central image of Christianity. And the central image of Christianity is a man who is on the cross, an extreme form of suffering.

And ultimately that means every human being. One could say Jesus is the archetype for every human. Every human being is crucified by life.

Every human being goes through the suffering and with the suffering comes the possibility of transcending the ego by entering a state of complete surrender and acceptance. Ultimately you step out of your thinking mind and what's left when you're no longer thinking about yourself and your life and what went wrong. In fact, thinking subsides and what's left of you when you're not thinking about yourself or about anything?

Is that even possible? Is that even possible? For example, at this moment, are you able to experience as you sit there being in that space of not needing to add any thought to this moment?

Can you allow this moment to be as it is so completely that you do not add any interpretation to it? Just be it. So what is left of you right now?

You're not remembering your story because you are still completely yourself without the story. Isn't that surprising? Even without remembering all your past suffering, there is a sense of being.

In fact, it's stronger. You don't remember all the things that went wrong in your life. Okay, it's gone.

You don't even remember your email address. It's gone. Or your telephone number.

You don't need it right now. When you need it, it'll be there. You don't need it.

It's gone. So instead of I am this, and I am that, and I am that, what remains is a sense of beingness, which is I am. But nothing is added to the I am.

This is what's left of you right now. There's a stillness. When thinking subsides, you have not lost consciousness.

You have not fallen below thinking. You have risen above thinking. There are two ways of becoming free of compulsive thinking, which is how the ego arises.

There are two ways of becoming free of compulsive thinking, the compulsive thinking that makes your life miserable, not the thinking that is useful, not the thinking that is a useful tool for creating and manifesting and inventing things and so on. There's a beautiful thing. Thinking is an enormous advance for humans, evolution of human consciousness.

But the way it has developed now, humans are possessed by thinking. They do not think. The language you use, you say, I think.

You don't think. Thinking happens to you. And the thoughts that happen to you are thoughts that you absorb from the surrounding culture.

You watch the media, the mainstream media, and you take that in, and then you regurgitate it. This is what I think. Or you're against it.

This is what I think. Thinking happens to you. You don't think unless you are aware.

And awareness or presence is a dimension of consciousness that is deeper, or we could say higher than thinking. Awareness is when thinking stops and you have not gone to sleep. In fact, you are more alert than before.

And you can look around wherever you are. For example, here and now in this room, you can look around this room and perceive everything visually and listen to everything without adding any thought to it. Just be still and perceive.

There's still a knowing there, but it's not conceptual knowing. There's a deeper knowing there. Become familiar with the state of being free of thinking and just aware.

But that requires a certain alertness. Without the alertness, you drift back into thinking. The true spiritual teaching shows you the way of rising above thinking so that you can begin to use thinking, not you as the ego, but you as the higher consciousness that you are, can use thinking as a tool instead of being used by thinking, by thought.

So there are two ways of being free of thinking. One is rising above, which is why we're here. The other is falling below.

If you want to fall below, you have to walk out of here, go to the bar next door and order a few whiskeys. And then you can experience becoming free of thinking also gradually. But you're falling below thinking.

Oh, it feels so good. I can't even remember my problems anymore. It feels good.

You start singing now. And there's a joy of life. No need to think.

Just be. Have another one. And then, of course, you're moving towards unconsciousness.

And this is not the way we are going. It is not the destiny of humanity to regress to a pre-thinking stage just because you want to be as happy as your dog. You say, well, the dog isn't thinking and so I'm going to go there too.

The dog hasn't arrived. The dog is a beautiful manifestation of consciousness, but it's not a thinking consciousness. So you need to discover in yourself the ability to be free of thinking initially for brief moments.

And this is a good moment. When you perceive the world around you without mental labels, just an alert presence in the background of your sense perceptions. And this is an amazing thing.

What happens? At first, well, what's so great about that? It's the greatest thing that could happen to you because you begin to access a deeper dimension of who you are.

And that sense of I am, of presence, begins to be your source of identity. Now, this is what I call your essence identity. Your form identity is the physical body.

Your form identity is the conditioning of your mind, your mental emotional conditioning. That is your form identity. Then most humans only know themselves as their form identity.

And that is the greatest deprivation in life. The greatest poverty in life is not to know yourself as who or what you are in your essence. If you only know yourself as form identity, your life is really continuous unhappiness and frustration with a brief interludes when you're okay for a while because something good has just happened, but it never lasts.

There's a possibility of living from a deeper place within yourself. And that is essence identity. And there is no thought in it.

There's only a sense of intense, aware presence. And so you can, in your daily life, you can invite this space, the inner space of essence identity into your life as much as you can. For example, simply by consciously perceiving something without imposing a mental label on it.

You look at a flower and you look at it for 15 seconds, 20 seconds, perceive it completely against the background of stillness. So to use an analogy, if you were a painting, it's a strange analogy, but let's use it anyway. If you were a painting, most people think they are whatever the painting, you are the figures on the canvas, the painting.

Now, if you are the painting and you suddenly realize there is more to me than whatever the painting shows, more essentially, I am the canvas on which this is painted. So you become aware of yourself as the canvas essentially, and whatever is on it is an addition. Another analogy we could use, another weird analogy.

Let's say you are this room. If I asked yourself to describe who or what you are, you would describe yourself in terms of floor, walls, ceilings, lights, maybe the furniture in the room. That's me, this, that, that.

Okay, you can talk about it for a long time. And then after a while you stop talking. And then I say, there's must be, is there not more to you than what you've been speaking about?

And you would say, well, maybe there is, but I need a few years of psychoanalysis to find out what that is. Okay. You do a few years of psychoanalysis, and then you come back and I say, okay, what have you found out?

Well, in my childhood, I found this, and it's a long story. It's very helpful. It's useful.

It can be useful to know. But, and then I ask again, is there not something else that you have neglected? You have not mentioned.

And suddenly the room, which is you, becomes aware and says, oh, I forgot about this wonderful space that has no form, but that is the essence of who I am. Without this space, there would be no room. I am essentially the space.

And this applies to you. Let's let go of the analogy. Essentially you are the space of consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness.

You are conscious. Are you not at this moment? The one thing that is beyond doubt in your life, everything can be doubted.

You can doubt whether this is real. Am I dreaming this? Maybe you are.

But even if you were dreaming this, in life it's a little bit like a dream because things come and go very quickly. They disappear. Even if it is a dream, what is it that you cannot doubt?

You cannot doubt that there is a consciousness in which the dream appears. You cannot doubt, and you can sense it within yourself at this moment that you are conscious, that you are aware of your consciousness. So I'm asking you now a strange question.

Can you be aware or conscious right now of the fact that you are conscious? Can you sense at this moment that you are conscious? Can you, another way of putting it, can you sense your own beingness that you are?

Can you sense the I am without any addition? Not this or that or that. I am.

And that is ancient wisdom already at the, in ancient Greece, there was an inscription on the temple of Apollo and that said, know yourself, know thyself. And this is what we are talking about at the deepest level. Knowing yourself is not knowing your story.

It's fine. There's a place for that too. But knowing yourself is knowing yourself in your essence.

Now, many people did not understand this inscription on the temple of Apollo. They were interested in other things, but next to it, there was another little inscription that gave the key to what it means to know thyself. And most people had overlooked that.

It was just one letter. And that letter that was inscribed also in that temple was A. And people thought it must be meaningless or maybe the sculptor forgot to complete the word.

And it was pointed out later, much later by Plutarch, the philosopher, that he said quite clearly, this letter is the second person singular, which by the way, happens to be the same as in French, tu es, you are. It said in ancient Greek, you are, second person singular. Also on one side, it said, know thyself.

And then a little bit away from there, it said, you are. So you would look at that, know thyself, you are, and then you go, I am. And then the key to knowing thyself is the I am, the I am realization, which somewhere in the Old Testament, this is one of the great highlights of the Bible.

There are some highlights there, undoubtedly, also other things. God is asked, who are you? I am that I am.

So God defines him, her, itself through the word, I am. And Jesus said, I am the truth, the way, and something else. I'm not good at quoting the Bible.

I am the truth, the way, and the light, maybe. And people have interpreted this as meaning, I am the one. In mind, if you allow me my interpretation of it, I believe they've omitted one word.

And that is the word, is. And then the line would read, I am is the way, and the life, and the truth. The I am realization is the way, the life, the truth.

Another wonderful pointer in the New Testament is two sayings. Jesus said, talking to his disciples, presumably, you are the light of the world. He also said it about himself.

I am the light of the world. It's in two different gospels. You are the light of the world.

This is a very powerful pointer towards self-realization. You are the light of the world. What does that mean?

Does that mean that the people he was speaking to are very special? No, they were not special. They were not educated, probably.

They were simple people. They had no social position. So he wasn't talking about that.

He wasn't saying you are VIPs. What was he then saying? He was pointing to the essence identity of those humans, the light.

What is the light of the world? What is it that illuminates the entire world without which there would be no world? Consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (26:26 - 26:48)

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Eckhart Tolle You Already Are Who You Want To Become [51d7b4b7-3059-4796-b082-855b4360fde5]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:34)

You already are who you want to become. In this episode, Eckhart talks with a live audience in Greece. He cautions participants against the belief that enlightenment is somewhere out there or something to be achieved in the distant future.

He says we don't have to go through a long process of becoming to find liberation. He explains the irony is that when we look to the future, we miss the opportunity to find freedom right here in the present moment. He urges all of us to wake up and to realize we already are who we want to become.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 42:50)

Some spiritual seekers seek with great intensity. It's their life purpose, and it's a great thing. Instead of seeking wealth or recognition or worldly success, what they seek is whatever they call it, liberation, enlightenment, becoming enlightened, liberated.

Okay, now the danger is to look to the future for a... that you project a state that you want to achieve, which is in the future. And the frustrating thing is you don't achieve it, but you want to get there.

And that is a movement of becoming. You want to become something or someone that you are not yet. And so this prevents you from realizing that you are already what you want to become.

And wanting to become it is the obstacle that prevents you from realizing that what you're looking for, you are already. So some teachings will tell you that in order to awaken spiritually, you need great intensity, the same intensity that a drowning man has for air. And that's very intense.

If you're about to drown, you really want air. And so some teachers will tell you you need... if you don't have...

if you do not look for spiritual realization with the same intensity of a drowning man or woman looking for air, you won't get there. That's one teaching. The others say, and this sounds a little bit like more what I've been saying, there's nothing you can do about it.

It comes when it wants to come. So just relax. Let go.

Don't look for anything. Just... Okay.

So... So you want me to just watch TV or... Become a couch potato and watch TV?

Just it might come or it might not come. It's unlikely that it'll come. However, if you bring the two together, the two approaches which seem totally contradictory of wanting to awaken with that enormous intensity and just being totally okay in this moment is just fine.

There's nothing to look for. This is fine. The intensity that created the projection of future, that intensity needs to move into the present moment.

So instead of the intensity of, I need to get there. There's a longing getting there. And of course you're almost looking for it.

This is the enlightened me is over there somewhere in the future. Or maybe it's maybe I need to move to India. Maybe then I'll find myself.

And of course you might or you might not bring that intensity into the present moment. And in the present moment, you are just be intensely present. You don't want anything.

Be intensely present. There's nothing to want anymore. If you're intensely present, it is a very deeply fulfilling state of being.

Intense presence. Are you still looking for yourself? No, there's nothing to look for.

That presence is it. Now you might lose it the next moment, but right now you are present. You are the presence.

And sometimes you don't get the intensity unless you are being extremely challenged by life. Some people don't get it until really you need to get to the limit of endurance. Let's say you lose everything.

And there you are on a park bench. Lost all status, relationships, possessions. Everything gone.

Taken away from me. And instead of developing a victim identity, what life has done to me. Oh my God.

This is where I've ended up. On the park bench. It's all been in vain.

All the stuff that I've been involved in. And all my spiritual search. Where has it gotten me?

Here. The park bench. It's all completely pointless.

The story. You can see the story. How it creates unhappiness and an unhappy identity.

And then you can't stand the suffering anymore. And perhaps a moment arises when you completely surrender to this moment as it is. And that's...

This is really... It's like an awakening. You suddenly awaken into this present moment.

And from before you were in your thoughts with a mind made identity. A very unhappy identity. And suddenly you go, oh.

There's no opinion anymore about who you are. Because you know that you are that deep presence. And then you notice whenever you move away from it, you begin to suffer.

So that keeps you on the narrow path that leads to life. That is life. And somebody talked about that.

The narrow road. The narrow path that leads to life. And not many people have chosen it.

I think somebody said that. And what is this narrow path? It's the path of presence.

Very narrow. And that is exactly what all the the great Zen teachers taught. To be absolutely here in the now.

And you burn off past and future. You can still manipulate past and future for practical purposes. But it no longer has anything to do with your sense of identity.

Your personal past. You remember it. Yes.

But it no longer has anything to do with who you are. You are the deep I. So that is something that you can, you can, this is an opportunity here.

And especially if your life situation is very unpleasant at the moment, at home, wherever. Go into intense, in very intense presence voluntarily without life forcing you into it by putting you into a limit situation. Another one could be you go to the doctor and he says, we've just been looking at your x-rays and it doesn't look good.

You have five months approximately. Now that's terrible news. Especially if you're not that old yet.

It could happen. So either this brings an enormous amount of suffering suddenly or it pushes you into absolute and complete presence. And this is, there's a phrase that the teacher, the chain-smoking guru, who approached this wonderful book, Nisargadatta described as this state, he described as in his habitual, very emphatic way of speaking.

He said, this is the radical refusal to harbor thoughts. And he would look at you like that. The radical refusal to harbor thoughts.

That's how he spoke. Okay, I'm not harboring any thoughts. This is a very yang approach to these, the Zen masters also are a bit on the yang side more than I am.

They look at you and they look really fierce with bulging eyes in the old drawings of Zen masters, these bulging eyes. And that's a teaching in itself. But in the good drawings of these ancient Zen masters, you see when you look at the, you can, done by perhaps by great artists, you can see that, yes, there is that intensity that looks almost intimidating, looks intimidating, but there's also hiding there.

Behind it, there is a gentleness and a presence and compassion. But yet, it's not on the surface. It's hiding behind.

The surface is very yang. And that's the same with Nisargadatta. He's the same approach.

It's a very, not many people yet are at, have arrived at the point where this statement by Nisargadatta, the radical refusal to harbor thoughts, not many humans are yet ready for that or are able to live that, but some are. And there may be some here. And if there are some here who are able to live this radical, very radical approach to awakening, if there are some who heal, then it's probably because you are faced with a threatening life situation or something is very not going well in your life or something very bad has just happened or you're in deep suffering.

You're contemplating suicide. Let's say you're contemplating suicide because you're telling yourself, I can't take any more. I just cannot take any more.

And one can see why people think that life is just unbearable. I can't, I can fully understand that. But I would suggest as an alternative option to suicide to try something else first.

You have nothing to lose anymore. Absolutely nothing to lose. So try something else first.

And we could call it the radical refusal to harbor thoughts or we could call it unconditional and total acceptance of this moment as it is. That's another way of putting it. So as an alternative to suicide, why not go there?

And what that is, and this sounds a little frightening or extreme, that has been described as an act of, but in a positive sense, an act of self-annihilation. Self-annihilation. Self-annihilation, but it refers to the egoic self.

So if you are faced with, or you're faced with imminent death, maybe you're just old, well, you have nothing to lose. Why not go there now? And once you know what it is that I'm talking about, you've had glimpses, so it's not just mental abstractions, you know experientially, at first hand, what presence is, because you have experienced moments of presence.

And so then you go there and no more of that nonsense, no more drama, no more

suffering, just this moment as it is. And in that you, you feel beautiful. Suddenly there's a deepening and you go into the deep I, and you are the deep I.

How much longer you live suddenly isn't that important anymore? Because the fulfillment of your life is already here. Nothing could be greater than to realize the depths of your being.

And so if you're not ready for this very radical approach, that's fine. A time may come when you are ready for it. But you can also awaken more gradually, and for most of you that applies, rather than, but if you're looking, if you're contemplating suicide, please try The radical refusal to harbor thoughts when the unhappy entity that wanted to commit suicide, the unhappy entity that said, I can't take anymore, dissolves.

So the very entity that couldn't take anymore isn't there anymore. You withdraw consciousness from it. This kind of happened to me that night when I experienced that shift.

I can't live with myself anymore was the thought that came. What does that mean? I can't live with myself.

Who am I and who is the self? So there are two of me here. Very weird.

I can't live with my, I can't live with myself. I can't stand myself. I am a burden to myself.

All that kind of thought, what does that mean? It means there is a self that's very unhappy and there's an I. And they have come together.

But now if you separate the I, which is consciousness, from the self, the self is no longer being sustained by consciousness and it evaporates. And then you realize who you are beyond the conditioned self. Consciousness.

When that happened to me kind of spontaneously, I could not have explained it in the way I explain it now. I didn't understand it at all. So there was no immediate understanding that came with it.

There was just a shift from being an unhappy person to being at peace in the same situation. So this is very, very important. The separation of consciousness from the structure of thinking, so that thinking does not continuously absorb all their consciousness and gobbles it up and devours it continuously.

The mind is a huge addiction. The greatest addiction is the addiction to thinking. Useless thinking, not constructive thinking, which means 95% of thinking is useless.

Creates enormous amount of suffering. So you take attention away from thinking and then separation happens between... Consciousness is realized in its pure form, not in its incarnated form as thought.

Consciousness is realized in its pure form. So simple. I know you're not waiting for me to continue speaking.

I may, but you're not waiting because you're experiencing that beautiful state of being where you're not waiting for the next thing. Let's just go a little more deeply into that beautiful state of pure presence, pure being. I'll be shutting up for a little while, probably, who knows.

And as much as possible, be here relinquishing thought. You don't really need it right now. What is there to think about right now?

It wouldn't add anything to the experience of this moment. It would only detract from the experience of this moment. If you find it difficult...

I'm talking again. If you find it difficult to hold presence, a very simple thing is, and that was already recommended by the Buddha, to be aware of your breathing. That means you can feel yourself breathing in, the whole length of the in-breath.

And then there's a brief stop, and you're aware of that also. And then there's a whole length of the out-breath. And there's another brief stop.

And then the in-breath starts again. So you're aware of these movements, and the two stops. You don't need to actually do anything to your breathing, because it's happening anyway, but you just didn't know it.

So this is one way of, for those who cannot directly enter the state of pure presence or awareness, this is a little help, because while you're aware of your breathing, you'll notice a weird thing. You cannot think at the same time. The moment you think, you lost awareness of your breath.

And this is why there's a probably a legendary thing that the Buddha said, he probably didn't say it, but be aware of your breathing for one hour, and you'll be totally enlightened. But if you miss one, you should rather start from the beginning. Now, you don't need to be aware of your breathing for one hour.

Don't believe that. All you need to be aware of your breathing is the breath you're taking at this moment. Not many breaths, only this one, because that's the only one there ever is.

So those of you who cannot yet just simply step out of thought into presence, that's a help. Breath awareness. Closely associated with that is body awareness, the inner body, the aliveness that pervades the inner body, to feel that aliveness in every cell of the body.

That's an anchor for presence also. Takes you out of your thinking mind, diverts

consciousness away from thought. It's helpful to be in this energy field of collective presence.

At first, the cessation of thinking happens sporadically. You may notice it when it happens spontaneously, as it does for most of you. You notice, for example, when you first look at something, let's say, you step out of your room or the house where you're staying, and you open the door, and then, of course, in the morning, for example, or during the day, and, of course, the first thing, you look what's there, you look.

And if you're very alert, you'll notice that in the first two or three seconds of looking, you're not thinking. There's just... Now, most people don't know that.

But in the first moment something new arises, it could also be listening. There's a sound. Maybe it's a bird.

And you're listening. In the first two, three, four, five seconds of looking or listening, you're just aware there's the perception and there's the awareness. And then some kind of mental labeling comes in, and you start either thinking something about it, calling it something, or your mind moves away entirely from that into some other mental dream world where you're thinking about the next thing you have to do, or whatever it is, or what happened just before or yesterday.

So it could be that you're looking at something for a moment, and then completely absorbed in thinking again. Or you're looking at something. There is that space of presence that arises spontaneously whenever something new comes into your perceptual field.

And if you can be aware of that, then a wonderful thing happens. Then that initial space becomes longer if you acknowledge it. You don't have to do anything.

Just become aware that whenever there's a first perception of something, there's a moment when you need to... You see it, and there's an awareness. But the labeling hasn't started yet.

And if you catch that first moment, it will deepen and it will become longer. And that means you become more spacious, more space. And you become, we could put it like that, a deeper human being.

The being deepens. Because the more space there is before the conceptual mind comes in, the deeper you are as a human being. In other words, the being dimension, which is the depth dimension within you, grows.

It deepens. It intensifies. Now, this is a lovely practice where you don't really have to do anything, and it happens continuously.

A human being, too. You look at a human being comes towards you, sitting at the table, and the first few seconds, you just look. And then something comes in.

Some kind of mind movement will come in, or this person you may then begin to interpret and feel something about this person. Oh, I'd like to have a date with this man or woman, or whatever. Some kind of desire movement may come in, some opinion, or some dislike, whatever it is.

That's with humans. But always catching the first moment when you look at something. Like, I mean, you can even do it anyway.

Look at something that you hadn't looked at before. Just look at the ceiling or whatever it is. And in the first few seconds, you'll notice, before the mind says, oh, there's so many lamps up there, before the mind says that, the mind doesn't say anything.

You're just aware of what we're looking at. Interpretation hasn't happened yet. And then the mind says, oh, I wonder how many lamps are actually on that ceiling.

Let's count them. That'll keep the mind busy. But in the first, this is the first moment, always catching that, then it gets longer and it deepens.

And this, even this very simple thing, as you practice that, changes the entire way in which you perceive so-called reality. Just catch the initial moment. And by catching it, it gets longer and you become deeper.

The longer the gap before you express a thought or whatever contribution you make, the deeper you are and the deeper your perception is. Any great artist, if let's say it's a painter who paints a landscape or whatever it is, has to enter that state. I mean, there are many artists these days who have no access to it.

You'll realize that when you visit modern art galleries. But there are still some who do. And they, in the act of creation, there is that absolute ability to look and look and look and be the awareness.

And then out of that comes something beautiful. And when the painting is done of a landscape, for example, there is an added element in that painting that is the, how it gets in there, nobody knows, that is the consciousness of the artist in that moment of creation. The awareness, the consciousness has to become part of the painting.

Yes, the nature is there, but it's more than a photo. Although photos can be very beautiful too. It's more than just a photo.

There's something else that has come. And that is the, this is why great works of art can help you enter. If you really contemplate them, they can help you enter the state out of which they were created.

So that's, remember that, that practice of first perception, it could be auditory too. That's a very beautiful thing. Let's say there's a sound of a bird.

And at first you, and after three or four seconds, you may find the mind will want to interpret, but you can actually delay it and say, not ready to interpret, just carry on. And then at some point the mind says, yes, but I really want to know what kind of a bird that is. No, and that's interesting because the mind says, I really want to know.

The mind wants to know, it wants to interpret. It does not want to be in the state of not knowing. However, the mind does not realize that there are two modalities of knowing and it regards the other modality of knowing that is non-conceptual as valueless and actually dangerous.

And you have to know that. And then you can see in your life, you need conceptual knowledge, but more importantly, you need, more fundamentally, you need non-conceptual knowing. I give sometimes the example of going into a beautiful ancient cathedral, for example.

So you enter that space and you begin to look. And then somebody offers you a recorded tour of it, which you can hire, you put it in your ear and it guides you around the cathedral. It explains everything.

And now you walk three more steps and you will see that statue by so-and-so, done there. And then you, now you look up to the ceiling and it will explain. Oh, so interesting.

Wow. Yes, yes. After an hour, you have learned everything.

There's to know a lot about the cathedral. So you've known it conceptually and to the mind, that's all there is. It doesn't realize there's another way of experience in the cathedral, which is totally non-conceptual.

And in order to do that, you have to refuse the electronic guide and just walk in there and just look and be aware and spacious and experience that space and what's in the space, the totality of the space. And you, a sense of awe, it's a funny English word, awe. It's onomatopoeic, I believe that's the word, which it kind of reproduces the sound that you make when you're in a state of awe, you say, awe.

And that's the state when you look at something, you say, wow. But there's no, you don't know anything conceptually. You don't know when it was built and who did this and who did that or what these particular architectural things are called.

You don't know anything. And you walk and you experience, it's a deep experience. And this means you're experiencing the other way of knowing, which is totally neglected in our civilization, but is vitally, vitally important.

And so you neglect it and all you know is conceptual knowledge. You need both. And the more fundamental one is the non-conceptual, because that takes you deeper and connects you intimately with what it is that you're perceiving.

So after a two of one hour of the cathedral, you come out and a friend is waiting for you and says, what have you learned? Nothing. But you have experienced the cathedral and it's been a wonderful experience.

Now, I recommend that if you have more time, the next day you go back and then you hire this guide and walk around and learn about it. And on the third day, you visit it again and you can be in both dimensions. As you walk around, you can still experience it.

You're not totally immersed in your conceptual knowledge, but it's there. But you have that spaces of pure awareness as you experience it. And this is an analogy almost for how your whole life should be and can be.

You move in the two dimensions. And this is not only knowing a sacred building or something like that. It refers also to knowing yourself.

Because most humans only know themselves conceptually. In other words, they don't know themselves at all. They only know stuff about themselves, but they don't know themselves.

There's knowing and knowing about. There's a reason why in some languages, such as French or Spanish, they have two words for to know, whereas English or German only have one. So in French, you have savoir and connaître.

And in Spanish, you have saber, you say, and conocer. So it's two different ways. For example, in Spanish, if you say, I know who you are.

That's one way of knowing. Sé quién eres. Or I know you.

Te conozco, you use a different verb. So one is the conceptual knowing, and one is a more direct knowing. So there's sometimes certain wisdom embodied in language.

So here you need to know yourself, not just as an object in your consciousness. In other words, you know about yourself. You know things about yourself.

You need to know yourself more intimately, but this knowing is totally non-conceptual. And from the conceptual point of view, looks like not knowing anything at all. But it is a deep knowing beyond concepts, where the knower and the known merge into one.

So you are no longer in the, when you know yourself in the sense that the ancient Greek philosophers talked about, then you know yourself no longer, you're no longer an object to yourself. Object and subject merge into one. And that is called, this is why we have the expression in some spiritual traditions, self-realization, self-realization.

You're no longer an object to yourself. This is the healing of the ancient split that started in Greek mythology, expressed as the myth of Narcissus. The man who saw an image of himself, then began to live through a mental image and became very unhappy.

That's the whole story of humanity, the development of the ego. And it is the healing of that split that occurred many thousands of years ago, when humans split themselves in two and sometimes more than two. So they have self-image and you, so knowing yourself, and this is fundamentally knowing yourself as subject, object in one.

And then you still have some things that you know about yourself. And this applies then to other situations and other humans. Then you know every human being also on the two levels.

You know them as humans, which is the conditioned entity, but you also know them in their being. And that is the added dimension to every interaction. So you're no longer related purely through the mental emotional field.

There's something deeper that is present in the interaction. So that's the two modalities of knowing, conceptual and deeper knowing, non-conceptual knowing. And that's the state that Socrates referred to when he said, I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

He dwelled in that state, that deep state of non-conceptual knowing, but miraculously out of that deep state of non-conceptual knowing, suddenly creative thinking arose from that. So he was one of the most creative. He taught humanity or certainly the Western world to think, to ask questions, to think.

And he was a highly creative thinker, but he could only be a creative thinker because he had access to the non-conceptual dimension. And then out of that creative thinking rose and that became concepts, yes. But he was never lost in concepts and he never created a conceptual structure that was the ultimate explanation of reality and that this is how it is.

No, it is more, it's a loose thing. Not, he didn't create any dogma to believe in. So he continued to have access to the source of creativity, which is non-conceptual knowing.

And then if that flows into your mind and if your mind, of course your mind needs a certain preparation in order to give form to that which arises from ultimately the formless dimension. So it helps if you have learned how to formulate words and sentences, then you can say something about it. And if you are an artist and you have, I can go within very deeply, but if you put me in front of a canvas, I'm not going to produce a great work of art because that is not, the vehicle is not prepared for that, but the vehicle is prepared for something else.

And I'm not going to create a great work of music if you put me in front of a piano. I'm

not going to suddenly produce a great symphony or come up with the completion of what Albert Einstein looked for, the unified field theory, whatever that is. I'm not going to come up with it.

That's not, the mind is not, cannot be a vehicle for that, but it can be a vehicle for this. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (42:57 - 43:16)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle You Are Already Complete [ce574151-45e8-44e9-8a00-291d870dea45]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:51)

You are already complete. In this podcast, Eckhart addresses participants' concerns. An athlete wants to know if competition is incompatible with leading an awakened life.

Eckhart explains that one can have the desire to win, but when winning becomes the key to one's sense of identity, that's a pitfall of the ego. A man asks what to do because his presence practice has grown so deeply he no longer relates to his family. He says he loves them but doesn't want to be around them.

Another person asks for advice on how to snap out of incessant thinking. Eckhart says if we're totally absorbed in thinking, then we've lost the present moment. Eckhart reminds everyone that even though we have problems, part of the solution is to realize in our deepest essence, we are already complete.

[Speaker 4] (0:54 - 1:20)

Here's the written question. I've been a competitive athlete all of my life. Before games, I would get fired up and definitely want to win.

Has my competitive nature always been entirely my ego? And if not, what's the role of competition in the awakened life? Should we not strive to compete in anything at all?

[Speaker 1] (1:21 - 13:58)

Okay, good question. That reminds me of a story of a Zen master. He was watching an archery competition and one of the competitors, who was really a master in archery, was not doing very well.

And the Zen master was watching and they asked him, what's happening to him? Why isn't he doing very well today? And the Zen master said, his desire to win drains him of power.

His desire to win drains him of power. Now that's interesting. Wouldn't one have thought that his desire to win would empower him?

That of course, that would be ego, his desire to win. His desire to win means there's a focus on the outcome. There's a mental focus on the outcome that he wants to achieve.

That mental focus on the outcome that he wants to achieve prevents him from being totally present in the moment and giving his fullest to the moment. So there is a drain of energy because the mental focus is on the desired outcome instead of total and complete and utter attention to the present moment. If you give total and complete and

utter attention to the doing of the present moment, an intense energy arises that sometimes could surpass anything that one would think a human being is capable of.

Now, how does that relate to winning and the desire to win? You can have the desire to win in competition. Of course, winning is important to you.

But winning becomes a distraction. The desire to win becomes a distraction when it is an ego, egoically motivated desire. It becomes important to your sense of identity, to your sense of self, to win, to win that competition.

Your sense of fulfillment, your sense of completion, your sense of happiness, and most importantly, your sense of identity and the completion of your sense of identity depends whether you win or you don't win that whatever it is, that competition. And that is the power drain. And that is when you feel elated.

And sometimes it's possible that despite the fact that you could have done better, you're still so good because you've practiced so much. And you can still win even if it's egoically motivated, but it's less likely. It's less likely when you need the win for your identity, then it becomes a hindrance.

But when you regard it as a game in which you participate, giving your fullest, because it's lovely to participate in the game of life, it is lovely to feel this empowerment of intense energy. And this is not only in sports, it's also when you are writing, let's say you're a creative writer. When I wrote *The Power of Now* and *The New Earth*, I could often sense this incredibly intense energy arising, not only when I was writing, it was also there even in between the writing.

Sometimes the energy, the intensity of energy was very, very high. And an outside observer might have thought that I was feeling stressed or that I was in a state of stress. There was no stress whatsoever.

We tend to associate high, intense energy with stress. And that is because when you're coming from ego, this high energy is always associated with stress because you need to get somewhere. You're not in full enjoyment of the energy.

Stressful energies can even be very destructive, destructive to the body, destructive to your mind. So the important thing then is the fact that you are able to participate in the game of life, because you're human, you're a human being. As a being, you don't need anything.

As a being, you're already complete. As a being, you are timeless. There's nothing to be added to who you are as a being.

As a being, you participate in the fullness of life. You are the fullness of life. As a human, which is your form identity, being is your essence identity, the two come together.

As a human, you engage in doing, because as a human, there are many things you can do and would want to do to participate in the created world. The universe delights in creativity. Only look at the planet, how many life forms just one planet has created.

In the oceans, on land, millions of life forms, and elsewhere undoubtedly also. So the universe delights in creating form. And you can also participate in the universe's delight by participating, becoming a co-creator in the world of form, whether you create something or you simply participate in this game of life through an activity.

You could become a master in your field, or you strive towards becoming a master in your field, and you delight in the intense energy that comes with it. You know what you want to achieve, but your sense of who you are is not linked to the achievement, and that is the key. So you can work towards an achievement without expecting a fuller sense of identity or finding yourself, one could say, without expecting to find yourself in the desired outcome.

When I get my gold medal, or when I have written this bestseller, or whatever it may be, then I will be fully myself. And then there's the idea that you will experience a completion of your sense of self, which actually can happen for brief moments, and then it disappears. So you cannot actually find your completion of your sense of self in any achievement except very temporarily.

And often the achievement doesn't last very long. You can be the greatest whatever tennis player or whatever field, and there comes a time when you're not the greatest anymore. There comes a time when you might have an accident, you might have dedicated your life to a certain physical activity, and suddenly you have an accident, you break a certain bone, and you can't do it anymore.

And your whole life was dedicated to it, and this can be devastating for a person, because they had associated their sense of identity with achievement in their particular field. But you can actually be more powerful if you do not link your sense of identity to what you do, so that the doing becomes an impersonal process where energy comes through you into this world, and then manifests in whatever form. And it's a beautiful thing that you can deeply enjoy, a joyful thing when you feel the creative process operating through you.

And creative process can even be, if you're a great tennis player, it's creative. People love watching these sports. I sometimes ask myself, why is it that people watch, there's two people with a racket and they're hitting a ball, they go on for hours, and people are fascinated.

Why can they be fascinated by watching two people hitting this ball for hours on end? And they're fascinated because they can sense that the players are present. They're totally present in that moment, and it's not the human that's doing it.

If the human interferes, they are much more likely to lose the match. If the ego comes in, if the desire to win comes in, then what the Zen master said applies, there is a power drain. But if they can be totally present, then that's the most wonderful thing, even just to watch as an observer.

There's a beauty to it. So the important thing is then, we come back to the very foundation of everything. The foundation is you need to find your identity that is transcendent to what you do or achieve or know as a person, so that you can operate in this world without the baggage of ego or the power drain of a false sense of self that seeks itself in something and then is happy for a little while when it gets it, and then it's no longer happy, or it doesn't get it and then becomes totally unhappy.

That's not how you want to live because then your activity becomes stressful. And even if you get your whatever you win in your particular field, it doesn't even help if you're so continuously focused on where you want to get to. You're never present in what you do, and you're much less likely also to be successful.

The greatest achievements were done by people who recognized that these things, they recognized that a power came through them, and they were open to it. So participate in the game of life, but find who you are first, so that you continue to know that who you are in your essence has nothing to do with what you achieve or don't achieve, and so you're no longer dependent for your sense of self on victory or defeat, gain or loss. You're not dependent for your sense of self on victory or defeat, gain or loss.

And that's essential, because if you are dependent on those things, it's a recipe for ultimate unhappiness and misery. So participate in the game of life in a free, liberated way, not looking to it for something that it cannot give you. And then you're much more likely to be successful.

That's a paradox. You're much more likely to be successful if there's this internal need to win isn't there anymore, and yet there's high intensity of energy. So you're more likely to get what you want when you don't desperately need it.

It doesn't mean there is not intense energy. There's intense energy in the present moment, and it's beautiful. Anybody who has experienced a moment of creativity or periods of in your life when you are creative, it's a wonderful, joyful thing when you feel this flow of creativity.

Enthusiasm is a word that's usually connected with that, and your action is enthusiastic. Enthusiasm, that word goes back to Greek language. It means in God, which means you're connected to the power that underlies the universe when you're enthusiastic.

Unless the ego is there, there's also egoic enthusiasm versus craziness. So let's not go there.

[Speaker 2] (14:03 - 15:31)

Hi. Hi. First of all, I really have to say thank you so much.

You've helped me out so much in my life, and I really appreciate it. But recently, I felt my presence growing and growing and growing, and it's really awesome, but there's a downside to it too because my family, who I really, really love, they have a really strong eminence of mind. It's like anything that we talk about, it's got to be logical.

It has to make sense. Why would you do that? Or look what this guy's doing over here.

So when I'm in conversation or spending time with my family, I'm kind of just sitting there in presence, and I don't feel like I get to connect with them in the way that I used to. But in order to do that, I have to get, it's like a really, there's a mind frequency that you have to get on, and then kind of just really, I can't do that the same as I used to. So it's just led to me just kind of not really wanting to be around them anymore, and that's really sad for me because it feels like you've said in many things like a kind of death almost, and I don't really know what to do about that or if there's a way I can change it or if I just have to accept it.

And if that's the case, I mean, I'm totally fine with that, and that's kind of where it feels like it has to be for me. But at the same time, I just wanted to see what your insights were because you know, I'd love to talk some things.

[Speaker 1] (15:32 - 22:10)

Yeah, yeah. So you're finding that you don't really participate anymore when they are having conversations or discussions, then you just sit there, and they notice it, and they say what's wrong with you, and you feel you're not part of them anymore, and you don't want to go there because that would draw you back into egoic mindset. So there's a transitional period when you, as you awaken spiritually, if you want to put it like that, then for a while you can feel that you don't connect anymore with people around you, and quite a few people have this challenge.

It is possible to participate in these normal interactions unless they are extremely negative. There are some people who manifest extreme negative conversations and vibrational frequencies that you would want to remove yourself from. There's even underlying sense of violence, whether it's physical or verbal violence.

There are certain energy fields that you would not want to be too close to. In fact, you can't anymore. You would have to remove yourself.

But then there are other energy fields that are just normal human craziness. I call the normal human state crazy, a bit crazy. The normal human craziness you have to learn to live with.

So not the extreme craziness that you can't, obviously, you can't participate. But the normal craziness you find when you meet your family or you meet old friends. Gradually you are able to develop the ability to participate in conversations without getting drawn into the egoic level of conversation.

So you can comment on things without getting drawn into unconscious identification with the stream of thinking. So you may even find that your presence is helpful to others because although you participate, I cannot quite explain to you because it's hard to explain how you're able to talk without being completely drawn into the mind stream that many people, when you observe conversations between people, they go and then the other replies and they're totally set in their opinions, completely identified with their mental positions.

And you are able then, you can practice, you say something, you comment on something without necessarily contradicting. But it comes from a different place than identification with the mental position. You might still have mental positions.

You probably have a mental position towards the political situation. You probably have some position. You're either on the left or on the right or somewhere in the middle, who knows?

You have some position. But the way in which you voice your mental position, are you identified with it? Do you derive your sense of self from it?

Or are you simply able to state how you see things? This is how I see it. But there's no self in it anymore.

If you can practice, practice with little comments. There's no self in it. You don't need to, whenever you become defensive about anything that you have said, you've been drawn into egoic sense of self.

Any defensiveness or aggression in what you say, you realize they have drawn you into their level of consciousness, normal craziness, in other words. But when you can observe yourself, when you can make statements without any defensiveness or aggression, then these statements are free of self. Doesn't mean you cannot have a position, but there's no self-identification with the position.

And then you can state your position and let others then say whatever they like. So gradually you learn to participate in the conversation, but coming from presence so that you continue to be able to function in this world without becoming drawn back into the craziness. That's always a danger, especially if you have a group of people and you are the only one who is present, then there's always a danger that you get drawn back into the egoic mindset.

So it's a challenge, but it's a very helpful challenge because by facing the challenge, you

grow in presence. You only grow in presence when presence is challenged. That's a wonderful miracle.

By whatever life circumstances they may be, presence needs to be challenged in order to grow in this dimension. If presence were not challenged, it would not grow. That's the beauty of it.

So be thankful for these people who challenge your presence, because they can intensify your presence if approached correctly. All right. All right.

Thank you very much. Any life situation that is challenging, where you think, oh, I can't be present with that. Well, yes, it is possible.

As I said, there are some situations where you would never want to be in, like to be with violent people or something like that, that you wouldn't want to. But otherwise, there's this huge area of normal craziness where it's wonderful to be challenged, because that's how presence grows in this world. And you may find that the spark of presence suddenly transmits itself to one or two other people.

Not through explanations. Don't try to explain stuff. Just live it, but don't explain it, unless they really want to know.

If it's a true question, then there's a time to say something. But otherwise, don't try to explain anything. Don't use the word presence or anything like that.

Just be present. Okay. Thank you so much, Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (22:10 - 22:11)

I really appreciate it.

[Speaker 1] (22:12 - 22:14)

Thank you. All the best to you.

[Speaker 4] (22:18 - 23:01)

We had a person write in, are there any tips that you can give to help us snap out of incessant thoughts immediately? For example, what about using a certain word like silence that we can say to ourself? I know you've spoken about taking a deep breath and also looking at the sky.

I find myself lately with a sharp increase in overwhelming, rampant, jumping thoughts, and I'm getting so frustrated with it all. Are there any tips to help us snap out of incessant thoughts immediately?

[Speaker 1] (23:04 - 32:41)

Well, the only place you can snap out is in the present moment. So it is always immediate. It's either in this moment, you are either in thought or you are out of thought.

So the important question is, in the moment, are you able to recognize that you do not want these thoughts because they are futile? They may even be destructive. They do not add anything to your life.

They make your life miserable. And they seem to have a life of their own. As you know, the thoughts, as I've said before, for most people, when they say, I think, it's not actually true because thinking happens to them.

Thinking is like something that takes place in you that you have no say in at all. So if there is enough awareness that you can realize that these thoughts are futile and you don't want them, and you do not believe in a subsequent thought after you've realized that you don't want this mental noise, it fulfills no purpose, except to be a terrible burden in your life. You realize that you would rather not have it because you don't need it.

And then a thought may come that says that you need to think more because worry, for example, is one such case. Worry says that you need to worry because if you don't worry, it will all fall apart. Of course, that's a lie.

So don't believe any thought that says that you really need to think a bit more about this. And then the moment you've realized you don't want it, then you can make a choice. I want to step out of thought.

Now, what do you do next? I want to step out of thought. If you say silence, I don't know if that's a good thing.

Silence is still a thought, and you might even develop a discussion or conflict in your mind that says, no, I'm not going to be silent. And then another part of their mind says, yes, I want you to be silent. So that may not work.

The one of the quickest ways is come to your senses, come to your senses, sensory perception, become aware of sensory perception, visual, auditory, those are the two main senses, and then the other senses, sense, taste, touch. But let's just stay with the two main senses, visual and auditory. Touch might be interesting too.

So come to your senses means become aware, place your attention. You can't stop thinking, can't stop thinking. I want to stop thinking, but I can't.

Of course, you can. What do I do? Open your eyes and look around the room and listen.

Are there any sounds? Touch the surface of the table or whatever is in front of you. And

feel it.

Look at different objects in the room briefly. So you're consciously perceiving the room. If you're in a room, if you're outside, you do it outside.

And keep your attention on sensory perception. Listen, see, touch, be where you are, be where you are, come to your senses. And then you will notice something.

You will notice a pull of thinking, wanting to get your attention back from sensory perception. And that pull can be very strong. There's a gravitational pull, I call it sometimes, where thought wants your attention back.

It doesn't want you to step out of, it wants to continue. Like every life form, because every thought is a temporary life form. It's an energetic form.

And it wants to grow in you. In many people, thoughts represent almost the kinds of cancer that they proliferate. Certain thoughts proliferate in your mind and they get hold and one thought leads to another and another.

So you will feel the gravitational pull of thought wanting your attention back. Once you know that, you can say, there, you can, I'm verbalizing it now, but you just notice, there's the gravitational pull of thought wants to come in and take. And sometimes you lose it, you lose sensory perception again, and you're back in thought.

And then you come back into your senses. And if you can combine sensory perception with breathing, taking conscious breaths, that's even better. That's more of an anchor for presence.

You're breathing and you're watching, and maybe you're also listening. And if you then can add a third thing, then you can be really totally present if you can feel your inner body while you're there breathing, sitting and perceiving. You're fully here in the now.

And when the pull of thought will come, and you refuse to go there, it's not, you don't suppress thought, you just give more attention to sensory perception, more attention to your breath, more attention to the inner body. Do it at night if you can't sleep at night. If the room is dark, inner body awareness, and breathing.

And if there's light in the room, then you add sensory perception, visual perception, look around, be where you are, be where you are. That is the most powerful way of withdrawing consciousness from thinking. And many times you will probably lose yourself in thought again, and then you come back.

And then gradually, you spend more times, longer periods of time in no thought. And the important thing is have an agreement with yourself that you do not spend more than a certain period of time every day thinking about your life problems, whatever they may

be. Say, set aside 15 minutes, 20 minutes, whatever day when you address mentally your problems, what can I do?

What is there to do? Can I do this, that, that. The rest of the time, do not allow your life situation to live in your mind and make your life miserable.

Detract from the enjoyment of life, which is always in the present moment, leading to continuous loss of the present moment. That's a dreadful fate. Never continuous loss of present moment.

Many humans are suffering from that condition. So, think about your problems for a certain period of time. For the rest of the time, have an agreement that whenever your mind comes in and starts thinking about whatever it is, your problems are, everybody has certain problems.

Do not go there. Do not see that it is futile, unless you have a sudden insight, a sudden realization, that's a different thing that will come at the most unexpected moments. But other than that, to dwell in useless, vicious circles of negative thinking, fearful thinking, empirics, experiencing emotions that come with negative and fearful thinking, it's dreadful.

So, have an agreement that you do not carry the burden of your problematic life situation, which exists as thought in you. Don't carry it around with you all the time and be in it all the time and derive your identity from it. Address your problems in a focused way.

Give it some time and then step away and then be present. It's always returning to the present moment again and again. When you have to think, you think.

Set aside problem-solving time. Every day, if that's necessary, every other day, this is my problem-solving time. The rest of the time, you use thought just in response to the present moment, because sometimes you need thought to talk to people and do this or that.

And at other times, you don't need thought. You're just present. But always, the practice is, return to present moment awareness again and again and again.

Every time you realize you lost present moment awareness, the possibility of being aware is there. Oh, I lost it. Well, that means you're there now, because otherwise you wouldn't even know that you lost it.

So, if you know you lost the present moment, that's the present moment. That is the awareness. Because if you are totally absorbed in thinking, you don't even know that you lost the present moment.

There is no present moment for you. I wish you well, and we will meet again in the now. And so, now let's have our little meditation.

We're starting now. Hear our bells.

[Speaker 3] (32:50 - 33:12)

Thank you. I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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Eckhart Tolle You Are the Consciousness of the Universe [1a57d328-64b3-4e7d-aecd-9bdb79de4a45]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:29)

You are the consciousness of the universe. In this episode, Eckhart talks about the need for challenges. He says, without them, we would not grow in awareness.

He explains the entire universe is evolving towards greater consciousness. He says beyond our individual lives, we are connected to something vital and vast. In our highest form, Eckhart believes we are the consciousness of the universe expressing itself.

[Speaker 1] (0:31 - 35:26)

Every animal develops their particular power because of challenges. They need the challenges. And then through the challenges, they develop certain powers of like extreme speed.

And they all have a high degree of alertness. The animal needs its own alertness. It's very different from the presence that arises in humans.

It is a higher level of consciousness, but it's the same consciousness. The animal is very present and alert because if the animal were not present and alert, it would have become extinct a long time ago. And then of course, when they say they're not alert and find a safe place, and then they're totally at rest.

And they're not thinking about their problems because that's not they haven't reached the level of consciousness that produces problems. They are below problems. And your destiny is not to regress to a level of consciousness below problems by becoming stupid.

Because that's not where the evolution is going. The evolution is going towards greater consciousness. You rise above the problems, you don't fall below your problems, you begin to rise above your problems.

And then the problems, certain problems are still there. But also, yes, challenges continue to come. But because the way in which you deal with the challenges is now suddenly very different.

You no longer complain about them. You no longer have an underlying assumption that these things should not be happening to you. This should not be happening.

No, you see it for what it is. It's one of the many challenges of life that come and come and come. So you no longer have this assumption that there is something wrong with your life because of this.

You can also look see through the delusion of things that you see online, you begin to

realize that what people post on Facebook is an illusory image of who they are. You no longer think, oh, look, their life is so great because look how the great meals that they have and send photos of and they're always happy. Look where I am.

And they look so good, their faces are so unblemished. Of course, you have to remind yourself that these are technical things that you can use. You can overexpose the face so much that you don't even recognize who is there.

You just see the big eyes. And everybody looks beautiful like that. They did it to me too.

We had photographers done and I just couldn't get rid of these photos that we need new photos. But every photographer, when you get the photos, has done something to your face. It's crazy.

So the challenge is there's no longer the expectation that the world is here to make you happy. It's not. Oh, that's a big relief.

I thought it was here to make me happy. So I don't need to complain anymore because it's pointless to complain about something that is not, that is actually, it's meant to be like that. Why?

Okay. And then suddenly all the challenges that come no longer were transformed into heavy problem making. Not only that, because only part of the challenges of life come from out so seemingly outside of you as through other people and events and things that happen.

And a very great part of challenges actually come from your own mind. And that is, I would suggest the greater part of challenges in your life are not through external events, although yes, they also happen. But the greater part of challenges is the unobserved mind.

What your mind is doing and saying about your life, the narrative in your mind, and the dysfunction of your mind, the misinterpretations of everything in your mind when you, as I mentioned earlier, when you look at life through the conditioning of your mind, the veil of conditioning, the narrative, and you cannot separate what is from your interpretation of what is. And suddenly you realize, okay, this is, this is a challenge, and you're not complaining anymore. You're just looking at it and facing it.

And you become more alert through every challenge that arises. Even the little ones, like your flight is canceled, you arrive at the airport, it's a little challenge. Or you stumble and you fall and you break something that's a little bit bigger challenge.

But the mechanism behind the reactivity is the same. So first you can start with little things, little things that go wrong, flight is canceled. It's canceled.

Nobody's telling you what's happening. And there are 50 people angry all around you. So you're either drawn into that or you just, okay, because you see this, oh, it's a sign for me to be alert.

It's an opportunity for intensified presence. And then you become actually intelligent for the first time. You access a, one could say higher intelligence.

And then if right, if a certain action is possible in that moment, you take action and it'll be right. It's not reactive. It's action, but not reaction.

And if no action is possible, you're simply in a state of complete surrender and you feel great just, and maybe you sit there for two hours and still nothing has happened. And then perhaps you go and go to a hotel or you sleep on this chair. And it's not, it's no longer creates a problem in the conventional sense of the word.

It's not, it no longer creates an unhappy entity that is you. It creates more alertness. And I have had accounts of people who were given a very serious prognosis when they went to see their doctor.

And usually the case is that when the doctor tells you something that might imply that there is not much time left for you, that's a terrible thing. When you believe that your life has, is not complete yet, that is so much more that you wanted to do that you could do, but you may not be able to do it. So usually the first reaction would be very great suffering.

And, but in some people that also has created, I've had quite a few accounts of people who suddenly became intensely alert and present. They refused to leave the present moment because they realized either through coming into contact with this or some other similar teaching or intuitively without having any guidance, they realized if I leave the present moment, I become unhappy. If I go just a few months into the future where I may not be here anymore or the body or me or whatever, I become unhappy.

So they got totally present and suddenly feel a sense of not only great alertness, but almost elation. There was an account a few years ago of a, unfortunately I've forgotten his name, a British musician, relatively well known, but not world famous. And he was given, he was only believe in his thirties or early forties.

He was given this diagnosis that he would only have another year to live. And, but this was an unusual case. He reported, he told it in an interview, he walked out of the doctor's office and without going through the stage of suffering first, he immediately experienced without having read any spiritual book, he immediately realized this arising of very intense, alive sense of aliveness.

And he lived completely in the present moment. Suddenly started living completely in the present moment. And then he said in the interview, he thought, why didn't I do this

before?

Why did I wait for this? And he felt not, you can't call this, it's not happiness what he felt. It's not happiness.

That's a superficial thing. Something deeper than happiness. He felt life itself, the joy of life that is deeper than happiness or unhappiness.

Perhaps even to call it joy is not quite right. That an intensified sense of aliveness. And what is that?

What is that intensified sense of aliveness? And what happened? Why did he, or anybody to something like that happens?

Why do they suddenly feel that? And they didn't have it before. Because time was removed from them.

There was no more time, no future. And without future, the ego cannot survive. The sense of self, the egoic sense of self needs future and it needs past.

It's built, it's built, it's up through the past and it needs future for its fulfillment. And of course, ultimate destruction, but that's the ego doesn't want to talk about that. So the ego got destroyed through that very quickly.

And so it has happened to people who've lost everything, who were involved in huge natural disasters or manmade disasters. Not to every, it doesn't happen to everybody. Some people remain stuck in terrible suffering.

But these, it's always an opportunity for true spiritual awakening. And so, but you have come here now because you no longer need, you've done the stage of suffering. So suffering plays, it still may still be important because it will intensify your presence when it comes.

But you don't need suffering as such because you are voluntarily inviting the state of presence into your life. It begins to manifest through you. And then the challenges that happen also do not remain, are not the same that they were when you were unconscious and continuously reacting angrily or despondently in a very unhappy way, where you actually, through the dysfunctional reaction, what you do, you amplify every challenge that happens in your life.

When you cannot face it for what it simply is, when you build up a huge narrative around it, you amplify it. Let's go back to a very simple thing. Your flight is canceled at the airport.

And you become, get taken over by reactive mode. You walk up to the counter, you start shouting at the employee, how dreadful this airline. It's your, you should be, you should

make sure that your clients are, you should, and you build it up.

So what before was a relatively small thing, through your reactivity, you amplify it. And what often happens, then the other person amplifies it back and you get a huge drama. And then they call the police and you're dragged away.

One often reads about people, especially these days in planes, perhaps because the seats are so narrow. So many people get very unconscious on planes and they start making a scene and shouting and then they have, the plane has to land somewhere and they have to be taken off the plane. And this is a typical example of how something that was a little challenge, you had to sit in this very confined space for two, three hours.

Okay. And you had to sit there, but their level of consciousness, perhaps through excessive intake of alcohol, became even lower than it would be normally. And then the little challenge becomes amplified so much that they end up in prison.

And this is just one example of how in human interaction, how humans, they amplify the challenges and then they get amplified back. And then sometimes even more humans participate in it. And then you get violence and warfare.

And it's just the same thing. It happens in one individual, it starts and then it spreads. And so the way in which you deal with challenges then changes, no longer reactive.

And when you no longer amplify the challenge, what tends to happen, and this is almost like a little miracle, it dissipates much more quickly and becomes transformed into something else. When you no longer fight it, then very often, very quickly, something else happens, some helpful circumstance that suddenly you say, oh, that's great. Or either something else arises to compensate for what just happened.

Sometimes something even better arises if something is taken away from you. So the flight is canceled and then, who knows, somebody says, oh, I have a private jet, come and join me. It's a little far-fetched, but.

And of course, you wouldn't get in a private jet because it's bad for the environment, so don't go there. So if you have a different relationship with the challenges of life, they dissipate more quickly. And if they don't dissipate, they become transformed into something different and helpful.

Instead of amplifying them, you help transform them through your state of consciousness. So although I'm saying that challenges continue to come at you even as you become more and more present, that is true, but it is also true that they dissolve more quickly. And what is also true is even if they don't dissolve, they no longer make you unhappy.

You no longer have an unhappy identity, an unhappy sense of self. And that's a great

relief when you're no longer deriving your sense of who you are from this unhappy sense of self. And if you look at humans, not humans who are here, but normal humans, when you look at normal humans, you often see that their basic identity is a very unhappy one.

And quite a few are just waiting for the next thing to be unhappy about. They look at you and they want some kind of reaction so that they can get angry. They are, as somebody once put it, a grievance in search of a cause.

So it's not the cause that causes the grievance. The grievance is already part of their sense of identity. And of course, if a grievance is part of your sense of identity, you find causes continuously, especially if you start reading stuff online.

So your practice then is the little challenges that you encounter here through external events, and sometimes somewhat bigger challenges through your mind, whatever narrative your mind is creating around the present moment. And then experience a freedom that comes from facing the present moment without a narrative. It is as it is.

This moment is as it is. And you don't add anything to it mentally. You're just present with what is.

Suddenly, you feel liberated. And of course, that's you're awakened at that moment of complete alignment with the isness of things. There's no longer an egoic entity there.

The egoic entity needs for its survival, non-alignment with the isness of life, which is always now. I'm saying it again, the ego needs for its continued survival, that sense of non-alignment with the isness of things, it needs to have an antagonistic relationship with life. That strengthens the ego.

And the ego has an antagonistic relationship with life. And what's life? Where does life happen?

Always here and now. So the ego has an antagonistic relationship with the present moment. It wants something else.

And that something else is never here and now. So it's condemned to continuous unhappiness. And it loves its unhappiness.

It loves it, because it's sustained by it. It is the food for its, it's the fuel for the ego. It's unhappiness.

It loves antagonism, having enemies, great. Nations do it. We need an enemy, because who are we if we don't have the other?

So we need to emphasize the otherness of the other. People do it to other people, but nations can do it also to others. So who is the, who is the bad nation now?

We need to find the, these are the bad guys. It got, there was a problem when Soviet communism collapsed, because this one big enemy suddenly didn't seem to be there. And then for a while, they didn't know what to do.

Well, then of course came the terrorists and all that. So that's, then that can, that's fine. And then, but now they've discovered that Russia is bad, not even without communism.

Russia has continuously evil intentions to interfere in elections. Of course, United States never do. So, so the, the practice then of not adding unnecessary narrative to what is, and suddenly you become free, you're just alert.

Wow. But what does that imply? What does it imply when we say not adding a narrative?

What is a narrative? A narrative is a sequence of thoughts. So not adding a sequence of thoughts to the present moment, what it's really saying is, there's a space of alert stillness.

Because then that means you're not adding a narrative, you're aware, but you're not interpreting, not conceptually. There's a deep knowing that awareness, but it's not conceptual. There are two types of knowing in this world.

One is conceptual, conceptual mind. And the other type of knowing is non-conceptual. And that's far greater.

That's intuitive knowing. That's a, that's a, that's the, that is higher intelligence, one could say, when you look at something and you know, but you don't call it anything. So you remove, so to not to add unnecessary mental baggage to what is, implies that you're able for a moment to be, to face whatever is in the state of alert stillness.

Like the heat here now. It just is. If you don't complain about it mentally, then it's still, it's not comfortable.

Nobody would even say it's comfortable. But you don't have to call it in your mind, it's dreadfully uncomfortable. You don't even have to call it uncomfortable.

You know, the body would rather be somewhere cooler. It's not a problem. You could get up and go out and that's your choice.

Or you can stay and say, this is what is. So if you can't get out, or you choose not to, that's the isness of this moment. And then you become free as your inner state becomes free of increasingly free of external conditions.

The external conditions no longer determine your inner state of consciousness. That's an enormous freedom. Because until you, that happens, you're at the mercy for your inner state of consciousness.

You're at the mercy of what happens continuously. An unpleasant person makes you feel equally unpleasant or disagreeable or even worse. And then you have a nice person, you feel, oh, that's nice.

And then something good happens, you feel, oh, great, great, but it never lasts so very long. And then the next thing happens, that's bad. And so, oh, oh, oh, my God.

So it continues at the mercy of situations, people, and so on. And so you're reactive. All this keeps the ego, the false sense of self going.

So your practice here is then as much as possible, face the present moment, without any narrative and experience the beauty of that. It's easy with nature, you can look at a tree, you can look at the sky, and the many plants here, without imposing any narrative on it, you can just watch, wow. Wow is a good word.

Wow isn't ultimately, it's the least conceptual it can be. Wow is just wow. After wow comes nothing, there's just a space.

Wow is not really an interpretation, it's just a remnant of an interpretation. Wow. And then there's stillness.

I don't know, it's maybe apocryphal, apocryphal, but I read them as Steve Jobs, the iPhone man, when he died, his last word was wow. I don't know if it's true. But that's a nice last word.

If I have to have a last word, why not wow? Wow. I will let you go soon, but not quite yet.

Just a few more minutes. A few more minutes. Don't count the minutes.

One more thing now, while you're here, this is just an additional comment, all connected with what we've been saying. As much as possible, don't carry around with you, or as little as possible, carry around with you your life situation in your mind. Everybody has a life situation, something that you left at home, a certain set of circumstances and problems, problems, yes, everybody has them, a certain set of circumstances and problems to do with other people, your job, your health, your financial situation, your living situation.

Some of these things get mixed into a particular mixture, configuration. And so there's not a single person who does not have a somewhat problematic life situation. When you look back and go, things that needs to be solved, or something needs to be sorted out, or don't know, big problems, what's going to happen, you don't know.

So usually people walk around carrying this burden of their life situation, they're so identified with it, the entire personality is made up of this problematic life situation. And they don't know they're carrying this burden around. And most of the time, they think

about it.

And they think by continuously thinking about it, they must arrive at some kind of solution. But that's not how a solution arises. Focused thinking from time to time, yes.

But continuous overthinking is the opposite of finding a solution. It is amplifying the so called problem, and amplifying a problematic sense of self, which is a huge heavy ego. So don't walk through the beautiful surroundings here with the heaviness of your, I call it your life situation.

You can take it up again, when you go home, and address your problems, whatever can be done, you do what cannot be done, you surrender to, that's fine. But here's this is about something else. It's not about your life situation.

It's about finding life, the life that's underneath your life situation. And that is the being. Your life situation is concerned with doing all kinds of things and happenings.

But underneath your life situation, there is a transcendent, I sometimes call it a transcendent dimension. There's a sense of beingness of presence, that is far deeper than your person. It's underneath the person, so to speak.

This is why you're here to, to go into this sense of being, so that you are not consumed by your life situation and by doing. So this is not denial, this is not denial of your life situation. It's finding the transcendent dimension.

And once you begin to find the transcendent dimension, you're just becoming still here, alert, still, watch, transcendent dimension begins to open up. Don't think about your problems here. What point is that?

And how do you get out of it? If your mind has a certain momentum, and you cannot stop thinking the mind, then just choose certain simple, simple practices, no matter where you are, choose conscious breathing. Even while you're walking, choose conscious breathing into the body, and you begin to feel the inner body, you feel the abdomen.

I'm developing a Buddha abdomen. That must be a good thing, I suppose. So abdomen, you feel that.

And that takes you out of the mind, brings you present sense perceptions, be alert, look, listen, feel the air on your skin, breathe, the scent, all come to your senses, breathe, all these things take you out of the mind. And so that is how you let go of your life situation while you're here, and begin to explore the beingness of you, the deeper I am the transcendent dimension, and you begin to realize then that who you are is not your historical personality that happens on the surface of life. Yes, you need to deal with stuff.

You cannot say, I'm not dealing with anything anymore, because it's all an illusion. You

have to deal with it. That's part of it.

If you deny it completely, then life will show you that that's not the way. So you have to deal with it, but not be consumed by it. If you're consumed by it, it's a terrible fate.

Then you ultimately means you're consumed by your mind, because it's the life situation exists, you keep it alive in your mind. And the demands of life are constant, the external demands. The life wants you to do this and that and that and this.

So there's the financial stuff, the relationship problems, people are so complicated. Oh, my God. And don't be consumed by this.

So we are here to find the transcendent dimension. So your sense of who you are is derived from there. And then you can deal with the rest.

But if your sense of who you are, your sense of identity is derived from the historical person with its problematic life situation, then you're lost. Basically, you're lost, you're lost in your life situation, which is overwhelming. And you're lost in your mind.

Basically, that's what it means. The one Indian teacher described the human condition, what's the human condition is basically lost in your mind. So the secret then is, where is does your sense of identity come from?

Where do you derive it from? Your sense of identity is, and we will be going deeply into that. Because my sense of transcendent identity is no different from my transcendent identity isn't really mine.

I just say like that. Your transcendent identity is not yours. Although sometimes I might use that word yours.

There's a transcendent identity in that we are one. Once you realize that who I am in my essence is identical with who you are in your essence. That's a wonderful realization.

And what if you want to put a word to that essence, you can say is, the essence of who we are is consciousness. But not my consciousness or your consciousness. We are expressions of the one consciousness, temporary incarnations, disguises of the one universal consciousness.

So you are this, the universe, there's an underlying consciousness that manifests through all the multiple billions of life forms, it incarnates continuously, it is born and dies, is born and dies, is born and dies. And gradually, there's an evolutionary process that we cannot possibly understand. But it's there, it's, it's happening.

So you are the consciousness of the universe, you're not, in addition to being a person, which seems to be so overwhelming and all consuming, there's something much more vital and important that you are. And that's the consciousness of the universe

incarnating as a person. But the strange thing is, through facing the problems of the so called person and the challenges, the who you are beyond that begins to emerge more fully, there's again, a little paradox.

It's through the very things that seem to block the evolution of your consciousness are actually the things that bring it about the things that will intensify your consciousness. And again, as I've said before, various occasions, that is the deeper meaning of the Christian cross, which is this, whether you're a Christian or not, you're able to see the truth that the Christian cross points to, although some people say, Oh, I don't like the cross, it's suffering. No, it's not just suffering.

The cross is a torture instrument. And it's a symbol for the transcendent dimension, which we could call the divine. The cross is a holy symbol for the divine.

But and it's a torture instrument. It's a weird paradox. So the very thing that's a torture instrument, where the archetypal human is being tortured and killed, and then transcends that.

And suddenly, the torture instrument becomes something very different. It's a symbol for the transcendent. And so you don't have to be a Christian to see that there's something hidden in that.

And that applies to everybody's life. So the very thing that seems to block your progress on the path, those challenges are actually there to awaken you. And that's a wonderful realization.

[Speaker 2] (35:31 - 35:52)

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Eckhart Tolle You Are the Light Of The World [bae525af-ddb4-47da-bbc9-fe83bd8bf7f4]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:35)

You are the light of the world. In this episode, Eckhart encourages listeners to release their thinking so they can become aware of what he calls their being. He says, most of us have a mistaken sense of identity based on what we think about ourselves.

He explains, however, that's not who we really are. Eckhart goes on to quote Jesus who said, you are the light of the world. Eckhart believes what Jesus is saying is, you are the light of consciousness because that is our true identity and the source of our deepest essence.

[Speaker 1] (0:37 - 52:14)

The essence of our gathering here and the essence of all spirituality is to discover in yourself the possibility of stepping out of thought and initially for brief moments. And that is an amazing thing. Before your identity was derived from the movement of thought, your identity was derived from the narrative, the story of me, my life was your identity, what you called my life.

And now you become aware or when there's a moment of no thought, what is it that who or what are you and I'm not just talking about it now, as I talk, let's do it. We're not doing it, it's the wrong word, but the language is very limited. There's no doing, we're becoming aware of being, that's really what it is.

So you don't do anything to become aware of being. So there's no thought in this moment, in this moment, let's pretend for a moment that past and future don't exist. I'm saying, pretend just to be more acceptable because ultimately past and future actually don't exist.

But to be more acceptable here, I'm saying, let's pretend that past and future don't exist because where are they? I don't see them right here. Can't see any past and future.

Okay, this is all there is. And in this moment, you don't need to remember your name. I mean, until I mentioned it just now, you probably didn't.

You weren't thinking of your name as you were sitting there probably, unless you're mad. And you weren't thinking of your email address and you weren't thinking of yesterday's breakfast and you weren't thinking about your childhood as you were sitting there, hopefully. And so as you're sitting here, let's say if you don't remember anything about your life, what's left of your life, when you just come into this moment and say, this is all there is.

And okay, then you have sensory perception. That's the first thing that you're left with is sensory perception, visual, auditory, and perhaps other tactile, breathing, scent, a little bit perhaps. The predominant ones are visual and auditory, but you can also feel perhaps your skin.

So that's, you're coming to your senses right now, coming to your senses without interpreting what you see. You don't need to interpret, you just see. Now, what happens inside you if you don't interpret?

What is there? Are you there as a person? No, the person is the whole conditioned mind.

But when you just perceive, the person has subsided and, but how is it possible for you to perceive? Well, obviously there's a consciousness. There's an awareness.

That's the background to the perception. Or one could say it's the space in which the perception happens. You could say it's the light in which the perception appears.

There is a presence. Now, next step, right here and now, you're aware of your sense perceptions here. And how are you aware of yourself now if there's no memory in it?

What's left of you? What's left of you is just a deep sense of presence, of beingness. It has no form.

In other words, what's left is a simple knowing that you are. Very hard to talk about, but you can sense the presence that you are. Can't say much about it, but undoubtedly, this is the one thing that's beyond doubt is that you are conscious.

And even that's not 100% correct because if I say you are conscious, I've created a duality between you and as if consciousness were something that you have. But the essence of who you are, the I am, is consciousness. You are consciousness.

You are awareness. And this is exactly what Jesus meant, although in churches, it's not generally understood. It's exactly what he meant when he said to his disciples, you are the light of the world.

He also said it about himself. There are two things he said. In one place in the New Testament, he says, I am the light of the world.

In another place, he says, you are the light of the world. That's the most amazing pointer to who you are in your essence. It doesn't mean you are special.

You are the light of the world, but you are not. We are the light of the world, but they are not. That's not, to sense yourself as formless presence is so liberating.

And then that becomes increasingly the foundation for your sense of identity. But it's no longer, it's very different from the form identity. Now, the form identity remains for a

while as a physical body and as a psychological form of you, but the difference is you no longer derive your sense of who you are from your form identity.

You are not identified with your physical form or your person, the person. You're not identified with it. It's still there, but it no longer gives you your sense of who you are.

That's an enormous shift and enormous difference. Your sense of who you are is timeless. It has nothing to do with your historical personality.

Your sense of who you are as this essence has nothing to do with whether on the surface level of reality, your life can be considered a huge success story for a while until it ends, or your life is a total failure. Let's say you've, let's say if it's a total failure, you've taken one bad decision after another because you were totally unconscious and anybody who's unconscious will take one bad decision after another. Well, occasionally you might have a lucky one, but it doesn't last.

And you end up, you're finally there in a prison cell. The whole thing has been complete, a total and complete disaster and mess. I messed it all up totally.

My whole life, I messed it all up. Now this thought, this narrative in your mind will create an enormous amount of unhappiness and strong ego too, but a very unhappy ego. But in your unhappiness, perhaps the ego would still be blaming others, can blame society or your parents or the unfair system.

You are the victim of the system. That's a victim is a wonderful ego food. I'm the victim.

Everybody, of course, is a victim to one, to a greater or lesser degree, because living in this relatively unconscious world, people have done things to you, sometimes very bad, sometimes bad enough, but everybody has been to some extent the victim of other people. No doubt about that. And also some very bad things humans have done to other humans, no doubt about that.

But the question is, is that memory and that narrative the basis for your sense of identity? Are you clinging to that narrative of yourself as a victim? And that becomes the main part of your sense of who you are.

That is a huge prison. It's worse than a physical prison. If you have put yourself in a mental prison of victimhood, it's worse than a physical prison.

So, but I just gave the example of somebody who has messed it all up, and now you're ending up in a prison cell. Or you have somebody else who will say who has achieved great things, and now he's sitting in his mansion and around where these wealthy young people, these Silicon Valley, you have built up your huge computer empire with probably the famous parent's garage. It's all started.

And now you have billions in the bank and your private jet. Now for the realization of your essence identity, and it makes no difference whether it's one or the other. The only difference is perhaps when things go wrong, so to speak, in your life, usually you're closer to it than when things go right.

You're closer to it when you're not in your comfort zone than when you're in your comfort zone. So the guy in Silicon Valley or Wall Street or wherever they are, they may have to wait until the whole thing collapses, and then they lose. They're no longer in their comfort zone.

The spiritual awakening is very, very rare. I don't even, haven't heard of anybody who became awakened in their comfort zone. Oh, that's bad news.

So it's when your surface reality, becomes frustrating, that's the beginning of potentially finding the portal into the awakened state. But when your surface reality is relatively pleasant, by the way, it doesn't stay like that, but for the time being, let's say it's relatively pleasant, you're not really motivated into finding the deeper essence of who you are, because why not, let's fly to Paris? We'll have a great meal there, where you feel a little bit uncomfortable and discontent.

Okay, let's go there. Let's do this. Let's try this.

More sensory experience. You can buy any sensory experience. And then after a while, you find being in your comfort zone, after a while, becomes your discomfort zone.

And then finally you've made it. And then finally, there's a possibility of awakening. And so the challenges that we encounter in life, many people have an attitude of resentment.

Or a feeling that there's something very wrong with the world, or there's something very wrong with my life, when they're being challenged by difficult situations, difficult people, loss of some kind. Did I mention difficult people? Oh, yes.

You may find a lot of your suffering, unhappiness, strangely enough, comes from other people. They are so difficult. And often the very people that were supposed to make you happy, suddenly they don't fulfill their purpose anymore, and they make you unhappy.

It's called the divorce court. And there's an implied belief that this shouldn't be happening. Life should unfold beautifully without all that stuff going wrong.

And to some extent, yes. To some extent, especially as you live more consciously and no longer totally in the grip of ego, you're beginning to awaken. There's an awareness.

You no longer create unnecessary suffering in your mind through reactivity. We are able to drop the unnecessary baggage of creating narratives and creating your own suffering through your narratives. You let go of that.

So it's a huge chunks of suffering begin to fall away. But challenges still come. And even then, it doesn't mean everything will now go totally as expected and as it should.

There's still loss happening from time. There's still, you still come across difficult people. How is that?

I don't want any more difficult. Yeah, but they're everywhere. As the famous French philosopher said, hell is other people.

He looked very unhappy, by the way. Well, the only photo I ever saw of him, he looked unhappy, so I don't know. Jean-Paul Sartre.

It's true, other people are difficult. So your life improves immeasurably as you become more conscious, but it will still challenge you. And it won't mean you will never experience loss again.

It doesn't mean things may not go wrong, still occasionally, not perhaps as drastically as before. You don't create your own mayhem and chaos anymore. But challenges, yes, different kinds of challenges come.

And if you no longer complain that a challenge shouldn't exist, difficulties shouldn't exist, obstacles shouldn't exist, things should not be canceled, they shouldn't go wrong. If you drop that expectation, then it's actually fine. But be careful that if you still have an unspoken assumption that there's something wrong when challenges happen, that would draw you back into unhappiness.

There's nothing wrong when challenges happen. We grow through them. And if you hadn't had yours, you wouldn't be here.

If I hadn't had mine, I wouldn't be here. So we wouldn't be here. We would not be here without it.

And so retrospectively, we can actually be grateful for the suffering that we've had, retrospectively. The question is, the challenges of life, when they come, do we transform them into unhappiness or are we able to just face them and then go with it, go with them and do whatever action is possible or necessary or totally accepted at this moment? This is how it is.

So when you live more consciously, you no longer convert the difficulties of life, the inevitable difficulties and challenges of life. You no longer convert them into unhappiness, which means they don't contribute anymore to your unhappy person identity. You're no longer becoming a more unhappy person.

You'd be surprised how many people's main sense of identity in this world is unhappiness. And they're just looking for the next thing to be unhappy about. And they

always find something or to complain about, to be angry about.

There's an expression that then you become a grievance looking for a cause. And of course, you always find the causes. So important thing then to realize that I'm sure there are some of you who have carried the burden of a very unhappy self for many years.

And perhaps you're just beginning to step out of it. You're just perhaps beginning to transcend it. And there are still millions in this world who carry the burden of an unhappy narrative in their minds, unhappy self.

And you think about then my life, why did it come to this? Why didn't my own, these my expectations that I had when I was 20, why didn't they work out? Why did my marriage collapse?

Why did I lose that job? Why did I succeed and made millions and then I lost them? Why, why, why did I work for nothing for 15 years and then the whole thing that I built up collapsed?

Why is it dreadful, dreadful? All this begins to dissolve because you realize you're unconsciously creating suffering and strengthening the egoic personality through that. And then my life then is just memories.

And you begin to realize, as I sometimes put it, or people find it a little weird, when I say my life isn't a correct way of putting it because you don't have a life, you don't have a life. Because if you have a life, there's you and life. How can you be separate from life?

So if you don't have a life, one could even say you can't even lose your life. You can only lose something that you have, but you are life, you don't have a life. I am life and life and consciousness are synonymous.

It doesn't mean that every form of life is conscious, but every form of life is, the way I see it, is matter, the table, the rock, mineral, it's like frozen consciousness. Plant life is like liquid consciousness. It's an analogy.

And the mind and thinking and beyond that, consciousness itself is like vapor, mist, it rises. This isn't a water analogy. All life is manifestation of the one underlying life or consciousness in manifold forms.

So you are that, I am life is a wonderful realization. I am consciousness, I don't have a life. Yes, I have a history, but the history is not my life.

It's stuff, it's stuff in the mind, it's memories. Hence, all these things are wonderful that they happen to you because they have brought about your awakening. They all make sense if you now look back on all the things that happened, including, not only including, but especially the so-called bad things.

They brought you to this point. They brought you, they pushed you into awakening. And some people have to suffer so much that one could almost say they are forced into awakening or they become dreadfully unhappy.

A good point to reach for humans is to become very frustrated with their life and the things of this world. It's not a bad place to reach that point. And you've all reached, you've all experienced to a greater or lesser degree, becoming frustrated with the way things are and with your so-called life, to a greater or lesser degree.

Now, some people become so totally frustrated. They say, I just can't take anymore. I just can't take not another day of this dreadful suffering of just one bad thing after another.

Awful. And that's a dangerous point to reach and a very potentially awakening point to reach. It's dangerous because it could take you to suicide, but if there's anybody here who, if that ever should happen again, or you're at that point now where you feel close to, I would rather end it than carrying on the suffering.

I'm suggesting an alternative possibility. If you're so frustrated, why not try the very simple thing ultimately of completely letting go of any resistance to whatever you're experiencing at this moment, just surrender totally to this moment as it is, your experience of this moment as it is. Yes, but I'm so unhappy.

Then you accept that this moment, I feel this unhappiness, but I accept that this is my experience of this moment. Yes, but all my circumstances are so unpleasant. Look around here.

This is awful. Yes, but I completely surrender to my experience of this moment. And then finally the mind has to stop because there's nothing else to say.

And then you notice the moment you leave this moment with your thoughts, you begin to suffer again. And then that means, okay, and this immediately the suffering is forcing you back into the present moment. And then after a while, some mind movement will come back.

Oh, and this is how, if you're really that unhappy that you're close to suicide, you're very close to awakening. And it's even possible if you're, it's even possible that you can go, for most people, awakening is a more gradual process. But if you're dreadfully unhappy and then you surrender, it could be a very sudden and drastic, immediate awakening.

It wouldn't even be gradual anymore. You might still occasionally have to, when you sense the pull of old thoughts, become so easy then to come back into the present moment. And this is why I have received letters from people in prison, some of them in for life, who have said, I'm free of suffering.

I have surrendered. And they become a force of power for good in their environment where it's very much needed. So whether your suffering is extreme or whether it comes in smaller doses, use it.

Use the challenges and difficulties of life so that eventually you transcend, was the words of the Buddha. The Buddha defined his whole teaching by saying, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. That's what he said.

Some of the things that you read in Buddhist scriptures were written much later. They're attributed by the Buddha. But some things are clearly to me uttered by the Buddha.

And I teach suffering and the end of suffering is undoubtedly what he actually literally said in which it means, I teach suffering means I show you how suffering arises. I show you how you create suffering through unconsciousness. And I teach the end of suffering.

And I show you how you can transcend suffering and transcend the self that is ultimately illusory because that's the second part of the Buddha's teaching is that the self is an illusion. By that he means what we've been talking about, the form identity of you, that is identification with that is the illusory self. And then the Buddha said, when they asked him, well, what's then, who are we then?

What's the essence of it all? Who are you? Who are we?

And he said, another term that he used is translated, not very well translated as emptiness. And that does not sound very inspiring at all. So if he says your essence is emptiness, what do you mean emptiness?

And then of course, very often his teaching was such that when they later talked about it, he said, when he was asked that question, he kept noble silence. In other words, he didn't answer, so, but he kept noble silence. That means he was just present, but didn't go into conceptualization.

Does God exist? They asked him, and his answer, and that's the answer, to go into that beautiful space of no thought or to realize within yourself that beautiful space of no thought, space, I said. Now, remember what the Buddha said, emptiness, space, my translation of the term sunyata would be spaciousness, the spaciousness, spacious awareness, the spaciousness of no thought.

You have risen above thought, not fallen below thought. That's a beautiful place too. Below thought is a beautiful place of connectedness with being without even knowing it.

The tree lives below thought and is a manifestation of the one consciousness too. Your dog, even your dog lives below thought. That's why he's so happy a lot of the time, has no self image, because you need thought to have a self image.

You need thought to have an ego. Some dogs and cats have beginnings of an ego, but of course they've lived with people who have a huge neurotic ego, so they have adopted it a little bit. But most dogs and cats are still surprisingly free of ego.

They're just there. But below, we don't want to go there. We don't want to go below thought, but they are there and they're beautiful.

This is why people feel attracted to dogs, because the beingness to the eyes of the dog speaks to you. The being of the dog, you can sense, you feel more alive when you look in the eyes of the dog, because the dog doesn't impose conceptualization to you. He has no conceptual identity.

So for a moment, for a few seconds, the dog frees you of your conceptual identity in the head and the tail wags. So, beautiful, below thought. The dog doesn't have a relationship with himself.

Humans do. They don't love themselves, they don't hate themselves, they're not unhappy with their body or their appearance, because they don't have a mental image of themselves. So even the fattest dog is okay.

No problem. And now humans rise above thought, and that's the spaciousness that the Buddha talks about. Emptiness is the usual translation.

You become, you realize yourself as spacious awareness. It's formless is another word for it, formless consciousness. And what did Jesus talk about when they asked him about when he said kingdom of heaven, kingdom of heaven?

What has that got to do with Buddha's sunyata or emptiness or spaciousness? Oh, rest a moment, let's see. Kingdom of heaven is very spacious.

If you had to choose something in the sense-perceived world as an analogy for emptiness, you would probably look at the spaciousness of the heavens. Kingdom of heaven, that's the old translation. In my translation, it is kingdom is dimension and heaven is spaciousness.

So the kingdom of heaven that Jesus talks about is the dimension of spaciousness. And where is that? It's in you.

It's a dimension of consciousness in you. Exactly the same what the Buddha talks about and points to. And it is realized when you are able to access this dimension of no thought.

At first, yes, meditation can help. And it's a good thing, I recommend it. It may not be for everybody, but it can be very helpful as long as you don't feel that you're doing a meditation.

Because the meditation is the realization of being, which is immediate. You cannot have a means to an end. If I meditate in order to realize being, you immediately project the realization of being into the future, where it isn't.

Because there is no future, except as a thought in your head. The future is a thought in your head. Otherwise, some explorer would have found it.

I have found the future, the undiscovered land. No, nobody has found it. It is for practical purposes.

We need past and future. There's no doubt about it. But beyond that, we need to realize that we don't want to be trapped in the mental concepts of past and future.

The future is experienced as a thought in your head, as is the past. So the future and past have their purpose, but we need to be able to go beyond them as regards our state of consciousness. And this is the arising of the timeless state of consciousness, the timeless dimension to who you are.

It's a liberation from the person. Spaciousness, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness. It's here and now.

So to be able to step out of thinking, I recommend highly that you practice contemplation, if only for brief moments, sensory perception without imposing thought on what you're perceiving. Just a clear, alert seeing. There's just looking.

And immediately there's a different dimension to what you're perceiving. You can look at a flower or a tree. And before, when you perceived through thought, the veil of thought, you thought you knew what it is you're looking at because you had a label for it.

In many, many cases, in most cases, it's just because you have a label for something doesn't mean you know what it is. It's conceptual knowledge. It's a lot like that.

You have labels for something. And that is, our civilization knows only this kind of knowledge, conceptualization. Analysis can accumulate knowledge through conceptualization.

You have access now to vast knowledge through the internet. All of mankind's, humankind's, what does Trudeau say? People kinds.

All of people kinds knowledge is at your fingertips on the internet. Is that going to save us? Is that going to save the world?

Is more of that, just need a bit more knowledge and then we're going to sort out all the problems of the world. We need a bit more knowledge. Okay.

We have a lot already. Or is there another dimension of knowing, of knowledge that we

have completely neglected? Yes.

And what is that dimension? That's the dimension of knowing through awareness, which is non-conceptual. So you can look at a tree without a single thought in your head, and suddenly you know this tree in a non-conceptual way, which means, if I had to put it in words, you can sense the being of the tree.

You can sense even the sacredness of the tree, but you can only sense that because you're in touch with that dimension within yourself. And you're no longer misled by concepts. You can still use concepts when you need them, but you're no longer burdened by concepts.

And then you can look at a tree and can sense the vastness and the mystery and the aliveness and the sacredness and the stillness that surrounds the tree. A whole new dimension of interacting with a tree that you had no idea of when all you had in your mind was ideas about the tree. You can do the same thing as I know these days, tourists walk around places and visiting.

Tourists are everywhere. Interesting branch species has developed out of humans. Tourists, I occasion, and they go around with the walk of my favorite example.

In Europe, you have cathedrals. In other places, you have temples, beautiful buildings. They've been there for hundreds of years or a thousand years.

You walk into a temple, you walk into an ancient cathedral and you can hire a tape, not tape anymore. It's a digital thing you put in your ears. It's your guide.

You hire this machine. It guides you through the cathedral and it talks to you all the time. After you've done that, it takes an hour.

You have learned so much about this cathedral. Nothing wrong with that. But have you truly experienced that place?

Have you really been there? In order to really experience that place, you can't do it through knowledge, although knowledge has its place. To really experience it, you need to say, when you go to the door, when they say, do you want to rent this thing?

I say, no, thanks. And then you walk through the cathedral and you go, wow. God.

And after half an hour, an hour, maybe you sit there for a while, just sort of take it all in, absorb it. And after an hour, you walk out. And if somebody then asked me, asked you, well, what have you learned?

Nothing. And yet you have had a very deep experience of that place. And that's another way of knowing that's totally neglected in our civilization.

It's all connected with awareness, with the awakening, with presence. So there are two ways of knowing, conceptual and non-conceptual. If you neglect the non-conceptual, you miss a whole dimension of life.

And actually the most important, the very foundation of life is then missed. And you get trapped in just one half of life, which is the conceptual. And the other half just doesn't exist for you.

And if a civilization continuously ignores, even discourages people from realizing that other half, I don't believe it can last for very long. So, and that other way of knowing from a conceptual viewpoint looks like ignorance. That's the strange thing.

So when you walk into the cathedral or the temple and you go like this, you don't know anything. From a conceptual viewpoint, you become comfortable with not knowing conceptually, but in that not knowing conceptually, there's a deeper knowing that has nothing to do with concepts. And that's not taught at school or universities, unless there's some individual teachers, perhaps bring it in.

And that's the way in which you know yourself also. It's not, you can't just, you know the famous dictum in ancient Greece, know thyself. That goes back to Pythagoras, the first philosopher, the most important thing.

Now you can know yours, again, you have the two dimensions. Know yourself on the one hand means, know what makes up your personality. Know about your past, about why you do things, why you have certain reactive pattern.

All that's very useful. You can go to a psychoanalyst and the psychoanalyst will help you on that level to know yourself. And then, well, when you were seven, what did you experience then?

Oh, well, this, and then, and then what about when you were eight? And nine, oh, that was terrible. Oh, God.

No, there is a place for that. It takes a long time, of course, to find out more about yourself. Psychoanalysis can take, some people are in it for 20 years.

I'm not saying this, it's wrong, but it's this one dimension of knowing yourself. And it's not the fundamental dimension of knowing yourself. The dimension of knowing yourself is knowing yourself not through concepts, but knowing yourself through awareness, not only through awareness, as the awareness, as the consciousness.

And then you have, and then that's, that's then a balanced human life. A balanced human life is when you know yourself as a human being. A human, no, that's a beautiful term.

Human being, two things. You know yourself as a human, which is who or what you are as a personality, but you also know yourself as the being. The being is not, nothing to do with concepts.

The being is the consciousness itself. The human is the ripple, the being is the ocean. And when you realize yourself as the being, then the ripple is fine for as long as, as long as the ripple is a ripple, actually has a much better existence than before when the ripple didn't know his or her own essence.

Once the ripple knows its essence, the ripple life actually, although not completely free of challenges, the ripple life actually becomes much more pleasant. You can actually enjoy the things of this world. You can enjoy other human beings.

You can enjoy even having things, but you're no longer looking for yourself in any of these things. And most importantly, you're no longer looking to the world or whatever the world can offer you and looking for some ultimate fulfillment or happiness through the things of this world, the surface dimension. And this is a wonderful shift when you realize nothing in this world is going to make you really ultimately happy, not for long.

Brief moments, yes, but not for long. And that's amazing. First of all, it looks, oh no, but of course it's good news.

It's good news. Nothing, you drop the demand that a human being, another person, a situation, a place, or some kind of achievement should make you happy. You say to them, make me happy.

Come. Why can't you doing it? And then you say, there's something wrong with this world.

It's not making me happy. I have failed. It must be me because everybody else is obviously happy.

And then you drop the demand that a place, person, achievement, attainment, possession should make you happy because you realize the being of yourself. That's where true happiness, joy, aliveness, peace, stillness arise. That's already there.

The rest is the icing on the cake, which is there for a while. You enjoy it when it's there. And then of course, everything goes.

After a while, it dissolves. The Buddha's famous teaching on impermanence, don't attach yourself to or look for yourself in anything that's impermanent. And everything is impermanent.

Fleeting comes and goes. So you have the two dimensions and then you're no longer just a human. That's so frustrating to be just a human without the being.

And you are a human being. Wow, that's like such liberation from just being human. Become comfortable then with what, from a conceptual viewpoint, looks like a state of ignorance, which is, you remember the example I gave, walking around a cathedral or a temple or looking at a tree.

From a conceptual viewpoint, it looks like ignorance, but there is a deep knowing there that's nothing to do with concepts. So you become comfortable with not knowing. That's a beautiful place to be.

Become comfortable with not knowing. And then you'll find that when you do, when the mind begins to operate out of that state of not knowing, you have actually many interesting insights and ideas and realizations, but you need to be rooted in not knowing. Rooted, that's a very, very powerful way of being.

So you have the two dimensions. The human is then rooted in the being. So become comfortable with, you don't need to continuously interpret everything around you.

Become comfortable with just the famous Beatles song, "Let It Be." Become comfortable with letting it be without imposing anything on it. Situations, you remember, we talked about situations, narratives about situations, let it be.

No need to interpret everything. Become comfortable with not knowing. Again, when you look at another human being, you need to immediately interpret who they are and whatever, have immediate opinions and judgments about them, or can you just look at somebody and just have no judgment?

Just take them in, spacious awareness, just looking, just listening. Listening, another thing that comes with not knowing, when you truly want to listen, you cannot know and listen. Your mind needs to be still and alert, which is a state of not knowing when you're listening to another human being.

That's creative listening. And creative listening is the only way two human beings can fruitfully interact with each other and then have a fruitful outcome of the interaction when each one, or at least one of them, can be in that state of pure listening, which is not knowing, not immediately formulating thoughts. So that's the practice of stepping out of thought.

What helps, especially initially, as you step out of thought is to feel the aliveness in your inner body, to feel the aliveness in your inner body that can become an anchor for not thinking, but not falling below thinking, no, not being, staying alert. And then you realize when you're present, you're present with your entire body. It's not just the, it's not the sense-perceived physical body.

There's something deeper there, but you can feel that as every cell of the body, even here and now, you can feel the aliveness that pervades the entire body that can become

an anchor for presence. So that's the new consciousness that's arising, means human beings are able to live in both dimensions. And that is the rest for the rest of your so-called life.

I say your life, because we know you don't have one anyway. The rest of your so-called life, which is not yours, is that is the practice is to live that. And that's the purpose.

Whatever you do otherwise is secondary. Just bring that into what you do and wherever you are, you bring in that practice, that after a while, it's not a practice anymore. It's a natural way of being.

So you're no longer completely absorbed any longer in the conceptualizing mind. So basically this is the essence of it all. This is the secret of life or the secret of the universe for the time being.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (52:19 - 52:39)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle You Are the Present Moment [359d0179-0860-44ce-b423-f4c159a97ddb]

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 0:26)

You are the present moment. In this podcast, Eckhart gives a brief talk on his signature teaching the power of presence and then answers questions from the audience. He says the important thing to understand is the presence that inhabits our bodies.

It's not something that is external to us. It is the essence of us. He says the secret and the mystery of the present moment is that we are the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (0:28 - 13:53)

Welcome everybody. Wonderful to be with you. Here we are again in the present moment.

So we might as well become aware of the present moment. How do you do that? Some people are thinking the entry point into the present moment or present moment awareness is sensory perception.

What you see here or other senses may be involved to a lesser extent, mostly what you see and hear right now. Be aware of that without labeling it mentally. And what you are aware of is the surface of reality.

One could say the surface of the ocean of being. So your attention is in sense perceptions. And then you notice the attention itself, which is the consciousness that makes sense perception possible.

And that's of course very subtle because it's not an object. You notice the subject behind all objects of consciousness. Consciousness is the eternal subject.

Whatever is being perceived or thought or felt is the object of consciousness. So your entire world arises as objects of consciousness, as sense perceptions, then also a more abstract reality, which is conceptual thinking. And there's the emotional reality feeling within yourself.

These arise and subside. Sense perceptions depend on where you are and what you happen to be directing your sense of perception towards. It changes, of course.

I can look at the ceiling, I can look out of the window, whatever. So sense perceptions, you can become aware of your inner perceptions too, the inner objects of consciousness, thoughts. There goes one, which comes and then it subsides.

Emotions, whatever you may be feeling right now, is an object of consciousness. And that's fine. This is what you feel right now.

But in addition to what you feel at this very moment, there is something else that is bigger than what you feel. And that is the consciousness through which you feel what you feel. To become aware of this awareness itself, which is you ultimately, the essence of you.

You become aware of yourself as the perceiving consciousness. And that presence, you sense it as an inner thing. And then you may begin to notice that this, the presence that you feel is all around you too.

It's not, there's no distinction anymore between inside and outside. There is a presence that pervades the universe, it pervades your body, pervades the space. You could say it is the space, because the space is not anything either.

Space isn't an object. Consciousness isn't an object. You cannot grasp it.

You can't say it's here or it's there. So becoming aware of the present moment is ultimately becoming aware of yourself. The deeper levels of yourself, the deeper level of yourself, the deeper dimension of yourself.

And so as you become aware of the present moment, you feel this presence that pervades you, that is all around you, that the universe is no longer an inanimate thing that is there around you. It's an alive presence. Everything has aliveness in it.

There's something that holds the atoms and molecules together of any form, a vast intelligence that operates and manifests as form temporarily. And at some point, it withdraws and then the form dissolves. For example, I've shown this, it's a pebble.

Now it's very smooth. There's tiny, tiny sparkles. There's some crystallization happening, almost invisible, tiny sparkles in there.

And it's very smooth and you can, this is tactile sensory perception, you can feel that it's almost something alive in you. But of course, everybody would say, well, this is an inanimate thing. Inanimate means it has no life.

But is that true? Minerals, they're all mineral realm, which is how Earth started, apparently. It started as, at first, there was not even the plant life.

It was just mineral life. Well, most humans don't call it life. But physicists then eventually discovered, if you penetrate deeply into even a so-called inanimate object, it is intensely alive because there's a vast universe in there of atoms and molecules in motion, in vast spaces in between.

So it's continuously, it looks like something, but it's a process. It's something that life is doing in a very slow way compared to us. It's something that life is doing.

Ultimately, there are no things. They're all only processes. They're all events in consciousness.

So even the pebble is an event in consciousness. It's a form consciousness takes. And so from our point of view, we could say, what is it that gives it this shape that holds the molecules together in this particular shape?

You could ask the same question. Your body is infinitely more complex than the pebble in its atomic molecular structure. And yet there too, there's something that there's an organizing principle behind form that enables form to be, and that is a vast intelligence, this organizing principle behind that inhabits your body too.

All the functions of the body, the vast intelligence is required to coordinate the countless functions in your body every moment, the exact temperature of the blood, the digestive system, the air moving into your body every moment into the lungs, what the lungs do with it, the chemical laboratory in your stomach, highly advanced, the immune system of the body that looks out for invaders. If you had to do it, no human intelligence could do that. It goes far beyond anything human intelligence could do.

An intelligence inhabits your body, enables your body to be. And at some point, the intelligence withdraws. And the atoms and molecules are no longer held together by the organizing principle of this vast intelligence.

And then it doesn't take long before they say, okay, we might as well go our separate ways. And that's called the body decays very quickly. And that's called death.

But all it means is something withdrew from the body. The most important thing is not just to talk about it, but to sense the presence that inhabits your body, and that inhabits entire all forms in the universe, the presence of consciousness in everything. So there's a tiny, tiny glimmer of consciousness in this pebble here, too, just less than a millionth of human consciousness.

And at some point, this also will dissolve at some point, but it could take a long time. In 2000 years, if there are no external influences, this pebble will still look exactly the same. And if there are no external influence in 10,000 years, it would still look exactly the same.

And then perhaps in 100,000 years or half a million years, it would eventually also dissolve. So the important thing in all this is to sense that presence that inhabits your body, not as something external to you, but as the essence of you. For example, you can breathe in, you feel the breath moving into the body.

And that makes it easier to feel the aliveness that pervades the body as you feel them. And thinking subsides for a moment, but you're fully conscious. And that's presence.

And that's the present moment. That's why it's called presence. So the secret and mystery of the present moment is that essentially, and in essence, you are the present moment.

The one thing that never changes, it's always now. The unconditioned conscious presence that does not exist ultimately in this dimension. It does not exist at all.

Exist means stand out to be manifested. It pops out into the surface of being that exists prior to existence as being. And being is not part of this dimension.

It kind of shines into this dimension, like sunlight shines down here, but being is transcendent to this dimension. So who you in essence are is a transcendent, the transcendent being prior to existence. And therefore, there've been some mystics that said, largely misunderstood, God does not exist, which means God is not something that is manifested in this dimension of space and time.

God doesn't, he, she, it doesn't stand out. And you can't say, oh, God is, where's God? Oh, there.

God is transcendent to this. Now, is God consciousness? Yes and no.

The way I put it is, God is unknowable. God is beyond anything that you could know or talk about. But this source that is beyond anything that could be known, the source of all life, emanates into this dimension, so to speak.

I'm trying to explain something that cannot be put into words. What it emanates is consciousness, in the same way that the sun emanates light. Is light the sun?

Yes and no. Is consciousness God? Yes and no.

It's an emanation. You are an emanation of the one. And to know that you are not intellectually, but to sense that the essence of you is that emanation, that's of course the end of fear.

Until you know yourself as that, there must be some fear, often quite a bit of fear, because you still don't know. You're kind of a disconnected fragment in a threatening universe, floating around, threatened by other disconnected fragments, seemingly disconnected fragments. So let's go on to the first question.

[Speaker 4] (13:54 - 14:28)

Here is my question. They say that the eyes are the windows to the soul. It can feel like seeing the whole universe just by looking into someone's eyes.

Is there a transmission happening when we look into another person's eyes, or is it just witnessing a silent presence as a model that helps us allow for the space within

ourselves to let whatever is happening to happen?

[Speaker 1] (14:30 - 27:09)

Thank you, thank you. Good, very good question. There is a kind of transmission.

For example, let's say when you look into somebody else's eyes, whether or not the other person is aware of that, let's just assume that the other person is aware of it and has agreed that he or she wants to share a moment of presence with you, and you look into each other's eyes. Now, for many people at first, it's an uncomfortable thing. So you have to kind of surrender to that moment and let go of thought, of any kind of mental interpretation.

If you can be still and present and look into somebody else's eyes, there's a sharing of presence. There's a field of presence that arises where you look at the other person is no longer perceived as other, you merge into one, your perception, self-perception. It can be a very powerful way of connecting in a relationship, if you do it occasionally.

Because otherwise, in the relationship, you have just personalities. And in many relationships, there's never any transcendence of the personalities, the conditioned personalities. There's never a moment of shared presence, which could also, it doesn't have to be looking into each other's eyes.

There can be a moment of shared presence when you're sitting together, just being, or you're out in nature and you're contemplating the sky together. Whenever the mind is not involved, and you still, you don't feel uncomfortable. In fact, you feel a togetherness, a connectedness without the involvement of thought structures.

And it goes even beyond emotions. When you look into another person's eyes, sometimes it happens at first, as you go beyond thought, you might encounter an emotional level. Sometimes for a little while, people get quite emotional when you look into somebody's eyes, there's a layer of emotion.

Some people even get tearful. And then you can even drop beyond that. And then you find presence.

So sometimes it's three levels involved for people when you, gazing is the word, not to be confused with staring. It's good that the English language has those two words to differentiate, because staring obviously involves a personality. Staring wants something from you or wants to impose something.

But gazing is very different. There's an openness there. So gazing into another's eyes.

At first, there's a discomfort in many people and still the mind is still active. Oh, this feels so weird. It's so weird.

I can't do this system. I don't want to do this. Then you let go of those thoughts.

And then you might get a layer of emotion. Oh, you suddenly feel very good about the other person or you've or you've or something else comes up. You remember what he or she did yesterday, or whatever it may be.

And then you let go of that. And then you can just be in still presence. Just stillness descends, but an alert stillness.

There's just consciousness left, no longer mine or yours. And that can be very lovely meditation. Naturally, when I look at another human being, I look at the other human being without any unnecessary thought.

I'm saying unnecessary because a little bit of thought may be necessary. For example, I had a haircut yesterday. So obviously, I had to talk to the person cutting my hair to explain and sometimes we have a conversation.

She tells me about her life and adventures. And then there are other times when I just sometimes I look at her in the mirror. She may not even know that.

And there's no thought. There's just I can sense her presence. She's no longer a hairdresser doing her hair.

I can sense the being beyond the personality. And that's wonderful. And so any interaction with human beings, I use thought when it's needed.

But I love just being present with another person without any mental judgment whatsoever. Now, not everybody is yet able to kind of do that because the mind has its own momentum. But it can be for a while a practice, you let go of judgments.

It's a practice until it becomes a natural thing. So that when you meet another human being, you don't immediately go into judgment, like, dislike, or some kind of suspicion or whatever it may be. Who is he?

What does he want? You just allow that human being to be without imposing anything. And that's a wonderful sense of connectedness and oneness.

And this is where empathy arises. As long as there is mental judgment, there's not really any empathy with another human being because you're judging the conditioned entity. Empathy means that you must have some access to that which is beyond the conditioned entity.

You can sense the being of the other beyond the personality, which is sometimes there are cases, of course, where the personality is extraordinarily dense, like a very cloudy sky. And that makes it a little bit more difficult to sense the being. But even there, it is possible.

It requires a more intense presence. And that sometimes happens when you meet very difficult people, or people who are aggressive towards you, that requires a much more intense presence, not to be reactive in that situation, and realize beyond conceptualization, that this person is acting out their conditioning. There's nobody else.

There's nobody really there. It's just a karmic entity acting out its conditioning. We call it a person.

Beyond that, there's a being, everybody is a child of God, in sadistic language, no matter how veiled, how dense the veils are. And they may not ever know that in this lifetime, but eventually, they will know it. Awakening happens.

So, when I look at you, there's no thought, obviously, in my mind. At the end of a session, sometimes, as you know, for many times, too, there's stillness and presence. I'm looking, there's no thought.

It's just still presence. And then, is there a transmission there? Or is it just, as you say, a modeling of presence?

In a way, both, but there is a transmission. Now, how can that happen? How can that happen?

I can see there's a transmission when two people come together, or you go to a spiritual teacher, sometimes the spiritual teacher may just look at you as, for example, Ramana Maharshi, wonderful spiritual teacher, lived in the first half of the 20th century in India. Very often, people would come to him with questions, and quite often, he wouldn't answer, he would just look at you. And for some people, that was very frustrating.

And others found it very enlightening, because immediately, the question dissolved, and there was a transmission. Now, it's understandable that somebody who is very present can awaken or intensify the presence that is also in you. That, of course, can happen when you are together with that person, but you don't have to be together.

Now, how does it happen here? You might ask, does the presence travel to everybody who is watching? It doesn't work like that.

Consciousness is not subject to space distances in this dimension of space and time. Consciousness is beyond space and time. So, there can be a transmission in consciousness.

This doesn't mean that consciousness has to travel from here to wherever you are, because it's already there. Consciousness has no distance and no time. So, there is a transmission in consciousness.

It doesn't need to travel. Even if one of you or if some of you were on planet Mars, it

would be the same. It doesn't depend on what we see as spatial.

Consciousness is transcendent to space and time. And as humans evolve, one day or gradually, we will realize the infinite possibilities of consciousness so that we will be able to establish connection with a human being easily, even on maybe not a human being, other beings, in another planetary system or the Andromeda Galaxy. Andromeda Galaxy is the closest galaxy to our Milky Way Galaxy.

And light, which is the fastest thing, it's not a thing there is, traveling at 300,000 kilometers per second, takes about, I've forgotten exactly, more than 200,000 years to reach the Andromeda Galaxy or to travel from the Andromeda Galaxy to here. And that's the closest galaxy to our own. It takes like, well, 200,000 or 250,000 or 300,000 years to travel.

And in consciousness, it would take no time, because consciousness is transcendent to this universe, the manifested universe. So yes, in that sense, one could say there is a transmission. But it can also happen if you can just look at a photo of somebody in the state of presence.

There's a famous photo of Ramana Maharshi that was taken. Some people find that very helpful. They look at him.

And they immediately sense their own presence. And that's really what it is. You sense your presence suddenly.

And it's not yours. I just call it that, for the sake of reusing language, where in this world, we appear as separate beings. So you can sense the presence in you.

It's not mine. And I'm not doing anything. And this event here with us, many people coming together here, there is a transmission, not just from me, all contribute to that.

So this event that's taking place through technology, but in part, but of course, involves human beings in different parts of the planet, is part of the awakening consciousness. Consciousness gradually awakens in this dimension, which means it comes more fully into this dimension. It doesn't awaken, we just use those words.

It comes more light comes into this dimension, and then the beings in this dimension gradually become more complex, more conscious. This is the evolutionary process. Well, thank you for the questions.

[Speaker 2] (27:11 - 28:33)

Hi, Eckhart. I very much appreciate the opportunity to connect with you this way. And I really love the way you started out tonight's session with reference to rocks and stones and minerals, because I'm a geologist by training.

And now I feel totally guilty about all the rocks that I've hit with a rock hammer and a sledgehammer all the way through my career, knowing they had a level of consciousness. Anyway, so my question involves the dissolving of the body and awareness. So when the body dies, what happens to awareness, the deep eye?

Does it rejoin the collective consciousness that underlies all of creation? Or does it maintain some sort of individuality? And the reason I ask that is because I find it difficult to reconcile that idea with the concept of reincarnation and karma, which suggests that awareness retains some sort of individuality and returns to inhabit another form to continuous journey of evolution of consciousness.

So I wonder if you'd help me reconcile those two lines of thinking.

[Speaker 1] (28:34 - 42:57)

Oh, yes, thank you. Very good and complex question. So let's start with that with reincarnation.

Is there such a thing as reincarnation? Then how do you reconcile that with consciousness? What is it if there is reincarnation?

What is it that reincarnates? Is it the person? One way of putting it is that what reincarnates is all the things that make up the illusory sense of self.

So ultimately, what reincarnates is the illusion of being a separate person with all its desires, accumulated desires, and other tendencies. In order to really understand this, we will need to understand the whole purpose of the universe because everything is connected, as above, so below. The microcosm that you are and your role in this universe as a human being is intimately connected and one with the whole purpose of the totality of the universe.

In order to really deeply understand this whole matter, you would have to understand the entire purpose of the universe, which is impossible. We can only have approximations. All I can say it is a little bit like this.

It is a little bit like that. Don't overestimate what the human mind, the capability of the human conceptual mind, there's another deeper mind. The conceptual mind cannot understand how the universe functions and what its purpose is.

It's vast, unbelievably vast. So, what I'm describing now is not the ultimate truth, but it's a way of approaching the truth, a limited way of understanding the whole function of the universe. The universal consciousness incarnates into form.

It takes on form and that becomes this dimension here. So, that which inhabits form is the one consciousness. It gradually creates for itself, so to speak, gradually more

complex forms because it gradually comes more fully into this dimension.

This is how this universe comes into being. Gradually, the Big Bang didn't happen. It's still happening.

It's the movement into form, increasing complexity of life forms. The universe, why is the universe doing that? I don't know.

We can't go there. We cannot understand that. All we can say, it seems that it wants to experience, the one consciousness wants to experience itself as a universe and maybe there are many other universes.

It goes into form and that includes the human form, but in that experience, the universe consciousness loses self-awareness. It identifies its form so fully that it gradually loses its connectedness, awareness of its connectedness to the one. So, that is the dream.

In a way, this universe is being dreamt by the one consciousness. All the forms that arise and subside and arise and subside gradually become more complex. It's a dream that gradually becomes more complex and there's a dreamer.

The dreamer is the one consciousness and the dreamer is completely identified with up to a point. The dreamer, which is the one consciousness, is completely identified with the dream and every form of the dream. How do I know that?

Because I've investigated within myself. You can find many answers to universal questions if you go deeply into yourself. To some extent, you can learn about where the universe is going by observing where you are going, where your consciousness is going.

For a long time, I and millions and you and millions and millions and billions of others, for a long time, I was completely identified with the forms, the conditioned entity, me, the person. I was completely identified with the conditioning, every emotion, every thought that arises. I was it.

Consciousness, at some point, woke out of the dream and realized itself beyond the dream. There was an awakening happening from being totally captivated by the dream, totally identified with the dream, to suddenly realizing that which is beyond the dream, which is the dreamer, which is consciousness, which is I, which is the deep I. I realized that, and now many others also realize that.

That is part of the awakening of the universe, where the dream of form gradually leads to an awakening. In that awakening, the universe, which is consciousness, knows itself in a way, perhaps, that it hadn't known itself before, to use limited language. So, the purpose, then, is the awakening.

Your purpose is the awakening of consciousness, the disidentification of form. Now,

perhaps, many humans have very little of that, perhaps, little glimpses of awakening in a normal human lifetime. But mostly, the dream of form continues, and you know it was totally identified with every thought that arises, and every reaction that comes up, every emotional reaction which is conditioned.

I mean, you can watch people in movies or in real life, everything is just absolutely so real, the person is. And so, there's fear, and there's anger, and complete identification. There's no separation whatsoever, or perhaps, through suffering, occasionally, there are little glimpses.

And then, immediately, the conditioning takes over again. This is many lifetimes of humans who are not engaged in the actual awakening process, but even in them, glimpses of awakening happen. But a lot of the human entity, which is the dream of form, does not awaken, and there's an enormous, to use Eastern terminology, there's an enormous karma behind it, accumulated stuff from the past.

This karmic entity, with all its desires, and even the ego itself, which is the dream, wants to dream again. That is what reincarnates, the illusion of the person reincarnates. And gradually, the illusion awakens.

Suddenly, or gradually, over many lifetimes, the illusion, which is the person, the illusory self, which reincarnates through suffering, and in the various reincarnations, awakens to its true nature, which is timeless consciousness. Now, you may ask, so is then all individuality lost? Do I disappear?

No. That which is most essentially you, that which is at the very bottom of, the very foundation of your sense of beingness, that is never lost, because that is the essence of who you are. Then, of course, there is an entire entity that consists of memories, and all kinds of things, narratives that make up the sense of self.

That, of course, does not survive for very long, but what lies underneath it, strong tendencies, also to want to experience more of form. I often say to people, if they ask about reincarnation, you can discover the truth of reincarnation every moment. You don't have to wait until you die, because when you are completely identified with every thought that arises, which means there is a sense of self that gets trapped in every thought, consciousness gets trapped in every thought that arises, you're completely identified, the dream is overpowering.

That means every time you identify with a thought or emotion, you reincarnate, you incarnate into that thought and into that emotion, you become it, or you think you are it. So, the very unconscious people who are completely identified with every thought and emotion that arises, they're in the grip of their conditioning, it's a dream-like state, they continuously reincarnate into thoughts and emotions, they become it. And those people, of course, there's an enormous urge when the body dissolves for this energy field that is

formed still to experience more of the same.

Sometimes it wants more suffering or whatever, more drama, please, I need another dramatic lifetime. This is one way of looking at it. One could also, sometimes analogies can be quite helpful, but although they're limited, let's say you are an iceberg that floats in the ocean, you only see about 10% of it above the water line, 90% of the iceberg is underwater, you don't see it.

Let's say that you are such an iceberg, so there's the part that you see, and there's the part that you don't see, and the part that you don't see is all the thoughts, the conditioning, even the thoughts that you're not having at this moment are unseen. Even the simplest things like, what's your telephone number? Of course, a second ago you were not aware of your telephone number, it was under the water, so to speak.

Now when I ask you, you can retrieve it, and then it rises up to consciousness. So there is a vast unconscious part of who you are, which is the iceberg underneath. Now the iceberg is floating in this vast ocean, and in essence it is no other than the ocean, but it seems to be other because it vibrates at a certain frequency that makes it solid, but it's still water, and even the person is still consciousness, but it is vibrated such a frequency that it seems to be something different.

Now, let's carry on this analogy one step further. Now, if you have observed icebergs, occasionally an iceberg is when it floats around, now it gradually melts, of course, that's an interesting part of our analogy, it gradually loses its heaviness and its weight gradually, but as it continues floating, occasionally it topples over, and as it topples over, it might very briefly disappear under the, in the water completely, and then it re-emerges and looks a little bit different, different part of it comes up, so it topples over, and then there it is again, and it re-emerges. This could be an analogy for the process of reincarnation, of dying, and then being reborn, but in this gradual process, there is an evolutionary development, and that is gradually the heaviness of this contracted entity that is the iceberg gradually merges with the ocean, it warms up, it becomes more conscious, gradually, and loses the illusion of separateness, and when it's lost the illusion of separateness completely, it doesn't need to reincarnate anymore, because there's nothing there to reincarnate. But in that process, to bring this analogy to a conclusion, somehow the ocean needed the iceberg, it needed to experience itself as the iceberg, and when the iceberg dissolves, it returns something to the ocean, it's no longer just the same in this analogy, it's no longer just the same water that was there before, there is something, because then through this whole process, this long process of reincarnating again and again, and there was a learning process, a deepening of self-awareness, through the suffering of being seemingly independent entity, autonomous, but it wasn't, the suffering gradually brought about consciousness, so the iceberg returns consciousness to the ocean, this is why the ocean needs the iceberg. This is obviously an analogy that is limited, as all analogies are, but it can be a glimpse of how this whole

thing functions, and why you are here, and so on. I hope this is a, although limited, a somewhat satisfactory explanation.

[Speaker 2] (42:59 - 43:29)

No, I thank you very much, and I understand that you were struggling to try and explain the unexplainable, so the analogies were hugely helpful, especially the one about the iceberg, yeah, and, you know, I remember every now and then you refer to the movie The Matrix, and I always remember the character that decides, makes a conscious decision to return to the Matrix, because that's where he really enjoys it, so thank you very much, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (43:29 - 43:30)

Thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 3] (43:32 - 43:51)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these Essential Teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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Eckhart Tolle You are the Light of Consciousness [1823714a-b91e-4dff-a734-6507238db30a]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 0:41)

You are the light of consciousness. In this podcast, Eckhart talks with a live audience about the new consciousness he sees emerging around the world. He says one of life's great mysteries is that the universe is conscious.

While scientists struggle to define it and we can't see it under a microscope, consciousness exists. We are living proof of that. Eckhart says we have a role to play.

And he quotes an ancient aphorism, you are the light of the world. He says what that means is you are the light of consciousness manifesting in the world.

[Speaker 1] (0:43 - 50:47)

Right now we are sitting here. You are sitting here. Ultimately there's only one eye and it's sitting there.

And here there's only this one eye. You are sitting here. You are aware of your sense perceptions.

That's part of the present moment. You're aware of this room. You're aware of the lights, the screen.

Man sitting on a chair talking. You hear the voice. You hear the background noise.

Boom, boom, boom, boom. I think they call it music. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.

It's noise that goes with a beer fest. That's fine. You perceive the totality of this room and yourself.

The body, you're sitting on a chair and that's the present moment, one would say. But it's not the depths of the present moment. It's the surface of the present moment.

The surface of the present moment is sense perceptions, hearing, seeing. If one of your sense perceptions is missing, either you don't hear or you don't see, that's fine. You have the others.

So you're aware of sense perceptions. You're aware of what you hear, what you see, what perhaps even what you touch. And is that all there is to this moment?

Is that all there is? Well, you would say, yes. Haven't you forgotten something?

No, just a second. How is it possible for you to perceive these things? How is it possible

for you to have these sense perceptions?

You might also have a thought may come into your head. What am I going to have for dinner later? How much longer do I have to sit here?

I don't understand a word of what he's saying. Or what you had for breakfast this morning. Thoughts can come and go.

Sense perceptions, thoughts. Your entire life consists of a mixture of sense perceptions, thoughts and emotions. That's basically, you mix them in a particular way and that becomes your life.

You mix them up in a pot. Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, my life. Is there more?

Have you forgotten something? Yes, of course you have forgotten something. You've forgotten that if you were not conscious right now, there would be no sense perceptions, there would be no thoughts, there would be no emotion.

If you were not conscious at this moment, none of this would be. And if there were nobody here, no perceiving consciousness, would there even be a room that's debatable? Or would there just be certain molecules and atoms floating around in space?

It only becomes a room when a perceiving consciousness makes it into a room. So you are the consciousness without which there wouldn't even be a room here. You are the consciousness without which there wouldn't be a man sitting on a chair.

You are that. That is the essence of who you are is consciousness. Now here we come to the, you are conscious right now.

This is one way of putting it, but it would be more accurate to say you are consciousness. That's the essence of who you are. If I say you are conscious, I have created a duality.

There's you and consciousness is something that is added to you. But the essence of who you are is consciousness. And when you are aware of yourself as consciousness, then you become self-aware.

Awareness arises. This is awareness is when consciousness, which is who or what you are in your essence, when consciousness becomes conscious of itself, that is the miracle of awakening. And that's the arising of awareness.

And in that arising of awareness, you have transcended thinking. You can come back to thinking and think much more effectively and creatively when you access a dimension. But you have transcended thinking when you realize experientially, like right here and now, the silent realization that who or what you are is this conscious presence and underlies everything and that you sense as yourself, that you sense as your own presence.

I call it your own, but of course it's not your own. It's the presence of the light of the world in you. You sense your presence.

This underlies everything. To give an analogy, I could give two analogies. Let's say there's a painting.

The painting is painted on a canvas. And let's say you are whatever is painted on the canvas, that's you as a person. And when the thing that's painted on the canvas, the picture, is totally identified with the form of the painting, that is unconsciousness and ego.

But let's say what's painted on the surface becomes aware of the canvas on which it is painted. That's a strange analogy, but it works for a moment. It might work.

If you're the painting, you become aware of the canvas without which the painting could not be. And that means you have become aware of the substratum in yourself, the consciousness without which nothing else would be. Wow.

Now, instead of canvas, I prefer to use the expression space. You are the space of consciousness, the inner space, but ultimately there's no division between inner and outer, the inner space of consciousness. Consciousness pervades the entire universe.

But of course it becomes focalized, for example, through the human brain, which is an instrument that consciousness uses to express itself through and to create this dimension that we inhabit. So this is just so amazing. Let me give another analogy.

You watch a movie as it's projected onto a screen. There's a projector and there's a film. I don't know if it's still the same these days.

There's a film that runs through and there's a light behind it and the light shines. There's a lens and then the light projects the images from the film onto the screen. Now, in this, another weird analogy now, let's say you are one of the actors on the screen acting out your script, which is your conditioned mind.

Drama, whatever it is. Oh no, look what he did to me. Let me tell you what he did.

And then he said, and I said, acting out the drama on the screen, it's your script, it's your conditioned mind. You don't even know you're acting it out. You think it's you.

It's just mechanical acting out of your conditioning. And suddenly the actor on the screen becomes aware of something. Maybe he or she gets a little shock on the screen.

Somebody hits him or her over the head. And suddenly the actor on the screen realizes something, realizes that actually the essence of who I am is actually the light. Of course it is.

The light is projected onto the screen. So the essence of who I am is the light and the rest is secondary. Oh, self-realization.

I am the light. I'm using that because that is another beautiful pointer. The light, a beautiful way of speaking of consciousness as the light.

And this is what you might remember from the New Testament. There were two significant sayings, well, among others, two of the most significant sayings by Jesus, which are undoubtedly literally true. Not everything that's in the New Testament is literally true of what he said.

And some things were distorted. Some things were added. Some things were left out.

That's another story. But with some things have such power that you immediately know somebody uttered these words who knew the essence of who he was. He knew.

So there are two statements. One is in the Gospel of John and one's in the other gospel. I can't quote.

You can look it up. One is, he says, I am the light of the world. Oh.

And in another gospel, he says, you are the light of the world. Oh. So that's an amazing statement, both about himself and about everybody else.

But you don't know it yet. That's the difference. You are the light of the world.

He was talking to uneducated, probably, fishermen or whoever he encountered. So when he says you are the light of the world, he was not saying you are the crème de la crème of society. No, he was talking to people who had no particular possessions or even education.

So he was pointing to something that was essential in every human being. You are the light of the world. You are the consciousness in which the whole world appears and comes into being.

Now, all you have to do is realize it experientially. Know it experientially. Then you know that you are the light of the world.

And when you know that you are the light of the world, it's not an ego thing. It's not saying I'm the light of the world, but you are not. Or saying I'm the greatest light of the world.

I'm a greater light. Some lights are greater than others. Or only I can give you the light of the world.

Come to me. None of that. So I am the light of the world is the same pointer as in the

ancient Greek temple said you are.

I am to become aware of the bare fact of your beingness. Right now. I don't use these words as explanations or philosophical statements.

They are only pointers towards something that you have to go beyond the words. Can you be aware of your own beingness? Because when I say I am, I am is the first person singular of the verb to be.

Strangely enough, I don't know why it's a totally different word. It really should be I be. I am.

It's being. It's being of your being. In the German language, you actually have the form ich bin, which is related to the English be.

I am. I am. Right now, are you able to realize the bare fact of your beingness as the I am without adding anything to it?

Just feel the presence of yourself. But ultimately, what is that presence? It transcends who you are.

It far transcends who you are as a person. Now, I don't very often speak of God, but I'll do it now. This is difficult territory for some people because God for most people is a conceptual edifice, and it's been spoken of so many times by so many different people, meaning so many different things.

Now, when Jesus said, I am the light of the world and you are the light of the world, the light of the world is the consciousness that illuminates everything, and that's the essence of who you are. And that consciousness emanates from the source of all life, which transcends space and time. It's not somewhere in space and time.

It transcends space and time. So you cannot really speak of the source. It transcends anything the human mind could think or speak of, that source you cannot speak of because you can't explain God with the limitations of human language, which after all are only a few sounds produced by the vocal cords, plus a few, I can't remember the term for it, sounds produced by a friction of air.

So just the combination of a few sounds produced by the vocal cords plus air friction cannot explain the mystery of the universe, not surprisingly. And to think you can explain the mystery of the universe by producing a few sounds is absurd. But there can be a few hints.

The source of all life, which transcends space and time, emanates into this dimension. It emanates into this dimension, and in this dimension it emanates gradually more and more, and that's the evolution of this universe. The gradual emanation of increasing

emanation from the source.

And it's a bit like the sun, another analogy. You could have the sun, the sun emanates light continuously. And it's not surprising that in ancient civilizations the sun was regarded as God.

Of course the sun is not God, but it's good as an analogy. The sun emanates light, and when the light touches your hand, you feel the warmth of the sun. In some sense you could say you are touching the sun.

And yet in another sense, of course, if you touch the sun you would immediately evaporate. But the light is still connected to the sun. The light in you, the consciousness in you, is an emanation of source.

And the source emanates, and temporarily it manifests this light, and this light temporarily appears as a person. It temporarily appears in a particular form and then evaporates, and then appears in another form, it evaporates, evaporates, appears. Human life is short-lived on this planet.

I mean, if you're still young, you might think, oh, it'll go on and on. And I've even heard recently a young person say, by the time I get old they'll have invented a remedy against death. I don't think so.

Life is short. If you saw a speeded-up version of life on the planet, you would see human beings appearing and disappearing continuously. Let's speed it up.

Let's speed up 100 years in 3 seconds, 5 seconds, 10 seconds. You would see life appearing and disappearing as human forms, continuously popping up and bursting like soap bubbles. Sparks, little sparks appearing and disappearing.

Millions, consciousness manifesting gradually, coming more into this dimension. In that sense, the evolution of the universe, and especially the evolution of humans, has not been completed yet. The evolution of humans is a work in progress.

Humans are evolving as more consciousness enters this dimension. So as you awaken to who you are, and you do it when the mind becomes still for a moment, and yet you haven't lost consciousness, and you look around, and you don't need to label it mentally. You look at a flower, you look at light, you can look at your own hand, you can look at whatever it is you may see.

You're aware, aren't you listening? Whatever it is you're listening to, you listen, and you don't have to label it mentally. So you become the background, the canvas.

You are the consciousness, and that means there's a stillness in you that arises. It's a stillness, but it's alert. It's an alert stillness.

It's not the stillness that comes when you've had 10 whiskeys, and you're about to drop off. Not that stillness. And it's not the stillness that is there just before you go to sleep, when the mind cannot think about its problems anymore, and you go, oh.

No, it's an alert, an alert stillness, and to realize that this dimension is in you, always there, can be covered up, but it's not something you need to attain. It's not something you need, and this is perhaps a disappointment for those of you who have been spiritual seekers for many years, and perhaps are attached to the mental concept of spiritual seeking. In other words, it's become part of your ego.

So I'll say it anyway, because it's good to be disappointed. It's not something that you can need to attain or get or obtain or achieve. It's not even an achievement.

It's realizing what's already there in you. The dimension is already there in you, always underlying the movement of thought, always underlying it, always there, like the canvas, always there, but always overlooked, almost always overlooked by normal humans. Occasionally it surfaces in their lives, this dimension of alert stillness, of pure consciousness, of unconditioned consciousness.

Occasionally it emerges in their lives, but they don't even know what it is because they associate it with something that they're experiencing at that moment, but what they're experiencing at that moment frees them for a moment from the stream of thinking, and a little space opens up inside, and they go, and it feels so wonderful, it's your life, and you go, for example, a magnificent natural spectacle could do it, a magnificent sunset, the sun disappears into the ocean, and there's a vastness of it all, and your eyes get wide, and you look, and so, wow.

And you may not realize the intensity of that moment, and the alert, the deep peace and aliveness you feel are only indirectly caused by the sunset because the sunset stopped, it was so magnificent that it stopped your mind for a moment, and there was that stillness arising in you, and in that stillness you can sense yourself more strongly than ever before, you can sense your essence more than ever before. It could also arise when you look into the eyes of a baby, one year old, and that baby looks back at you, and the baby has not yet arrived at thinking, it has not yet arrived at conceptualization, it has no opinion about you yet, it probably will in a year or two years' time, but right now, with one year old, the baby has no opinion about you, the baby has no judgment about you, the baby just looks.

And you look into the eyes of the baby, and for a moment, and you feel so good, and you say, after a few seconds you say something, you say, oh, wonderful, what is wonderful? Wonderful is that for a moment, the baby freed you of the incessant stream of thought in your mind, because you instinctively felt that the baby was not imposing any thought on you, so it freed you for a moment from thought, and that it feels so good to look at this baby, because for a moment you are freed from the person, the personality, it's just a

spaciousness, a space. So it can happen accidentally in people's lives, but it doesn't happen that frequently, you can't wait for the next thing to happen in four weeks' time, in four weeks' time maybe I'll meet another baby, and then I'll have another five seconds of freedom, and you may suddenly realize that even the dog can do it for you.

You look into the eyes of the dog, and again the dog, although the dog is conscious, in expression of consciousness of course, he has a lovely consciousness, but the dog has not arrived, the dog exists below thought, not in thought, the dog has no thought as such, no conceptual thinking, he doesn't think, I wonder what kind of a person you are, so even looking into, and this is why people love their animals, or even love just meeting an animal in the street, and you go, oh, and again for a few seconds, the dog looks at you, you look at the dog, and the dog frees you for a moment from yourself ultimately, frees you for a moment from yourself, and you feel, oh, feels so good to be free from myself. Another thing you can do, of course, is you can engage in extremely hazardous activities that require your intense presence, and if you don't have that intense presence, you will die.

There are certain activities of that kind, like rock climbing, or car racing, or whatever else, even surfing can be dangerous if you get hit by a huge wave, if you surf, then you're not going to be thinking, I wonder if the next wave is the one that I'm going to catch, let me think about it, no, it's not quite big enough, it doesn't go like that, you're totally present, and people get addicted almost sometimes to certain activities of that kind because it frees them temporarily from themselves, from the mind-made person or personality, so all that remains of them is a conscious presence, and that feels so alive and so good that they need to go back to this dangerous activity again and again, and perhaps one day they fall off the rock, the rock wall, and it's all been worth it, I'm sure, however, you don't need to do all that, if you enjoy it, it's fine, but you don't need that, once you realize that this is always in you, you just need to acknowledge that it's there, that dimension, you just need to acknowledge it, first of all, you can do it when it arises spontaneously in your life, like I mentioned a few things, the dog, the baby, dangerous activities, but also whenever something new comes into your field of vision, let's say you open a door and you go into a room that you haven't been in before, or you're walking along a street and you turn around a corner, maybe it's a new city, you walk, and again something new opens up, and every time you look at a new vista for three seconds or four seconds or so, you're not thinking, but you don't normally know that, for a few seconds you're just taking it all in, and then you interpret it mentally, you can even do it with a sound, we can do it with sounds, I highly recommend listening to the shakuhachi flute, Japanese bamboo flute, which is often used in Zen practice, and the best shakuhachi players are actually Zen monks, the others may be good technically, but the essence isn't there, the shakuhachi is just a bamboo flute, bamboo with a few holes in it, or maybe it's just one, I don't, they play it and there are big spaces of silent spaces in between the sounds, so the sound goes, space, and then another sound arises, space, so

the most important thing when you listen to shakuhachi music is the spaces in between the sounds, and as you listen to the spaces in between the sounds, your mind is still, you listen to it, and so listening to the space in between sounds puts you in touch with the inner space of consciousness, of awareness, and whenever you look at something new, for the first few seconds, you may realize you're not thinking, you're just taking it all in, and if you become consciously aware of that, you can prolong that, you can actually arrive at a point where you can walk along a city street, or initially more easily in nature, because nature does not stimulate mind activity in the way that a city does, if you walk in nature along the beach, a forest, whatever it may be, you begin to be able to walk through nature, or sit around nature under a tree, and take it all in, the sounds, the sights, the smells, the feel of the air, the breeze on your skin, take it all in, be so alert, you're taking it all in, but you're not thinking, it's just you are the consciousness that makes the perceptions possible, and so when you're not thinking, it's not that difficult to do, and when you're not thinking, of course, you're not a person anymore, temporarily you have transcended the self, what the Buddha called the self, which he said, the self that is ultimately a delusion, you have transcended the self, it is extremely liberating, nature can help you with that, because nature does not think, nature is also a manifestation of consciousness, but nature has no conceptual thought, so you are activating something that becomes activated in you, that is an intelligence that is deeper, than the conceptual intelligence that is thought, and it's essential to have access to that deeper intelligence, if you want to use thought in a creative and powerful way, if you don't have access to that intelligence, that is deeper than thought, higher, deeper, whatever you prefer, if you don't have access to that intelligence, that is deeper than thought, then all your thinking is repetitive and ultimately not helpful. And not only not helpful, creates more problems than it solves.

And you do an enormous amount of overthinking that creates an unhappy person and an unhappy life. My life then becomes unhappy. So there is the conditioned intelligence in you.

And this is the kind of thing that is encouraged at school and at university. And that's the kind of thing that does the IQ tests and is either good at it or not. And then there is a deeper non-conceptual intelligence where all creativity arises.

And that is the essence of you as consciousness. That is the essence that emanates from the source of all life. And so you are a ray of source.

You're that source emanation. You're a ray of God, one could say. You are a ray.

And so the awakening is not a personal thing. It's not that the personality of the person does not awaken. The person ultimately recognizes that it is not ultimately real.

It's only temporarily semi-real and gives way and something else shines through. And that is the awakening. So the person does not awaken.

But what is it then that awakens? Well, that's a wonderful question. The universe awakens through you.

The universe, what is the greatest mystery of the universe? Is it the mystery of the atomic, molecular and subatomic? Well, deep mysteries are there.

Is it the mystery of infinite outer space, the galaxies and the unbelievable vastness of it all? Yes, those are great mysteries, but the real mystery is something that the astronomers or molecular scientists almost never mention. The greatest mystery is that the universe is conscious and nobody knows what consciousness is.

No scientist has ever seen it. Some scientists even deny that it exists. How you can do that, I don't know, but they do.

There is no consciousness. Okay, who is speaking? How is speaking possible?

So the science, you cannot put consciousness under a microscope. You can never say, there it is. I now know what it is.

So in a way you can never know what it is because you're never separate from it. You are essentially it, but you can know it as yourself, but you cannot know it through conceptual mind. So the interesting fact about the deeper non-conceptual intelligence, which is the alert stillness, the unconditioned consciousness and an interesting fact about this is that from the point of view of conceptual thinking, that state of connectedness with the deeper intelligence, the unconditioned, from that point of view, it is a state of not knowing.

It is a state of ignorance, but only from a conceptual viewpoint. But you need to know that because there may be a little bit of fear in you that comes from the mind that says, I need to think all the time to figure everything out. And that is not true.

Certain things you need to think about undoubtedly. Certain things can only be approached through thought, but there are other things that thought can be a great interference through the essential realization of who you are and also to experiencing the joy of life and true inner peace and experiencing empathy towards other humans, experience love, true love, not egoic love. I want you, don't you ever leave me, not that.

True love, all those things emanate not from conceptual thinking, they emanate from source, from the unconditioned consciousness. But when you go there, it seems from the point of view of the egoic mind and conceptual thinking that you don't know anything anymore because the mind is still. Conceptual thought does not realize that that stillness is the source of all creativity and or anybody is truly being creative has created from by having some access at least perhaps in the limited area of their creation, have had some access within themselves to that dimension.

And they have created out of that incredible things, incredible music, beauty, architecture, incredible works of even writing that's inspired writing, all creativity, any creative insight has come out of that. Creative piece of music that survives from generation to generation has that essence in it. So there are the two levels to you, there is the intelligence of thinking, which is fine, and there's a deeper intelligence of not thinking.

And that is not only that, it's the essence of who you are. Why don't they teach that at school? I don't know.

Some people have a natural connectedness with that. I've read the biography of Albert Einstein a while ago and I was surprised when he was about four years old, he was so slow, he didn't have this quick mind that could immediately have formulated thinking immediate as it's encouraged at school, that kind of thing. The other is totally neglected at school.

So the teacher asked the question, who knows the answer to this? I know, I know, I know, and Einstein would just sit there and started going deep, deep, deep within. And he naturally drifted into stillness without ever having it as a practice.

He naturally always drifted back into stillness. And then great insights came out of that. So some people have it naturally, but most people need to consciously embrace it and invite it into their lives.

So inviting that space of no thought and becoming comfortable for those periods of time when you embrace no thought, it might be just a few seconds and gradually become extended, become comfortable, and this is a strange way of putting it, become comfortable with not knowing. And yet in this not knowing, there is a deeper knowing, and that's what's called wisdom. Wisdom is something that the world desperately needs.

The world does not need an intensification of analytical thinking. We've got so much analytical thinking. The world does not need more information or facts.

Is that going to save the world? We've probably got millions of facts on the internet. We're drowning in information.

And everybody's doing their conceptual thinking and it's not getting us anywhere. Wisdom, intelligence without wisdom, which means just intelligence cut off from the deeper essence of who you are, becomes very destructive. Intelligence without connectedness to wisdom is very dangerous, as we can witness in the world.

With technology, more and more technology development becomes more and more destructive in the absence of wisdom. And wisdom is the intelligence of the unconditioned consciousness. And that's what the world needs.

That's what you need. And that is what wants to emerge into this world through humans. If humans don't become vehicles for it, it will emerge somewhere else.

But there's a good chance that humans will make it. Now we are in an interesting, because you're all here. So that's very promising.

You are here. You are not just people come here at a deeper level. This is an event of awakening, of the awakening consciousness.

You have all come here as persons, but that which has brought you here far transcends who you are as a person. You are the awakening universe. Obviously, you're not separate from the universe.

You are the universe that is awakening through you. That is the purpose of your life ultimately is to enable the universe to awaken through you because you are it. That's what it wants.

And every other purpose you have must be aligned with the purpose of awakening. So even if you continue the job that you are doing, you bring a conscious presence to what you are doing. You're no longer egoic.

You bring conscious presence to it. You might be a hairdresser and the way in which you approach your clients, you bring consciousness into them. You look at another human being and there's a moment of spaciousness.

There's not immediate labeling, mental labeling. You can begin to be with another human being and offer them space to be. And you are that space for them.

Empathy comes through that. Loving kindness comes through that. As you may remember, the Dalai Lama said, the Dalai Lama, interestingly, didn't say my religion is Buddhism.

Everybody knows that. But he said, my religion is kindness. And kindness implies empathy and benevolence.

Goodwill is another word for benevolence that flows from within you towards another human being. And that can only flow through connectedness with the unconditioned non-conceptual intelligence in you. That's when it flows.

And then you can love the other, not in the egoic sense. And you can love a person, if you meet for half a minute in an elevator, you can love them by sensing their essence as consciousness beyond the person that they manifest on the external. You can sense that you share consciousness with them.

And that is the recognition of the other as yourself. So when Jesus said, love your neighbor as yourself, there's something that was not transmitted or written down

completely. So we get an isolated fragment.

He did not say, please, you don't need to believe me. I'm just saying it if you don't want to believe me. He did not say, love your neighbor as yourself, because that is a commandment that he would know people cannot fulfill.

And they have tried for 2000 years, not done that well. I must love my neighbor as myself. He's a jerk, but I must love him.

I can't stand him, but I must love him. I'll try. Or you deny all the negative feelings you have towards your neighbor because you have a mental image of yourself as spiritual or religious.

Press it down. So it needs to be connected with the kingdom of heaven that he talked about. Kingdom of heaven is an old translation.

As you may know, my translation is kingdom is dimension. Heaven is spaciousness because heaven is the sky. It's the heaven.

It's an analogy, vast space. He's talking about something within you, spaciousness of awareness. The dimension of spaciousness is a kingdom of heaven.

And that is within you. It's also around you, it's within you. Now, if you find the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness in you, that dimension of consciousness in you, if you find that, then you love your neighbor as yourself.

The two go together. You can't take as a separate commandment, you must love your neighbor as yourself. You're not capable, but seek first the dimension of spaciousness.

Then you will love your neighbor as yourself. It's a natural result of that. It flows from that.

These realizations come to all the ancient, all religions have, in their essence, have that realization, especially, of course, it's there in Zen, it's there in Hinduism, it's there, especially in Sufism, in the Islamic tradition. It's, the realization is always, that's what it is. Oh, it's all, these things are the most important things of human life, and our civilization seems to ignore it completely.

The mainstream civilization that we have, it's still, nothing of that is ever mentioned. Now, when I say that humans are awakening, it is true that there's an increasing number of humans who are going through the shift in consciousness and are awakening. It's still a minority, small minority still, that's true, but it's happening.

When you watch the news on television or you go onto the internet, the opposite seems to be happening. The world seems to become more and more crazy, but that's fine, that goes together. It's only when things become critical that the awakening happens.

The awakening does not happen when things are comfortable. They happen when things become critical. It's, your comfort zone is not the place where you will likely find spiritual awakening.

That's a bummer. When you're taken out of your comfort zone, then you get challenged by life, and only when you get challenged by life, and most of you have been challenged by life, and the only reason why you are here is because you have been challenged by life, and only that can bring about the motivation for awakening, for, in other words, it would be in Buddhist terms, finding the end of suffering for yourself. The end of suffering.

You no longer make yourself happy by your own mind, and you no longer make yourself unhappy, and you no longer make others unhappy. That would be a step forward. So when life takes you out of your comfort zone, and it's taking that now, for example, collectively, when you watch the news, read the newspaper, and so on, the media and the politicians, they're both going crazy.

The media are looking for enemies, and they're finding them again, and the politicians agree. Be very careful that you don't get taken in by all the stuff that you read, and then you adopt all these thoughts as your own because you're reading them. If you can't bring stillness into your life, then you can begin to think more creatively and look at situations outside of the conditioning of your mind, because every time you go to the internet and you go to television or newspapers, you don't realize that you are taking on the collective mind, and your mind is being conditioned by the collective, and you don't realize that the thoughts you think are your thoughts are not your thoughts at all.

So you've just taken them on. So the thoughts can very much act as a prison in your life, and to become free of being imprisoned by your thoughts, find the dimension of spaciousness in you, which is always there, just waiting to be acknowledged. It's here and now, always there, and that is your adventure, to find that in your life, and then allow it to live through you, and then life becomes satisfying, and what you do becomes secondary.

Of course, you'll do something, but what you do becomes secondary. The consciousness that flows into what you do is primary. What is your state of consciousness when you speak to a person, when you take action, do this and that, what is your state of consciousness?

Please practice all the things that I mentioned. Step out of your mind, conscious sense perceptions, take some conscious breath that frees you from thinking too for a moment. Step out of thinking as much as you can, and then your thinking will become more empowered and become creative.

You have the courage to go into the space of not knowing from the point of view of

conceptual thinking, and look at a human being without needing to work something out mentally about them. In fact, you will know a lot about that human being, but not conceptually, not as a judgment. You can sense their essence, and you might also sense what it is that covers up their essence, and that's fine, but you no longer mistake that which covers up their essence, which is a personality, for who they are, because if you mistake that which covers up another person's essence for who they are, then you're trapped in ego again.

You're creating more ego for the other, and you yourself are strengthening your own ego. So not mistaking the behavior of other humans, of their personality for who they actually are. You recognize it, yes.

So primary in your life is awareness, conscious presence, alert presence, stillness. Find that dimension, invite it into your life as much as possible. Resist the temptation of always grabbing your cell phone when there's a moment of not doing anything.

Allow that moment to be, and realize the essence of who you are as the deepest, the deep I am, I am. Without adding anything to it. There was an Indian teacher who was several, but especially one, Ramana Maharshi, recommended this as a meditation method, asking yourself the question, who am I?

So you go, you can close your eyes or not close your eyes, and you go, and so you ask yourself that question, who am I? Who am I? Okay.

Now, the important thing is, if you find an answer to that, you're wrong. The important thing is, after you've asked yourself the question, who am I? There's a space of not knowing.

That space of not knowing is also a space of no thought and is also a space of unconditioned consciousness. And that's the answer. But there's no answer on a conceptual level.

So the question, who am I, can be a very powerful pointer to who you are. But you must become comfortable with not knowing who you are in order to know who you are. And with this paradox, I'll leave you.

[Speaker 2] (50:50 - 51:10)

I'm Oprah Winfrey, and you've been listening to Eckhart Tolle, Essential Teachings, the podcast. You can follow these essential teachings on Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't yet, go to Spotify and follow this podcast.

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**Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : A New Earth (Chapter 10) [gid :
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[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 5:07)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Welcome to the final class of our New Earth series. You know, I have just loved being able to bring this to all of you. For those of you who are new to Eckhart and A New Earth, I hope that this experience has been as eye-opening and as heart-opening as it was for me and so many others, and continues to be.

For those of you who are revisiting the book, hopefully you're reading and hearing things in a new way, deepening your understanding of Eckhart's wisdom. If there's one key message in A New Earth, it is to recognize that the only time that matters is now. There is only the present moment, and every time we get better at recognizing the present moment, awakening to that, we get better at recognizing our ego when it shows up.

Every time we get better at recognizing our pain body, it means we're strengthening our spiritual muscle, and we keep that muscle in shape by being more centered, more thoughtful, by living more consciously. That's what this is all about. And the result of all this hard work, you get a life that gets filled with a lot more meaning and a whole lot more joy.

So let's get started with our final class, Chapter 10, A New Earth. I just again want to say thank you to every one of you for helping us to create this new Earth here with Eckhart Tolle and with me. The themes of Chapter 10 are truly the culmination, I think, of what all of our work has been about, how to bring consciousness to every moment and to every action of our lives,

and in the process, learning that we are far greater than anything that we could have imagined ourselves to be.

We're going to get started. You talk about the brief history of your life on page 282, the coming into manifestation of the world as it's returned to the unmanifested, its expansion and contraction. On the previous page, you talked about the Earth expanding, the universe really expanding and contracting.

Those two movements are reflected throughout the universe in many ways, such as in the incessant expansion and contraction of our heart, as well as the inhaling and exhaling of our breath. They're also reflected in the cycles of sleep and wakefulness. Each night without knowing it, I love this, you return to the unmanifested, capital S, source of all life, when you enter this stage of deep, dreamless sleep, and then reemerge again in the morning replenished.

Those two movements, the outgoing and return, are also reflected in each person's life cycles. Out of nowhere, so to speak, you suddenly appear in this world. Birth is followed by expansion.

There's not only physical growth, but also growth of knowledge and activities and possessions. This is a time where you're mainly concerned with finding or pursuing your outer purpose. Each person's life, each life form, in fact, represents a world, a unique way in which the universe experiences itself, and when your form dissolves, a world comes to an end out of countless worlds.

I thought that was so beautiful. That's the bottom of page 283, everybody. Each person's life, each life form, in fact, represents a world, a unique way in which the universe experiences itself.

So we are manifestations of the universe experiencing itself as each of us. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (5:08 - 5:34)

And that takes you out of this illusion that all you are is this limited little person. This is, on the surface of things, you are this person with a name and a form, but in the depths of your being, you are the universe experiencing itself in this form. And just this thought brings about a little shift in the way in which you perceive yourself.

[Speaker 2] (5:34 - 5:35)

And everybody else.

[Speaker 1] (5:35 - 5:36)

Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (5:37 - 5:48)

We are the universe, or the source of all life, or the creator, or God, whichever name you choose to use, expressing itself in our particular form.

[Speaker 1] (5:48 - 6:06)

Yes. In and through this form. So there's not...people usually perceive themselves as being this is me, and there's the universe, or the world, and there's the me and the rest of the world. But you are the universe. You are the life. We're not separate.

Not separate.

[Speaker 2] (6:07 - 6:32)

Yeah. Each person's life, each life form represents a world, a unique way in which the universe experiences itself. And when your form dissolves, a world comes to an end, one of countless worlds.

Wow. That's really powerful. So let's talk about the awakening and the return movement.

What is the return movement in a person's life?

[Speaker 1] (6:32 - 7:52)

Usually you start off with the outward movement as you grow up. And as you go into adolescence and adulthood, you start building your life. You acquire experiences.

You acquire knowledge. You acquire possessions. Your sphere of influence extends.

So that's the expansion. You grow. And usually that goes up to a certain age.

It varies from person to person. Unless, I talk about it also, unless this period of expansion is interrupted by some traumatic event, we can come to that a little bit later. So there's the expansion.

And then when people reach a certain age, suddenly a different movement starts. Things, the body is no longer as strong, not working so well anymore. People around you begin to die.

They reach a certain age. And so there's another movement that at some point comes into people's lives, which we could call the dissolution of form. It's gradually happening.

And in our culture, we don't like to talk about that. And this is why most old people are hidden away in homes. You rarely see, you have to go to third world countries to really see the reality of human life.

[Speaker 2] (7:53 - 8:03)

And also we have such a fear of it and not just a fear, a disdain for it. So we do everything to make ourselves look younger. Everything is about looking younger, being younger, younger, younger, younger.

[Speaker 1] (8:03 - 8:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (8:04 - 8:04)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (8:04 - 9:46)

Now the return movement is also when the spiritual dimension can come into your life very strongly when the form with which perhaps for many years you had been identified, which is the physical form and the form of my life, all the things that you had built up and identified with, your job, your status, your profession, your possessions. And when that begins to become a little bit shaky, then it is very often at that point that there's the possibility for the spiritual dimension to come into your life when the solidity of the outer forms becomes diminished. Right.

So traditionally, and there's still the, in India, for example, there's still a tradition when a man reaches a certain age, he withdraws from society. He sometimes even, some people still practice it, but not so many these days. He even leaves his family.

If he knows that his family is being looked after, he leaves and becomes a solitary a mendicant or monk in order to go deeply within. So that's, but you don't need to do that. All we need to be aware is that when the return movement starts, when the forms that you had identified with begin to break down, that is a wonderful time for going back home for the return movement into spirituality so that you become aware of your own consciousness.

Rather than what consciousness had identified with, that was your life before.

[Speaker 2] (9:46 - 9:47)

You mean form.

[Speaker 1] (9:47 - 9:48)

Form, yes.

[Speaker 2] (9:49 - 9:52)

And so it's sort of the return back to formlessness.

[Speaker 1] (9:52 - 10:25)

Yes, but consciously. It's a conscious return to see where, what is the source of my very being. You could say it's, you're going, when the world begins to become shaky, then you go back to the source out of which it all came, which is God ultimately, God within, the source within.

So there's these two movements in a person's life. Now, in our civilization, the whole civilization...

[Speaker 2] (10:25 - 10:27)

These two movements, the outgoing and the return.

[Speaker 1] (10:28 - 10:50)

The outgoing and the return. Now, our civilization is only interested, it seems, in the outgoing movement. People are interested in accumulating, in building up, in creating, making a life for yourself, being successful.

Of course, that has its place. That's fine. What our civilization knows very little about is the return movement.

[Speaker 2] (10:50 - 11:26)

You say, then one day, you too disappear. Your armchair is still there, but instead of you sitting in it, there's just an empty space. You went back to where you came from, from just a few years ago.

Each person's life, each life form, in fact, represents a world, a unique way in which the universe experiences itself. And when your form dissolves, a world comes to an end, one of countless worlds. The return movement in a person's life, the weakening or dissolution of form, whether through old age, illness, disability, loss, or some kind of personal tragedy, carries great potential for spiritual awakening.

That's why you say some older people become sort of luminescent.

[Speaker 1] (11:26 - 11:27)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (11:27 - 11:27)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (11:27 - 11:54)

And others have a resistance against the return movement. The ego identifies with the weakening body, for example. And so negative inner states arise.

People become angry or bitter or complain all the time or talk about the past all the time. Then they resist what's happening.

[Speaker 2] (11:54 - 12:02)

Yeah, because they can't accept, which we're going to talk about those three modalities, acceptance, enjoyment, and enthusiasm.

[Speaker 1] (12:02 - 12:11)

So here comes the acceptance of when old age approaches, the acceptance that this can be also very beautiful if you're open to that.

[Speaker 2] (12:11 - 12:39)

You say, because in old age, the emphasis, the top of 286, everybody, because in old age, the emphasis shifts from doing to being. And our civilization, which is lost in doing, knows nothing of being. It asks being, what do you do with that?

What do you do with it? Yeah. But the older you get, the more conscious you become that being is of more value to you than doing.

Doing. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (12:39 - 12:39)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (12:40 - 12:54)

And the whole point of A New Earth is for everybody to realize no matter what age you are, that being is of more value to us than doing. Yes. And that it's only the being that you bring into your doing that matters.

[Speaker 1] (12:55 - 13:08)

Yes. And you don't have to wait for old age for this to happen. You can become conscious of this at any age.

And then the way in which you interact with the world is very different.

[Speaker 2] (13:09 - 13:42)

Right. 287, when the ego is no longer identified with the return movement in a person's life, old age or approaching death becomes what it's meant to be, an opening into the realm of spirit. And many times, obviously, you don't have to approach death in order to open into the realm of spirit, as so many of you have told us that this whole book is about opening to the realm of spirit.

Okay. You say in A New Earth, on our new earth, old age will be universally recognized and highly valued as a time for the flowering of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (13:43 - 15:06)

In a way, we lost it because that was already there in ancient cultures where old age was greatly honored. For example, in the Native American culture, a grandmother, when somebody is called a grandmother, it's a title of great distinction and everybody has great respect for the grandmother because the grandmother embodies that wisdom, not only wisdom, she also embodies the opening into the realm of spirit. The elder of a tribe, for example, they embody the opening into the realm of spirit and through those old people, everybody can contact that realm.

So it's very vital to have that. We lost it and now we are going to find that again where old age is honored rather than looked down upon. So there's the grandmother, and I mentioned in the

book, you have the grandmother of the Native American.

In our civilization, you have the granny, and I say the granny at best is cute, but there's no depth to that, to how we perceive it. Because we don't honor. No.

That dimension has virtually disappeared from our civilization, the dimension of depth, the dimension of spirit, the dimension of the sacred, which is so vital for human life.

[Speaker 2] (15:06 - 15:15)

And what kind of effect does that have on us, not honoring that age and that which is sacred within the age and the depth of that? What kind of effect does that have on us?

[Speaker 1] (15:15 - 15:43)

Well, it means the whole dimension of spirit, which is there, is lost. So all our life becomes completely superficial. And when life becomes completely superficial, you're identified with the surface movement of your life.

And because of that lack of depth, people become very unhappy because there's only the surface of their life possessions, achieving this or that, getting recognition. And role-playing. Role-playing.

[Speaker 2] (15:43 - 15:48)

And also what you call on page 289, I like this, intelligent stupidity.

[Speaker 1] (15:48 - 15:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:49 - 15:50)

Intelligent stupidity.

[Speaker 1] (15:50 - 15:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:51 - 15:52)

Tell us what you mean by that.

[Speaker 1] (15:52 - 16:24)

Well, an example I give is, for example, you need great intelligence to split the atom. To do that, but then what do we do with that? We make an atom bomb, a destructive weapon, out of something that could be a wonderful thing.

So on the one hand, humans seem very intelligent, and then what they do with that intelligence very often is extremely stupid. Right. And it becomes destructive.

[Speaker 2] (16:24 - 16:28)

Because that's where intelligent stupidity comes in.

[Speaker 1] (16:28 - 16:45)

And that's because the dimension of spirit is missing. Intelligence that is not connected to the deeper dimension of awareness or spirit, whatever you want to call it. And being.

Yes. Is very destructive. Right.

Sooner or later, it becomes destructive.

[Speaker 2] (16:46 - 16:56)

Yes. I love what you say on page 290. This is, you know, I've read the book now several times, because when you go back and read it again, you will find things that you didn't experience the first time.

[Speaker 1] (16:56 - 16:58)

Repeated readings, very helpful.

[Speaker 2] (16:58 - 17:15)

Or the second time. Yes. Or the third time.

Once again, this chapter. Struggle or stress is a sign that the ego has returned, as are negative reactions when we encounter obstacles. So whenever you encounter obstacles in your life, it is because your ego is forefront, at the forefront.

[Speaker 1] (17:15 - 17:26)

Yes. It doesn't mean that you don't encounter challenges in your life. But to make them into, if you consider a challenge an obstacle that you need to fight against, that means the ego is there.

[Speaker 2] (17:27 - 17:54)

Right. This is 290. The force behind the ego's wanting creates enemies.

That is to say, reaction in the form of an opposing force equal in intensity. That's what an enemy is. The stronger the ego, the stronger the sense of separateness between people.

The only actions, this is one of my favorite quotes. I love this. The only, see I've underlined it three times.

The only actions that do not cause opposing reactions are those that are aimed at the good of all.

[Speaker 1] (17:55 - 18:18)

Yes. So you no longer separate yourself and say, this is, this is my, you consider in whatever you do, you consider the totality of the whole, not just my little needs, but how do I fit into the totality? And so then, this is not, no longer karmic action which produces suffering.

Right.

[Speaker 2] (18:18 - 18:42)

We're also learning that action, although necessary, is only a secondary factor in manifesting our external reality. The primary factor in creation is consciousness. No matter how active we are, I love this, how much effort we make, our state of consciousness creates our world.

And if there's no change on that inner level, no amount of action will make any difference.

[Speaker 1] (18:43 - 19:06)

Yes. In other words, what you do is always secondary. Who you are is primary.

And that means not who you are in the eyes of the world or who you are in whatever image you might have about yourself, but whether you are connected within yourself with that dimension of being spirit or consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (19:07 - 19:23)

You say it beautifully, 294, it's not what you do but how you do what you do determines whether or not you are fulfilling your destiny. Yes. It's not what you do, but how you do it.

And by that you mean the amount of presence or consciousness you bring to whatever you do.

[Speaker 1] (19:24 - 20:15)

Yes. Another aspect of that is whether whatever you are doing at any given moment, even the most, what the mind would say, insignificant thing, are you doing it in presence or is it just a means to an end because you want to get to some future moment? Right.

Just a simple example you could give, you can go to a restaurant and the way in which the waiter puts the plate on your table can be present and conscious and immediately you would be affected by that. Sometimes it happens that you have a waiter who is conscious and with care and attention he or she puts the plate in front of you. Right.

And you can sense a very different energy from a waiter who is just doing his or her job and he just puts it down. And that's in every aspect. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (20:15 - 20:24)

Going through the toll booth, that's picking up your laundry, that's standing in line for french fries, that's everything. People either bring their presence or they don't.

[Speaker 1] (20:24 - 20:42)

Yes. Yeah. And often it's a useful thing to remember to check inside yourself to see whether you are making whatever you are doing at this moment, whether it is primarily a means to an end because you want to get somewhere else through what you are doing, or whether you are giving it your fullest attention.

[Speaker 2] (20:42 - 21:04)

Well, we're going to get into the three modalities of awakening where you say that unless you are at any given time having acceptance, enjoyment, or enthusiasm for whatever you are doing, you should stop doing it. Yes. Because if you're not accepting the moment, enjoying the moment, or having enthusiasm for the moment, then you are in one way or another causing suffering.

[Speaker 1] (21:05 - 21:22)

Yes. It's a dysfunctional state. You're in a dysfunctional state.

You are not aligned with the present moment. You are not aligned with yourself. You are not aligned with life.

Completely dysfunctional. And then you generate psychic disharmony around you. You make yourself unhappy.

Already you are unhappy.

[Speaker 6] (21:22 - 21:22)

Right.

[Speaker 1] (21:22 - 21:31)

Because you can't accept the present moment. And the unhappiness spreads because when you're unhappy, others around you, you make them unhappy too. It spreads like a disease.

[Speaker 2] (21:32 - 22:03)

Well, I think, you know, as we here are already in Chapter 10, one of the biggest issues that I've heard so many people talk about, and a friend of mine started emailing me saying that she was following the classes and that it's very easy to have this resonate with you. But then when you have to go out into the world and actually deal with people, that it starts to get difficult. And that friend is an actress who played my daughter in the movie Beloved.

Oh. Yes. She's my baby girl.

Kimberly Elise played my baby girl. Hello, Kimberly.

[Speaker 6] (22:04 - 22:04)

Hi.

[Speaker 2] (22:04 - 22:23)

Hi. Who's been reading the book. Kimberly's been reading the book.

And I was trying to email back and forth explaining this in email. And as Eckhart says, emails are, you know, not a full form of communication when you're trying to express these ideas. So go at it, Kimberly.

[Speaker 3] (22:24 - 24:07)

Okay. So, yes, as I was telling Oprah, it's been really exciting and enlightening to discuss in theory all the different concepts and ideas in the book. It's been attainable here in this loving cocoon, which I live in and my book club members live in.

But once you go out into the real world and have real life situations, you're presented with a lot of challenges because not everybody's read the book. Not everybody's on this journey. Not everybody is striving to evolve or have awareness.

A simple example, one of the book club members works for a very egotistical boss and is very sort of pushed and has unrealistic demands put upon her. And she's managed to sort of pull herself above it, become witness to the ego she's dealing with and the ego within herself. And as a consequence, she's been perceived as sort of lax and dispassionate and disengaged in everything that's going around because everybody else is so in the drama.

And she feels her job could be at stake because she's being viewed this way. That's an example. So my question is, if we're in the process of evolving our state of consciousness, moving away from our egos and getting closer to our true selves, how do we manage, how do we manage to maintain this level of elevation when you're forced in the real world to live and work with people who come from a strictly egotistical place and don't understand this awareness level and really can perceive you as being weak?

[Speaker 2] (24:09 - 24:14)

Good. Good question. Good.

Now let's hear what Eckhart has to say.

[Speaker 3] (24:16 - 24:16)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (24:17 - 26:31)

So we are gradually learning to live from a different state of consciousness. Now you cannot expect to be necessarily to be a master when you meet difficult people and already to be fully in that state of presence. It's a gradual process where you bring presence into your life.

And as you invite presence into your life, and at first don't even practice with the difficult boss, but leave him alone for a while. First you invite presence into your life with small things. When

you're at home, one little movement, making tea, opening the curtains as you get up, looking out of the window without any judgment, just perceiving the light, the clouds.

Bring as much as possible presence into your life in simple situations. When you get into your car, you get in, close the door. Be quiet for 20 seconds, 30 seconds.

Feel the inner body. Many opportunities are there whenever you're waiting. I talk about that in both books, I believe.

Whenever you're waiting for something or someone, drop the waiting and be present. Be fully there, fully alert, fully accepting of that moment rather than wanting some other moment. And gradually you grow in presence power, or presence power grows in you.

And as presence power grows in you, you can begin to apply it to slightly challenging situations which normally would have triggered, for example, some slight irritation. And there you can observe, oh, there's the old reaction as you're waiting in line at the supermarket. And you can see the irritation with the cashier or whoever is there ahead of you.

And you can immediately be aware of that and see, oh, what's it? It has no useful function. It does nothing except make me unhappy.

And you can then let go of it and be clear and free and present at that moment.

[Speaker 2] (26:32 - 27:46)

WINFREY Yeah, I think, too, Kim, that one of the things that we all want when you read this and you feel so great, it's like you feel so enthusiastic and you want everybody to get it as you get it. It's like developing a, like developing spiritual muscle. DR. WINFREY It's like developing spiritual muscle. You can't go out and lift, you know, the 50-pound weight unless you have also lifted the 25-pound weight and the 10-pound weight. And so you have to start developing the muscle with things that you are more comfortable with. And once you've developed a strong enough muscle, the bosses become, the unruly bosses become easier to handle.

In the beginning, you just can't say, I'm going to go out, I'm going to apply this principle and expect it to work, because you have to have the inner strength in which to deal with it. And also it comes from a greater awareness, I think, having had unruly bosses in my early years, it comes from a greater awareness of what your real purpose in life is. I remember being in Baltimore in the early days of my career, having a boss who was a complete jerk, who was just a complete jerk.

I'd like to use another word for it, but I'll just leave it.

[Speaker 1] (27:46 - 27:50)

DR. WINFREY Of course, it's not his true self, but it's almost. WINFREY Heavy overlay.

[Speaker 2] (27:50 - 28:32)

WINFREY Having a boss whose true self was love and innocence and had a wonderful

presence, but the- WINFREY Heavy overlay. WINFREY Heavy overlay was the ego self that he showed daily was a complete jerk. Something inside me knew I wasn't going to be here forever, there forever.

WINFREY I knew that I could tolerate it. I could deal with it. I could handle it.

I could, you know, my place in it was not, I knew he ultimately had no power over me, that I needed to do what was necessary for this particular time in my life. But inside myself, I knew trouble don't last always. And I will not, this is not going to be the course of my life.

[Speaker 1] (28:32 - 28:33)

WINFREY This too will pass.

[Speaker 2] (28:33 - 29:06)

WINFREY This too will pass. I knew that this too will pass. And so I could go into the space every day doing what needed to be done, as perhaps maybe your friend needs to do, doing what needs to be done, and could do the thing that everybody else couldn't understand.

I could offer, give that person what they thought they needed. I could give them, I could create the space for them to be and even to show themselves, to be whoever their ego at that particular time, you know, wanted to be. You see what I'm saying?

[Speaker 3] (29:07 - 29:18)

I do. I do. So as you're, as you're at that higher level of awareness, you're able to look at a situation and see it as just a situation, but not your entire life.

[Speaker 2] (29:18 - 29:28)

Not my entire, not your, not your entire life. Because that person, ultimately, I knew I'm going to be here for a time. I need to learn this much here.

And then I'm going to be gone.

[Speaker 3] (29:29 - 29:41)

And do you believe that there are just some people in this lifetime who will not get to this level of awareness? And that you just really have to focus on yourself. Yeah, but that's what I said to you.

[Speaker 2] (29:41 - 29:50)

That's what I was saying to you in the email. That's not your job to worry about what other people are going to do. Your only role is to be, is to concern yourself with yourself.

Isn't that true?

[Speaker 1] (29:50 - 29:51)

Oh, yes.

[Speaker 2] (29:51 - 29:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (29:52 - 29:58)

Yeah. So in one thing, as we said, and Oprah called it spiritual muscle.

[Speaker 6] (29:59 - 29:59)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (29:59 - 30:35)

And I called it growing in presence power. It's the same thing. So presence builds up gradually.

Right. In the meantime, you can still practice, even in difficult situations. It might sometimes work, even if your spiritual muscle is not yet highly developed.

If you can remember just a little pointer, the little phrase, am I able to accept this moment as it is? And if this moment comes in the form of this obnoxious person, then the question is, can I accept this obnoxious person at this moment?

[Speaker 2] (30:35 - 30:37)

Can I accept this obnoxious person at this moment?

[Speaker 1] (30:37 - 30:41)

Because whatever arises in the present moment, can I be the space for this?

[Speaker 2] (30:42 - 30:57)

Yeah. And if you're able to remove your ego from it, if you're able to take your ego out of it, then it becomes just what it is. What you were saying, Kim, it becomes just another situation.

If you can take your ego out of it or your friend take the ego out of it, so it's not personal.

[Speaker 1] (30:57 - 30:58)

No.

[Speaker 2] (30:58 - 31:01)

It's not personal at all. No. Yeah.

That's what I learned how to do.

[Speaker 3] (31:02 - 31:09)

So we can really take these opportunities that are so challenging as little gifts and opportunities to grow ourselves.

[Speaker 2] (31:09 - 31:43)

Not only that, it is the truth. That is the spiritual path. You know, we talked at a previous class about how everybody has their cross to bear.

And the truth is that when you confront an obnoxious boss or in difficult situations, therein lies your opportunity to build a spiritual muscle. To build or create or allow presence to come through in a way that you get to show who you are instead of being worried about what the other person is doing.

[Speaker 1] (31:43 - 32:02)

Yes. So difficult people or ego-controlled people have a very important spiritual function in this world. Eventually, they will become so unhappy that they will also go beyond that.

But in the meantime, they are there as practice material for others.

[Speaker 2] (32:03 - 32:07)

That's right. Because if everything was wonderful all the time, you would have no practice, no way to practice.

[Speaker 1] (32:07 - 32:08)

There would be no growth.

[Speaker 3] (32:09 - 32:10)

Good way to look at it.

[Speaker 2] (32:10 - 32:26)

Talk to you soon. Bye. Bye-bye.

Very nice. Interesting about the practicing of the spiritual muscle. Yes.

Now, notice when I was calling my former boss a jerk, and you said that's not who he is. Do you ever encounter obnoxious people in your life?

[Speaker 1] (32:26 - 32:30)

No, you do. I encounter obnoxious people. It's a question of looking...

[Speaker 2] (32:30 - 32:32)

Do you have only love for them?

[Speaker 1] (32:33 - 32:34)

Not necessarily.

[Speaker 2] (32:34 - 32:35)

Okay, good.

[Speaker 1] (32:35 - 32:35)

No.

[Speaker 2] (32:36 - 32:38)

Okay. But it's a question of what? Did you say?

[Speaker 1] (32:39 - 33:03)

Of whether one is able to look through this overlay of ego or heavy pain body, which can be very strong, whether you're able to go through that. It's very hard to describe this process. When you are not judging the person mentally, not calling him or her anything, you still know that this person is obnoxious.

Yes. You know that.

[Speaker 6] (33:03 - 33:03)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (33:03 - 33:28)

You still know that this person is controlled by the ego. You know it even without formulating a concept in your mind. But you also know that beyond there is a being...

Right. ...that is pure and innocent and as close to God as anybody.

[Speaker 2] (33:28 - 33:29)

As anybody.

[Speaker 1] (33:29 - 33:34)

So... Okay. ...is it possible to look through the ego in others?

[Speaker 2] (33:34 - 33:37)

Yeah, but Eckhart, you still don't have to want to deal with that person.

[Speaker 1] (33:37 - 33:45)

No. You may want to remove yourself. Right.

And if that is possible, then that often is the best thing to do.

[Speaker 2] (33:45 - 33:49)

That's right. Because you can still say, I can bless you in your beingness...

[Speaker 1] (33:49 - 33:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:50 - 33:53)

...but what you're showing me now is not what I want to deal with.

[Speaker 1] (33:53 - 34:29)

Or you can walk out of a job if it's insane. The environment is insane. And the more present you are, the more certain you will be...

About what to do. ...of what to do. Absolutely.

But we talked about this in one of the sessions, the realization of what you have to do comes from a powerful but peaceful place where you're present. That's right. So when you're walking out of the office, you're not walking out in anger when it comes through presence.

You're walking out, you're being... You're peaceful with everybody and say, that's it, I'm walking out of here. That's it.

There's power, but no negativity.

[Speaker 2] (34:29 - 34:30)

Right, I got that.

[Speaker 1] (34:30 - 34:33)

I got that. So that's... it's beautiful when that happens.

[Speaker 2] (34:34 - 34:36)

When you say, I have had enough.

[Speaker 1] (34:36 - 34:36)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:37 - 34:40)

I have had enough. And that comes from your inner purpose...

[Speaker 1] (34:41 - 34:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:41 - 34:43)

...as opposed to your outer.

[Speaker 1] (34:43 - 34:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:43 - 34:44)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (34:44 - 35:05)

Now, there may be other situations when you are forced, for some reason you are forced into... Now, an extreme example is that you're in an elevator and it gets... the elevator gets stuck.

And there you are with an obnoxious person for one hour in the elevator. Or some people are stuck with somebody, for some reason they can't go, leave the situation. You're maybe in a prison cell.

[Speaker 2] (35:05 - 35:08)

Or lots of people are in... they have to keep jobs.

[Speaker 1] (35:08 - 35:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (35:09 - 35:12)

Where they are dealing with bosses who are obnoxious.

[Speaker 1] (35:12 - 35:12)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (35:12 - 35:18)

Yeah, as we just heard Kimberly say. You have to keep a job. You have to earn a living for yourself and your family.

[Speaker 1] (35:18 - 35:27)

Yes. And there's the question of accepting that this is where this person is at without getting into reactivity. And resisting it.

Resisting it. Right. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (35:28 - 35:44)

I did it the right way because I was in that situation for quite a long time and literally would... just accepted it. And I would have friends say, how can you put up with that?

How can you tolerate that? Because I know this too shall pass. And so...

Trouble doesn't last always.

[Speaker 1] (35:45 - 35:46)

Intuitively you did that.

[Speaker 2] (35:46 - 35:59)

Intuitively I knew that I wasn't going to be there forever. Kippy is an American who teaches gifted students at an elementary school on a U.S. Air Force base outside Tokyo, Japan. How do you say hello in Japanese?

Is it konnichiwa?

[Speaker 1] (36:06 - 36:10)

And the same to you. Mushi, mushi. Mushi, mushi.

On the telephone.

[Speaker 2] (36:12 - 36:13)

Hi, Kippy. What is your question?

[Speaker 5] (36:15 - 36:36)

Okay. Eckhart, on page 301 you wrote, enthusiasm means there is a deep enjoyment in what you do plus the added element of a goal or vision that you work toward. My question is, is how can we have goals or visions if we are to always remain in the present?

Good question.

[Speaker 1] (36:37 - 36:38)

Good, yes.

[Speaker 2] (36:38 - 36:39)

Good question.

[Speaker 1] (36:39 - 36:39)

Yes.

[Speaker 5] (36:40 - 36:40)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (36:41 - 39:20)

So the goal or vision is inside you as if it were already a reality. And in fact, on some level, it is a reality inside you already. So a goal that is powerful when you're in touch with your own power is not a goal that you project yourself mentally to and say, I would like to achieve this or that at some future point.

I need that. I want that to complete myself. You're reaching out towards that goal.

You're losing yourself. You're not present. But if you are, if you realize that whatever vision you hold is already a reality inside you, I give an example now of the power of now.

Before I ever wrote the book, I had this vision of that book was already, on some level, already there, had already been written. And so I felt all I'm doing is I'm externalizing what's already there. But I had this strong inner feeling that the book already exists inside me.

I saw it as a reality already. I didn't try to achieve writing a book. The book was already there.

And all then I had to do was be open to this energy movement coming from within to manifest what was already there on a deeper level. And that's why Jesus said, whenever you ask for anything, believe that you already have received it and it will be yours. So if you believe that you already have received it, it means it must already be a reality inside yourself.

So you're not coming from lack or scarcity or neediness because then you're not, there's no power behind your vision or your goal. You're already coming from fullness. So the goal is already a reality inside.

You already feel as if you had it. Right. It's already a reality.

And what you feel about it is the fullness that is already there in the present moment. And then you don't lose yourself. Then you are fully there as you begin to respond to this inner impulse.

You manifest it in your life, in the present moment. So it's not a future thing, really. A powerful goal when you visualize, a powerful goal is you're not visualizing in order to achieve something in the future.

You're visualizing in order to bring something out that's already inside you.

[Speaker 2] (39:21 - 40:00)

Wow. Okay. That's powerful, but I can understand why a lot of people would be confused by it because then how do you ever achieve anything in the future?

Isn't that what you're saying too, Kippy? Right, right. How do you ever achieve anything in the future?

Say, I want to be an actress. There are a lot of people, you know, have day jobs where they really want, I want to be an actress. That's a future goal.

I want to be an actor or an actress, or I want to get a job working for a major corporation. How do you, you know, how can you not hold that as a vision for yourself?

[Speaker 1] (40:01 - 40:36)

You can, but what you're visualizing is not yourself in some future state. The power that is there inside you that will manifest externally in time and in the future is already there. Get in touch with the power.

What would it feel like if you were an actress already successful? What does that feel like inside you? And where does the power come from with which you can make a difference in people's lives when you are doing something like that?

Where does the power reside?

[Speaker 2] (40:36 - 40:45)

Yeah, because you say, instead of saying I want to be a great actress is how do I use this talent to manifest in such a way that causes people to feel a certain way?

[Speaker 1] (40:45 - 41:11)

Yes. Yeah. Yes.

So it's already a reality inside you and then you can take steps towards implementing that, but it comes from fullness rather than neediness. The mistake is not finding the place of power that is in the present moment and believing that something else that is not in the present moment is going to bring you to the place of power. Okay.

It won't.

[Speaker 2] (41:11 - 42:15)

Okay. I just got it, Kippy. I just got it.

I just got it. What he's saying is that whatever goal that you have or vision that you have must come from the place of being or consciousness. And if it comes from a place of being or consciousness and not as an external goal that you have for yourself, I think I'm getting it right, right?

If it comes from being or consciousness, then it comes through you out into the world instead of you reaching out into the world saying, this is what I want for myself. And so all things, and I can use the example of myself, I have always wanted to do exactly what I'm doing here with all of you. I've always felt that deep inside me, this is what I was meant to do.

I was meant to be a teacher. I was meant to use television as a platform for helping people to better know themselves. And knowing that, knowing that deep inside myself is what has helped bring this into fruition.

You see what I'm saying?

[Speaker 5] (42:16 - 42:17)

I do, yes.

[Speaker 2] (42:17 - 42:48)

That it comes from the inner part of you. There's a feeling that comes from the consciousness part of yourself, the being of yourself that says, this is what I now need to do. And that's why you're saying it doesn't matter what you do.

No. It's how you do what you do. And it doesn't matter what you do.

Everything that you do has to be fueled by consciousness or the spirit of God, which is another way of saying it, by consciousness or the spirit of God. Otherwise, it has no real meaning in your life.

[Speaker 1] (42:49 - 42:56)

And the place of power is in the present moment. You can only touch that power in the present moment. That's right.

So if you're not...

[Speaker 2] (42:57 - 43:08)

And so you said last week, it's about this step, the step today that it takes to get to the next step, then the next step, and the next step, and the next step. You don't get there by thinking, let me, you know.

[Speaker 1] (43:08 - 43:36)

And even if you are doing something at the moment that life has given you that doesn't seem to be part of your vision, let's say you are working in a restaurant, but your vision is being a great artist. Right. You still need to honor whatever it is that you are doing at this moment fully and completely, because it may, in some way, it may arise out of that.

That may also be part of it. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (43:36 - 43:44)

Because every step leads you to the direction. It's the means and not the end that counts. The means and not the end.

[Speaker 1] (43:45 - 43:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (43:45 - 43:46)

You follow that, right, Kip?

[Speaker 5] (43:47 - 43:48)

I do. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (43:48 - 44:17)

That's interesting, because everything always comes back to that same point of whatever sense of presence or being, Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, whatever you choose to call it, name, because it doesn't have an ego, so it doesn't get hung up on what it's being called. That when you bring that into your life, it fuels everything that you do. And as you said last week, the evolutionary impulse of the universe rises up to meet you.

[Speaker 1] (44:18 - 44:57)

Yes. And so the question to ask yourself, it's a very simple question, am I okay with the present moment? You need to be deeply okay with the present moment to find the power of the present moment, which is your own power or the power of the universe or the power of God.

Am I okay? If you're not okay with the present moment, let's say you're working in a restaurant, but while you're working in the restaurant, you would rather be somewhere else, you're not empowered. You're only empowered that even while you're working in the restaurant, and for some people, that's their life purpose, to work in a restaurant and to spread that presence through whatever they do, people they meet there, and that's beautiful.

[Speaker 2] (44:57 - 45:20)

And what you're saying in this book is, is that whatever you do, wherever you do, whatever you do, can have deep meaning and purpose to it and for the rest of the world if you bring your presence to it. Yes, yes. And we all have encountered that, the difference between people, whether it's a waiter or the toll booth operator, or you know.

[Speaker 1] (45:21 - 45:22)

Yes, enormous.

[Speaker 2] (45:22 - 46:31)

In every one of our life circumstances. All right, let's talk about, you say that the alignment of your outer purpose with your inner purposes, which we talked about last week, the inner purpose must fuel the outer purpose. Otherwise, ultimately, it's not going to work for us.

But the alignment of our outer purpose with the inner purpose is called awakened doing, and that awakened doing is the next stage in the evolution of consciousness on our planet. There are three modalities of awakened doing, acceptance, enjoyment, and enthusiasm. On page 295, you write, each modality represents a certain vibrational frequency of consciousness.

That is, you need to be vigilant to make sure that one of them operates whenever you are engaged in doing anything at all. This is key, folks. From the most simple task to the most

complex.

If you are not in a state of either acceptance, enjoyment, or enthusiasm, look closely and you will find that you are creating suffering for yourself and others. So let's explain each one of them. You touched on it a little bit earlier, that acceptance does not mean condonement.

It means I accept this moment for what it is.

[Speaker 1] (46:31 - 46:49)

Yes. And so when you're doing something, you'll be amazed if you become aware of this and observe people around you, how many people are constantly in a state of disharmony because they cannot be in either acceptance, enjoyment, or enthusiasm about what they're doing.

[Speaker 2] (46:49 - 47:03)

You use the example in the book of changing a flat tire. Now, you don't have to enjoy changing the flat tire, that you would have reached another level of consciousness where you can enjoy changing it, which I'm sure you could. You maybe could change it with enthusiasm.

[Speaker 1] (47:03 - 47:05)

I'll let you know when it happens.

[Speaker 2] (47:06 - 47:26)

Okay. But so you don't have to enjoy changing the flat tire, but at least to accept the tire is flat, you will have a much better experience rather than cursing the fact that you've had a flat tire, which is what most people do. The first time you get the flat tire, everybody goes, damn, flat tire.

I can't believe it.

[Speaker 1] (47:26 - 47:29)

And even more so if it's at night in the pouring rain.

[Speaker 2] (47:29 - 47:29)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (47:29 - 47:54)

It's never convenient. No. Yeah.

So the question then is you have to check inside to see what is your inner state of consciousness that you're bringing to this action, to whatever you are doing. What is this inner state of consciousness? What state am I in?

And then often you will realize that you are in a state of denial of the present moment. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (47:54 - 47:59)

So you said acceptance, you just said this to Beth, is just saying what is, is.

[Speaker 1] (47:59 - 48:06)

Is. And if this is what I have to do at this moment, then I might as well do it without resistance.

[Speaker 2] (48:06 - 48:13)

And that is the same as if it's a flat tire or if it is as my friend Kimberly was saying earlier with the girl and her boss.

[Speaker 1] (48:13 - 48:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:14 - 48:15)

My boss is obnoxious.

[Speaker 1] (48:15 - 48:16)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:16 - 48:17)

That is what is.

[Speaker 1] (48:17 - 48:17)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:18 - 48:22)

I'm not going to change that. So let me figure out how to deal with that.

[Speaker 1] (48:22 - 48:47)

Yes. And the acceptance really has to be applied only to the present moment. If the boss is there, sitting there, saying whatever he says.

Right. At this moment, am I able to accept this? Am I bringing acceptance to this?

That's right. Now here we are talking more specifically about when you're performing some kind of action. Right.

And what is the question is, what energy flows into the doing?

[Speaker 2] (48:48 - 48:49)

That's right. That's the question.

[Speaker 1] (48:49 - 49:46)

Is it the energy of denial or negativity? And once you have developed a little bit of sensitivity, you can very easily tell by observing other people whether the energy that flows into what they do is contaminated with negativity or whether it's presence or consciousness that flows. Totally qualitative difference is enormous.

I mentioned the waiter as an example. How does he put the plate on the table? Is he just doing a job because he wants to get out of there as soon as possible or just making a living?

Or is he honoring this moment? And by honoring this moment, he's honoring you. He's honoring life.

And something flows into the simple movement of putting a plate on the table, just as one simple example. Right. That changes the entire environment around him too.

Yeah. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (49:46 - 49:55)

And the reason you've come into acceptance again is because of the energy that you're bringing into it. And the next modality for awakening is enjoyment.

[Speaker 1] (49:56 - 49:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (49:56 - 49:58)

That's a notch above acceptance.

[Speaker 1] (49:58 - 50:02)

Yes. Different frequency, vibrational frequency.

[Speaker 2] (50:02 - 50:04)

Because everything is about vibrational frequency.

[Speaker 1] (50:04 - 50:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (50:05 - 50:09)

People are bringing energy to everything that they do.

[Speaker 1] (50:10 - 50:10)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (50:10 - 50:10)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (50:11 - 50:26)

Now, enjoyment is a higher frequency. Right. Some things are easier, of course, to do in the state of enjoyment.

One might almost say you do them naturally in a state of enjoyment. Things that you like doing.

[Speaker 2] (50:26 - 50:36)

Yeah. I love this quote, Eckhart. On 297, you say, on the new earth, enjoyment will replace wanting as the motivating power behind people's actions.

[Speaker 1] (50:37 - 50:37)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (50:37 - 50:38)

When's that going to happen?

[Speaker 1] (50:38 - 50:43)

Well, not in the collective, but it can happen in the individual already now.

[Speaker 2] (50:43 - 50:49)

Where we do things because we enjoy them. And not because you want more and want more and want more.

[Speaker 1] (50:49 - 50:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (50:49 - 50:57)

Because so many people have expressed how you get more things and get more things and you want more things and want more things and that leaves you with an empty space.

[Speaker 1] (50:57 - 51:29)

Yes. Trying to fill your life up with things, eventually you come to an empty space and you feel completely unfulfilled. Right.

And so the wanting is the usual thing that comes out of the egoic state of scarcity or lack, which is always there when the ego predominates. So I need that in order to fulfill myself, in order to find satisfaction. I need to achieve this in order to be fully myself.

This is the underlying assumption.

[Speaker 2] (51:30 - 51:30)

Right. Of wanting.

[Speaker 1] (51:31 - 51:39)

And that is the old energy of wanting. And so you go out and it becomes very stressful because you're trying to arrive at that point.

[Speaker 2] (51:39 - 51:39)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (51:39 - 51:44)

Always trying to get away from this moment because the next one promises greater fulfillment.

[Speaker 2] (51:44 - 51:44)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (51:45 - 51:53)

The next one never comes because when it comes it's the now again, which is a place you want to get away from. Completely insane, but normal.

[Speaker 2] (51:53 - 52:00)

Okay. So getting to the place where you can have enjoyment from things because enjoyment does what?

[Speaker 1] (52:01 - 52:11)

Enjoyment brings an enormous empowerment to what you do and it flows into what you do. And this is the beginning of creativity, which comes out of that.

[Speaker 2] (52:11 - 52:29)

When the creative power of the universe becomes conscious of itself, it manifests as joy. You don't have to wait for something meaningful to come into your life so that you can finally enjoy what you do. There's more meaning in joy than you will ever need.

The waiting to start living syndrome is one of the most common delusions of the unconscious state.

[Speaker 1] (52:30 - 52:41)

That's important because many people are trapped in that delusion. They are waiting for something to come into their lives, which will finally give them joy or a sense of aliveness.

[Speaker 2] (52:41 - 52:54)

The misperception that joy comes from what you do is normal and is always dangerous because it creates the belief that joy is something that can be derived from something else, such as an activity or a thing. Don't people do things that bring them joy?

[Speaker 1] (52:55 - 53:08)

That's what it looks like, but it's the same process that we talked about a little earlier when we talked about manifesting something from within. The joy is there. It comes from the fullness of life that you already sense within you at this moment.

[Speaker 2] (53:09 - 53:47)

The misperception that joy comes from what you do is normal, also dangerous, creates a belief that joy is something that can be derived from something else. You then look to the world to bring you joy, to bring you happiness, but it cannot do that. That is why people live in constant frustration because the world's not giving them what they think they need.

You will only enjoy any activity in which you are fully present, any activity that is not just a means to an end. It isn't the action you perform that you really enjoy, but the deep sense of aliveness that flows into it. That aliveness is one with who you are.

I got that. Yeah. Right.

But is that enjoyment the same as pleasure?

[Speaker 1] (53:48 - 53:55)

No. Pleasure comes from something without outside of you. Okay.

So you derive pleasure from something outside of you.

[Speaker 2] (53:55 - 54:14)

And I ask that because you say this means that when you enjoy doing something, you're really experiencing the joy of being in its dynamic aspect. That's why anything you enjoy doing connects you with the power behind all creation. I read that and I thought, what about people who enjoy gambling or enjoy...

[Speaker 1] (54:14 - 54:15)

These are pleasures.

[Speaker 2] (54:15 - 54:22)

Okay. Sex or enjoy being sadistic or enjoy harming other people.

[Speaker 1] (54:22 - 54:24)

Yes, or enjoy things that...

[Speaker 2] (54:24 - 54:26)

The power of creation isn't behind that.

[Speaker 1] (54:26 - 54:36)

No, we sometimes call that enjoy, but there is no true joy in it. It's being addicted to a pleasure, something outside that feeds the ego or the plain body.

[Speaker 2] (54:36 - 55:05)

And pleasure by the definition means pleasing me. Yes. Which would be ego.

Yes. Got it. Got it.

When you become more awakened, everybody, things begin to flow in your life in a way that they had not before. And that's what's supposed to be happening. These, you know, you talk in the book about, serendipitous encounters.

I don't think you use the word, but things just start happening. They line up.

[Speaker 1] (55:05 - 55:48)

Yes, yes. You have to be there for this to happen. If you're not there, you have to be there in the now so that life can work for you.

You can't, if you deny life by denying the now, life can't work. It's like shutting, closing the shutters. The sun can't come in.

The sun doesn't mind, but the sun, why not open the shutters and let the sun shine in? The strange thing is that it's when you no longer deny the present moment, then not only do you see all the things that are lining up there to support you, it also means more things are coming into your life.

[Speaker 2] (55:48 - 55:49)

Absolutely.

[Speaker 1] (55:49 - 55:50)

To be of assistance.

[Speaker 2] (55:50 - 55:58)

Absolutely. And so that's wonderful once you- The evolutionary impulse of the universe. Yes, yes.

Rises up to me. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (55:59 - 56:21)

It does not mean that you will never again encounter challenges. Right. Or if you want to have a certain course of action, you want to go from here to there, always, of course, being conscious that the step you're taking at this moment is the most important step, but you might still want to go from here to there.

But it does reduce the fear. Oh, yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:21 - 56:22)

It does reduce the fear.

[Speaker 1] (56:22 - 56:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:23 - 56:27)

Because you know, you can always bring your sense of presence to whatever the moment is.

[Speaker 1] (56:27 - 56:27)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:27 - 56:28)

And that you'll be all right.

[Speaker 1] (56:28 - 56:28)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:29 - 56:29)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (56:29 - 57:05)

And as soon as you encounter a challenge, not resist it, but immediately come to an acceptance of the new situation and then see how that- Very often it turns around and becomes actually helpful. Yes. In the same way that a martial arts master always uses the opposing energy.

He never- The martial arts master does not fight against. He uses the opponent's energy and gives into it. And he wins by yielding to the oncoming energy.

[Speaker 2] (57:05 - 57:13)

Knowing how to surrender to the oncoming energy. Yes, absolutely. Well, let's go to the third modality, which is we've talked about acceptance.

[Speaker 1] (57:13 - 57:13)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (57:13 - 57:33)

If you can't bring acceptance, enjoyment or enthusiasm. And enthusiasm, which is what Kipi from Tokyo had brought up earlier, is the higher vibration modality for awakening. That whenever you are enthusiastic, that there is something else that comes into play.

There's an energy field created that's bigger than you are.

[Speaker 1] (57:33 - 57:56)

Yes. It's particularly- It's an energy that is of a creative kind. An energy that creates something, brings something into this world.

I wouldn't say it's necessarily of a higher frequency. It's a more powerful frequency because it's the outgoing movement that is connected, however, with the source.

[Speaker 2] (57:56 - 58:09)

Yeah. And again, we say that that is the kind of enthusiasm that's just not wild, external enthusiasm, but enthusiasm born of the spirit. Enthusiasm born of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (58:09 - 58:44)

There are no clear dividing lines between these three modalities. Sometimes acceptance suddenly shifts into enjoyment. And sometimes enjoyment shifts into enthusiasm.

So let's say you're doing something that before you would have resented and suddenly you're able to realize, okay, there's resentment and denial inside me. Let's see if I can accept that I have to do this right now. And so suddenly you bring acceptance to it.

And as you bring acceptance to it, and you're actually beginning to enjoy what you're doing.

[Speaker 2] (58:44 - 58:47)

Do you ever have problems, Eckhart? Do you have problems?

[Speaker 1] (58:48 - 59:38)

No, I don't create problems. Challenges happen always. You don't get...

Life will always challenge you in one way or another. And that is good. But there's no need to transform the challenges of life into problems by dwelling on things mentally.

If you cannot take any action at this moment to turn things around in your mind, which is where worry comes in, related to... Worry is problem making. It's the mental problem making.

So I don't have problems, not because there are no challenges in my life, because no matter what stage in life you reach, there's always some kind of challenge. Right. Life is designed in that way.

The world is not here to make you conscious. Sorry, the world is not here to make you happy. Right.

It's here to make you conscious.

[Speaker 2] (59:39 - 1:00:03)

And when you bring consciousness into your life, for all of those who have been conflicted over the past weeks about their religious beliefs, when you bring consciousness into your life, what you're really saying is that you're bringing in, allowing the spirit of that which is God to flow through you and be the preeminent force in your life. Isn't that what you're saying?

[Speaker 1] (1:00:03 - 1:00:07)

Yes. Yes. Yes.

It's no longer the little me.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:07 - 1:00:14)

Not the little me. Yeah. You are connecting yourself to the bigger source, to the source of all things.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:14 - 1:00:41)

Yes. And let it then flow through you. And then this is, for example, where creativity comes into your life.

True creativity can only come in when you let that dimension into your life. So the source energy manifests through you. And creativity can start with a little thing, like even a tiny creative thought or some new way of looking at something is already a sign of creativity.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:41 - 1:01:04)

But most important, it's recognizing that when you can be conscious of the consciousness, when you bring the presence of that which is consciousness or the spirit of a higher power or the spirit of God into your life and you allow that to direct your path, that then all things come to you as they should. Yeah. That's how you create the flow.

[Speaker 1] (1:01:05 - 1:01:07)

Yes, that's the flow, entering the flow.

[Speaker 2] (1:01:07 - 1:01:16)

And that is how you say a new species is arising on the planet. It is arising now and we are it. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:01:17 - 1:01:45)

This is such an enormous shift in consciousness that's happening. It's almost, this is why I use

that expression, it's almost as if we were transforming into a new species. For the first time, a conscious species.

It's almost as if humanity was only now beginning to actually wake up.

[Speaker 2] (1:01:45 - 1:01:59)

Yes. I marvel at how you were able to put these sentences together in such a way that they have connected to me and to all of you all around the world. So thank you for this experience.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:00 - 1:02:10)

Thank you. And everybody else, of course, is also that in essence, you are the opening for that dimension to come into this world.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:10 - 1:02:21)

That's right. And anything that we do that is creative or is successful or is good comes from that source flowing through us. It is not of our doing.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:22 - 1:02:22)

No.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:22 - 1:02:47)

But of the greater doing. Yes. Of consciousness.

There's no greater gift than sharing it. That's why I wanted to share it with you all. There's no greater gift than sharing it with somebody that you care about and having their lives also be awakened and transformed by the words that point you in the direction of the experience of awakening.

So thank you all. And again, as Gandhi said, let's all go out in the world and be the change we want to see. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (1:02:48 - 1:03:28)

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Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : Awakening to Your Life's Purpose (Chapter 1) [gid : [//art19-episode-locator/v0/fZvBNB27zvUFC5iE-QNdT6lsCLnQIdtKdYCI8366WSw](https://art19-episode-locator/v0/fZvBNB27zvUFC5iE-QNdT6lsCLnQIdtKdYCI8366WSw)]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 2:25)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Now, in this first class, to kick things off, Eckhart teaches some very practical ways for us to learn how to be more present, because as he says, things, this is his quote, things cannot give you happiness, because happiness comes from a deeper place within you that you can only access in the present moment. I'll tell you, this chapter, I believe, is going to make you want to get outside and see the world through a different lens. I know it did that for me.

I started seeing everything differently. So here we go. Week one, A New Earth.

Of course, I'm honored to introduce the author of this great book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 1] (2:26 - 2:28)

Thank you. Good to be here.

[Speaker 2] (2:28 - 2:52)

And many people are saying that they look at flowers differently now. I can certainly say that I do. And one of the things that you said that struck me when you said that they are representatives of the spiritual realm, and that when you are still, allow yourself to be still with a flower, or a crystal, or a bird, or really anything of nature.

[Speaker 1] (2:52 - 2:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:53 - 2:55)

But you used a flower specifically because?

[Speaker 1] (2:55 - 3:55)

Yes. Because a flower is, nature on the whole is a beautiful access point into inner stillness if you can be there for the present. But a flower is even...

You're saying messengers from another realm. Yes, like messengers. A flower is much more fragile than a plant.

It is more fleeting, ethereal, I think is the word, more ethereal. So it has less density to it than most other things. And because of the lack of density, it's almost as if spirit could flow through it more freely.

So when you contemplate a flower without too much interference of the thinking mind to actually truly look, which is what Jesus said by the way, in churches you hear Jesus saying, look at the lilies of the field. Yes. And so when he said that, he wasn't just saying look at the lilies of the field.

[Speaker 8] (3:55 - 3:56)

Aren't they pretty?

[Speaker 1] (3:56 - 4:32)

Yes. He said, look, you really have to look because there is something that they embody something that you also have, but because of all your anxiety about tomorrow and you're thinking, that's what I'm translating very freely now, what Jesus said. These flowers are not anxious, they are not concerned about tomorrow and see how beautiful they are, how God clothes them in such beauty.

And you can live like that also. So he used this natural realm and flowers to get people in

touch with the dimension of depth within them.

[Speaker 2] (4:33 - 5:38)

Well, what's very interesting to me about all of this is that when I read that the first time, I thought it was a beautiful passage. And then I read it a second time and awakened a little bit more and started to look at nature differently in California. And I always just appreciated the garden.

Aren't they lovely and all the different colors and the roses and all that. And then I decided to move into the garden without naming it. What if I were like a babe?

What if I were a babe learning what a flower was for the first time? What if I went out under the oaks that I love so much, but I didn't know it was an oak. I didn't know what to call it.

That for the first time, and I've loved trees all of my life and the sense of power and stillness they represent. But by not naming those things in nature, that I felt a magical presence. I felt a sense of majesty and power and strength and connection that I'd never felt before.

[Speaker 1] (5:38 - 5:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (5:38 - 5:40)

Because I didn't give it a name.

[Speaker 1] (5:40 - 5:41)

Yes. That's the key.

[Speaker 2] (5:41 - 5:48)

Yes. I didn't give a name or have a reference for everything that a tree is meant in my life. That's right.

Isn't it?

[Speaker 1] (5:48 - 6:08)

That's right. So being present with the perception. And this theme runs, is perhaps the main theme running through the whole book is that state where the compulsive naming of things.

And you start with nature because it's easier to let go of the naming. Later we'll be

talking about that in some future session.

[Speaker 2] (6:08 - 6:09)

Stop labeling people.

[Speaker 1] (6:09 - 6:54)

Yes. That's more difficult because people invite the labels because there's so much mind in everybody and they label you and you label them. So, but with nature, this is the starting point to find a different relationship to nature.

It doesn't mean that you need to forget what you have learned about trees or about flowers when it's necessary. You can get that knowledge and you'd use it. Right.

But not to be totally in the grip of what you have learned of mental labels, of interpreting mentally, but being able to perceive. One could call it, perceive the flower, see it through a background of just stillness. Just stillness.

Which is really consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (6:54 - 7:25)

When you start to walk through a park or walk in your backyard or begin to, and you're right, it's easier with nature than with people. And pretend that you don't know, or just let yourself be in the space without labeling the things. It's just, everything's vibrating and it's like, you know, scintillating.

Everything's exciting. Everything's exciting. A walk through the park becomes exciting and it's the same path you've always taken.

[Speaker 1] (7:25 - 7:47)

Yes. And before, when you were involved in your mind, perhaps you didn't even see it. Never saw it.

I see. Yeah. And so many people are so trapped in this continuous mental noise that absorbs their whole attention all the time.

Every thought absorbs the stream of thinking, absorbs their attention. They don't see that the world around them is vitally alive.

[Speaker 8] (7:47 - 7:47)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (7:48 - 8:10)

So you become, gradually, as people then grow older, the world around them becomes more and more lifeless and dead. Right. Right.

And that happens to them also. And why is that? Because...

That is because you are run by mental abstraction. All the concepts and the thoughts in the head are abstractions.

[Speaker 2] (8:10 - 8:19)

It's not life. So you can't take in the information that's there to be received all around you because you're in your head.

[Speaker 1] (8:19 - 8:21)

You're in your head. You're not present.

[Speaker 2] (8:21 - 8:22)

All right.

[Speaker 1] (8:22 - 8:27)

So you're lost in thought. I could say that the human condition is being lost in thought.

[Speaker 8] (8:28 - 8:28)

Hmm.

[Speaker 1] (8:29 - 8:36)

And people don't... And that, of course, is the famous, what we call the voice in the head. The voice in the head.

Some people have been asking about.

[Speaker 2] (8:36 - 8:38)

Which we'll be talking a lot about the voice in the head.

[Speaker 1] (8:38 - 8:43)

So some people say, what voice in the head? It's that one. It's that one.

[Speaker 2] (8:44 - 8:51)

All right. So Kelly from Alton, Illinois, joins us. Kelly, hi.

Hi. Hi, Oprah. Hi.

[Speaker 3] (8:51 - 8:53)

What's your question? Thank you for having me.

[Speaker 2] (8:53 - 8:55)

Oh, good. Okay. What's your question?

[Speaker 3] (8:55 - 9:26)

Well, my question is regarding religion and spirituality. I had a Catholic upbringing. I married a Catholic, and we're raising our children this way.

In reading books such as Tully's, it's really opened my eyes up to a new way of thinking, a new form of spirituality that doesn't always align with the teachings of Christianity. So my question is to you, Oprah, how have you reconciled these spiritual teachings with your Christian beliefs?

[Speaker 2] (9:26 - 12:55)

Oh, the question's to me. I was resting knowing it was going to be about him. I've reconciled it because I was able to open my mind about the absolute, indescribable hugeness of that which we call God.

I took God out of the box because I grew up in the Baptist church, and there were rules and belief systems and doctrine. And I happened to be sitting in church in my late 20s, and I was going to this church where you had to get there at 8 o'clock in the morning, or you couldn't get a seat, and a very charismatic minister, and everybody was just into the sermon. And this great minister was preaching about how great God was, and how omniscient, and omnipresent, and God is everything.

And then he said, and the Lord thy God is a jealous God. And I was caught up in the rapture of that moment until he said jealous. And something struck me.

And I was like, I think about 27 or 28. I was thinking, God is all. God is omnipresent.

God is all. And God's also jealous. God is jealous of me.

And something about that didn't feel right in my spirit, because I believe that God is love, and that God is in all things. And so that's when the search for something more than doctrine started to stir within me. And I love this quote that Eckhart has.

This is one of my favorite quotes in chapter 1, where he says, man made God in his own image. The eternal, the infinite, and unnameable was reduced to a mental idol that you had to believe in and worship as my God or our God. Now, I think that's very eloquently put by Eckhart Tolle in chapter 1.

But that is exactly what I was feeling when I was sitting in church that Sunday, listening to the preacher. And it's been a journey to get to the place where I understand that what I believe is that Jesus came to show us Christ's consciousness, that Jesus came to show us the way of the heart, and that what Jesus was saying to show us the higher consciousness that we're all talking about here. Jesus came to say, look, I'm going to live in the body, in the human body, and I'm going to show you how it's done.

These are some principles and some laws that you can use to live by to know that way. And when I started to recognize that, that Jesus didn't come in my belief, even as a Christian, I don't believe that Jesus came to start Christianity. So that was also very helpful to me.

There was a wonderful book called Discover the Power Within You by Eric Butterworth, which helped me reconcile the two. So that might be really good for those of you who are Christian and trying to balance the two. What would you say?

Because one of the things that Eckhart says in the beginning of this book on page six is that this book's main purpose is not to add new information or beliefs to your mind or to try to convince you of anything, but to bring about a shift in consciousness, that is to say, to awaken. How do you advise people to reconcile this with their religious beliefs?

[Speaker 1] (12:55 - 14:29)

Well, religion can be an open doorway into spirituality and religion can be a closed door that prevents you from going deeper. I love reading the New Testament and I also read the Old Testament. Sometimes there's some incredible jewels in there.

And when I went through this inner transformation and for the first time, accidentally, I picked up a copy of the New Testament at my mother's place and I started reading and I immediately recognized the deep truth that is there. And I realized the truth that is deeper, that is expressed in what Jesus said, is much deeper than how the church interprets it. There is a depth to it and it reflects your own depth when you read it.

So there's no conflict between this teaching, which is purely spiritual, and any religion, because if you go deep enough into your religion, then you all get to the same place. It's a question of going deeper. So there's no conflict here.

The important thing is that religion doesn't become an ideology. So it's, I believe this, and the moment you say, only my belief or our belief is true, and you deny other people's beliefs, then you've adopted an ideology. And then religion becomes a closed door.

But potentially, religion can also be an open door.

[Speaker 2] (14:30 - 16:22)

Well, let me share this with you too, Kelly. There is another book by a woman named Elizabeth Lesser. It's called The Seeker's Guide, where she talks about the new spirituality versus the old.

So I just wanted to, this is on page 51 and 52 of Elizabeth Lesser's book called The Seeker's Guide. And she talks about old spirituality versus the new spirituality. And she says the old was, the old way is the hierarchy has the authority.

Church authorities tell you how to worship in church and how to behave outside of church. The new spirituality is that you are your own best authority as you work to know and love yourself. You discover how to live a more spiritual life.

The old is God and the path to worship him have already been defined, and all you need to do is follow the directions. The new is being able to listen within for your own definition of spirituality. Your deeper longings are your compass on the search.

And the old says exactly what Eckhart was saying, that there is only one path. It's the right way and all other ways are wrong. And the new spirituality says that many paths lead to spiritual freedom and peace.

You have a rich array of gems from which to draw illumination, the world's religious traditions, mythology, psychology, healing methods, scientific wisdom, your own experience, and that you can begin to string a necklace all your own. Then she lists, you know, other old and new. And so it's really a question of what you were saying to us earlier, that this material strikes a chord within you, something in you opens up and once, you know, feels alive and is awakened to that.

And yet there is the ideology that says what to you? What is the conflict for you?

[Speaker 3] (16:23 - 16:45)

Just thoughts on the afterlife, things like that. In a lot of books, such as Tully's, we get teachings from Buddhism or Hinduism. And those thoughts don't go along with, you know, what I was raised to believe as a Christian.

So that's been the biggest thing that I've struggled with, I think.

[Speaker 2] (16:46 - 17:02)

Well, I am a Christian who believes that there are certainly many more paths to God other than Christianity. So I'm a free-thinking Christian who believes in my way, but I don't believe that it's the only way with 6 billion people here on the planet.

[Speaker 1] (17:03 - 17:15)

Another author who might appeal to you, who uses Christian terminology, but goes very,

very deep using Christian language and Christian teachings, Joel Goldsmith.

[Speaker 2] (17:15 - 17:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (17:16 - 17:18)

So any book... Joel Goldstein? Goldsmith.

[Speaker 2] (17:18 - 17:19)

Oh, Goldsmith.

[Speaker 1] (17:19 - 17:27)

Joel Goldsmith. Any book by Joel Goldsmith, I think you would try that and can see how deep the Christian teaching can be.

[Speaker 2] (17:28 - 17:38)

Okay. Well, thank you very much. Thanks, Kelly.

We've got Erica, who lives on a U.S. military base in Landstuhl, Germany. Hi, Erica.

[Speaker 4] (17:39 - 18:22)

Hi, Oprah. Thank you so much. What is your question or comment to us?

My question is for Mr. Tully. I, too, grew up in the Baptist church, just like Oprah and so many others. And you talk about the voice in my head.

And I had a situation where I no longer attend that church because the behavior didn't line up with the teaching. But on Sundays when I'm at home with my family and we're enjoying a nice day and we decided not to go to church, that voice in my head says things like, you didn't go to church today. That's not how you were raised.

When your mom calls, what are you going to say? Can you help me with that on explaining why we have the voice in the head that says things like that?

[Speaker 1] (18:22 - 18:23)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (18:24 - 18:27)

Yes, he can help you, Erica.

[Speaker 1] (18:29 - 21:10)

Now, the voice, of course, is the conditioned thinking. The voice, what the voice says, is conditioned by your past, by your childhood, by your upbringing, by the surrounding culture. All those things condition your thought processes.

And sometimes it happens when you awaken, maybe not completely, but when the awakening process begins, a lot of the old voices in the head, the old thoughts still come up. They still come up. And the essential thing is to recognize them as conditioned thought processes.

And to see, because the fact that you're asking the question means there's already an awareness there that these are the voices in your head. So you are not totally identified. Because if you were totally identified with the voice, you would say, I feel so terrible.

I really think I should be doing this. But you realize it's the voice in the head that's doing it. And then you can allow it and say, okay, there's an old thought.

And allow it to be there and be the awareness behind the thought. And anybody, this is not just for your particular case. There are many other instances where people have the movement of thought.

Telling them this or that. Interpreting events and people according to the old conditioning. When you meet people, telling you immediately, judging somebody according to your old conditioning with prejudices, with all the old conditioning.

The only way you can gradually go beyond the conditioned thought processes is simply to be there as the witness. You don't need to act on it or say, go away. I don't want to be thinking this.

That doesn't work. It would only give it more energy. That's right.

So again, a vital thing, and this will be going throughout the book and the teaching is, as much as possible, be aware of what your mind is saying. And realize there's only a small part of the consciousness, the totality of consciousness that you are. Many people don't know that yet.

They're totally one with the voice. They are the voice. They're so identified with every thought that comes.

There's no space between them and the thought. So the essential thing is this, realize there's thought processes and here I am as the space for the thought. As the awareness or the space for the thought.

And that the thought is only a part of... a small part. It's the conditioned part of who you are.

[Speaker 2] (21:10 - 21:10)

Who you are.

[Speaker 1] (21:11 - 21:19)

And that's time bound. It's conditioned by the past. There's a more essential part of who you are.

And that is the awareness that knows that there's a voice.

[Speaker 2] (21:19 - 24:09)

The awareness of the thoughts. Yes. Which we're going to get into in further detail.

But also, Erica, let me share this with you. Part of what you and our first caller from Alton, Illinois, was also talking about is trying to reconcile the two. The reason why the voice keeps repeating is because, of course, of what Eckhart is saying, it's conditioned thinking.

But also the guilt is you haven't made a decision for yourself about what is real or true for you. So you're still being led by the conditioned thinking and haven't made a decision. And for me, that came when I was able to do exactly what Eckhart said earlier.

I didn't phrase it the way he did. I asked God to use me. That has been my prayer for many years.

You know, Eckhart says, ask life what is its purpose for you. But I would pray on my knees to God and ask to be used and to be a servant and to allow his spirit to work through me and to not to just be on television, but to be able to use television for a purpose that was greater than my own personality and to collect shoes in my closet. It didn't mean I wanted to give up the shoes, but I would if I had to.

So when I started to ask that question of God, how can I be used? God, how do you want me to live? How would you have me be?

I let go of the guilt of did I make it to church or I didn't make it to church? Because the majesty and power and omniscience of this force that we call God cannot be contained in a church. You're right.

Cannot be contained in a church and does not just want to be served in a church. But if church allows you to feel like you are being of service, then use it that way. But the bigness is what Eckhart was saying in that quote in the book, man-made God in his image, the eternal, the infinite and unnameable force that is God, that is all consciousness, that is universal energy, I don't believe wishes to just be served on Sunday at 11 o'clock service.

And so that's what you're trying to reconcile with yourself, the voice in your head versus

what you really should be doing. That's it. Yeah.

Thank you.

[Speaker 8] (24:09 - 24:10)

That's it.

[Speaker 2] (24:10 - 24:11)

You need to make that decision for yourself.

[Speaker 8] (24:12 - 24:13)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (24:13 - 24:27)

And start asking that question of God. Okay. All right.

I'll do that. Thank you. Thank you, Erika from Lundstuhl, Lundstuhl, Germany.

We have Adam from Redmond, Washington. Hi, Adam.

[Speaker 6] (24:28 - 24:40)

Hi, thank you so much, both of you. Go ahead. Oh, gosh.

What role do you see community or joining with others with the intention of sharing this consciousness playing in the flowering of human consciousness?

[Speaker 1] (24:42 - 25:42)

Good. Good question. Yes, to have a group of people who practice being present, perhaps listen to a spiritual talk or have a little reading, enter stillness, be present is extremely helpful because an energy field is generated when people come together and enter the state of presence together.

And this is happening here also, although people are not physically together. And yet there is an energy field now that is generated all over the planet of presence, a different level of consciousness being generated. So it's extremely helpful to join with others.

Also, it needs to be said not to become dependent on any group. It is still your responsibility to bring this new consciousness into everyday life. Whenever you go about your business in your family.

[Speaker 2] (25:43 - 25:45)

Once you become dependent upon the group, then you've now.

[Speaker 1] (25:46 - 26:24)

Then you always need to go back to the group and you cannot live presence in your daily life. So the important thing, yes, go to the group to generate more presence. And then your responsibility is to live it in your everyday life, where most of the time, perhaps you will not yet be surrounded by people who are present.

You will be surrounded by the old egoic consciousness. So there that is and this is the challenge for everybody now who is awakening that, yes, more and more people are beginning to awaken. And yet there's still vast numbers of people on the planet who are not.

[Speaker 2] (26:24 - 26:28)

This is the arising of a new consciousness that he speaks about, Adam.

[Speaker 6] (26:30 - 26:52)

Well, it certainly is. And it's, you know, it's it's very pleasurable to spend time with others and sharing this consciousness. You know, like you said, when you were under the tree and you felt the you felt that oneness and that majesty.

Well, imagine if you had someone sitting there next to you to share that experience with. I think it makes it even that much more sacred.

[Speaker 2] (26:53 - 26:55)

I did have my two dogs. Luke and Layla were there.

[Speaker 6] (26:56 - 26:57)

Oh, wonderful. Wonderful.

[Speaker 2] (26:59 - 26:59)

Thanks, Adam.

[Speaker 6] (27:00 - 27:01)

It's a sacred moment. Yes, thank you.

[Speaker 2] (27:01 - 27:15)

Thank you, Adam. One of the things that really struck us so was that so many people responded to this. Page 13.

You don't become good by trying to be good. You don't become good by trying to be good.

[Speaker 1] (27:16 - 27:17)

And carry on.

[Speaker 2] (27:18 - 27:18)

OK.

[Speaker 1] (27:19 - 27:20)

There's more to that sentence.

[Speaker 2] (27:20 - 27:37)

Yes, there is. I must go to page 13 to find it. You don't become good by trying to be good, but by finding the goodness that is already within you and allowing that goodness to emerge.

But it can only emerge if something fundamental changes in your state of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (27:38 - 28:33)

So what that means, if nothing changes in your state of consciousness, the ego has many ideas. It says, I want to be a spiritual person. I want to be recognized as a spiritual person.

I want to be more spiritual than all these people. And I'm definitely more spiritual than you. So the ego has all kinds of ideas of what it wants to be, it might even say, yes, I want to be good, because it wants to have a better image of itself.

But on that level, the essential dysfunction of the ego is still operating. So this is why we have the phrase, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Because no matter how good your intentions are, when you're still trapped in the ego, it will always take you into conflict eventually.

Yes. So you must. It's the realm of opposites.

[Speaker 2] (28:34 - 28:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (28:34 - 28:51)

So you have to go deeper beyond the realm of opposites where there's good and bad and reach a place within yourself that is unconditioned, that is what I sometimes call the

formless, formless consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (28:52 - 28:52)

What I call spirit.

[Speaker 1] (28:53 - 30:20)

Expressed beautifully in the Old Testament, in the little saying, be still and know that I am God. And that's in the Old Testament. It contains the entire wisdom of religion in those few words.

Be still, meaning go to that place where the mind is no longer operating, where you are just conscious without thinking. And that is the level where the eternal resides. So the eternal, the formless, the spirit is the essence of every human being.

No matter how insane or conflict ridden they seem to appear on the surface, within every human being, that remains untouched. There's nothing that anybody could have done to you or nothing that you could have done to others to destroy that. It's always there.

It's always there. And that is the grace of being here. And no matter how much madness there has been in your life, that remains untouched.

So it's getting in touch with that deepest place within. And you can only do that by becoming still.

[Speaker 2] (30:20 - 30:57)

The way you begin to feel that is to look at nature. If you were to go out and just be with a tree, and I don't mean hug a tree, we're not talking about now you got to go hug a tree and eat granola. But if you were just to be with anything in nature, I like trees because they're so majestic.

They're so powerful and visual. And if you're with it for a time, you start to sense the presence of it, the stillness of it, and begin to recognize that stillness within yourself.

[Speaker 1] (30:58 - 31:01)

Yes. So what you sense in the tree is also in you.

[Speaker 2] (31:02 - 31:03)

And it's always in the tree.

[Speaker 1] (31:03 - 31:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (31:03 - 31:05)

When the wind is blowing and there's a storm.

[Speaker 1] (31:05 - 31:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (31:06 - 31:06)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (31:06 - 31:18)

And that is also a sacredness that is there in the tree. Our world doesn't know much. It's sacred.

It has become an abstract concept. Nobody seems to know what sacredness is. Until you can feel it.

[Speaker 2] (31:18 - 31:19)

Until you can feel it.

[Speaker 1] (31:19 - 31:36)

When you feel, then you don't need a definition. People ask, please define what sacred is. You don't need a definition of what sacred is, because sacred is the essence of who you are.

So it's sensing that. And you can sense it when you're still enough. You sense it in the tree.

[Speaker 2] (31:36 - 31:41)

Now, isn't it interesting that you first came to recognize this when you were about to kill yourself?

[Speaker 1] (31:41 - 32:02)

Yes. Yes. Sometimes you have to reach a limit.

Humans have to reach a limit. The human species as a whole is reaching that limit. But also on a personal level, sometimes people have to be pushed to the limit.

My ego was so obstinate and my pain body was so strong. I had to be pushed to the limit

before it cracked open.

[Speaker 2] (32:03 - 32:09)

Well, before we go into any further, share that moment that you talk about in the beginning of The Power of Now, when you were about to kill yourself.

[Speaker 1] (32:09 - 33:01)

Yes. Feeling so much pain. Dreadful suffering at night.

I would often wake up in extreme feeling of dread and fear, consumed by dread and fear. The whole world seemed alien. And I saw the thought one night.

I woke up again. The thought came, I can't live with myself any longer. I just can't live with myself any longer.

It's so painful. And that thought repeated itself a few times. And then suddenly something happened inside me.

And I looked at the thought. That was, of course, awareness. I didn't know that at the time what it was.

I became aware of the thought. And I said, I cannot live with myself. That's strange.

So there must be I and there must be myself. Am I one or two? I seem to be two.

Because if I can't live with myself, there must be two of me.

[Speaker 2] (33:01 - 33:09)

Well, and everybody has felt that. Not to kill themselves. But everybody has felt or heard you say to yourself, I said to myself.

[Speaker 1] (33:10 - 33:10)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:10 - 33:11)

I said to myself.

[Speaker 1] (33:11 - 33:38)

Yes. And of course, the entire what we call the voice in the head, we could also call it self-talk, where you talk to yourself. And most people address themselves as you.

So the voice says, you shouldn't have done that. Or you should better. So there's a

constantly there's a separation inside human beings, which is the essence of ego.

Right. That there's a here's an image of who I think I am. And then there's a me.

And they get mixed up together.

[Speaker 2] (33:39 - 33:46)

OK, I'm sorry I interrupted you on that thought, though. But you use getting ready to kill yourself said, I can't live with myself any longer.

[Speaker 1] (33:46 - 33:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:47 - 33:48)

Said that several times in your mind.

[Speaker 1] (33:48 - 34:32)

And then I became aware of the structure of the sentence. And I said, if that's the case, then who is the self that I cannot live with? And who am I?

Wow. And at that moment, a separation happened completely between the essential I, which is the essential consciousness that I am beyond past and future, the eternal stillness. But awake stillness and all my thought processes, which were ego, which was all my thought process, but that created the dreadful suffering.

The mind created entity. The unhappy me was continuously fed by my thinking. It consisted of thinking, a stream of thinking.

[Speaker 2] (34:32 - 34:36)

So did you just decide that night, I guess I'll wait to see if I will kill myself?

[Speaker 1] (34:36 - 34:52)

No, the I kind of it was a kind of spiritual suicide. So the ego died. Instead of me having to jump off a bridge, fortunately, the ego died.

The ego dissolved. The ego as the unobserved mind dissolved.

[Speaker 2] (34:52 - 34:53)

The ego.

[Speaker 1] (34:53 - 34:56)

The false self, the me, the unhappy story.

[Speaker 2] (34:56 - 34:57)

Oh, got it.

[Speaker 1] (34:57 - 35:25)

Me as the unhappy, my identity as me and my unhappy story. Died. Died, dissolved.

Because the I behind it suddenly woke up and said, who is that self that I can't live with? And when you fully look at that self, it actually dissolves because it cannot survive in the light of intense consciousness. And so the next morning I woke up and I didn't know.

I thought that was strange. What happened? Well, there was still I felt myself.

[Speaker 2] (35:25 - 35:25)

Were you drinking?

[Speaker 1] (35:26 - 35:28)

No drinking, no drugs.

[Speaker 2] (35:29 - 35:31)

No, I had a couple of sips or something.

[Speaker 1] (35:32 - 35:47)

Nothing, just it just happened. And the I felt like being drawn into a kind of vortex. And then I went to sleep.

And the last thing I felt, there was still some fear. A voice said, don't resist or resist nothing.

[Speaker 2] (35:48 - 35:49)

Resist nothing.

[Speaker 1] (35:49 - 35:54)

Don't resist. Resist nothing. And so I must have gone to sleep then.

[Speaker 2] (35:54 - 35:55)

You had your first good night's sleep in God.

[Speaker 1] (35:56 - 36:24)

Yes. And the next morning I woke up and looked around and looked. Everything looked so fresh.

All the old furniture, the pencil, everything looked fresh and alive. And I could hear birdsong outside. Wow.

As if I'd never heard it before. Wow. Because the mind had become still.

And there was simply the beautiful perception of everything. The sunlight coming through the curtains. Incredible.

I said, I'd never seen that before.

[Speaker 2] (36:24 - 37:01)

Part of what you're describing is what I came close to that. When I decided to go outside without naming things or labeling things. It's what I was describing earlier.

Walking through the park. Walking around my house, which is like a park. And everything was vibrating.

And it was the colors and everything. The sense perception was very different because I wasn't in my mind thinking about it. I was just there to experience it.

So that's how you get to that place.

[Speaker 1] (37:01 - 38:53)

That's right. So when you're then, you're no longer there when you walk through your garden in that or wherever. And you're not naming every flower.

You're not naming. And also, you're not carrying the burden of a heavy me, a personality, a person with its problems, with its past. You're not thinking about anything.

So you are basically, you've become a conscious presence perceiving the beauty around you. Yeah, it's fascinating. There are many little things you can do to access the power of the present moment.

For example, a very simple thing, ask yourself, am I still breathing? Now, what does that mean? To find out if you're still breathing, your attention needs to move from the thinking into here.

And you suddenly feel the air flowing into your body and out of your body. Yes, I'm breathing. At that moment, you've entered the state of presence.

Even if it's only five seconds, you've entered that. You've become present. In the moment.

In that moment. So another thing I suggest is when you do habitual everyday motions like washing your hands or walking across the room or walking down the stairs or the slightest thing, taking a cup out of the cupboard. Do it consciously.

Do it being present of how you feel. For example, you wash your hands, feel the water, smell the soap, sense perceptions, becoming acutely conscious of sense perceptions, which means looking, hearing, touching. It also brings you into the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (38:53 - 39:26)

How is that going to help me? Because I started doing that going up the stairs. I was going one foot on the stairs.

There's another foot on the stairs. There's another foot. OK, I'm at the top of the stairs now.

I was present walking up the stairs. What does that do for me, Eckhart? Were you present?

Yeah, I think I was. There's a foot on the stairs. I'm just there.

The movement of feeling the motion of my body and how many parts of my body have to move to get me up the stairs. You know, oh, I used my thigh muscle there.

[Speaker 1] (39:26 - 39:26)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (39:26 - 39:28)

I used the back of the leg, my ankles.

[Speaker 1] (39:28 - 39:35)

It was presence. I wasn't sure from the way you said it. I thought you were repeating mentally, here's one step and here's another step.

But you were not.

[Speaker 2] (39:35 - 39:40)

No, I was not. I was feeling every part of what it took to get me up the stairs.

[Speaker 1] (39:40 - 39:40)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (39:41 - 39:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (39:41 - 39:44)

So now the mind says, what's the point in that?

[Speaker 2] (39:44 - 39:48)

Yes, the mind then said, OK, now you were present getting up the stairs.

[Speaker 1] (39:48 - 39:51)

And the mind says, I've got more important things to think about.

[Speaker 2] (39:51 - 39:52)

Yes, it did.

[Speaker 1] (39:53 - 40:12)

The mind said, now what did that do you? Now to the mind, that kind of thing is completely meaningless. Because you're inviting a different state of consciousness into your life, which the mind cannot understand.

But this is how you bring in awareness. This is the end of the old conditioning.

[Speaker 2] (40:12 - 40:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (40:12 - 40:26)

And you bring in a consciousness that is totally fresh and new that comes out of the present moment. And the more you bring those moments of presence into your life, the more your old conditioning becomes eroded gradually.

[Speaker 2] (40:26 - 40:38)

I see. So learning to do it with washing your hands, I just got this. Simple things.

Just learning to do the simple things begins to retrain your mind.

[Speaker 1] (40:38 - 41:00)

Yes. And another thing is most simple things that you do, which actually fill up most person's everyday life. Because the whole day consists of simple things that you have to do.

Right. They're all relatively simple. Right.

And the way most people live is that everything you do is a means to an end. And the end is where you want to get to, the next moment. Right.

[Speaker 2] (41:00 - 41:02)

So you're never thinking about the moment.

[Speaker 1] (41:02 - 41:12)

No. Because you want to get to the next one. You're washing your hand in order to already do that.

While you're making a cup of coffee, we really want to be drinking it.

[Speaker 2] (41:12 - 41:24)

Yeah. Jon Kabat-Zinn says in his book, *Coming to Our Senses*, that most people, every morning, people take a shower or they bathe. But most people are in the shower, but they never actually get to experience a shower because they're thinking they're already in the office.

[Speaker 1] (41:24 - 41:24)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (41:24 - 41:25)

Already in the office.

[Speaker 1] (41:25 - 41:34)

And then everything you do is a means to an end. The end is always the next moment in the future, which never arrives. Because all you ever have in life is the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (41:34 - 41:43)

Present moment. So you're constantly frustrated. Yes.

Creating anxiety for yourself. And stress. Because you can't just be present now.

[Speaker 1] (41:44 - 42:05)

And the power can only flow into your life when you are present completely, totally, with what you're doing now. And this is why most people's lives do not have this power. Because they're always living for the next thing.

So they- Trying to get to. They devalue the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (42:05 - 42:08)

Got it. And so- That's why walking up the stairs, being with the stairs.

[Speaker 1] (42:09 - 42:09)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (42:09 - 42:12)

Teaches you how to be present with other things.

[Speaker 1] (42:12 - 42:27)

Yes. And then gradually, you can be present with- even when you are with other human beings, you can be totally present in whatever work you do. So that the work is not a means to an end.

But you're totally there with what you do. Your attention.

[Speaker 2] (42:27 - 42:31)

Casey in Asheville, North Carolina, has a question also for Eckhart. Casey?

[Speaker 7] (42:32 - 42:55)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Mr. Tully. So my question is this.

When I put out into the universe, when I ask God for things, for hopes and dreams and material things, and a lot of times I get them, those material things, I think they may be coming from the ego. And I just wonder, Mr. Tully, is that wrong?

[Speaker 1] (42:56 - 44:15)

Okay. Well, it's not wrong. You can always easily recognize that something is coming from ego because when you get it, it doesn't satisfy you.

That's always a sign that it's coming from ego. It may satisfy you for a little while, and then something- Oh, I need more. I need something else.

So that's a good learning process. You can manifest things, and if you see, oh, that's not satisfying, that must have been the ego. So there's nothing wrong with manifesting things.

The only illusion would be to expect things to provide some ultimate satisfaction in your life. Things can't do that. The world of form can't ultimately satisfy you.

You can enjoy the world of form, but the true satisfaction doesn't come from there. The

world can't do that. The world can't make you happy.

Things cannot give you happiness because happiness comes from a deeper place within you that you can only access in the present moment. So it's fine to- We live in the world of things. Why not manifest things?

It is part of the game of in this life, the game of form. But if you expect some kind of satisfaction, then you will always be frustrated.

[Speaker 2] (44:15 - 45:02)

WINFREY OVER TO DR. GARRETT-JONES Which is going to be- I think we get into that a lot in Chapter 3. DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes. In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

DR. GARRETT-JONES I love Chapter 2. Not allowing yourself- Oh, love Chapter 2. DR. GARRETT-JONES Oh, so good. Not allowing yourself to be defined by the things. To be in the world and not of it, is how I describe it. To not allow- to have things.

I have lots of beautiful things, and I love beautiful things. And later on, in one of the chapters, he talks about when you say that you're not defined by things, what happens to you if you were to lose any of those things? The depth of your grieving or sorrow or so-called suffering determines how attached you were to those things.

[Speaker 1] (45:02 - 45:02)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes.

[Speaker 2] (45:02 - 45:05)

And for many people- DR. GARRETT-JONES It doesn't matter to me until somebody steals your car.

[Speaker 1] (45:05 - 46:34)

DR. GARRETT-JONES That's right. And for many people, that's a very important lesson. When suddenly they do lose something, it can be a wonderful spiritual lesson, and then you- perhaps you suffer, and then your attachment gets broken, and suddenly you go beyond the attachment.

So there have been people who've lost everything and suddenly become free of the ego because the ego had nothing left to identify with. So this can happen. And another important thing to mention with regard to manifestation is the basis for your life is the present moment.

You need to- first of all, the very basis for everything is to come to an acceptance of this moment as it is. Gratitude is part of that. Of course, we'll be talking about that in more

detail.

So that there's no neediness when you manifest. The neediness that- there's dissatisfaction, for example, in your life. There's dissatisfaction.

That is not a good place, not a good starting point for changing your life. The ego may tell you that, but it isn't. You need to find a place of acceptance, which is- Wow, that's powerful.

DR. GARRETT-JONES No matter where you are, come to terms and become friendly with the present moment. Because if you do not become friendly with the present moment, you're not friendly with life. If you're not- because life is only now.

If you're not friendly with life, life cannot support you.

[Speaker 2] (46:35 - 46:40)

OPRAH WINFREY But did you just say that being dissatisfied is not a good time or place to change?

[Speaker 1] (46:40 - 47:10)

DR. GARRETT-JONES It's first- you can see the totality of the situation. Let's say, I use the example in *The Power of Now*, you're stuck in the mud. DR. GARRETT-JONES You're walking somewhere, and suddenly you get deep into the mud up to your knees. OPRAH WINFREY Right. DR. GARRETT-JONES Now, you wouldn't say, okay, I'm satisfied with this situation. You can't be satisfied with this situation, and you know that you need to get out.

But you say, okay, here I am stuck in the mud, and I need to get out. There is no negative reaction. OPRAH WINFREY Yeah, there's no- DR. GARRETT-JONES Cursing.

[Speaker 8] (47:10 - 47:11)

OPRAH WINFREY Damn this mud!

[Speaker 1] (47:11 - 47:15)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes. OPRAH WINFREY Yeah. DR. GARRETT-JONES Or struggle against. OPRAH WINFREY Yeah. DR. GARRETT-JONES Because if you struggle against, you get in deeper.

[Speaker 2] (47:15 - 47:17)

OPRAH WINFREY You're just going to get more mud on you.

[Speaker 1] (47:23 - 47:32)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Acceptance of what is first. DR. GARRETT-JONES Then action comes out of the acceptance. It no longer comes out of resistance.

[Speaker 6] (47:33 - 47:33)

OPRAH WINFREY Got it.

[Speaker 1] (47:33 - 47:44)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Which is a totally different energy flows into what you do when it comes out of an acceptance of this is what is, and then action happens. That is actually empowered by life itself.

[Speaker 2] (47:46 - 48:16)

OPRAH WINFREY I think that explained it, Casey. DR. GARRETT-JONES Thank you. OPRAH WINFREY I think so, too.

Thank you so much. That's amazing. DR. GARRETT-JONES Thank you so much. I just wanted to go back to spirituality and religion for a few moments and the few moments we have remaining, because I know that's still such a major issue with so many of you. And you say on page 17 that the more you make your thoughts or beliefs into your identity, the more cut off you are from the spiritual dimension within yourself. And you also say on page 18, how spiritual you are has nothing to do with what you believe.

[Speaker 1] (48:16 - 48:16)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:16 - 48:19)

OPRAH WINFREY But everything to do with your state of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (48:19 - 48:58)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes. How spiritual you are means how present are you at this moment. Are you in your thoughts or are you there as the awareness behind your thoughts?

OPRAH WINFREY Which is your spirit. DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes. OPRAH WINFREY Yeah.

DR. GARRETT-JONES Stillness. So often in newspapers and the media, they always ask, well, what do you believe in? That is not an important question, what I believe in.

It's the important question is, are you present at this moment? Not what your belief structures are.

[Speaker 2] (48:58 - 49:04)

OPRAH WINFREY I think people want to know what you believe so that they can label it and decide whether they're going to like you, accept you or not.

[Speaker 1] (49:04 - 49:04)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Yes.

[Speaker 2] (49:04 - 49:04)

OPRAH WINFREY Yes.

[Speaker 1] (49:04 - 49:09)

DR. GARRETT-JONES And they want to know, do you believe the same thing that I believe? Because if you don't, you're my enemy.

[Speaker 2] (49:10 - 49:13)

OPRAH WINFREY Yeah. And you're laughing at that. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (49:13 - 49:15)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Well, it's mad. It's better to laugh at madness.

[Speaker 2] (49:16 - 49:24)

OPRAH WINFREY Yes, yes. I just wanted to mention this person, Maria from Doha, Qatar. I just wanted to say Doha, Qatar.

[Speaker 1] (49:24 - 49:26)

DR. GARRETT-JONES In? OPRAH WINFREY Yes. DR. GARRETT-JONES In what country?

[Speaker 2] (49:27 - 49:27)

OPRAH WINFREY Qatar.

[Speaker 1] (49:27 - 49:28)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Qatar. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (49:29 - 49:44)

OPRAH WINFREY Qatar. Okay. She says, do you think that people are ready and willing to set aside time to be quiet each day?

Is this possible in a global sense? Would anyone who thinks their life is fine be willing to

waste time just sitting in order to raise their consciousness level?

[Speaker 1] (49:44 - 50:04)

DR. GARRETT-JONES Well, better, I would change the question a little bit to make it more vital and more relevant, is ask, am I ready? The only question you really need to answer is, am I ready to do this? DR. GARRETT-JONES You don't need to know whether other people are ready to do it. Only you can have the answer, am I ready to be still?

[Speaker 2] (50:04 - 50:05)

OPRAH WINFREY Very good, Ms. Qatar.

[Speaker 1] (50:06 - 50:25)

Am I ready? DR. GARRETT-JONES That's the vital question. And only you can answer that.

I can't answer that. Are you ready? Or are you so fascinated by the things of this world and your mind that perhaps you need to pursue those things for a few more years until you suffer a bit more, and then you're ready?

[Speaker 2] (50:25 - 50:30)

OPRAH WINFREY What about the people who are struggling, particularly in this first chapter with the book?

[Speaker 1] (50:31 - 51:50)

DR. GARRETT-JONES The first chapter is a little bit more conceptual than the other chapters and less practical. I wanted to give a general context for where the book fits into the general context of the spirituality on the planet, the transformation of consciousness on the planet. So just read through.

There are already very important pointers in the first chapter. If you can see them, we'll run through the whole book, presence and so on. Just carry on, but not only the first chapter.

Anywhere in the book, don't expect to immediately understand everything that's not necessary. And besides, understanding the book is not the essential thing. It's secondary.

The first thing is to experience the truth of it, rather than conceptual understanding the essence of what's in the book, but in any case cannot be understood conceptually. For example, presence. People say, can you explain to me what presence is?

I've already given a few pointers. It's pointless to go beyond that and give further definitions. You can only know what presence is by being present.

You must have at least a glimpse of presence, and this is why it's not understanding that's the essence. So when you don't understand, just read on. It's a process.

Reading this book is a process.

[Speaker 2] (51:50 - 51:59)

Yes. And this book, as you say, again, as I said in the beginning, this isn't about creating more information for you to believe in. No, no.

And you don't want to be anybody's guru.

[Speaker 1] (52:00 - 52:32)

No, no. So it's not through your mind, really, that you can get it. And anybody who finds this book meaningful, and this is the important thing, is already awakening.

If you're not awakening already, this book will be completely meaningless, or any other truly alive spiritual book will be meaningless. If you want to understand it, or you say, there's not much there, I don't know, it doesn't make sense to me. If it does make sense, and especially if you feel something from within responding, and you say, wow, yeah.

[Speaker 2] (52:33 - 52:46)

There are a lot of people who are expressing, they're getting it, they're awakening, they're feeling more alive and excited, and then you want to go share it with somebody else, who perhaps hasn't read the book, doesn't feel the same as you, and then they feel frustrated.

[Speaker 1] (52:47 - 52:47)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (52:47 - 52:52)

And I guess you would say the same thing as you say to the woman in Qatar, just worry about yourself.

[Speaker 1] (52:53 - 52:54)

Yes. And so if other...

[Speaker 2] (52:54 - 52:55)

Concern yourself with yourself.

[Speaker 1] (52:56 - 53:17)

That's right. And if friends or relatives say, it doesn't make sense to me, that's fine. Perhaps in a few years' time, they'll be ready.

We don't know. So it's to accept that it's not yet for everybody. Accept it.

First. Accept. Accept.

Don't demand that, or don't make it into an ideology, and then try to convince people that they must be present.

[Speaker 2] (53:17 - 53:39)

Right. I got it. Before we say goodbye, I want to thank you for being with me, all of you out there, being able to talk with you all and share this kind of information that allows all of us to get closer to who we really are, so that we can do honor our life's purpose and calling here while we're on earth.

Thank you, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (53:39 - 53:40)

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (53:41 - 54:21)

Hey, Supersolars. Looking for a great new read or listen? Well, that's why we're so excited about Oprah's new book, *The Path Made Clear, Discovering Your Life's Direction and Purpose*.

Oprah has collected all of the lessons she's learned from thought leaders like Eckhart Tolle and Brene Brown and innovators like Jay-Z and Lin-Manuel Miranda, who all understand what it means to achieve the life of your dreams. *The Path Made Clear* is available now on Apple Books, Amazon, Audible, and at your local bookstore. It really is a game changer for anyone seeking to discover their true calling and start living it.

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**Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : Breaking Free (Chapter 6) [gid :
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[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 3:25)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Hello everybody and welcome to week six of our New Earth series. I am thrilled about this material. This is a book that's always on my nightstand.

So that's what's so exciting about this material. Eckhart always meets you where you are. So last time he introduced us to the concept of the pain body.

It's an accumulation of all the pain and negativity from our past, the stuff that's really hard to let go of. Simply put, your emotional baggage. According to Eckhart though, the pain body is the source of all the friction in our lives.

We all carry our own to one degree or another. For some people it's stronger than others and we've all met people with some heavy, heavy, heavy pain bodies. But the good news is you can free yourself from the pain body after all.

Chapter six is called Breaking Free. So today we explore what triggers that pain body and how we can begin to free ourselves from its grip. We're also going to look at how the pain body affects children.

How you pass it on. So parents, you don't want to miss this. Let's get to it.

Open up your books. Here's a New Earth chapter six. Welcome again, Eckhart Tolle.

Thank you. Thank you. One of the things that we both look forward to every week is the energy that we feel from all of you out there.

I consider this to be a sacred moment when we can all come together and in community this way and share in this work. So wherever you are right now, I thank you. Eckhart Tolle thanks you for awakening with us.

One of my other favorite books is a book that Eckhart Tolle had written, I don't know how many years ago.

[Speaker 1] (3:25 - 3:26)

A few years ago.

[Speaker 2] (3:27 - 4:19)

And it's a little book with wonderful passages in it. And it's called Stillness Speaks. It really speaks to just on a different level what we've been talking about in New Earth.

It says stillness is your essential nature. What is stillness? The inner space or awareness in which the words on this page are being perceived and become thoughts.

Without that awareness, there would be no perception, no thoughts, no world. You are that awareness disguised as a person. I just love that.

That you are the awareness. That's what we've been saying week after week here, is that you're not your thoughts, you are the awareness of your thoughts disguised as a person.

[Speaker 1] (4:19 - 4:38)

Yes. And you're not your sense perceptions, you are the awareness that makes all sense perception possible. You are not your emotions, you are the awareness that makes all these emotions possible.

So that's the dimension where you are timeless. Everything else is time.

[Speaker 2] (4:39 - 6:55)

So when you lose touch with your inner stillness, you lose touch with yourself. When you lose touch with yourself, you lose yourself in the world. Your innermost sense of self, of who you are, is inseparable from stillness.

This is the I am that is deeper than name and form. You are the awareness disguised as a person. Yes.

All right. That is beautiful. So everybody, we're discussing chapter six, Breaking Free.

Let's start with an overview of what this chapter is really about. In chapter five, as you all know, we met the pain body. And that's, we all know what that is.

That part of us that's addicted to negativity and unhappiness. And Eckhart says that the beginning of freedom from the pain body lies, first of all, in the realization that we all have a pain body. That was chapter five.

We did that last week. Now in chapter six, we're going to explore what triggers the pain body in our everyday lives, and whether it's a situation or certain things other people do or say. Eckhart shows us how that we can actually use those triggers to enter a more heightened state of awareness.

And also, this chapter is about breaking free of the pain body so you don't have to continually carry the past and everything that happened in the past and what people did to you, your story. You can release that. Tonight is about breaking free.

At the beginning of the chapter on page 162, you say that when you disidentify with the pain body, the energy that was trapped in the pain body, you say, then changes itself, its vibrational frequency, and is transmuted into presence. In this way, the pain body becomes fuel for consciousness. This is why many of the wisest, most enlightened men and women on our planet once had a heavy pain body, you say.

So, what I wanted to ask is that so many people today medicate themselves. Any uncomfortable feelings that you have, you go to a psychiatrist or counselor, remember, the first thing they do is prescribe medication for you. Does medication get in the way of using the pain body as fuel for enlightenment?

[Speaker 1] (6:56 - 8:10)

To a large extent, it does. There may be certain extreme cases when medication is necessary. And for people who already are on medication, it's certainly not advisable to go off medication without the advice of a doctor.

So, if you feel that it's time for you to get off, talk to a doctor who is relatively conscious and can help you gradually to get off the medication. So, it's really a question of not giving in to this culturally conditioned behavior that says whenever you feel some discomfort inside yourself, emotional disturbance, immediately to seek some external help in the form of a substance that you ask your doctor to give you. Rather, learn to be with inner discomfort that arises, learn to be with emotional pain that arises.

Rather than wanting to eliminate it, learn to accept it. Acceptance is one of the main focal points of this teaching. Learn to accept whatever emotion arises in you rather than run away from it or wanting to eliminate it.

[Speaker 2] (8:10 - 8:28)

But why, this is the thing, Eckhart, why would I want to accept it? That's why people are medicating themselves. That's why people eat, they gamble, they overwork themselves, they live in denial, they become unconscious because they don't want to deal with the pain.

That's what we're all trying to get away from. It's the pain.

[Speaker 1] (8:28 - 9:42)

Yes. Now, if you medicate it, it doesn't actually go away. It dulls the pain so that you're not conscious of it anymore.

It's still there in the background. It's the same thing for many illnesses. For example, I had a heavy cold a couple of weeks ago.

Yes. I didn't take anything. Some people take things so that the symptoms are suppressed of the cold.

It doesn't suppress the cold. The cold is still there. So why accept it?

It's because it is here at this moment. So it's part of bringing this inner yes to whatever arises in the present moment. It is part of becoming friendly with the present moment, even if on the surface the present moment doesn't look that great.

So we are bringing, and this is where the awareness begins to come into the emotion. If we bring acceptance to whatever we feel at this moment, rather than not wanting to feel it, the equivalent of that would be an external situation that arises, and then I resist it because I don't want this situation to be as it is, but it already is.

[Speaker 2] (9:42 - 9:50)

And then you just cause stress, and that's what you say in this book and also in The Power of Now. Wanting something to be different than it is is what causes stress.

[Speaker 1] (9:50 - 10:06)

And creates further negative emotion. If there's some emotion in you that is not pleasant, and then you don't want to be feeling what you feel, creates on top of the emotion that's already there another negative emotion that wants to deny what's there.

[Speaker 2] (10:06 - 10:21)

So the best thing to do is to feel it, accept it, allow the feeling to do whatever it's going to do to you, make you feel sad or angry or upset or whatever, and then choose to do something about that.

[Speaker 1] (10:21 - 10:32)

Yes. Or not. Yes.

Realize first that you are the awareness for that emotion. You are the space for it. You are the awareness disguised as a person.

You are not the emotion.

[Speaker 2] (10:32 - 10:33)

You are the awareness. Not the emotion. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (10:34 - 11:35)

So then already a shift has happened. Because if you completely identify with the emotion, then the emotion will very quickly rise into your mind, and it will control your thinking. So...

And you will think it's you. Yes. Yeah.

You will think it's you. So you will be identified with the emotion. Let's say it's anger that arises.

Yes. A slight trigger, triggers enormous anger, and immediately you start to think angry thoughts. Correct.

Or if it's sadness or depression, you immediately start to think thoughts that reflect the emotion. And the pain body loves that because the pain body will feed on the energy of your thinking. That's right.

And once you are trapped in the vicious circle between emotion and emotional thinking, when all the self-talk in your head, that everybody experiences most of the time, the self-talk in the head then becomes the voice of the pain body that is talking in your head. And then all your interpretations of other people, of events, will be totally distorted and very negative.

[Speaker 2] (11:36 - 12:05)

Because you say at the bottom of page 162, when you realize that pain bodies unconsciously seek more pain, that is to say, they want something bad to happen, you will understand that many traffic accidents are caused by drivers whose pain bodies are active at the time. When two drivers with active pain bodies arrive at an intersection at the same time, the likelihood of an accident is many times greater than under normal circumstances. So is it always the pain body that attracts accidents and other bad things?

[Speaker 1] (12:05 - 12:17)

No. No. No.

That's just one factor that is often there. But there are many other factors that could attract an accident. Many people are not fully present when they drive.

[Speaker 2] (12:17 - 12:20)

Well, Dave is from Madison, Wisconsin. Dave, thank you for joining us.

[Speaker 4] (12:21 - 12:23)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (12:23 - 12:24)

Hi. Your question is?

[Speaker 4] (12:24 - 12:50)

First off, I just want to say thank you, thank you, thank you to both of you. You are welcome. Welcome.

My question is, when my wife and I have a disagreement, she comes back hours or days later wanting to rehash that disagreement. And she always feels there has to be a wrong or a right to it. How can I get her to live in the present and get the ego out of the way?

[Speaker 1] (12:51 - 13:26)

Now, you need to see what is your role when you have disagreements at home. I assume that your wife has a pain body that becomes active at that time. And when you have disagreements, is your pain body also a contributing factor at home?

Or do you feel that it is just your wife's pain body? In other words, what is your part in the disagreement and in the energy field there?

[Speaker 2] (13:26 - 13:29)

Yeah, how are you playing into the drama of it, Dave?

[Speaker 4] (13:30 - 14:04)

I don't play into the drama of it. And that seems to initially increase it more on her behalf. And then, but lately, after going through the book, I find that I look for a single thing.

Her eyes are beautiful. And I just think of those and I take to a different place inside myself. And it seems that it kind of it just diminishes on her behalf then.

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (14:04 - 14:22)

Now, when you disagree or you have an argument, that means to some extent you must be identified with a mental position. And because if you don't have a mental position that you identify with, there is no argument. Correct.

[Speaker 2] (14:23 - 14:25)

That's why I said, hmm, today.

[Speaker 1] (14:25 - 15:03)

Yes, this is why Oprah was a little bit skeptical when you were talking. So it's perhaps before we talk about your wife, maybe there's something that you can do so that you let go of identification with mental positions when you discuss things. You can still discuss the practicality of certain things that you need to talk about, but don't become identified with a

mental position of rightness that makes you right.

And because that is what the ego thrives on and that is what feeds the pain body.

[Speaker 2] (15:03 - 15:06)

Whenever you identify with anything, it's the ego.

[Speaker 1] (15:06 - 15:38)

Yes, whatever you identify with becomes ego. So perhaps bring more vigilance into, especially when you see a situation is developing that is going to become an argument. Or you can see that the pain body in your wife is becoming active again.

And then it's a time of being particularly alert and vigilant inside yourself so that you do not get drawn into opposing her in any way.

[Speaker 2] (15:39 - 16:10)

And even, Dave, the reason why I said, hmm, and was skeptical because of what Eckhart just said, if I may reiterate, if there's no drama involved at all with you, if you just become peace, then the argument has to dissolve. Like the woman, the story that he tells in the book of the woman who came and was so upset and carrying all the papers and the bills and the so forth. And as he sat there just listening, taking it in, she finally said, this doesn't really matter, does it?

And left and went home. You remember that?

[Speaker 4] (16:11 - 16:11)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (16:11 - 16:50)

And I understand what you're talking about because often when you start reading this material and you start to awaken yourself, we become a little self-righteous about it. So perhaps maybe there's a little bit of that still remaining with you where you want to say, I am so, because I know this happened with Stedman and myself. We're in a discussion and I'm feeling, well, I am very awakened.

I'm a very evolved person. So what you're saying is not going to upset me. But that attitude, the energy of that, my ego and my self-righteousness is what contributed to the drama.

You see what I'm saying? I do. Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (16:51 - 16:51)

I do.

[Speaker 2] (16:51 - 16:59)

Your need to be right or your need to feel like, you know, I'm a little bit more superior because I'm not engaging in this and you are.

[Speaker 1] (16:59 - 17:06)

Yes. Yes. So that's then alertness and vigilance is very important on your part.

[Speaker 2] (17:06 - 17:34)

I think what you just said here is so important for every one of us who's trying to continue to wake into this process, that whenever there's an argument or disagreement, the thing is, is to not, and it's not to ever make it about the other person, even though it seems to be. The question is not, what can I do for my wife, for my partner, for my boss, for my co-worker? But it is what can I do in the situation?

[Speaker 1] (17:35 - 17:36)

Yes. Right. That's all.

[Speaker 2] (17:36 - 17:38)

What is my contribution to it?

[Speaker 1] (17:38 - 17:57)

That's right. That's primary. And then your wife, I don't know whether she has any interest in spiritual teaching or the pain body.

Have you ever mentioned to her the pain body? Not while there's a pain body attack happening, but when the pain body is...

[Speaker 2] (17:57 - 17:59)

Because you said nobody hears you when you say it.

[Speaker 1] (17:59 - 18:30)

No, because when you cannot talk to the pain body about the pain body, that was actually dangerous because the pain body will throw something at you. So does your wife... What?

I love it when you get tickled. Go ahead. I know pain bodies.

So is your wife sometimes relatively more open to this than at other times, or is she always not open to this in your view?

[Speaker 4] (18:31 - 18:51)

She's not open to it to this point. But when I was running off the sheets for this week's class, she picked them up out of the printer and she read them over and she said, hmm, you're talking about me. So maybe that opens the book.

Yes, yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (18:51 - 18:54)

Opens the door. Dave, thanks so much for your question. Thanks so much.

[Speaker 4] (18:54 - 18:56)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (18:56 - 19:08)

Well, many acts of violence, you say on page 163, are committed by normal people who temporarily turn into maniacs. Does this mean that you think people are not responsible for what they do when possessed by the pain body?

[Speaker 1] (19:08 - 20:56)

No, that's what I say. They are not responsible. As we mentioned Jesus on the cross when he said, they know not what they do, meaning they are so unconscious.

They are in the grip of an energy field at which they cannot control. They don't even know that they are in the grip of this energy field because it has taken complete possession of them. So in that sense, I say they are not responsible, which does not mean that they do not suffer the consequences of their actions.

So it almost looks like a little bit of a paradox. Yes, no, they are not responsible. Nevertheless, karmically, they will suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness because human beings are, our purpose is to evolve into conscious beings.

So if we are not evolving into conscious beings, then we suffer. Right. The more close we are to this evolutionary impulse of evolving into conscious being, of the flowering of consciousness, the more close we are to this, the more we suffer.

And so these people who inflict violence on others, who make others suffer, also make themselves suffer. And they suffer the consequences karmically and sometimes the karmic consequences come in the form of the legal system. So they are put away and so that represents for them at that time karma.

And then there's always the possibility when they are in deep suffering because of something that they did in a state of complete unconsciousness, when they then are in deep suffering, perhaps in prison, whatever they may be, there's always the possibility then of awakening through the suffering that they inflicted on themselves, on others also.

[Speaker 2] (20:56 - 21:15)

Because you say on page 164, when you can't stand the endless cycle of suffering anymore, you begin to awaken. So the pain body too has its necessary place in the larger picture. But there are a lot of people who never awaken.

They just, you know, the pain body just, they die with it.

[Speaker 1] (21:15 - 21:38)

Yes, that is true. Then there's always a chance that the unawakened consciousness awakens in some other form, in some other situation. So, but the entire universe is going in the direction of awakening.

So it is, the more we are open to this...

[Speaker 2] (21:38 - 21:39)

Because we have to, or we're going to die.

[Speaker 1] (21:40 - 22:20)

Yes, as the human species now, the impulse, the awakening impulse has been there for a million years, longer. But for us now, we have arrived at this critical point where humanity, if humanity does not embrace this new state of consciousness, the awakened state, then humanity is not going to make it. On a cosmic scale, even that doesn't matter.

And whatever gain there has been achieved in the awakening of conscience on this planet is not going to be lost. There's only one consciousness throughout the entire universe. And that one consciousness is awakening in millions and billions of life.

[Speaker 2] (22:20 - 22:23)

And so if we don't survive as a human species...

[Speaker 1] (22:23 - 22:31)

That's not the greatest tragedy either. In relatively speaking, it is tragic. But in absolute terms, that's fine too.

[Speaker 2] (22:32 - 22:34)

Yeah, and it's really, it's our decision.

[Speaker 1] (22:34 - 22:50)

Yes, yes. The fact that we are here at this very moment engaged in this work is a very good sign. It's a sign.

Because here, at least we know that right now, here, the awakening is happening.

[Speaker 2] (22:51 - 22:57)

Yeah, for the hundreds of thousands of people who are joining us around the world. Yes. Danielle, who's joining us now from Ireland.

Hi, Danielle.

[Speaker 5] (22:58 - 22:59)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Akash.

[Speaker 2] (22:59 - 22:59)

Hi.

[Speaker 5] (23:00 - 23:24)

My question's about ego, and I'm just going to read it out. And I've been practicing trying to stay in the present moment for over three years now, but I've come to some sort of block because my ego keeps on telling me, if you get rid of your ego, you will lose the world as you know it. You will lose your relationships with the friends you've built up for years, and you want to give up your career you've worked so hard for, and you'll be isolated from the rest of society because they are all living in ego.

How can I overcome this?

[Speaker 1] (23:26 - 25:07)

Thank you. Excellent question. Now, as you may have noticed, these are thoughts that arise in your mind.

These thoughts that arise in your mind are telling you something. Now, what these thoughts are saying may be very far from the truth. What the thought that if you awaken, if you become really present, you're going to lose your friends, life is not going to be fun anymore.

You have to see, is that the truth, or are these just thoughts that my egoic mind is producing in order to stop me from being present? Do I believe in those thoughts, or do I believe in first-hand evidence that I have? Because if you've been practicing being present, then you realize it's actually quite joyful to be fully open to the present moment.

It doesn't take away from the fun of being alive. It actually makes you more intensely alive when you are fully present in the now, rather than always looking to some next moment that's going to be better than this one. This is how most of the world lives.

So, I'm sure you've already had glimpses, or more than glimpses, of how the quality of your life actually becomes enhanced through being fully present to life now, because life is now. So, and your mind is, please, a question?

[Speaker 5] (25:07 - 25:22)

Oh no, I definitely have, but I think it's just the ego keeps on sweeping in, or else you'll be in a situation where your friends expect you to act the same way that you've always acted, like in ego. Like your friendship, a lot of friendships are kind of bound through ego.

[Speaker 1] (25:22 - 25:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 5] (25:22 - 25:33)

You know, it's your personality, and you'll try and be in the present moment, and then they'll be like, come on, come on, you know, let's go and do something, which is obviously trying to escape from the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (25:33 - 26:07)

But isn't it true, Danielle, when you come to the state where you feel more alive, and awakened, and willing to be more present with yourself, that that means you might have to let go of some of the things that used to bring you a false sense of happiness. That maybe the same people you used to hang around with and do things with, who are not ready to follow your path, not willing to be a part of some of the things that you now recognize that matter, maybe it means letting some of those friends go. That's the whole point.

[Speaker 1] (26:08 - 26:54)

Maybe just a comment on this. Usually what happens when people become more present, some of their friends are actually drawn into that also, because whatever state you're in will affect the people around you. So usually it happens that some of your friends will actually join you and also grow in presence and awaken, and others may drop away who are not ready yet.

That is usually the case. And your career actually can only improve because the quality of anything that you do in full presence is so much greater, and there's so much power available to you that is not there when you're always looking to some...

[Speaker 2] (26:55 - 27:10)

If you're on track, I used to run track, and if you just take the moment to look back and see where the other guy is, that energy is so draining and causes you to lose your own footing and lose your own concentration and focus. So that's what you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (27:10 - 27:18)

Yes, and that's also put this into this sense that you're competing against others as part of the ego energy. That's right. And that also takes power away.

[Speaker 2] (27:18 - 27:21)

That's right. Instead of just run the race, run your own race.

[Speaker 1] (27:21 - 27:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (27:22 - 27:28)

Now, what's the best way for us to sense the pain body? It's very... Thank you so much, Danielle, joining us from Dublin.

Thanks.

[Speaker 5] (27:28 - 27:29)

Bye.

[Speaker 2] (27:29 - 28:00)

Thank you. Bye. Thank you.

It's very easy for all of us to spot the pain body in other people, and I've actually heard the word come up many times this week. Ooh, that was his pain body. That was his pain body.

So thanks for introducing it to our culture. So it's easy to see it in other people. What's the best way, number one, to spot it in yourself, and how do you stop ourselves from acting out when we're in its grip?

Are there simple, you know, exercises or something we can do to break the grip when you feel yourself going there?

[Speaker 1] (28:00 - 28:24)

Yes. So the important thing is to catch it as it first arises, in the first, because before it takes over your mind, when it's there as an emotion, and usually it's the pain body when the emotional reaction is out of proportion to the triggering event. So a relatively minor thing triggers an enormous amount of unhappiness in whatever form.

[Speaker 2] (28:24 - 28:26)

That's right. A small thing happens and you flare up.

[Speaker 1] (28:26 - 30:47)

Yes. Yeah. Yes.

And so then, after a while, you realize the kind of situation that triggers your pain body, and then you can be actually more vigilant when such a situation happens. And you can see a very important thing is to be able to have some attention inside your body. If you're able to bring consciousness into the body, you can more easily feel an arising emotion inside you, whether it's a very heavy emotion of deep sadness, or whether it's a fiery emotion of anger, or whatever it is, or the emotion of intense fear, that contraction.

Then you can... There are so many people these days who are completely out of touch with their emotions because they live only in the head. Yeah.

So being able to feel an emotion as it arises, and then recognizing it as the beginning of the pain body, my pain body. And as long as you know this is the pain body, you are not identified with it, because the knowing is the awareness. So if you can catch it early on, and then it may still grow, suddenly the fear may become very intense, or the anger, or whatever form the pain body takes, but you will be there as the awareness in the background while it happens.

And one thing that then doesn't happen is that the pain body cannot control your thinking, because you're shining the light of consciousness on it. It cannot then creep into your mind and suddenly make your mind think what it wants to think. So remain there as the awareness for it, and say, oh, there's the pain body.

Then it cannot renew itself, and it also cannot control your behavior, your actions. All it is that you have contained it, not through holding it down, but you have contained it there through your presence. Okay.

And then it can't renew itself in that situation. So suddenly it comes up, but it cannot renew itself, and then it will subside again. But the pain body being very clever, it will then wait for a more suitable opportunity when you are less conscious than at that moment, and then it will come up again.

It will try again. And for example...

[Speaker 2] (30:47 - 30:48)

It's like you're always being tested.

[Speaker 1] (30:49 - 31:02)

Yes. The pain body is like a little wild animal or something. It's always there in the background saying, okay, am I going to come out now, or is the situation not right?

He's too conscious.

[Speaker 2] (31:02 - 31:05)

Is the pain body also your ego, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (31:05 - 31:22)

The pain body is the emotional aspect of ego. So when you identify with the pain body, it becomes part of the ego, because whatever you identify with becomes part of the ego. When you don't identify with it, it's no longer part of the ego.

[Speaker 2] (31:23 - 31:25)

All right, because what you identify with is the ego.

[Speaker 1] (31:25 - 31:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (31:25 - 31:46)

I like this question from Lorraine from Vancouver, British Columbia, who writes, I attract negativity. It seems that my whole world is one big fight. I just want people to stop instigating fights with me.

I don't deliberately go out and begin conflict, but it comes to me. I hate it. I just want peace.

What's the problem? Isn't that interesting?

[Speaker 1] (31:46 - 32:20)

Yes. Yes. Now, this is whatever you experience repeatedly and frequently externally is a reflection of your inner state.

So you attract certain things into your life that reflect your state of consciousness. So for Lorraine, it's very important to become much more aware of whatever state she is in at any given moment. Become more aware of what emotion she is feeling at any given moment.

[Speaker 2] (32:20 - 32:23)

Because Lorraine could not be attracting fights and conflict.

[Speaker 1] (32:23 - 32:23)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (32:23 - 32:25)

Unless she was emanating that energy.

[Speaker 1] (32:26 - 32:26)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (32:26 - 32:45)

And you say on 162, every human being emanates an energy field that corresponds to his or her inner state. Most people can sense it, although they may feel someone else's energy emanation only subliminally. That is to say, they don't know that they sense it, yet it determines to a large extent how they feel about and react to that person.

[Speaker 1] (32:45 - 33:19)

Yes. Yeah. So there are two aspects to your inner state.

There's the emotional aspect to your inner state. What is the energy of the emotion that you feel? And there's a mental aspect.

What kinds of thoughts is your mind producing at this moment? Is your mind producing negative thoughts? What kind of thoughts?

So you need to be there as the awareness. Become aware of what is it that I feel right now? What is my state at this moment?

That's a good question to ask yourself. What's my inner state at this moment?

[Speaker 2] (33:19 - 33:21)

At the moment that somebody instigates to fight with her?

[Speaker 1] (33:22 - 33:22)

No.

[Speaker 2] (33:23 - 33:23)

No.

[Speaker 1] (33:23 - 33:42)

Normal moments when you're not being challenged. Okay. Because all these accumulate, your normal state of consciousness eventually produces some external event.

So as much as possible and in any situation, it's always more important what your inner state of consciousness is than the external situation.

[Speaker 2] (33:42 - 33:42)

Got it.

[Speaker 1] (33:43 - 34:11)

The external situation is always secondary. So what am I feeling now and what am I thinking now? These are the important questions.

So become an alertness then arises. You become suddenly realize, what's my mind saying? Most of the day, what kind of thoughts is my mind producing?

How many negative thoughts do I have every hour, every minute? You become aware particularly of, because the ego loves negative thinking.

[Speaker 2] (34:11 - 34:32)

And so what you're saying then, it would be impossible for Lorraine to be a peaceful person, to say, she says here, I just want peace. What's the problem? It would be impossible to just be a peaceful person, minding your own business, having peaceful, loving thoughts, and people want to pick a fight with you all the time.

[Speaker 1] (34:32 - 35:13)

Yes, that would not be possible. So there's something in her that she needs to become aware of. And that's not her true self.

It's a form of conditioning. Her true self is the awareness, which is already perfect. It's fine.

There's nothing wrong with who she is in her essence. Be vigilant as much as possible. Have maybe put little signs at home, little reminders, so that you remember to be conscious of

what's going on inside me.

What's going on inside me? Very important question.

[Speaker 2] (35:13 - 35:15)

What's going on inside me?

[Speaker 1] (35:15 - 35:17)

What thoughts is my mind thinking?

[Speaker 2] (35:18 - 35:18)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (35:18 - 35:20)

What is it that I'm feeling right now?

[Speaker 2] (35:20 - 36:27)

I wanted to go back to page 162 again, where you say, every human being emanates an energy field that corresponds to his or her inner state. And most people can sense it, although they may feel somebody else's energy emanation only subliminally. That is to say, they don't know that they sense it, yet it determines to a large extent how they feel about and react to that person.

I had an encounter with somebody recently where their energy thing was so strong, I walked into the room and felt it so strong, I had to remove myself from the room. Yes. Yeah.

Yes. Some people are most clearly aware of it when they first meet someone, even before any words are exchanged. That's what had happened there.

A little later, however, I love this part. A little later, however, words take over the relationship and with words come the roles that most people play. Attention then moves to the realm of mind and the ability to sense the other person's energy field becomes greatly diminished.

Nevertheless, it is still felt on an unconscious level. And that's why kids can sense it. Little kids can sense it because they don't have the words or the language.

Isn't that true?

[Speaker 1] (36:27 - 36:41)

Yes. And animals can sense it. And animals can sense it too.

Very acutely, because they don't have the conceptual mental realm, so they can feel much more acutely a human energy field.

[Speaker 2] (36:41 - 36:52)

That's right. And after they're introduced to you, your title means nothing to them. Yes.

Your title or your position or your label, the role that you're playing means nothing to them.

[Speaker 1] (36:52 - 36:52)

No.

[Speaker 2] (36:52 - 37:32)

So once they sniff you and they don't like you, they don't like you. Well, on page 170, you talk about children and you say, suppressed pain bodies are extremely toxic, even more so than openly active ones. And that psychic toxicity is absorbed by the children and contributes to the development of their own pain bodies.

So people who are, I think about this all the time, arguing in their families. When you argue in front of your children, I remember this, the little girl said, when my mommy and daddy argue, I go and hide under the covers. When you argue in front of your children, you are creating and reinforcing their pain bodies.

[Speaker 1] (37:32 - 37:48)

Yes. I did that as a child. I was always trying to hide from my parents' pain body, which was there a lot of the time.

Active. So that's one way is when there's an active confrontation and the parents having a confrontation with their mutual pain bodies.

[Speaker 2] (37:48 - 37:52)

It shocked us when you said you started thinking of killing yourself when you were at a very young age, nine or 10.

[Speaker 1] (37:52 - 39:01)

Yes. Because of your parents. Yes.

That was the general environment that I was in. I perceived it as extremely unpleasant. That was the environment of my parents.

Not that they were not loving parents, but they both had heavy pain bodies. I loved them, but I didn't know at the time why that was continuous conflict. I just knew it was dreadful to be around them.

And of course, I was also unhappy at school because I never liked having to study things that I wasn't interested in. It wasn't done in an interesting way. So, yes.

So the children then absorb. One way they absorb the pain body from their parents is when there's open conflict between the parents' pain bodies. But another way is also when some parents say, we mustn't fight in front of the children.

And nevertheless, there's an intense emotional negativity. They may not be saying anything, but there's an emanation of intense negativity in the parents.

[Speaker 2] (39:01 - 39:24)

That's right. I know a couple stayed together 24 years in order until the last child was grown and had gone to college. All the children are completely messed up.

One problem after another problem. Drugs and drinking and all kinds of problems because the children stayed in that house and absorbed all the energy that was in that house.

[Speaker 1] (39:24 - 39:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (39:25 - 39:25)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (39:26 - 39:50)

And sometimes it's the case if the parents repress that because they don't want to fight in front of the children or they may have an image of themselves as religious and they mustn't. That's right. And so they are not even admitting to themselves, perhaps, that there's intense negativity.

And then the children grow up in that. And sometimes it's then the children who are forced to act it out in the world. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (39:51 - 40:20)

And the interesting about that, when you try to repress it, when you're not fully realizing the truth of who you are and you say the truth of who you are will set you free, when you allow the repressed bad energy to go on in the household, the energy is still there. It goes back to what I was saying on page 162. The energy is always there.

And children more so than even adults, children who don't have the language for it, pick up on the energy.

[Speaker 1] (40:20 - 40:21)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (40:21 - 40:25)

And often blame themselves because they don't have the language to explain.

[Speaker 1] (40:25 - 40:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (40:25 - 40:35)

Okay. So we'll go to a caller on this topic from Melbourne, Australia. Hello.

She has a 10-year-old daughter. Her name is Wendy. Wendy, hi.

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Echard.

[Speaker 1] (40:35 - 40:35)

Hi.

[Speaker 3] (40:36 - 41:23)

I have a question. Echard, on page 178, you state that someone who in childhood was neglected or abandoned by one or both parents will likely develop a pain body that becomes triggered in any situation that resonates even remotely with their primordial pain of abandonment. So I see this pain in my 10-year-old daughter whose father no longer sees her and hasn't really had much of a relationship with her.

And my question is, how do I help her through her feelings of abandonment? And how do I guide her through people-pleasing behavior? Because I noticed she has a strong tendency to people-please just to be accepted or liked.

I would really love some help on this one as I'm often at a loss on how to help her through it.

[Speaker 1] (41:23 - 41:41)

Can you give an example of how this, what you see as a sense of abandonment, how it manifests in her now? Can you give a situation where this happens? How does she behave in such a situation?

[Speaker 3] (41:42 - 42:21)

Well, often there's been occasions when they have little parties at school and children get invited. And she's one of the kids that's excluded because obviously not everyone gets invited to everyone's birthday party. She's so traumatized by it.

She cries and she doesn't understand. And she comes and she says they don't like her or they don't love her. And then she'll try to often buy the friendship.

She'll take things to them, you know, take gifts or take Easter eggs lately and things like that. And I just think, oh, how do I get her through this? She wants to be liked all the time.

She wants approval. So your child- It's a case of intense tears and trauma.

[Speaker 1] (42:21 - 42:24)

She is now 10 years old?

[Speaker 3] (42:24 - 42:25)

10 years old, yes.

[Speaker 1] (42:25 - 43:09)

Yes. Perhaps you can gradually over the next few years explain to her that she cannot be liked by everybody. Nobody is liked by everybody.

I think if you explain it gently, she will begin to understand that some, it is impossible in this world to be liked and accepted by everybody. And it is not necessary to be liked and accepted by everybody. And especially if you do things that are of any significance in this world, as when she grows up, the more significant things you do in this world, the more you will find there are certain people who don't like what you do.

[Speaker 2] (43:09 - 43:09)

Correct.

[Speaker 1] (43:09 - 43:18)

And even Oprah has people who don't like what she does. I don't know why, but the- I don't either. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (43:19 - 44:04)

Yes. And the more successful you become, the more people you have who don't like what you do. So you have a, and I used to be, listen, as you're describing your daughter, I used to be this little 10 year old girl who had such a desire to please.

I was always taking all of my notebook paper and giving it to everybody else, whatever I had. Even in college, nobody liked me. So I would spend all my money because I was working in TV from the time I was a sophomore in college.

And everybody else was jealous of me for having a job and, you know, and having a job on TV. And so I would take my money and buy pizzas for everybody and try to make everybody like me. And, you know, listen, I hope you, I was 40 something before I figured it out.

[Speaker 1] (44:04 - 44:20)

So I hope your daughter gets it before then. I think some gentle explanations, just a little bit here and there. Now she's 10.

And then over the next few years, the behavior will continue for a while. You cannot just undo old conditioning in another person.

[Speaker 2] (44:20 - 44:28)

Yeah. The pain body is I was not wanted by my father. That's what the 10 year old is feeling.

I was not wanted by my father.

[Speaker 1] (44:28 - 45:33)

Yes. Yes. And the pain body, if your daughter gets taken over by intense negative feelings that are out of proportion to the triggering event, which is a sign that this is the pain body, if this happens and when this happens after, I'll describe it in a new earth, after a pain body episode is over, the next day, for example, you talk to what your daughter felt at that time.

Yesterday, when you behaved in such a way, when you did this, when you said that, what did it feel like? Ask her questions about, so that she begins to put attention on her own emotions and she can detect them. Ask questions about, after a pain body episode in your daughter, ask her what it feels like so that the awareness grows in her of this.

And next time, when it happens again, say, oh, there's the, that old thing has come back. She might even, you may even encourage her to give it a name, the pain body.

[Speaker 3] (45:33 - 45:33)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (45:34 - 45:52)

And then she can identify it when it happens again. So gradually the child can be, instead of at the mercy of these arising emotions, the child can already learn at an early age to be there as the awareness of the emotion, rather than to be taken over by the emotion.

[Speaker 2] (45:53 - 45:57)

Actually, I think children can learn this a lot easier than adults can, because we're so overly conditioned.

[Speaker 1] (45:57 - 46:03)

Yes. And that should be the, one of the main things that children learn at school, but so far that's not happening.

[Speaker 2] (46:03 - 47:03)

Right. And also, Wendy, I might suggest this, you know, I think one of the things that would have helped me a lot, and I found this with my girls in Africa, who come from really disadvantaged backgrounds. They're disadvantaged.

And one of the things I want to teach them is a life of service. You always feel better about your life when you can be of service to someone else's. And so if your daughter, even at 10, is exposed to children who are less fortunate than she is, children who are orphaned or abandoned or, you know, in poverty, I don't know what the situation is in Melbourne, but children who have less than she does, and she is able to see that her situation really isn't so bad, and allowed to feel a sense of gratitude for who she is and where she is and what she has, and yet also empathy and compassion for people who have less than she does. I think that that will also, even at 10 years old, begin to offer some perspective for her.

[Speaker 1] (47:03 - 47:04)

Yes, absolutely.

[Speaker 2] (47:04 - 47:04)

Yes, I agree.

[Speaker 1] (47:05 - 47:05)

Absolutely.

[Speaker 2] (47:05 - 47:09)

Thank you so much for your call. Thank you very much. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (47:09 - 47:10)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (47:10 - 47:19)

So, breaking free, how do we do it? You say, how long does it take to become free of the pain body on page 183? Tell us how long.

[Speaker 1] (47:21 - 47:47)

The important question, as I say, is not how long it takes to become free of the pain body, but how long does it take for me to stop identifying with the pain body. That's because it's more important to stop identifying with it, because in one sense, you're already free. The pain body may still be there in you for a while, but when you stop identifying with it, that's freedom already.

[Speaker 2] (47:47 - 47:59)

You say the answer is, of course, that it depends both on the density of an individual's pain body, some are more dense than others, as well as the degree or intensity of that individual's arising presence.

[Speaker 1] (47:59 - 48:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:00 - 48:19)

So, the more you're able to bring that sense of awareness, or as I said in the beginning, that you, you who is disguised as awareness, that awareness is you disguised as a person, the more you can be present with that, the more it dissipates. It doesn't happen instantly.

[Speaker 1] (48:19 - 48:55)

No, but every time you disidentify, every time you are there as the awareness, the energy of the pain body already diminishes. So, every time there's a little bit less of it, and it's the, what happens to the energy? It's all, energy is all one.

There's only one energy, but it appears in different frequencies, and the pain body energy has a certain frequency. It's contained, it's rigid, it's tight, and it becomes freed, and it contributes to the arising awareness.

[Speaker 2] (48:56 - 49:00)

And you say, but it's not the pain body, but identification with it that causes the suffering.

[Speaker 1] (49:00 - 49:18)

That's right. The pain body itself is only- Has no power over it. No, it's not suffering anymore when you don't identify with it.

Then it's only an unpleasant feeling inside you. You can hardly call it suffering, but it's suffering when you become it, or it becomes you. That's suffering.

[Speaker 2] (49:19 - 49:36)

It's not the pain body, but identification with the pain body that forces you to relive the past again and again and again, and keeps you in a state of unconsciousness. I'm on page 183, everybody. So, a more important question to ask would be, how long does it take to become free of identification?

[Speaker 1] (49:37 - 50:14)

Yes, that's the key. And the answer to that, of course, is it doesn't really take any time, because all it requires you is to be aware at this moment as it arises, in the moment it arises, to see it and recognize it. Be the awareness for it.

Be the space for it, is another word, another expression we can use. Are you able to be the awareness for the pain body, to be the space for the pain body and say, oh, there it is? That means you've broken the identification.

All it requires is for you to be present in the now as the awareness.

[Speaker 2] (50:15 - 50:25)

And to remember that the past, no matter what it is, no matter how awful it was, how horrifying, how much suffering, the past has no power over the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (50:26 - 50:48)

Because what arises out of the present moment is the dimension of consciousness that we call presence or awareness. It's a dimension that was already there in you always, but had been covered up by density of emotion and density of conditioned mind structures, thinking.

[Speaker 2] (50:48 - 50:51)

And the way you get to that is to bring yourself back to the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (50:52 - 51:40)

Get still. Yes. Get still.

Get still. And then that arises, that dimension that then arises is, we could call it, goes beyond who you are as a person. It is transpersonal.

It is a transpersonal dimension in you. And that's the only thing that can free you from the purely personal realm, which has its place, but is very limited. And it's the only thing that can free you from the past and the heaviness of the past.

And the past cannot prevail against it. It is impossible, because it is the only power there is. So it is also the timeless dimension in you.

When we talk of presence or awareness, there is no past and future in presence or awareness.

[Speaker 2] (51:40 - 51:49)

I got that. When you say on page 184, when you feel the pain body, don't fall into the era of thinking there's something wrong with you, making yourself into a problem.

[Speaker 1] (51:49 - 51:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (51:50 - 51:51)

Because the ego loves that.

[Speaker 1] (51:51 - 51:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (51:51 - 52:38)

Okay. The knowing needs to be followed by accepting. We talked about that a lot tonight.

Anything else will obscure it. Accepting means you allow yourself to feel whatever it is you're feeling at that moment. You can't argue with what is.

Well, you can, but if you do, you suffer. That's how we suffer. Through allowing, you become what you are, vast and spacious.

You become whole. You're not a fragment anymore, which is how the ego perceives itself. Your true nature emerges, which is one with the nature of God.

And then you say, Jesus points to this when he says, be ye whole, even as your father in

heaven is whole. The New Testament's be perfect is a mistranslation of the original Greek word, which means whole. This is to say you don't need to become whole, but be what you already are, with or without the pain body.

[Speaker 1] (52:38 - 52:41)

Yes. Yes. You already that.

[Speaker 2] (52:41 - 52:54)

Now, this brings us to the question that Denise in Michigan asks. She says, is Eckhart perfect? Eckhart, you seem to be almost perfect, although I know nobody is.

Do you ever yell? Do you ever get angry or feel sad?

[Speaker 1] (52:55 - 53:45)

I'm not perfect because the form cannot be perfect. Every form, by the very fact that it has form, is one thing, but not the other. So whole, yes, I feel that I'm aligned with something far greater than the little person.

And that is where I rest. And that is where inspiration comes from, where the teaching arises. This is presence.

And it goes far beyond this little person. This little person is insignificant. It doesn't matter very much to me.

So I don't look for perfection. I don't look for perfection in myself because that would be terrible frustration. I do things that people perhaps would regard as not perfect.

[Speaker 2] (53:46 - 53:48)

I'm waiting to hear.

[Speaker 1] (53:50 - 54:30)

I have a glass of wine. I drink, I like my glass of wine occasionally. I drink coffee at Starbucks almost every day.

And sometimes people come up to me and say, you are drinking coffee, you shouldn't be drinking coffee. What do you need coffee for? I say, why not?

I enjoy it. So I enjoy all kinds of things. I don't have many negative emotions.

I can't think the last time I even had a negative emotion, but it's possible. I perhaps remember maybe some years ago, yes, I was watching and people were mistreating an animal and I suddenly felt anger. So it can happen.

And what did you do when you felt the anger?

[Speaker 2] (54:30 - 54:35)

What did you do with that anger? Did you say, oh, I'm feeling anger? You noticed the anger?

[Speaker 1] (54:36 - 55:11)

Yes. And the situation, somebody else interfered at that very moment. Otherwise, I had already taken steps towards stopping it.

And so the anger was there. I felt it. And it was in my system for a couple of minutes as a vibrational, intense vibration in the body.

And then it dissipated. I let it go. So you don't just like little things don't upset you ever?

No, no. I've let go. I had so much of that in the past.

So much suffering with all kinds of little things. It's not worth it.

[Speaker 2] (55:11 - 55:20)

Yeah, I never understand this because I'm not, I don't get triggered by automobiles or driving or stuff. I never understand the people, the road rage.

[Speaker 1] (55:20 - 55:23)

That's pain body, right? Yes, and the continuous...

[Speaker 2] (55:23 - 55:28)

I never understand why not getting in a, not being led in a line or being cut off, why that would cause you to be so crazy.

[Speaker 1] (55:29 - 55:48)

I don't understand it either. But for many people, that is something they personalize the traffic. So it's an egoic phenomenon.

So when somebody does something, they regard it as a personal insult to them, to their dignity or whatever. So, and of course, if it were...

[Speaker 2] (55:48 - 55:49)

They personalize the traffic.

[Speaker 1] (55:50 - 56:46)

They wouldn't perhaps do it with the weather. If some hail or rain hits your windscreen, then you would, perhaps you wouldn't get angry. But if a driver cuts across, then you suddenly get angry.

But it's the same thing. It's just an energy field cutting across. Why personalize it?

And I'm amazed that people suffer so much stress in traffic because if you don't react, then

there's no stress. If you don't personalize other drivers, as if they had some personal disagreement with you, it's nothing to do with you. They don't even know you.

If you don't personalize things, it's actually quite stress-free. Or you get stuck in traffic and people get so frustrated getting stuck in traffic. Yes.

I know. And that can be a wonderful meditation. You can't move.

Why not be in the body, feel the intense aliveness in your energy field, and be there, enjoy.

[Speaker 2] (56:46 - 56:57)

And everybody who's listening has ever been stuck in traffic. You now, after reading the book, you know how ridiculous it is to be upset that you're stuck in traffic because there's nothing you can do to change it.

[Speaker 1] (56:57 - 57:10)

So just be with it. Wonderful opportunity for acceptance and surrender. And a wonderful opportunity for learning dysfunction.

If you observe you're not accepting and surrendering, then you can observe how dysfunction arises.

[Speaker 2] (57:10 - 57:14)

I love the way you answered that question from Denise in Michigan. You say you're not perfect, but you're whole.

[Speaker 1] (57:15 - 57:34)

Yes. So sometimes people on the spiritual path, they look for some kind of perfection. They have an image of how a perfect, evolved, spiritual human being behaves.

And then they try to conform that to that image. It doesn't work. It really accepts your own limitations, accepts your imperfections.

[Speaker 2] (57:34 - 58:03)

Do you have no attachment to, I mean, the way you even described your body, I asked you if you had any fear of dying. And I said this later to some friends. I've never talked to anybody to whom I've asked that question.

And there was such definitive resoluteness about it. How you were just like, I really believed you when you said you had no fear. I really believed you when you had no fear of death.

And you have no attachment to anything? Like, do you live in a nice house? Do you like nice things?

[Speaker 1] (58:03 - 58:38)

Oh, yes. Yes. I like nice things.

Now, for many years, I lived on a minimum because for many years, I didn't have a regular job. I was just doing some occasional counseling and occasional little workshops. So for many years, I lived on very, very little.

And I enjoyed that. I later on, I realized, oh, I must have lived for all those years below the poverty level. But I didn't feel that at the time.

I didn't regard myself as poor. I've enjoyed every moment of it. And then now I have relative wealth, especially compared to that time.

[Speaker 2] (58:38 - 58:38)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (58:38 - 58:48)

I'm relatively well. And I'm actually enjoying that, too. I buy some nice furniture sometimes and enjoy it.

You like nice sheets? I like nice sheets. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (58:48 - 58:49)

Or do you care?

[Speaker 1] (58:49 - 59:19)

Well, I can sleep in any. But I like nice things. So.

But you're not attached to them? No, no. I'm not attached.

I enjoy having space around so that you don't have to listen to the neighbor's noise. That is quite nice. Perhaps the greatest thing that money can buy is space around you.

But if you don't have it, and if you have to live with neighbor's noise, it's a great opportunity for surrendering or for telling them to shut up.

[Speaker 2] (59:22 - 59:24)

If you want to summarize, I guess you just basically did.

[Speaker 1] (59:25 - 59:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (59:25 - 59:27)

Break free of it, lose the identification.

[Speaker 1] (59:27 - 59:29)

Yes, that's it. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (59:29 - 59:45)

I'm really excited about the next chapter because the next chapter is finding who you truly are. Because even if you haven't read the rest of the book, you can start really on page 185 with finding who you truly are and then work your way backwards. It's going to be so exciting.

[Speaker 1] (59:45 - 59:46)

Yes, I love it too.

[Speaker 2] (59:46 - 1:00:05)

I love it. I love it when you love it. Again, Eckhart and I thank you all for joining us around the world.

Get ready for next week's class, finding out who you truly are. If you're not who you think you are, well, then who are you? We're going to talk about that.

It's going to be so exciting next week. Again, I thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:05 - 1:00:06)

Thank you, everybody.

[Speaker 6] (1:00:06 - 1:00:47)

Thank you. Hey, Super Solars, looking for a great new read or listen? Well, that's why we're so excited about Oprah's new book, *The Path Made Clear, Discovering Your Life's Direction and Purpose*.

Oprah has collected all of the lessons she's learned from thought leaders like Eckhart Tolle and Brene Brown and innovators like Jay-Z and Lin-Manuel Miranda, who all understand what it means to achieve the life of your dreams. *The Path Made Clear* is available now on Apple Books, Amazon, Audible, and at your local bookstore. It really is a game changer for anyone seeking to discover their true calling and start living it.

So what are you waiting for? Get the book now and begin your journey today.

Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : Ego : The Current State of Humanity (Chapter 2) [gid : //art19-episode-locator/V0/wlZ6ssc Gj2CN8fCV4Y pQf-3xH2Pd0LDcuVL Ot-3o]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 3:46)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls a new earth inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Hi, everybody. Ah, today we start chapter two. We're taking on the biggest thing ever, the ego.

Now, for so many of us, Eckhart Tolle redefined the word ego because before Eckhart, I knew it as a way to describe someone who is really kind of full of themselves, you know, like so-and-so has a really big ego. Well, that is what the ego is. But as you're learning, if you're reading this book, it is also so much more.

According to Eckhart, it's the part of us that causes all of the friction and the pain and the suffering in our lives. It's the part that holds on to all that painful baggage from our past, and it's the part that makes us jealous, makes us angry, makes us depressed, and also fearful. Get that?

I mean, it's just, it's amazing when you do. Today, what we're going to do is focus on the

first step of getting it, which is learning to recognize when your ego shows up. This was so big for me, big, big, big, big, big.

And the best part is that once you become aware of your ego, you start to develop some real spiritual muscle and a higher level of consciousness. I think that's just the biggest wow ever. It's an aha, bing, bing, bing moment.

So let's get going to be able to identify when that ego shows up. Since I read this book, I can just, the instant my ego shows up, I go, oh, that's the ego. Shut that thing down.

On to chapter two, the ego. Welcome again, Eckhart Tolle. Thank you.

Thank you. You shared with us how there are tools that we can use to bring ourself into the present moment. And you were saying from that first chapter and throughout this book that there is only the present moment.

And you were saying that if we would allow ourselves to take ourselves out of our mind and just go to our breath, that we could learn presence that way. That's how you begin to learn presence.

[Speaker 1] (3:47 - 5:03)

Yes. Yes. And I suggest that we all do that right now, which is to say we are taking our attention right now away from where it usually dwells, which is in the head and in the thinking mind.

And we direct our attention to our breath. And the simple question that one could ask is, or you could ask yourself is, am I still breathing? Let's just check if I'm still breathing.

Now, how do you find out whether you're still breathing? You have to take your attention away from the thinking mind and sense yourself breathing right now. And as you're taking attention away from the thinking mind, which always works using past and future, sustains itself by always generating past and future thinking, you also enter the present moment.

When you take attention away from thinking, direct attention to your breathing. You're always breathing, but usually you're not aware of it. And now we are bringing awareness to it, which means we are taking attention away from thinking.

So we are not losing consciousness. We are very conscious, but thinking much less or perhaps not at all.

[Speaker 2] (5:04 - 5:51)

Well, this is the most exciting chapter until you get to the next chapter. I think chapter two is the most exciting chapter. Chapter one is pretty conceptual.

You would agree. You're the one who wrote it. Pretty conceptual.

But in chapter two, title, Ego, the Current State of Humanity, we get into, I think, a way of understanding ourselves that perhaps so many people were not aware of until beginning to read this. So I would just like to just get right into this chapter. When you say, when you don't cover up the world with words and labels, a sense of miraculous returns to your life that was lost a long time ago when humanity, instead of using thought, became possessed by thought.

What do you mean by that? Yes.

[Speaker 1] (5:52 - 7:17)

Now, usually, and everybody can verify this in their own experience, we experience the phenomenal world, whatever we experience. We do not experience it directly. It is overlaid with self-talk, which are the mental processes.

So as you go about your life, you encounter situations, you meet people, you do your work. And most of the time, there is a voice in the head, which can be called the self-talk. It can be called the inner voice.

But it is the conditioned thought processes. And they are commenting and interpreting and mentally labeling whatever it is you're perceiving or experiencing. So there's always a running commentary in people's heads.

So they don't relate to the world directly and immediately, but through the veil of the self-talk. And this greatly decreases the sense of aliveness, the sense of how you relate to the outer world and especially to human beings. For example, if every time I meet another human being, I immediately have certain thoughts and judgments in my head that come up the moment I meet a person.

I'm already thinking something about this person.

[Speaker 2] (7:17 - 7:18)

That's right. You've already labeled.

[Speaker 1] (7:19 - 7:26)

I'm already labeled. And so I'm no longer really in communication with that person. I'm in communication with my own labels.

[Speaker 2] (7:26 - 7:56)

Yes. And what you said to us last week, and you also say in this chapter, even a stone and more easily a flower or a bird could show you the way back to God and the source to

yourself when you look at it or hold it and let it be without imposing a word or mental label. And what you were saying in last week is that if you can learn to do that in nature first, stop labeling things, just feel the essence and presence of things, it allows you then to be able to gradually move into doing that with people.

[Speaker 9] (7:56 - 7:56)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (7:56 - 8:10)

So often we don't engage in presence with people. We've already labeled them and labeled the situation. And so we're reacting out of the situations and not out of what's actually happening.

That's what you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (8:10 - 8:38)

Yes. We've already put people into mental boxes. And so we no longer experience them as in their full aliveness.

We have desensitized ourselves through this continuous mental conceptualization we have desensitized ourselves to the aliveness of other human beings, because the moment I put a label on another human being, I've already desensitized myself to their life.

[Speaker 2] (8:38 - 8:55)

So you say the quicker you are in attaching verbal or mental labels to things, people, or situations, the more on page 26, everybody, the bottom, the more shallow and lifeless your reality becomes and the more deadened you become to reality, the miracle of life that continuously unfolds within and around you.

[Speaker 1] (8:55 - 9:40)

I go for a walk every day in the little forest at home. And often I encounter people who are jogging or friends going for a walk. And most people, some are listening to things on their headphones, whatever it is, and they're talking to their friends.

And very few people are actually truly present there as they walk through this beautiful forest. And this is a spiritual practice. And I recommend that people, whenever they go out into nature, especially, practice being very alert so that they can perceive the trees, the flowers, the plants, the sky.

Without too much mental interference.

[Speaker 2] (9:40 - 9:43)

That's so interesting. Heather from Vancouver Island. Hello, Heather.

[Speaker 8] (9:44 - 9:48)

Hello, Oprah. I'm honored to be here speaking with you today.

[Speaker 2] (9:48 - 9:50)

I think this is fun. Okay.

[Speaker 8] (9:51 - 10:08)

Okay. Go right ahead. Mr. Tolle, I'd like to commend you on a spectacular book. I found it thought-provoking and questions arose for me. For example, when we get free of the ego, where does that energy go? Good question.

[Speaker 1] (10:09 - 11:23)

Good question. Yes, thank you. The energy that was used up by the ego.

Now, what is the ego? Basically consists of compulsive conditioned thought processes. So that we are not aware of.

So we identify so closely with our stream of thinking that we don't even know that we are thinking. So all this energy is used up in continuous, to a large extent, useless thinking. Even psychologists have found out that 90, even psychologists who are not interested in spiritual things, they looked at the nature of human thought and they discovered that 98 or 99% of our thoughts are quite useless and repetitive.

They're not really needed. So where does that energy go? That energy that then becomes freed from thinking and becomes presence.

Which is a new dimension. Well, not entirely new because almost everybody has had glimpses of presence. But it is a dimension of consciousness that most people still don't know exists.

And really, this is the essence of the whole teaching.

[Speaker 2] (11:23 - 11:47)

And everybody's had glimpses of it. I'm sure you have too, Heather, and everybody who's listening to us. Everybody's had just that little moment where everything is okay.

Where you have just a moment of bliss. Where there's nothing particularly going on that would cause you to feel that. But there's a sense of an awareness that causes you to

have, as you said, a glimpse of something bigger than yourself.

[Speaker 1] (11:47 - 12:07)

Yes, it can come accidentally. Sometimes it comes into people's lives accidentally. And suddenly you feel a deep sense of inner peace and aliveness.

And all rightness. Yes, and not because something particular has happened. So there's no external cause for it.

It's causeless joy, one could say.

[Speaker 2] (12:07 - 12:15)

That's happened to you, Heather? Has that happened to you? Occasionally.

Yeah, occasionally. Yeah, and then you wonder, how did that happen so I could make that happen again?

[Speaker 1] (12:16 - 12:59)

Yes, it can also happen when you're engaged in very strenuous physical activity. So that requires all your attention, like climbing a mountain. So you need to be, when you're climbing a wall, you need to be totally present every moment.

If you lose presence and start thinking about what you're going to do when you get down from the mountain, you will probably have an accident. So certain activities, very strenuous activities, require absolute presence. And some people become actually addicted to dangerous activities because they feel much more alive in those moments.

Because you need to be fully present. Yes, the reason why they feel so much more alive is because they're thinking almost nothing at all.

[Speaker 2] (12:59 - 13:04)

Because you have to be present in order to climb a mountain or to do strenuous activities.

[Speaker 1] (13:05 - 13:07)

Your attention is absolutely there.

[Speaker 2] (13:07 - 13:29)

All right. All right, Heather, did that answer your question? Yes, it did.

Thank you. Thank you so much from Vancouver Island, Canada, Heather. Well, Heather introduces this whole idea of the illusory self that you talk about on page 27.

You say, the word I embodies the greatest error and the deepest truth depending upon how it is used. What do you mean by that?

[Speaker 1] (13:29 - 14:08)

Yes, usually when people say I, they refer to what I call me and my story. Yes. Which is your personal history that you identify with as yourself.

So everybody has a story, of course, because everybody has a past. Now, most people are completely identified with the story that is their successes, their failures, things that happened to them, things that they acquired. They see themselves as a victim.

They see themselves as successful. Whatever it is, there is a certain story that develops.

[Speaker 2] (14:08 - 14:19)

Because when you ask me, who am I? That's what I'm going to tell you, my story, my successes, my failures, where I was born, what I did, what my mother did or didn't do. That's who we think we are.

[Speaker 1] (14:20 - 16:22)

That's right. Now, what I'm saying is and what all spiritual teachings point to is that that ultimately is not who you are in your essence. It is no more than a collection of memories.

And of course, memories are thoughts. It is no more than a bundle of thoughts that you identify with and that you believe to be who you are. So that becomes an entity almost, a mind made entity, a self sense of self, like a phantom entity that lives with you, that you then refer to as myself.

So you have me and myself. For example, in Greek mythology, we have the interesting story of Narcissus. Narcissus was a young man who lived, how the story goes.

Mythology, of course, always embodies some truth that goes beyond the personal. Narcissus happened to be walking somewhere and he saw, suddenly he looked down and he saw his own image in a pool of water. At the time, of course, they didn't have mirrors at the time.

So it was a surprise for him to see himself reflected in a pool of water. And the story goes that he fell in love with himself. My view is that actually a better translation is of the story is that he became obsessed with himself.

And that to me signals the beginning of the human ego. It is to have a mental image in your head, ultimately, not out there. That's just the story.

A mental image in your head that you regard as yourself. And that mental image is the mind made me that consists of memories, things that happen to you, things, failures, successes, opinions, all kinds of things. I've described them in the book.

Together, make up this I.

[Speaker 2] (16:22 - 16:27)

Well, if I'm not the memories and I'm not the things that happen to me and I'm not my story, then who am I?

[Speaker 1] (16:28 - 17:45)

That's the question. And in fact, who am I is actually a question that in some spiritual, Eastern spiritual teachings is used as a kind of mantra or pointer that you repeat to yourself in a meditation setting. So you sit down and you ask yourself, who am I?

And you're not supposed to answer that question. You leave the blank after the question. In that blank, in that empty space, if it works, if this practice works as it should, you suddenly get a sense of your own presence.

It has nothing to do with your thought processes, your own sense of conscious presence, your beingness, your presence, part of which is actually also your physical presence, but as a sense of aliveness. Every cell of the body becomes part of that sense of presence and aliveness. So as we sit here, we can perhaps see if we can get a little glimpse of that, a glimpse of our own presence, which again is nothing to do with thinking.

It is deeper than thinking.

[Speaker 2] (17:45 - 17:47)

How do we get a glimpse of it sitting here?

[Speaker 1] (17:48 - 18:07)

We get a glimpse of it. I recommend that, see if you can feel the inner aliveness in your body as you sit here. Is there any sense in which you can feel that you're, that there is an aliveness in every cell of the body?

Now, if people...

[Speaker 2] (18:07 - 18:09)

But isn't my mind thinking that?

[Speaker 1] (18:09 - 18:12)

Your mind may be thinking, yes, of course I'm alive.

[Speaker 2] (18:12 - 18:23)

Like in the book, you say, feel the aliveness in your hands. When I go to feel the aliveness in my hand, I can't feel the aliveness in my hand unless I had a mind in which to feel that.

[Speaker 1] (18:24 - 18:39)

No. So if you close your eyes and you hold out your hand like this, and then the question... Feel the vibrating sensation in your hand.

Yes. You ask yourself, for example, I always have this exercise for people who have no idea what I'm talking about when I talk about inner body. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (18:40 - 18:41)

Well, there would be a lot of people listening right now.

[Speaker 1] (18:42 - 19:49)

Go ahead. So you hold your hand and close your eyes and then ask yourself, how, without touching anything and without moving my hand, how can I know whether my hand is still here? How can I know that?

Now, your mind might say, of course I know it because I remember seeing it just a few seconds ago. And I feel it right here. But that's it.

You need to, you feel the inside is alive. A subtle sense of warmth or tingling, a subtle sense of aliveness. That is the beginning of getting in touch with your inner body, the energy field.

But I need my brain to do that though. You need your conscious attention to do that, but not thinking. Not thinking.

No. That's the difference. You need attention, which is consciousness.

Yes, you need consciousness to feel it. But the consciousness then moves from where it usually is, just as it did when we started today with becoming aware of our breathing. Now the consciousness moves into the hand.

And if you can feel your hand, if you can feel one hand, you can also feel the other hand. If you can feel both hands at the same time, you can perhaps also feel your both arms.

[Speaker 2] (19:49 - 19:49)

Right.

[Speaker 1] (19:50 - 19:53)

And if you can feel the arms, perhaps you can also feel your feet.

[Speaker 2] (19:53 - 19:59)

Okay. And as I begin to feel that, and everybody who's with us around the world feels that, then what?

[Speaker 1] (19:59 - 20:26)

This means this, the inner body, which we also could call, this is what we are doing is we are practicing embodiment. This keeps you in the present moment and keeps you present. It keeps you out of your thought processes.

Thinking about what I need to do tomorrow. Yes. And it takes you out of ego, because the ego lives in your thought processes, consists of thought processes.

[Speaker 9] (20:26 - 20:27)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (20:27 - 20:59)

So the moment you enter the inner aliveness of a body, you sense there is a sense of self that is deeper than thinking. You are that aliveness that you feel. You are that alive presence.

And this applies whether your past or your personal history is a happy one or an unhappy one. For most people, it's a very mixed story. But no personal history is entirely happy.

Right. With very few examples. And then you just have to wait a little while until it becomes unhappy again.

[Speaker 2] (20:59 - 21:01)

Even the people who say, I had a great childhood.

[Speaker 1] (21:02 - 21:30)

No, personal histories are all very problematic. And it's not people think, oh, it's only me. It's everybody.

Everybody's personal history. That's what being a human is. Yes.

So to be able to step out and find a dimension that has nothing to do with your past and your history, or whether you are a miserable failure in the eyes of the world or your thought processes or greater, has nothing to do with that.

[Speaker 2] (21:30 - 22:03)

I love it when you say what you usually refer to when you say I, I'm on page 28, is not who you are. By a monstrous act of reductionism. Which is a great way of putting it.

The infinite depth of who you are is confused with a sound produced by the vocal cords or the thought of I in your mind and whatever the I has identified with. So what do the usual I and the related me, my, or mine refer to? You talk about when a young child first learns to identify my toy.

[Speaker 1] (22:03 - 22:45)

Yes. That's the beginning of ego. When the child starts to identify with an external object and you can see when the toy is taken away from a child after this identification has happened, after the child thought of it as my toy, there's enormous amount of pain in the child.

The child will start screaming and saying, it's mine, it's mine. So the toy has been taken away. Why is it so painful for the child?

Because it is the beginning of the ego. The ego has lost something that it had identified with. It's a misperception of who one is.

And so it's very painful.

[Speaker 2] (22:45 - 22:50)

The child thinks that the toy has something to do with them.

[Speaker 1] (22:50 - 22:51)

Who they are. It's who they are.

[Speaker 2] (22:51 - 22:57)

That's the identification. And that's why kids go into spasms over a toy and you're going, it's just a toy.

[Speaker 1] (22:57 - 23:09)

And two days later, they lose interest in it. Right. And so that's the beginning of it.

And then it's because they think the toy is them. They think it's a part of them. It adds

something to their sense of self.

[Speaker 2] (23:09 - 23:11)

That's right. And when you take it away, they think it isn't.

[Speaker 1] (23:11 - 23:17)

Then it's like losing a limb because it became so much part of who they thought they were.

[Speaker 2] (23:17 - 23:20)

In the child's mind, that's a part of me.

[Speaker 1] (23:20 - 23:23)

And then we grow up. And of course the process continues.

[Speaker 2] (23:23 - 23:25)

When we grow up, our toys just get bigger.

[Speaker 1] (23:25 - 23:26)

They get bigger.

[Speaker 2] (23:27 - 23:29)

And we cry because I lost my...

[Speaker 1] (23:29 - 23:46)

Lost external possessions. Yes. But of course possessions is an important part of all the things that people identify with that become part of their identity.

But there are many other things apart from possessions. Right. For example, social position, how others see you.

[Speaker 2] (23:46 - 23:54)

Because you say other things the eye identifies with is nationality, race, religion, profession, mother, father, husband, wife, so on.

[Speaker 1] (23:54 - 24:01)

Roles they play. Roles they play. Opinions they hold.

You can see, for example, when people are...

[Speaker 2] (24:01 - 24:06)

But these are roles. They are actual roles. You know, people are mothers and fathers and...

[Speaker 1] (24:06 - 24:06)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (24:07 - 24:07)

You know.

[Speaker 1] (24:07 - 24:16)

Yes. Now it's important, of course, to fulfill the functions that you have in this world. And mother and father are important functions as opposed to roles.

[Speaker 2] (24:16 - 24:18)

Your nationality and your race and your religion.

[Speaker 1] (24:18 - 24:19)

It's fine.

[Speaker 2] (24:19 - 24:20)

You identify with those things.

[Speaker 1] (24:20 - 24:33)

It's fine to honor all these things. But if that's all you have, then you are lost in a surface reality that always turns into... becomes painful and turns into conflict.

[Speaker 9] (24:33 - 24:33)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (24:34 - 25:11)

You can see, for example, when people are discussing and if somebody questions somebody's opinion, very often, immediately, they become defensive. Right. Sometimes even aggressive or start shouting.

Right. And because opinions, again, is another thing that... Because my beliefs.

Mine. They identify with the thought they hold, a mental position, and then anybody who questions that mental position immediately becomes your enemy because you believe

you're being attacked. You're not being attacked, but the image that you have of yourself and the opinion is part of that, the ego believes it's being attacked.

[Speaker 2] (25:12 - 25:35)

So you're saying that whenever you can see that that's what you're thinking, when you can see the illusion of that, the moment you can see the illusion of it, these are thoughts in my head, this is something I've told myself I believe, this is something I've told myself that I identify with, that when you can see that, the seer or the observer is who you really are.

[Speaker 1] (25:35 - 25:39)

Yes. And the seer or the observer is the presence or the awareness.

[Speaker 2] (25:39 - 25:42)

So you're saying there's two of us at all times.

[Speaker 1] (25:42 - 25:51)

Yes. There is the formless awareness and there is the form that a thought becomes. Thought is an energy formation.

[Speaker 2] (25:52 - 25:52)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (25:52 - 25:59)

And so that you've just mentioned, the essence is to be there as the awareness when it happens.

[Speaker 2] (25:59 - 26:05)

All right, I'm gonna go to Victoria. Victoria lives in Maui. Victoria, hello.

Aloha. Aloha.

[Speaker 4] (26:06 - 27:01)

Can't wait to get there. Thank you, Oprah and Mr. Toley for this awesome opportunity. I was diagnosed over 10 years ago with systemic lupus and RA, and I've been a really active person.

But two years ago, I gave up my business, my health deteriorated, and I got an aha moment in this book on page 51. I never realized that I had unconsciously clinged to my illness, and I'm taking this out of the book because I put it to myself, because it had

actually become the most important part of who I perceived myself to be. How can I undo this identity?

And how can I stay focused when I'm in excruciating pain from the illness to have the peace constantly and not just fleeting moments? That's real.

[Speaker 1] (27:01 - 27:01)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (27:01 - 27:02)

That's real.

[Speaker 1] (27:02 - 29:30)

Yes. Now, the most important thing has already happened, which is you have become aware that up to now you had been identified with the idea of, I am a sufferer of such and such an illness. So the illness had become thought forms in your head, and you had identified with these thought forms and took them to be who you are.

And now the most important thing, your question is still valid, but realize that the most important thing has already happened, which is the awareness has arisen, so there's a space now between yourself and your thought processes and the image of yourself as a sick person. Now, another thing, of course, in addition you can do is, for example, no longer talk about your illness to other people except when you visit a doctor. Then otherwise the more you talk about it to your friends, acquaintances, family members, the more you keep that process going.

Empower it. He empowers the disease. That's right.

Yes. So if you just take the decision now that from now on I'm not going to talk about it and if people ask me about my illness, which they're going to do because they're perhaps used to you talking about it, you say, well, I'm doing all I can to find healing in this and I'm making good progress. Go as far as that and don't encourage people to ask you questions and just say that's how it is, no more mentioning my illness.

So you begin on the external level not to talk about it anymore except when, of course, when you need to talk to doctors and that will have also a certain influence on your thought processes and then you can gradually also refrain from thinking of yourself as a sick person and perhaps give less thought to your illness and focus attention more on well-being. Now you may ask, well, but if I don't feel good, if I feel it, how can I give attention to well-being? You can still do that.

One way is to see well-being around you in nature because nature is just an embodiment of well-being.

[Speaker 2] (29:30 - 29:32)

You have a lot of opportunity to do that in Maui.

[Speaker 1] (29:32 - 30:11)

Yes, you're in the best place and also there's well-being even if certain parts of your body feel unwell or painful and again we are coming back to the sensing the inner body. There are always parts of your body where you can still find well-being in your hands, your arms, wherever. Take some attention into the body and see where can I most strongly feel, get a sense of well-being in the body.

Then take your attention there. So you choose to direct attention to well-being rather than dwelling on the idea of illness.

[Speaker 2] (30:12 - 30:16)

That does not mean the pain is going to go away because she said she has physical pain.

[Speaker 1] (30:16 - 31:02)

The pain may still be there. As far as the pain is concerned, pain unfortunately requires surrender. You need to see that the pain is there so that you do not generate an additional level of psychological pain which complains about being in physical pain because if the mind starts to complain about being in physical pain, you have two levels of pain.

You have psychological pain and physical pain. Got it. Leave physical pain.

With physical pain you just, right now this is how it is. It's there. Don't resist it.

Don't resist it. Do what you can as far as treatment goes of course but don't resist it. Don't create psychological pain on top of the physical pain.

[Speaker 2] (31:02 - 31:05)

Are you following that, Victoria? Got it. Yeah, excellent.

[Speaker 4] (31:06 - 31:10)

Got it. Makes sense to you? You know, it really does.

It does, yes.

[Speaker 2] (31:11 - 31:31)

Let's move on to content and structure of the ego. On page 34. It's very exciting when you really get these concepts of the ego.

You say that there's the egoic mind is completely conditioned by the past. Its conditioning is too full. It consists of content and structure.

What do you mean by that?

[Speaker 1] (31:32 - 34:07)

Uh, content is whatever it is that you identify with and that then you take to be yourself. So that varies. Depends what culture you live in.

Depends on your upbringing. It depends on your personal circumstances. And content is different for everybody.

It differs for everybody. Although there are certain similarities in the same cultural field like there's certain similarities that in America or in France or whatever country you live in. There are certain similarities of things that pertain to that particular nationality that we would identify with.

Nevertheless, from person to person, yes, it differs. The content differs. One person may identify with very strongly held religious beliefs and believe that everybody else is evil who does not hold these religious beliefs.

That would be a very rigid ego. Or another person identifies very strongly with the company they work for. And they feel, I've heard stories in Japan where people, when they got dismissed from their job, they committed suicide.

They were so identified with their company that when they lost their job, which until recently was very rare apparently in Japan, you would keep your job for the rest of your life. So it became part of who you thought you were. And if they didn't commit suicide, they suffered dreadfully because their identity got taken away.

All that, of course, is pseudo-identity. It's not who you truly are. It's part of the ego.

And all that is content. The structure of the ego basically consists of identification. The ego seeks something or things to identify with.

What it is doesn't really matter. For one person, one person identifies him or herself with a very positive-looking ego, meaning I'm the greatest thing that ever lived. It might be a delusion, probably is.

Or another person might identify with a very negative ego image, like I'm the most wretched person that has ever lived. Life has treated me so unfairly. I've suffered so much more than you.

Let me tell you about it. Many egos are like that. They are just as strong as egos who think they are the greatest.

So the ego can be predominantly negative. It can be predominantly positive. But in either case, it's ego.

[Speaker 2] (34:08 - 34:17)

Capsulize for us what, you know, I know the whole chapter is about the current state of humanity being the ego. But can you put in a capsule what it is, the ego?

[Speaker 1] (34:18 - 34:34)

The ego is a false sense of self based on mental concepts. So that's... And our identification with form.

Identification with form. These are, these are, yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:35 - 34:53)

But why do we have it, though? Why do we have an ego? We're all human.

We all have one, right? We all have one. You say yours, last week you said yours died.

Does that mean you don't have one? You said yours died in that moment where you wanted to kill yourself. I am so miserable.

I can no, I can live with myself no longer.

[Speaker 1] (34:53 - 34:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:53 - 34:57)

You said in that moment, your ego died. It never came back. It died forever.

[Speaker 1] (34:58 - 35:26)

Yes. When we say that, it simply means it sounds like some great achievement or it's not. Yeah.

All it means is I'm no longer identified with my thought processes. I know when thoughts happen, I know they're just thoughts. I don't look for myself in some opinion that I hold of myself.

Some mental concept, including the concept that I am free of ego. I don't think in those terms because if I had this mental concept, I am free of ego, that would be ego again.

[Speaker 2] (35:27 - 35:28)

That would be ego again. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (35:29 - 35:31)

And this can happen very easy.

[Speaker 2] (35:31 - 35:49)

So ego is any identification with form. Yes. Because what we really are is the awareness that we are identified with form.

Yes. And the more you can become aware that you are identified with things, you create a space that separates you from the things.

[Speaker 1] (35:49 - 36:02)

Yes. Because the question is, when you're aware that you're identified, who is it that is aware? What is it?

It's a new dimension of consciousness that comes from a deeper level of yourself.

[Speaker 2] (36:02 - 36:06)

But how do we live in the world without things? We have to have things. We have to live in a house.

[Speaker 1] (36:06 - 36:37)

Fine. We have transportation. Nothing wrong with things.

We have clothes. We have to be clothed. Nothing wrong with things.

Nothing wrong with thoughts. Nothing wrong with opinions. But the moment you identify with opinions, then you need to defend them.

They become part of your pseudo image. There's nothing wrong with possessing things. But when you become identified, then first of all, if you lose something, immediately you will suffer.

[Speaker 2] (36:37 - 37:56)

I love when you say the people in the advertising industry know very well that in order to sell things that people don't really need, I'm on page 35, everybody, they must convince them that those things will add something to how they see themselves or are seen by others. In other words, add something to their sense of self. They do this, for example, by telling you, you will stand out from the crowd by using this product.

And so by implication, be more fully yourself. You say in so many cases, you're not

buying a product, but an identity enhancer. I thought that was so fantastic.

Designer labels are primarily collective identities that you buy into. They are expensive and therefore exclusive. If everybody could buy them, they would lose their psychological value.

And all you would be left with would be their material value, which likely amounts to a fraction of what you paid. Interesting. Okay.

I want to go back to the identification with things because that is an issue for so many people. The unchecked striving for more, for endless growth, you say, is a dysfunction and a disease on page 37, like the cancer cell whose only goal is to multiply itself, unaware that it's bringing about its own destruction by destroying the organism of which it is a part. Okay.

We have Joyce from Minnesota. Joyce, what is your question? I thought this applied to you.

[Speaker 3] (37:57 - 38:16)

Yeah, yeah, it does. And fortunately, it applies to my son as well. He came home from kindergarten and I said, I'm so happy to see you and I'm in such a good mood.

And he said, oh, good. Does that mean we get to go shopping? And I thought, it's rubbing off on him.

So what my question is, is how do I reverse that process in him?

[Speaker 2] (38:16 - 38:27)

Oh, well, first of all, let me ask you this. You're reading the book, correct? Yes.

Right. So you've gotten through chapter two already? Yes.

Yeah. So when you read that, did you see yourself in the pages?

[Speaker 3] (38:28 - 38:37)

I did. The aha for me was in seeing of who you are not, your real self emerges through something along those lines.

[Speaker 2] (38:37 - 38:51)

One of my favorite quotes in this chapter is, when you can no longer feel the life that you are, you are likely to try to fill up your life with things. Would that be what you're trying to do?

[Speaker 3] (38:51 - 39:25)

That was me. Since I've started reading this book, I've gotten so much better. I'm not searching for that thing anymore.

I think I was trying to find my identity in things. And since I've stopped that, and I really don't have any interest in that anymore, I've discovered so much more about myself. I'm artistic and I'm doing sculptures and just things I never did before.

So it's working out great. I just want to know how to enforce that in my son as well, since he's only five.

[Speaker 1] (39:26 - 39:56)

Oh, well, now the most important change has already happened in you. So you've become aware of the old pattern. You've gone beyond it.

And it's inevitable that now this will, even if you don't say anything, it will transmit itself to your son also. When after a while your son sees that the importance that you give to acquiring things has diminished, then he will also reflect that this is how it works with young children.

[Speaker 2] (39:56 - 40:16)

It will take some time. Yes. Since he's been a baby, you've been a shopaholic.

And so that's what he has seen. That's what he's taken in. That's what he identifies with as pleasure.

And when you say I'm in a good mood and things are going well, well, let's go shopping, mommy. Because that's what mommy's always done.

[Speaker 1] (40:16 - 41:15)

Yes. Another thing that perhaps you could do is to point out things to him that are of intrinsic value that you cannot buy. So, for example, the natural world.

Whatever you see out in nature is of infinite intrinsic value and you can't buy it. Don't pick flowers, for example. Don't encourage him to, because that's the acquisition instinct.

The instinct to, oh, I want that for myself. Why not allow the flower to be there and enjoy it for a few seconds as you look at it? So point out things and engage in activities perhaps that involve nature and see that is of greater value than anything that you see in a shopping mall.

And it doesn't mean that you don't buy anything anymore. Occasionally, you may come

across something that looks truly beautiful, that speaks to you, and you may acquire it, but it's no longer compulsive.

[Speaker 2] (41:15 - 41:22)

You say we need to honor the world of things, not despise it, but we cannot honor things if we try to find ourselves through them.

[Speaker 1] (41:22 - 41:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (41:23 - 41:24)

And how do we honor them?

[Speaker 1] (41:24 - 42:08)

You honor them by giving them attention. I sometimes, I have a few possessions that I love and sometimes I just hold them, look at them, they're beautiful to look at. If somebody stole them, that's fine.

Somebody else wants them more than I, it's fine, you let go. There's no identification, but there can be enjoyment in things. You can enjoy a beautiful, you might come across a beautiful picture and you buy it.

You might come across a beautiful fabric, whatever it may be, you see beauty there. And sometimes it will be enough to acknowledge beauty in a shop window and say, oh, isn't that beautiful? Of course, I don't need it.

And you walk on and you can, and that's what, there's a lot.

[Speaker 2] (42:09 - 42:10)

That's a thought I never had.

[Speaker 1] (42:11 - 42:12)

There's a lot of freedom in that.

[Speaker 2] (42:12 - 42:19)

It's beautiful, let's leave it there. I can just admire its beauty. What about that, Joyce?

It's beautiful, let's leave it in the window.

[Speaker 1] (42:19 - 42:22)

It's the same as the flower, you don't need to pick it.

[Speaker 3] (42:22 - 42:25)

That's a thought, yeah. Yeah, that's a good one.

[Speaker 1] (42:25 - 42:43)

You can walk around, occasionally I don't do it anymore, but I sometimes would enjoy walking around a few stores. Or when I lived in London, I would sometimes walk down Regent Street, all these beautiful stores. Window shop.

Window shopping, look in, oh, nice. Would I want to buy it? No.

[Speaker 2] (42:45 - 42:48)

Even if I- You can just accept that it's beautiful and let it be.

[Speaker 1] (42:48 - 42:49)

And then let it be.

[Speaker 2] (42:49 - 43:19)

Thank you, Joyce. Thank you, Joyce, so much. You talk about the illusion of ownership on page 42.

You say the ego tends to equate having with being and lives through comparison. And you use a quote from the Bible that Jesus said, blessed are the poor in spirit, Jesus said, for theirs will be the kingdom of heaven. What does poor in spirit mean?

No inner baggage, no identifications. I never knew that's what poor in spirit means. How did you come to that interpretation of what poor in spirit means?

[Speaker 1] (43:19 - 44:11)

There was a time after I went through this inner shift, it must have been three years later, I was visiting my mother and she had a New Testament on her shelf. I picked it up and I started reading. I could suddenly see the truth that was hiding there and that in many cases, the conventional interpretation was the superficial one of what Jesus had said.

And that was one of the things that I immediately saw when he said poor in spirit, I realized it's to do with not carrying stuff inside so that your spirit is very light. It has no burden. And so there were many things at that time I read and I suddenly saw, oh, he was talking about awakening and about living in that free state of consciousness.

Wonderful, suddenly to be able to read it and suddenly it all makes sense, which before hadn't made sense.

[Speaker 2] (44:11 - 44:20)

You also talk about renunciation of possessions will not automatically free you of the ego, that there are people who have renounced all possessions but have a bigger ego than some millionaires.

[Speaker 9] (44:21 - 44:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:21 - 44:30)

So if you take away one kind of identification, the ego will quickly find another. For instance, I'm a more spiritual person than you are. You see this all the time.

[Speaker 1] (44:30 - 44:32)

Yes. So it's identification.

[Speaker 2] (44:32 - 44:34)

People use their religion to say I'm better than you are.

[Speaker 1] (44:34 - 45:11)

That's right, yes. Or even an image of myself as a spiritual person. I'm more spiritual than you.

Yes. For example, there could be theoretically, you could have a man driving a Rolls Royce and then in the same street, a man riding a bicycle and it is quite possible, not necessarily, of course, it could be the other way around, but it's quite possible that the man on bicycle may have a bigger ego than the Rolls, if he thinks of himself as spiritually superior to the man in the Rolls Royce. And so the ego compares itself always to others.

Yes. In order to find some superiority somewhere.

[Speaker 2] (45:11 - 45:20)

Yes, because another favorite quote is that anytime you feel yourself superior or inferior to anybody, it is always your ego.

[Speaker 1] (45:20 - 45:53)

Yes. And that's very interesting. You can observe yourself then in many situations because the ego always looks out when you come into a group of people or you meet

new people and it wants to position itself somewhere.

Am I better looking than this person? Or am I more knowledgeable than this person? Or am I more wealthy than this person?

Or is this person more wealthy than me? So it tries to position itself and that then leads either to a sense of superiority Yeah. or inferiority and both are ego.

[Speaker 2] (45:54 - 46:16)

Yes. Well, what made me also think about one of the situations in our country in particular here in the United States is that people live lives in debt. They're indebted, credit card debt, overwhelmed by debt because of what you talk about on page 46, wanting the need for more.

Wanting keeps the ego alive much more than having. Yes. Let's talk about that.

[Speaker 1] (46:17 - 46:19)

Now that's again a structure of the ego.

[Speaker 2] (46:19 - 46:19)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (46:19 - 46:43)

Because we've been talking about content and structure and one of the main structure of the ego is it is never satisfied. So for example, when you have attained a goal or attained something that you wanted. I got a nice house.

Not a nice house. Nice things in the house. And after a little while, it no longer satisfies you and that's always a sign that it was an egoic goal.

[Speaker 2] (46:43 - 46:44)

Because I now need nicer things.

[Speaker 1] (46:44 - 47:15)

Yes. And I need more square footage. Yes.

Yes. So nothing satisfies the ego for long and therefore it needs to continue to look for more. And of course, and this is to do also with the ego's need for future because it's only by attaching undue importance to the future because it's looking for more in the future moment.

It seeks to complete itself at some point and it wants to attain something in addition to

what you already have.

[Speaker 2] (47:15 - 47:22)

So how do we stop that and begin to be satisfied where we are with what we have and who we are?

[Speaker 1] (47:23 - 48:32)

Well, first of all, to see the illusion of seeking fulfillment in the future. Sometimes people need to have lived for a while to see that that's actually true. Right.

That no matter what you achieve or what you attain, you're not satisfied for long. So what do we do about this? We realize that the thing that is of prime importance in our lives, we had always overlooked and that's the ego in us had always overlooked that.

And that thing that is of absolutely prime importance in our life is the present moment. The present moment is actually the easiest exit point out of the ego state of consciousness because when you're absolutely present in this moment, the ego can't survive. There's only conscious presence.

The ego lives through past and future. It identifies with the past, but it's not a very happy identity. And it looks to the future where it wants this, that or the other to complete itself.

[Speaker 2] (48:32 - 48:39)

Well, someone's asked me, what about our past memories that are pleasant? You have happy times, the pleasant memories.

[Speaker 1] (48:39 - 49:38)

Okay, and when you remember those memories, it's also the present moment. So no matter what you remember from the past, when those things happened, whether pleasant or unpleasant, did they happen in the past? That's what we say, okay, these things happened in the past, but of course they happened in the now because nothing can happen in the past.

There is only the now. And when you remember something from the past, when do you remember it? Now.

And when you think of something that may happen in the future, when do you think of that? Now. And when that thing actually happens, when does that happen?

Now. So there is no life apart from now. And that is a very important realization for people to have because the ego continuously overlooks the now.

It thinks past and future are more important. It gives much more importance to past and future. And the now is just almost as if didn't exist.

[Speaker 2] (49:38 - 49:58)

And what you're saying is that if we can learn to recondition ourselves to be present now, then we can be more alive to do whatever it is going to be in the future because even when the future gets here, it will only be now.

[Speaker 1] (49:58 - 50:04)

Yes. The now is the foundation for the rest of your life because the rest of your life will also be the now.

[Speaker 2] (50:04 - 50:11)

Got it. Madeline from Pennsylvania is 13 years old and is on the phone with a question. Madeline?

Hi. Hi.

[Speaker 1] (50:11 - 50:12)

Hello.

[Speaker 6] (50:13 - 50:28)

Hello. On page 47, at the end of the second paragraph, the sentence reads, intense wanting that has no specific object can often be found in the still-developing ego of teenagers, some of whom are in a permanent state of negativity and dissatisfaction.

[Speaker 9] (50:28 - 50:29)

Yes.

[Speaker 6] (50:29 - 50:41)

By stating this, are you implying that teenagers cannot be awakened, that although I'm reading this book, I may have no chance in reaching consciousness merely because I'm 13 and my ego is not fully developed?

[Speaker 2] (50:42 - 50:49)

Go, Madeline. Go, Madeline. I just think the fact that you could ask the question is pretty darn good.

[Speaker 1] (50:49 - 50:54)

Yes. Now, the first thing, you are more advanced than I was at 13.

[Speaker 2] (50:54 - 50:55)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (50:56 - 51:47)

Than most of us, I'd say, yeah. I would not have been able to read or understand that book when I was 13. So it certainly does not mean that you cannot be awakened because you're already awakening, because if you are not already awakening, the book would be completely meaningless to you.

Okay. So there is a new generation growing up and there are more youngsters now than before who may not have to go through the extreme egoic delusion that we had to go through in our generation and you may be one of them. It doesn't mean perhaps that your ego will not develop at all.

Your ego will develop, but I don't believe that you will be as trapped in ego as I had to be. I can't speak for Oprah. I know Oprah is fine now.

[Speaker 2] (51:47 - 51:47)

Oprah was trapped.

[Speaker 1] (51:48 - 51:49)

She was very trapped, Madeline.

[Speaker 2] (51:50 - 51:51)

She was very trapped.

[Speaker 1] (51:51 - 51:56)

So your chances are excellent. You're already awakening. It's wonderful to see.

[Speaker 2] (51:57 - 52:28)

Let me ask you this though, Madeline. When you just read us that passage at the bottom of page 47, intense wanting that has no specific object can often be found in the still developing ego of teenagers. So what you're saying there is that the ego of teenagers is still in the process of becoming.

And also, Madeline, don't you see it in your friends? This sort of intense wanting? Yeah, all the time.

Okay. So I think that's what he was talking about. Yes.

He was talking about all of your friends, but not you, Madeline.

[Speaker 1] (52:28 - 52:32)

Now, Madeline, do you detect intense wanting in yourself?

[Speaker 2] (52:32 - 52:33)

Yeah, occasionally.

[Speaker 1] (52:34 - 52:34)

Occasionally.

[Speaker 2] (52:35 - 52:35)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (52:35 - 52:40)

But you're not totally identified because you know it's there. There is an awareness there, isn't there?

[Speaker 2] (52:41 - 53:29)

Mm-hmm. Okay. Are you understanding the book, Madeline?

Yeah, it makes a lot of sense, actually. Wow. What grade are you in, actually?

I'm in eighth grade. Eighth grade, okay. Well, great to hear from you.

Thank you so much. Thank you. Keep reading.

Thank you. Thank you. That's pretty cool, isn't it?

Thirteen. I couldn't have listened. I was in so much trouble at 13.

I didn't have... Me too. Yes.

Okay. As we make our way in the world, this is from Japan, Toyohashi, Japan. As we make our way in the world, being confident, assertive, our characteristics that help us get a job, that big promotion, I realize now that these are traits that are associated with ego.

And so the question then becomes, how then does one move beyond the ego? Great question. How does one move beyond the ego?

[Speaker 1] (53:31 - 53:34)

Become aware of the ego is the first step.

[Speaker 2] (53:35 - 53:52)

But can't you still be the biggest jerk on earth and still just be aware of it and say, well, I'm a jerk. Boy, that sure is some big ego of mine. You know, you were talking earlier, I was thinking, you know, you can be in the moment, still being one of those road raging people.

Road raging jerk in the moment. What?

[Speaker 1] (53:52 - 53:59)

And aware that you are road raging jerk in the moment. It's unlikely that at that moment you are actually aware.

[Speaker 2] (53:59 - 54:00)

Really?

[Speaker 1] (54:00 - 54:08)

Because if you're aware, then you cannot be totally possessed. By? By the ego, by the form, the thought form or the emotional form.

[Speaker 2] (54:08 - 54:11)

Okay. Usually that's the pain body that's taken over.

[Speaker 1] (54:12 - 55:45)

Yes. If the dimension of awareness is present, you are not totally in the grip of ego. And so, but the quickest way out of ego is to practice as much as possible living in the present moment, which means to give more attention to this moment than to the future or the past.

To make this moment the primary factor in your life rather than future and past. Of course, you still use future and past for practical purposes. It helps to make an appointment, to go from here to there.

It's all fine. It works very well. But it means being present?

As much as possible, being open to whatever arises in the present moment. The word that I use, and I think it may be helpful for many people, is make friends with the present moment. Because the ego doesn't come to that.

The ego always is antagonistic. It wants, at best, it uses the present moment as a

stepping stone because it wants to get to the next moment which promises greater fulfillment at best. But in many cases, the ego actually resists the present moment.

So if you can make the present moment into the primary focal point of your life and live, then ego will very quickly diminish in you because it cannot survive the present moment. So the ego...

[Speaker 2] (55:45 - 55:45)

That's how you do it.

[Speaker 1] (55:46 - 55:48)

That's how one moves beyond the ego.

[Speaker 2] (55:48 - 55:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (55:48 - 56:18)

The ego... Present. So the ego lives as if...

People who are possessed by the ego live as if the present moment were their enemy. They're stressed. They want to get somewhere else.

Whenever you need to, they're doing something, but they really already want to be at the end of their doing. Yeah. They don't want to be where they are.

They'd rather be somewhere else. They don't want to be who they are with. They don't...

There's always a striving away from now internally. Yeah. And that's, of course, the dysfunction.

[Speaker 2] (56:18 - 56:31)

I just had a moment like that today because I was waiting on somebody to get something ready and they said, sorry, we're so sorry. We're going to hurry up. We're waiting.

And I go, no. I took the lesson from the book. No, I'm just here being with myself.

[Speaker 9] (56:31 - 56:31)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:31 - 56:37)

Not waiting on anything because if you're waiting, you're in anticipation and you're wanting to be out of that moment.

[Speaker 1] (56:37 - 57:01)

That's right. Waiting means you don't like this moment. Right.

You'd rather have another moment. So whenever you are waiting, so to speak... Why not practice being rather than waiting?

Which means completely inhabit this moment and feel your body, perhaps. Feel the energy. And that's very pleasant to feel that you're alive.

[Speaker 2] (57:01 - 57:10)

All right. We have one last phone call. A question from Michelle in Philadelphia.

Hello. Hi, Oprah. How are you?

Hi. Good, good.

[Speaker 7] (57:10 - 57:36)

Yeah. Hi, Eckhart. Hello.

I'm just like a little bit so excited that you called me. My question was that I'm a little bit confused with chapter two. I understand the quote, if someone takes your shirt, let them have your coat as well.

But where do you draw the line without getting walked all over? I do not want to be an egotistical person, but at the same time, I don't want to get taken advantage of. Good question.

So I was having a little bit confusion with that.

[Speaker 1] (57:36 - 57:36)

Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (57:37 - 57:37)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (57:37 - 57:37)

Good, good, good.

[Speaker 7] (57:37 - 57:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (57:38 - 58:46)

All it says is sometimes letting go, there's more power in letting go than in clinging or hanging on to something. So there are situations when you actually become empowered when you let go rather than when you cling. It does not mean that people walk all over you.

In fact, I say there are situations when you have to say no very clearly to a situation or to a person. But even that no can be of two different kinds. Usually the no is very negative when you say no to a person.

Person says, I'll give you a ride home and you see the person is drunk. Of course, you wouldn't say yes just to be pleasant. You say no.

Now, do you say no with negative energy and in a state of resistance or do you say no that is positive where it simply means clear and straightforward? No, I won't do that. This is very different from the resistance no.

Yeah. I call that the no that is not negative, a high quality no too.

[Speaker 2] (58:46 - 58:53)

So you're saying be able to be in the state of presence and awareness so that you can surrender whatever needs to be surrendered.

[Speaker 1] (58:53 - 58:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (58:54 - 59:05)

That does not mean, and surrender does not mean allowing yourself to be walked over but to be fully present so that you can be conscious of what's always going on.

[Speaker 1] (59:05 - 59:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (59:06 - 59:20)

So it means in some cases it's fine to say, here, you want it, take it. In other cases, it's not, depending upon what the situation is. That's right.

Based upon the truth of who you are in any given moment. Yes. Yeah.

[Speaker 9] (59:20 - 59:21)

Okay.

[Speaker 2] (59:21 - 59:32)

I got that, Michelle. Thank you for asking the question. It helped me to get it.

So let's close with the piece that passes all understanding that you talk about on page 56. What is that piece?

[Speaker 1] (59:33 - 59:50)

That piece comes when you live in internal alignment with the present moment, which means what is, whatever is. When you no longer argue with what is, when you don't fight it internally, this present moment already, always is.

[Speaker 2] (59:50 - 59:52)

Even if it's a situation that you don't want.

[Speaker 1] (59:52 - 1:00:39)

Even if you don't want it, it is. You must accept it first. You accept first and then you take action.

Because that was the mud example you used last week. Yes, you get... Even if you're stuck in the mud.

This is where I am right now. I'm here. And then you take action.

But that action no longer arises out of negativity, which is there when you don't like to be where you are, when you don't like this moment. Always friendly with the present moment. Accepting the is-ness of the present moment.

Then move on from there. Then whatever action you take is actually empowered by life itself. When you're in a state of negativity or resistance, your action is not empowered by life.

So it's not inspired and much less effective than action that comes out of the state of non-resistance. Right.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:40 - 1:00:55)

Before we say goodbye, I'd like to thank you for being with Eckhart and with me. Spend this week rereading and thinking about Chapter 3. Chapter 3 is all about the core of ego.

Thank you again, Eckhart. Thank you. This is just the coolest.

Yes.

[Speaker 5] (1:00:57 - 1:01:37)

Hey, Supersolars. Looking for a great new read or listen? Well, that's why we're so excited about Oprah's new book, *The Path Made Clear, Discovering Your Life's Direction and Purpose*.

Oprah has collected all of the lessons she's learned from thought leaders like Eckhart Tolle and Brene Brown and innovators like Jay-Z and Lin-Manuel Miranda, who all understand what it means to achieve the life of your dreams. *The Path Made Clear* is available now on Apple Books, Amazon, Audible, and at your local bookstore. It really is a game changer for anyone seeking to discover their true calling and start living it.

So what are you waiting for? Get the book now and begin your journey today.

Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : Role-Playing : The Many Faces of the Ego (Chapter 4) [gid : [//art19-episode-locator/v0/ikDUPxIUUpzWdyZ58p1D48A9oJl-rGFz71EKoQgaX9Io](https://art19-episode-locator/v0/ikDUPxIUUpzWdyZ58p1D48A9oJl-rGFz71EKoQgaX9Io)]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 3:13)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Thanks for joining me again as we continue exploring one of my favorite books ever, Eckhart Tolle's A New Earth. Today, Eckhart and I dig into Chapter 4, and it's all about role-playing and the many faces of the ego. Shows up in lots of different ways.

Think of all the roles that you might identify with. Parent, daughter, son, perfectionist, victim, the list goes on and on. Today, we'll discover how defining ourselves by roles and labels actually feeds the ego, keeps that thing going all the time, and can keep you feeling stuck.

And if you're an animal lover like me, you're going to love what Eckhart has to say about the greatest lesson our pets can teach us. They're not just there to be pets. Big lessons there.

And here we go. Chapter 4 of Eckhart Tolle's A New Earth. Welcome, everybody, to week

number four of our New Earth class.

Thank you again for joining us as we come together to study and to discuss Eckhart Tolle's A New Earth. I am just so happy that so many of you around the world are making time, you're giving time to yourself every week to be awakened, and we're all doing this together. It is really my deepest hope that our collective consciousness will begin to create a powerful transformation, not only in our individual lives, but in the future of our planet.

So welcome to you all, and welcome, sir.

[Speaker 1] (3:13 - 3:14)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (3:14 - 3:25)

Yes. Let us begin here on Chapter 4, which is a very long chapter. Yes.

When you wrote this, you must have been at it for a while.

[Speaker 1] (3:25 - 3:33)

Yes. And in a way, it reflects all the main themes in the book that are actually already contained in that chapter. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (3:34 - 4:02)

The chapter is called Roleplaying the Many Faces of the Ego. So before we really begin, I'd like to take a moment and talk about one of the most frequently asked questions. So many people who are committed to the book and becoming aware of a new way of thinking, a new way of consciousness, want to know how they can relate to people in their lives who are not yet on this path and don't think they need to be.

[Speaker 1] (4:03 - 5:55)

Yes. The main thing is that the shift can only happen inside you. So not to expect other people to also change or to expect or say, I cannot change unless somebody close to me also changes.

The main thing is to take responsibility for your own state of consciousness and allow other people, especially people that you are close to, to be where they are. Not to demand that because something is happening inside you and you are beginning to change, not to demand that others should also change. Change does not come about in others by trying to make them change.

The most powerful way of bringing about change in others is not trying to bring about

change in the other, but to completely accept the other as he or she is. So that is absolutely vital. There are even schools of psychotherapy that recognize that.

So you give the other person complete acceptance. And that's part of this change that's happening in us is that we step out of the judgmental mind that continuously judges the other. So we step out of that and if we step out of the judgmental mind, we are able to simply accept your partner, a close friend, a family member, a relative.

This is where they are at right now. They are still going through their old behavior patterns. What has changed is you are no longer resisting their pattern and reacting to, and by reacting, reinforcing their pattern.

That's right. That's right. So you're not taking part in that game anymore.

[Speaker 2] (5:56 - 6:09)

So part of your change has to be your willingness not to judge, you know, to sit back and to be an observer in your own life and then to more clearly see the ego in others as you also see it in yourself.

[Speaker 1] (6:10 - 6:10)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (6:10 - 6:11)

Don't judge it.

[Speaker 1] (6:11 - 6:11)

No.

[Speaker 2] (6:11 - 6:13)

Just know that that's what it is.

[Speaker 1] (6:13 - 6:38)

Yes. And don't mistake what you're observing, the behavior that people manifest. As them.

That's not who they are. And that's a vital distinction because if you mistake that for who they are, then you will perpetuate that kind of behavior. So that's not, it won't work.

Acceptance is vital. Acceptance.

[Speaker 2] (6:38 - 7:00)

And isn't it sort of like, I mean, all of you who've asked that question, it's kind of like when people join the church or are, quote, born again, or, you know, we've heard about being born again in the church, or you find Jesus or you find Buddha or you discover a new way of being for yourself. And now you want everybody to go to Jesus. Yes.

And you want everybody to believe what you believe.

[Speaker 1] (7:00 - 7:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (7:00 - 7:04)

That is part of your ego that now wants people to believe what you believe.

[Speaker 1] (7:04 - 8:00)

Yes. And so that's a trap one can fall into even with this teaching, which isn't really based on belief at all. So it's not a new belief.

We're not trying to find some new belief. It's going beyond the thinking mind into awareness. But there is always the danger when you discover something new that you want to talk about it to others.

And sometimes it works because sometimes the other person is totally ready and receptive and say, wow, I never realized that. But they recognize it from within because the readiness is there. Right.

But the readiness is not there in everybody. So some people buy copies of the New Earth or the Power of Now for their friends or relatives and then give them out. And sometimes they are disappointed when the other person says, doesn't make sense to me at all.

It means they're not yet ready. And that's fine. Maybe they put it on the shelf and maybe 10 years later, they're not ready.

It's quite possible.

[Speaker 2] (8:00 - 9:34)

Absolutely. Absolutely. We're going deeper into identifying the ego in all of its forms.

Chapter four, role playing and the many faces of our ego. Let me start by saying that I think the essence it's a long chapter, but I think that the essence of this chapter is what you say on page one hundred and four, everybody, that you are a human being. What does that mean?

Mastery of life is not a question of control, but of finding a balance between human and

being mother, father, husband, wife, young, old, all roles that you play, the functions you fulfill, whatever you do, all that belongs to the human dimension. It has its place and needs to be honored. But in itself, it is not enough for a fulfilled, truly meaningful relationship or life.

Human alone is never enough, no matter how hard you try or what you achieve. I just love that sentence. I loved it so much.

I wrote, wow. Yeah, well, wow. Human alone is never enough, no matter how hard you try or what you achieve.

Then there is being. It is found in the still, alert presence of consciousness itself. The consciousness that you are.

Human is form. Being is formless. Human and being are not separate, but interwoven.

That's the essence to me of this chapter.

[Speaker 1] (9:35 - 9:40)

Yes. And one could say the essence of the whole teaching in a way. Yes.

Way of putting it.

[Speaker 2] (9:41 - 9:56)

So and of course, human alone is never enough, no matter how hard you try or what you achieve. And that is the essence of why people are in such suffering and such struggle and such angst against themselves in life, is it not?

[Speaker 1] (9:56 - 11:00)

And it's why they play roles, because the ego plays roles, because there's unawareness that within you, there is the source of all power. So people who are out of touch with the power within or the place where all power resides, the aliveness itself, consciousness itself, then they feel a sense of lack. Why are they not in touch with it?

Because they are not present. They're not in the present moment, because the present moment is the entry point into that place of power within. If you're not present, you don't realize that there is a source of power within.

And then you believe that you need to get secondary power from someone or some situation or other people. Then the ego plays roles to manipulate the environment and other people to get what it thinks it needs, not realizing that all the things that it thinks will give it the power that it seems to lack, all that is already within you if you could only be present in the now.

[Speaker 2] (11:01 - 11:11)

I got it. Okay. So the question is how not to lose ourselves in the human dimension, how not to, by being present in the now.

[Speaker 1] (11:11 - 11:17)

Yes. And by realizing that whenever you lose yourself... In the human dimension.

[Speaker 2] (11:17 - 11:21)

That's all the stuff that being human brings with it.

[Speaker 1] (11:21 - 11:49)

Yes. On the most primordial level, losing oneself means losing oneself in that continuous stream of thinking that goes through people's heads. So it drags you along.

It takes all your conscious attention. Remember, we started today with taking attention away from mind and putting it into the body. Right.

Another thing you can do is take attention away from thinking and put it into sense perceptions and really look and listen and touch things so that an alertness arises.

[Speaker 2] (11:49 - 12:12)

You know what I found by doing this? I don't know about all the rest of you, but I have found by being more present, just doing that one exercise, putting yourself, if I'm walking along a path in the woods near my house, be there and not be, you know, in my head thinking about what I need to do, just to be there. And what I found is, I don't know if you all are realizing this too, you are just less stressed.

[Speaker 1] (12:12 - 12:13)

Less stressed.

[Speaker 2] (12:13 - 12:14)

You're just less stressed.

[Speaker 1] (12:14 - 12:29)

You're calmer. Yes. And you don't carry the heavy burden of a personality or me with the burden of past and future, my problematic future, my problematic past.

You're much more, you're light and free when you walk in presence.

[Speaker 2] (12:30 - 12:35)

Then how do you ever plan for anything if you're not thinking about the future? How do you ever get anything done?

[Speaker 1] (12:35 - 12:46)

You plan in the present moment. When the time comes to plan, and the time is not when you're walking in the woods. When you're walking in the woods, the time is to be present.

Unless you want to go to the woods to plan.

[Speaker 2] (12:46 - 12:48)

You could go to the woods to plan.

[Speaker 1] (12:48 - 13:13)

You could. Yes, you could. But it's much more likely that your planning is going to be fruitful if it is preceded by a period of presence and stillness.

All right. Any mind activity is much more likely to be beneficial and to be creative if it's preceded by presence and stillness. And then you apply the mind and say, okay, what do I have to do today?

[Speaker 2] (13:13 - 13:22)

And then you make a list. So if you're going to be in the future, do that as a concentrated event or experience.

[Speaker 1] (13:22 - 13:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (13:22 - 13:24)

Say, now I'm going to sit and plan.

[Speaker 1] (13:24 - 14:14)

Yes. And don't think about tomorrow. Once you've done that, then you know this is what I have to do so that you're not continuously in the next moment.

You don't project yourself. You play mental movies about what you're going to say when that situation arises. So you can, you trust in life that whatever it is that you need when the future comes will be there.

So that's the, as far as practical matters are concerned, future is simply something that you use, like I call it a clock time. You make an appointment for tomorrow. And you deal

with tomorrow, tomorrow.

Yes. So you don't continuously project yourself away from the now to some future believing that it's more important, going to be more important than the now.

[Speaker 2] (14:14 - 14:23)

It's not. Because what you say on page 122, anybody who is one with what he or she does is building the new earth.

[Speaker 1] (14:23 - 14:24)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (14:24 - 14:25)

That's how you do it.

[Speaker 1] (14:25 - 14:55)

Being one with what you're doing means being total in what you do so that the main focus of your attention is not where you want to get to. You know where you want to get to. Right.

But the main focus of your attention is on the actual doing now. So this is what, the energy flows fully into this. The energy doesn't, is not diverted from what you're doing now through mental dysfunction because you're wanting to get there.

Because then whatever you're doing will be stressful.

[Speaker 2] (14:55 - 14:59)

Because whatever you give your 100% attention to is going to be better anyway.

[Speaker 1] (14:59 - 14:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (14:59 - 15:00)

Absolutely.

[Speaker 1] (15:00 - 15:28)

There was a Zen master, he was watching somebody in a competition archery and a man was trying very hard to win this competition but he just couldn't make it. And then somebody asked the Zen master, what's he doing wrong? And the Zen master said his need to win drains him of power.

Wow. And so his need to win is some future, he wants to have some future moment where he's going to be fulfilled.

[Speaker 2] (15:28 - 15:29)

Wow.

[Speaker 1] (15:29 - 15:54)

So his attention is not totally in the now. So the now, where all power resides, this power that resides in the now cannot flow then into what you're doing. The openness isn't there.

Yeah. Because to have mastery in any endeavor, whatever it is, you need to be total in what you do. That's what athletes know, the great ones know.

And then when they enter that, they call it the zone.

[Speaker 2] (15:54 - 16:24)

Yeah. Okay. When Kadada from California was saying that as a young person, she's thinking about the future and thinking about wanting to have a career and husband and so forth, I think a lot of people felt unsatisfied by your response.

I've heard that a lot of people were like, I feel the same way Kadada feels. A lot of people are wondering where the passion goes, where the ambition goes and how you can relate passion and ambition, which is what I think Kadada was saying.

[Speaker 1] (16:24 - 16:25)

Okay.

[Speaker 2] (16:25 - 16:32)

With this new awakening. Yes. So do we now just, we're just all so awakened and that we become passive people?

[Speaker 1] (16:32 - 17:58)

No, the passion is much greater when you are totally focused on what you're doing now. The passion will become stress. The more you're focused on where you want to get to, the more the passion will degenerate into stress.

You may still have a high energy, but there's a lot of negative energy that comes in. So if you want to remain truly in your power, then you need to be total. And that applies to the smallest thing that you do during the day.

Right. Because even great endeavors consist of small steps, even the greatest thing. You are doing wonderful work, but every day that you spend consists of small steps.

One needs to be present as you are. That's where the power comes from every moment and not look to some future moment that promises some kind of greater fulfillment. That is the delusion.

It does not mean that you don't have a plan. You can plan you. I want to achieve, I want to build up a business.

I want to do this or that. But the main focus must be in the doing. And if the main focus is in the doing now, that's the passion is there and the deep enjoyment is there and an intensity of energy.

An intensity of energy. Say that again what the Zen master said that his desire to win drains him of power.

[Speaker 2] (17:58 - 17:59)

Desire to win drains him of power.

[Speaker 1] (17:59 - 18:08)

His need to win drains him of power. So the being, yeah, that's the being present.

[Speaker 2] (18:09 - 18:12)

You just focused on whatever is necessary in that moment.

[Speaker 1] (18:13 - 18:13)

In that moment.

[Speaker 2] (18:13 - 18:16)

I'm sure that struck a lot of people that that Zen master quote.

[Speaker 1] (18:16 - 18:16)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (18:17 - 18:29)

Because you're so you got to win, you got to make it, you got to succeed, you got to, got to, got to. And that's draining energy from you. Instead, we should be focused on this moment, this step, and then the next step, and then the next step.

[Speaker 1] (18:29 - 19:23)

That's right. Now, you may win if you try very hard or very stressed. Occasionally it happens that you do win, but it's not really worth it because you get more and more depleted.

And after a while you lose the, you lose the joy of life. If you spend five years of stress and finally you achieve what you wanted, is that worth it? Right.

Is there joy in what I'm doing? Is there an enliveness and intensity? That's the question people believe.

Sometimes high energy in our civilization, when there's high energy in what you do, often people believe there must be stress. They cannot imagine high energy in what you do without stress. That's how we are conditioned because we're always conditioned to look to the next thing.

But there is a much more powerful state of high energy and intensity of energy.

[Speaker 2] (19:23 - 19:25)

I was going to say where the energy is intense and focused.

[Speaker 1] (19:25 - 19:28)

No, no stress at all. No stress at all.

[Speaker 2] (19:28 - 19:53)

So let's, let's get into this chapter. You say that we can assume that the ego is at play whenever we feel superior or inferior to anyone else. Now, I, I know this is true.

When you see the person who's the biggest jerk out there, you know, people who act with such a sense of superiority and arrogance. I know that that is because they are really feeling inferior.

[Speaker 1] (19:53 - 19:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (19:54 - 19:55)

But still hard to deal with.

[Speaker 1] (19:55 - 19:55)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (19:55 - 20:11)

But what surprised me is that you say that often people who are also shy are also acting out of their egos. And you say whenever you feel superior or inferior to anyone, that's the ego in you. Why is that?

[Speaker 1] (20:11 - 20:23)

Well, if you're shy, then you're, you're, what I, what do you fear is to be found, uh, wanting, but so you're not, you're there.

[Speaker 2] (20:24 - 20:27)

The fear is that the attention may take the form of disapproval or criticism.

[Speaker 1] (20:27 - 21:01)

Yes. You're afraid of that. So because you're afraid of that, whatever the disapproval or the criticism would represent an injury of your mentally mind made sense of self, which is the ego.

So it was the image that I have of myself as a capable person or whatever it is that I'm trying to uphold. If I, if I encounter criticism, the ego immediately will be hurt. And so a shy person would not dare say anything because they're afraid of ego loss.

[Speaker 2] (21:01 - 21:05)

You're afraid of ego loss. Got it.

[Speaker 1] (21:05 - 21:38)

And so, because sometimes that's mistaken for an egoless person, a person who's very meek. It's not. And deep down inside the shy person or this person who is suffering from this sense of inferiority, there's the desire, the unexpressed desire to be superior.

Wow. And inside the person who acts superior, who seems to have a big confident ego, there's always the hidden fear that he might be inferior. And his whole acting out is to compensate for that hidden fear of being inferior.

[Speaker 2] (21:39 - 21:43)

Okay. Behind every positive self-concept is the hidden fear of not being good enough?

[Speaker 1] (21:43 - 21:44)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (21:44 - 21:55)

Behind every negative self-concept is the hidden desire of being the greatest or better

than others? Yes. And where does self-esteem fit into all of that?

Where is real self-esteem? What would true self-esteem look like?

[Speaker 1] (21:56 - 23:08)

Well, first there is the ego self-esteem, which is really, even if you have high ego self-esteem, as we've just seen, there's always hidden fear underneath it. It's always there to compensate for that fear that you feel of not being good enough or perhaps failing. So you need to play a role of being big to compensate for the fear of failure that's deep down.

But usually the world would say he or she has high self-esteem, people who have big egos. But the world doesn't realize that that's not true self-esteem. True self-esteem goes much deeper.

It's finding the source of power and aliveness deep inside. We talked about the lake. Realizing that within the depth of your being, there is that continuous source of intense aliveness and power, which is the stillness out of which everything comes.

The potential, the unexpressed potential for all form is there within every human being. You just have to become still.

[Speaker 2] (23:08 - 23:13)

True self-esteem is realizing that that sense of being, that presence is there.

[Speaker 1] (23:13 - 23:14)

It comes out of the stillness.

[Speaker 2] (23:14 - 23:19)

It comes out of the stillness. And that presence in me is the same as the presence in all people.

[Speaker 1] (23:19 - 23:19)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (23:20 - 23:27)

And when you recognize that and act from that space within yourself, that is when you have true self-esteem.

[Speaker 1] (23:27 - 23:34)

That's true self-esteem. And self-esteem then is no longer derived from the belief that

you are better than somebody else.

[Speaker 2] (23:34 - 23:42)

And so you are not attached to the labels or the roles that you play. And you speak about the many various roles that everybody has.

[Speaker 1] (23:42 - 23:56)

Yes. And then you're no longer devastated by criticism or get very angry when you're criticized, as the ego does. The ego is either totally devastated when you get, or it gets very angry when it gets criticized, the self-image.

[Speaker 2] (23:56 - 24:08)

But you know, there's a role that most women in our society, in all societies play, is that role of mother, which is a very, which is more than just a role. I mean, it's real. It's not just a role.

[Speaker 1] (24:08 - 24:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (24:08 - 24:09)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (24:09 - 24:55)

So we need to differentiate between the function that you need to fulfill in this world for a while. Right. So if you have a child, your function is to be the mother and to fulfill the function of being the mother, which of course is looking after the child, sometimes set limits, what the child is allowed to do and so on.

That's all fine. Now, if you become too identified with your function, then the function turns into a role. And then you cannot let go of the role.

And that gets stuck to you. And even when the child grows up and especially becomes a teenager, you still behave as if your child were small. And you still try to control and try to protect when it's no longer appropriate.

[Speaker 2] (24:55 - 24:56)

I got it.

[Speaker 1] (24:56 - 25:08)

Because you're stuck with a role then. So sometimes when the children become adults,

the adult children are still treated by their parents, parents who are stuck in the role of parent.

[Speaker 2] (25:08 - 25:09)

They can't let go of the role.

[Speaker 1] (25:09 - 25:17)

Yes. So they believe unconsciously that they need to continue to protect and ultimately control what the child does.

[Speaker 2] (25:17 - 25:19)

Because you don't parent a child the same at every age.

[Speaker 1] (25:19 - 25:20)

No.

[Speaker 2] (25:20 - 25:32)

Absolutely. And so they've lost sight of the function that they had as mother to be guide and to direct and to correct and to help and to protect. Right.

[Speaker 1] (25:32 - 25:33)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (25:33 - 25:37)

And they want to carry that in to the future. Yes. Because they are attached to the role.

[Speaker 1] (25:37 - 26:08)

Yes. Okay. And it's not only when the children grow up, even when the children already are still small.

Right. If you are completely identified with this role of mother, then also it can become obsessive. So you might become too controlling or overprotective.

Certain functions become overemphasized. You go too far in fulfilling these functions. So what was good initially is looking after the child, protecting the child can become too much.

[Speaker 2] (26:09 - 26:33)

I got it. I got it. Well, let's clarify what we mean by roles.

Because I think it's confusing to some people who say, well, listen, I am a doctor. I am a teacher. I am a lawyer.

I am a store clerk. I am that. Those are labels.

And what is the difference between the job functions that we have and the so-called and roles, you know, and the roles that we play?

[Speaker 1] (26:33 - 26:46)

I met a woman, middle-aged, and she talked to me in a certain way. And I asked, are you a schoolteacher? And she said, now, how did you know that I'm a schoolteacher?

[Speaker 2] (26:47 - 26:48)

She did that?

[Speaker 1] (26:48 - 26:53)

She was, because she had already, she talks to people as if she were talking to the children at school.

[Speaker 2] (26:53 - 26:54)

OK.

[Speaker 1] (26:54 - 26:57)

So and even when she said, how did you know? She was pointing a finger.

[Speaker 2] (26:57 - 26:58)

OK, OK.

[Speaker 1] (26:58 - 27:16)

You naughty boy. How did you know that? Yes, yes.

Of course, that's how I knew it. Because she had become completely identified with her function. So the role took her over.

She couldn't leave it. She couldn't leave her function behind after work. Even inside her family, she behaved like a teacher.

[Speaker 2] (27:16 - 27:21)

You say when you adjust the way you interact based upon who you're talking to, you're playing a role.

[Speaker 1] (27:22 - 27:23)

Yes, that also.

[Speaker 2] (27:23 - 27:24)

So do we talk to everyone the same?

[Speaker 1] (27:25 - 27:31)

No, most people, if they, but you need to have some power of self-observation, which is another word for awareness.

[Speaker 2] (27:31 - 27:33)

We talk to children differently.

[Speaker 1] (27:33 - 27:33)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (27:33 - 27:35)

Friends differently than we do a head of state.

[Speaker 1] (27:35 - 27:56)

Yes, or a so-called important person and a so-called not important person. The janitor in a building different than you speak to your boss. Yes, and this is very interesting to observe in oneself because you need to observe it in yourself.

Otherwise, you won't know that you're doing it. And you can only observe it in yourself if there's some awareness there that is outside of the role.

[Speaker 2] (27:57 - 28:40)

And is this why when you go to a party or you're at an event and you don't know people, the first thing you want to know is. A friend of mine, Marlene, said to me, who is taking our class every week, hello, Marlene, that she was at a gathering recently and that she was trying to practice the principles of a new earth and that she was introducing herself around the table and she was doing that in such a way that she didn't talk about what she had done or accomplished or who she was married to or where she lived and that one of the people at the table said, well, we don't care about who you are.

We want to know what you do. We want to know what do you do. And what I realized is people want to know that so they can determine your so-called value.

[Speaker 1] (28:40 - 28:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (28:41 - 28:45)

And to see if you will be of value or...

[Speaker 1] (28:45 - 28:49)

Yes, perhaps that... Or necessary... Yes, perhaps...

[Speaker 2] (28:49 - 28:51)

For them to play the role with you.

[Speaker 1] (28:51 - 29:02)

Yes, enhance their ego or whether you might be a threat to their ego, whether they can use you or whether they need to be afraid of you or whether they want to have further contact...

[Speaker 2] (29:02 - 29:02)

Whether you fit in their circle.

[Speaker 1] (29:03 - 29:12)

Fit in, yes. And all these things, and then many judgments go through people's minds often when they meet somebody and they're automatic. You observe whatever...

[Speaker 2] (29:12 - 29:20)

That is what people mean by what do you do, really, isn't it? For the most part. They want to say, what do you do?

Let me place it in terms of...

[Speaker 1] (29:20 - 29:20)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (29:20 - 29:22)

How valuable that's going to be to me.

[Speaker 1] (29:23 - 29:32)

Now, when you don't play roles anymore, you don't have to become strange and then when you go to parties and somebody asks you, what do you do? You say, I have to...

[Speaker 2] (29:32 - 29:39)

I am. Yes. I am.

I am that I am. That is all that I am.

[Speaker 1] (29:39 - 29:50)

This is the basic truth, but you don't need to say that when you go to a party. You don't. You can actually talk quite normally without being identified with what you say.

If people ask me...

[Speaker 2] (29:51 - 30:09)

So that's the essence of what you're trying to say to us in this chapter, is that, of course, there are all roles that we are assigned or labels that we use to identify ourselves. What you're saying is, the problem is when you become completely identified with it. And you think that is who you are.

[Speaker 1] (30:09 - 30:22)

Yes. And you behave and act as if that were who you are. So you get trapped inside that conditioned personality.

And whatever you do, then the personality is acting out.

[Speaker 2] (30:22 - 30:33)

You mention in the book where you play the role of patient. And if you go to a doctor who's playing the role of doctor, he often doesn't see you, the person, because he's playing the role.

[Speaker 1] (30:33 - 31:02)

Yes, he has become so identified with his function that the function has taken him over and he has become a role. And many patients can actually feel that when they go to a doctor, whether there's a human being still there or whether the doctor has become a role. Absolutely.

And so when the doctor has become a role, when you go to that doctor, you don't feel acknowledged anymore in your beingness. You feel he might be very competent as a doctor.

[Speaker 2] (31:02 - 31:02)

I know.

[Speaker 1] (31:03 - 31:14)

But something vital is lacking in the interaction when you see a doctor. He might be the greatest expert in his field. It still doesn't help.

Something very vital is missing. And everybody...

[Speaker 2] (31:14 - 31:24)

And you feel completely... That happened to me recently, where you feel completely dismissed and disconnected because you're thinking, he's just trying to get me out of here so he can get the next person in.

[Speaker 1] (31:24 - 31:24)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (31:24 - 31:24)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (31:25 - 31:29)

If he does that to you, you can imagine what he does that to a normal person.

[Speaker 2] (31:29 - 31:48)

Yeah. Because usually people treat me pretty nice. But anyway, there's a question from Grayson Pleasant in California that says, since I've been an owner of a dog, I find myself so much more in the present.

My question is, why am I naturally so much more present with an animal than I'm sometimes dealing with people?

[Speaker 1] (31:48 - 32:18)

Yes. Well, the animal does not provoke thought activity because the dog is not thinking. When the dog looks at you, the dog is not thinking what kind of a person you are.

The dog is not judging you. The dog is at a state of consciousness prior to the arrival of thought. So the dog is, and that state has certain similarities with the state of presence, which is a state of going beyond thinking, where we are going.

In both cases, if you are...

[Speaker 2] (32:18 - 32:20)

So in that way, the dogs are a little more enlightened than we are?

[Speaker 1] (32:20 - 32:23)

In some ways, the dogs are more connected with being...

[Speaker 2] (32:23 - 32:24)

With being.

[Speaker 1] (32:24 - 32:26)

...than we are, than normal humans are.

[Speaker 2] (32:26 - 32:27)

Normal humans are.

[Speaker 1] (32:27 - 32:28)

And so...

[Speaker 2] (32:28 - 32:30)

Because that's where they are all the time.

[Speaker 1] (32:30 - 32:43)

Yes. I sometimes call them dogs and cats, particularly because that's the pets that are millions of humans that are very important in their lives. Right.

I call them guardians of being.

[Speaker 2] (32:44 - 32:45)

Guardians of being.

[Speaker 1] (32:45 - 33:02)

Because for many people, they fulfill that function. For many people who are so lost in their minds, so much involved in their thought processes, the only moments they have when they are not trapped in that is when they're relating to their animal, their pet.

[Speaker 2] (33:02 - 33:08)

All right. You say that the role of the parent should not be to spare children from all suffering. Why not?

[Speaker 1] (33:10 - 33:28)

Because first of all, you can't. It would be futile to even attempt. Of course, you protect

the child as much as you can.

But every human being has to go through a certain amount of suffering. You cannot come into this planet and avoid suffering.

[Speaker 2] (33:30 - 33:32)

Because that's what being a human being is.

[Speaker 1] (33:32 - 33:32)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:33 - 33:35)

There's some discord.

[Speaker 1] (33:35 - 33:53)

Yes. And that is how we grow. If there were a human being that could have avoided all suffering, that human being would be totally superficial and totally identified with the external form of things because it's suffering that drives you deeper, drives you within where you need to find.

[Speaker 2] (33:53 - 33:56)

By suffering, do you mean not getting what we want?

[Speaker 1] (33:56 - 34:14)

Well, that's one form of suffering. Two, there are different forms of suffering. Many forms of suffering, of course, are generated by the ego itself.

These are ultimately unnecessary forms of suffering. Right. But they are necessary for as long as you are unconscious.

[Speaker 2] (34:15 - 34:18)

And another word for suffering would be challenges or difficulties, correct?

[Speaker 1] (34:19 - 34:19)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:20 - 34:24)

Challenges. So you can't be a human being without being challenged.

[Speaker 1] (34:24 - 35:48)

No, that would be... You would miss the whole purpose for being here. So you need to see even your children will not escape.

They will sooner or later, and usually sooner than later, they will encounter their form of suffering, whatever it is. You protect them as much as you can. But when you see certain things are inevitable, they may do things, unconscious behavior, they may generate their own suffering, self-generated, or it may happen to them from the outside.

But no matter what, it will happen. And then rather than going into intense anguish, see this is human suffering. And every human, you had to go through your forms of suffering.

In my case, for example, my parents had very heavy pain bodies. There was constant conflict at home. And that was my constant suffering.

This, of course, not only applies to children. It also applies to other people that may be close to you and going through their suffering. You do what you can to help them.

Whatever you can. The important thing is that you don't go into anguish yourself, because by going into anxiety and anguish yourself, you're not helping them at all. Because whatever state you are in transmits itself to others.

[Speaker 2] (35:48 - 35:54)

How does playing a role at work keep us from being powerful?

[Speaker 1] (35:57 - 37:03)

Well, if you play a role at work, you always have a secondary motive in what you do, because the ego is at work. You're not totally focused on the task at hand, because there is some self-interest there. You want to protect yourself.

You want to get credit for yourself. You want to perhaps eliminate other people around you, or perhaps you want to use other people. If you have a position of little power, then the ego is kind of there in potential.

It's latent as far as your work situation is concerned. The similar situation you have in certain third world countries, where often you find a revolution overthrows the government, and the people who initiate the revolution have the best intentions. They want to do away with corruption.

They want the best for their country. The moment they get into power, the latent ego in them, although they had good intentions, comes up and they repeat the same dysfunction that they wanted to do away with.

[Speaker 2] (37:03 - 37:12)

It happens all the time. All right. Shali lives in Stockholm.

I hear you have a question about raising your three-year-old daughter. Go ahead.

[Speaker 3] (37:12 - 37:55)

The question about her is, how do you stay present when you're trying to discipline your child, and she starts screaming and shouting? She's only three, so I can't really explain to her that it's really your ego that's coming out. I feel like she's learning these roles.

I guess my question is, I want to raise her as a more conscious human being. I don't want her to be awakened at the age of 35 like me. How do you raise a more conscious child, and how do you stay more conscious when you're dealing with conflict?

Because I don't want to set a negative pattern for when she's 16 and she wants to borrow the car, for example.

[Speaker 1] (37:56 - 38:17)

Yes, yes. I would suggest that you pay, first of all, pay more attention to your inner state than to what is happening to your daughter. Because I believe you experience perhaps your daughter causing you feelings of anxiety sometimes.

[Speaker 3] (38:18 - 38:19)

Yeah, right on.

[Speaker 1] (38:19 - 39:20)

You believe that? Now, that seems to be the case, that your daughter, by going through certain kinds of behavior, causes you feelings of anxiety. But ultimately, that is not the case.

You cause yourself the feelings of anxiety. When your daughter refuses to eat, she's not making you anxious. Only you can do that.

So it is vital what state of consciousness you are in, what emotional state you are in, when you are relating to your daughter. Because if you're often in a state of anxiety, you get into a vicious circle. The anxiety that you believe was caused by your daughter's behavior, but is ultimately caused by your reaction to your daughter's behavior, that anxiety then will affect her.

And that is a nervous energy field that will provoke further so-called bad behavior in her.

[Speaker 2] (39:20 - 39:27)

Because children absorb... I was going to say, a three-year-old is absorbing that and

picking up that energy more than even your language.

[Speaker 1] (39:27 - 39:27)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (39:28 - 39:30)

They're picking up the energy that you carry.

[Speaker 1] (39:30 - 39:30)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (39:31 - 39:32)

Right. Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (39:32 - 39:32)

So your first...

[Speaker 2] (39:32 - 39:34)

Because that is their language.

[Speaker 1] (39:34 - 41:12)

That's right. Yeah. And so your first realization needs to...

Your first interest needs to be in any situation with your child, okay, there's the external situation, there's what the child is doing or is not doing but should be doing, or screaming or whatever it is, or not eating, not wanting to go to bed, whatever children do. But your first interest needs to be, okay, what's my inner state right now? Am I accepting this moment no matter what form it is?

What I suggest is the little mantra that I recommend is to ask yourself whether you can be there as the space for whatever your daughter does. Can I be the space for this? This is a general thing that many people will find helpful no matter what situation you go into in life, at work, at home, wherever.

The present moment, am I able to accept this moment as it is or am I saying this should be different? You should behave differently but she's not behaving differently. She's behaving the way she's behaving right now.

You need to accept that right now she's screaming if that's what she does. There it is. Can I be the space for that?

And then you see her screaming. Another, this is related to the little exercise we had earlier where you felt yourself becoming transparent to an irritating external situation so that you don't have a reactive barrier inside you.

[Speaker 2] (41:12 - 41:40)

That's hard to do though when your child is screaming because your immediate instinct I would think is to stop the child from screaming, to resist the screaming, to try to prevent more screaming and so the resistance of that, the angst and the anxiety of that creates more screaming because if you could just be calm enough to allow your calmness to then calm the child. That's easier said than done.

[Speaker 1] (41:41 - 42:33)

Yes, that's your spiritual practice. You don't need any other spiritual practice for the next few years. It's far better than going to a monastery and meditate all day long.

It's much more effective making that into your spiritual practice and then you will see as you become more peaceful and more accepting of the present moment, more being the space, then that will transmit itself to the child and affect the child and if the child will absorb your emanation, your energetic vibrational frequency and the change will happen in that way rather than feeling that I need to change her.

The change happens when you change.

[Speaker 2] (42:33 - 42:46)

Yeah, that is to prevent her but that is to not allow her to do things that are dangerous. He's not saying that but he's saying about adjusting the way you are being, capital B, with her.

[Speaker 1] (42:46 - 42:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (42:47 - 42:53)

Capital B. Yes. Thank you.

Thank you so much. It's a way of being. Yes.

Present.

[Speaker 1] (42:54 - 42:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (42:54 - 42:59)

For any situation and what you were saying is we can apply it not just to children but to all situations.

[Speaker 1] (43:00 - 44:18)

Any situation and it's usually the case that in some people's lives they have a variety of little challenges. There's other people who have one predominant difficulty in their lives whether it's another person, whether it's a health situation or whether it's a work situation or financial problem. They have one huge challenge in their lives and usually one would consider this huge challenge in your life as your greatest enemy almost, the greatest burden or as Christians would call it my cross.

To bear. To bear. Yeah.

Now this can actually be turned around and you can make that very thing that is considered your great... Your cross to bear. You can make that into your greatest help on the spiritual path because it's precisely there that if you can bring acceptance to that and be the space for that situation that is usually called...

Would usually be called bad by the mind but it is. You can't argue with that. This is the situation right now.

Can I be the space for that? Then that situation takes you into surrender and into presence.

[Speaker 2] (44:19 - 44:57)

So many people when they were first talking about purchasing this book I saw a lot of messages and people saying I hope this, you know, shows me my life purpose. I want to awaken to my life purpose and for a lot of people they want that to be something grand. They want it to be, you know, saving starving children in India and Africa.

They want it to be some, you know, great description or something. But what you're saying is that if we allow ourselves to be fully present with whatever our chosen function is in life and whatever difficulties might arise that there is sacredness in the difficulty.

[Speaker 1] (44:57 - 44:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:57 - 44:58)

If we allow it to be.

[Speaker 1] (44:58 - 45:16)

Yes. And be fully present with whatever it the situation is now. Yes.

And then go from there. So because then your inner self changes when you're fully present with the situation you're no longer putting up internal resistance to life.

[Speaker 2] (45:16 - 45:25)

Even if there is that thing that you call there's something that you call background happiness. There's something that happened or needs to happen or someone who did.

[Speaker 1] (45:25 - 45:26)

Background unhappiness.

[Speaker 2] (45:26 - 45:47)

Background unhappiness. There's something that happened he refers to that on page 114 everybody. There's something that needs to happen in my life before I can be at peace.

Something happened in the past that should not have happened. Something is happening now that should not be happening. How do we make peace with the background unhappiness of our lives?

[Speaker 1] (45:47 - 46:12)

Yes. You recognize the background unhappiness as not content based but as structural. It's the structure of the egoic mind to create that.

No matter what situation if you haven't tackled or recognized the structure of the ego in yourself as certain thought forms that repeat themselves no matter what situation you go into they will come up in some new form but basically the same structure.

[Speaker 2] (46:14 - 47:01)

I got it. I got it. The secret to happiness everybody page 115.

There are three words that convey the secret of the art of living. The secret of all success and happiness. One with life.

Being one with life is being one with now you say. You then realize that you don't live your life but life lives you. Life is the dancer and you are the dance.

I have to tell you I love this book but I was like gee I thought life was the dance and I was the dancer. And there are a lot of people who are saying the same thing. Can you

explain how life is the dancer and we are the dance?

Why aren't we the dancer?

[Speaker 1] (47:02 - 48:01)

You are not separate from life. So whatever any form Life is a dancer. Life is dancing the dance of form one could say.

Every human being and everything that everything that exists is part of the dance of life. That which moves you the very consciousness that animates your being that animates every cell of your body that produces thoughts too the very consciousness that you are is the one universal the one life. And that permeates everything.

So the entire universe is permeated by that consciousness by life which is another word for God. I don't see God as an entity that is in a particular place somewhere but as the essence the intelligence the animating life essence behind all life forms. It's the eternal.

[Speaker 2] (48:02 - 48:02)

The totality.

[Speaker 1] (48:02 - 48:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:03 - 48:15)

It's the totality you see God you're saying that God is your idea of God is the totality of the essence of all life form.

[Speaker 1] (48:15 - 48:58)

Yes and ultimately you are not separate from that. It's the egoic mind that says my life. The moment you say my life you've already separated yourself from life.

It's a thought. You have a thought to say this is my life and then you think oh I can lose my life. I am not separate from life because I am life.

It's only through the structure of language that you create the illusion of separation. Mm-hmm. I see that.

The dog still knows on a primordial level the animal, the tree knows that it is one with life. So it doesn't have this fear of death and it doesn't see itself as separate from the rest of the universe.

[Speaker 2] (48:58 - 49:01)

So let me ask you the big question. You have no fear of death?

[Speaker 1] (49:02 - 49:14)

No. No. The ego has dissolved and so only the ego fears death.

I know there is no death. You know there is no death.

[Speaker 2] (49:17 - 49:19)

Okay tell me how.

[Speaker 1] (49:19 - 49:21)

I have a little thing at the end of this chapter.

[Speaker 2] (49:21 - 49:30)

I know you say the incontrovertible proof of immortality. I read that and I went okay. I read that.

I still.

[Speaker 1] (49:30 - 49:42)

I've done a little thing I did there. Usually when people talk about immortality they use certain arguments perhaps from physics. They say the energy gets never is destroyed.

Energy can only become transformed.

[Speaker 2] (49:42 - 49:43)

That's right transformed.

[Speaker 1] (49:43 - 50:21)

So the vital energy that is your life because energy cannot be destroyed must survive in some form. That's often the argument for the survival of that life. There is no death.

Only the form dissolves. That's right. That's one way you can approach it.

But what I thought I'd do I look at the structure of this sentence of language that says my life or I have a life because most people believe that they have a life and they also believe that they can lose their life. Now if you look at that sentence I can lose my life then I am separate from life.

[Speaker 2] (50:22 - 50:27)

So there is no such thing as my life you say at the end of this chapter page 128.

[Speaker 1] (50:27 - 50:44)

Because I am life. I am not separate from life. I am an expression of the one life a temporary expression in this form of the one timeless and formless life.

So I don't have a life because I am life expressing itself as this form.

[Speaker 2] (50:45 - 51:09)

Okay so what happens when you talked about your mother and father lying in the casket and you realized that the life force or formlessness that they were lying in the casket and there were these bodies but they were not there. They were not there. So we're not our bodies.

We do know that. Everybody who's reading this book knows we're not our bodies. We do get that.

[Speaker 1] (51:09 - 51:48)

Yes. And that's once you can actually sense that not just as a it's not just a belief you can also see that you're not your body even if you just approach it logically and see that when there's a dead body then the dead being is not there anymore. There's only the flesh and the bones.

Right. And when the being isn't there anymore the flesh and the bones very quickly dissolve. When the animating presence isn't there anymore all the atoms and molecules separate.

Right. And go their own way. Right.

Because the animating presence is not there anymore.

[Speaker 2] (51:49 - 52:26)

Okay. So continuing here. So there is no such thing as my life and I don't have a life.

I am life. I and life are one. It cannot be otherwise.

So how could I lose my life? How can I lose something that I don't have in the first place? How can I lose something that I am?

It is impossible. So what is happening here is I just got it. Hello, hello, hello.

I got it. We are confusing the I am life force with our bodies. Yes, yes.

We're confusing that.

[Speaker 1] (52:27 - 52:28)

Yes, that's right. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (52:29 - 52:50)

So when this dies and becomes the shell and dissipates and the atoms go wherever they go back into the ground, ashes to ashes, dust to dust we are confusing that which is the physical form. The human. We're confusing that with the being.

Yes, that's right. And they are separate.

[Speaker 1] (52:51 - 53:05)

Yes. So another way if you don't like the word life you can say the universe. People believe that I am here and there's the rest of the universe.

And they believe I have come into this universe. They don't know from where.

[Speaker 2] (53:06 - 53:06)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (53:06 - 53:59)

I've come into this universe. It would be more appropriate to feel that you have come out of this universe because you are this universe experiencing itself very briefly. I got that.

And so it wants to do that. Ooh, I got that, I got that, I got that. It's wonderful when you realize there's more to you than a person.

You are the universe. Expressing itself. Yes, and experiencing.

As a human. As a human. Called Eckhart.

Yes, for a little while. For a little while. And then it goes through other experiences.

And then where do we go, Eckhart? Could you tell us that? Well, let's see what happens.

Otherwise you take the fun out of it. If you knew the rest of your life already the fun would be taken out of it.

[Speaker 2] (53:59 - 54:27)

Oh, okay, all right. Well, before we say goodbye, I know there's lots we did not get to in this chapter. We could have spent, you know, two or three weeks on this one chapter.

But what would you say is the essence of this chapter? The essence of this chapter? Yeah, the role-playing chapter.

What I said in the beginning, that we're humans and beings. And in this body trying to live through the two.

[Speaker 1] (54:27 - 55:01)

Yes, it's balancing the human and the being. So that you can be function in this world of form, where you have to do things and fulfill your function. At the same time not lose yourself in that.

Be rooted in the depth of being. So that you're not lost in form. So there's a depth to you and rootedness in that stillness, that aliveness.

And then from there you function out here. And there's always then a peace in the background. A peace in the background.

No matter what's happening out there.

[Speaker 2] (55:01 - 55:12)

And most particularly not to be attached to, defined by the roles that we play in life and realize what they are. Just roles.

[Speaker 1] (55:12 - 55:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (55:13 - 55:13)

Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (55:13 - 55:23)

And relinquish the role when it's not required anymore. When your children grow up, you don't need to be a mother or father. You don't need to play that role anymore.

[Speaker 2] (55:23 - 55:29)

See, so many people think that that is who they are. And so when their children grow up, they don't know who they are anymore.

[Speaker 1] (55:29 - 55:33)

Yes. Can be a crisis or people retire. That's right.

They had identified...

[Speaker 2] (55:33 - 55:34)

They were their job.

[Speaker 1] (55:34 - 55:36)

Yes. And then who am I?

[Speaker 2] (55:36 - 55:39)

Yeah. You were talking about in Japan where it used to be you kept your job for life.

[Speaker 1] (55:40 - 55:40)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (55:40 - 55:44)

And you were sharing with us the last time about a man who committed suicide.

[Speaker 1] (55:44 - 55:53)

But there's been many cases of people in Japan who lost their jobs and committed suicide. Because they were so identified. Their company was their sense of self.

[Speaker 2] (55:55 - 56:33)

Well, fascinating. I want to thank all of you around the world for making this... This is really a remarkable experience for making it possible.

Tell all your friends, share the book with them. If they say, I don't get it, that's okay. That's really okay.

That's okay. They'll have the book and maybe pick it up a year from now, two years from now, 10 years from now. Next week, it's the chapter many of you've been waiting for.

Chapter five, the pain body. The pain body. If you feel burdened by your past, begin to learn how to lighten that load.

That's going to be really very exciting. This was fun.

[Speaker 4] (56:34 - 57:14)

Hey, Super Solars. Looking for a great new read or listen? Well, that's why we're so excited about Oprah's new book, *The Path Made Clear*, *Discovering Your Life's Direction and Purpose*.

Oprah has collected all of the lessons she's learned from thought leaders like Eckhart Tolle and Brene Brown and innovators like Jay-Z and Lin-Manuel Miranda, who all understand what it means to achieve the life of your dreams. *The Path Made Clear* is

available now on Apple Books, Amazon, Audible, and at your local bookstore. It really is a game changer for anyone seeking to discover their true calling and start living it.

So what are you waiting for? Get the book now and begin your journey today.

Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : The Core of Ego (Chapter 3)

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[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 3:05)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Welcome to class number three of Eckhart Tolle's magnificent book, A New Earth. I got to tell you, this is my first favorite chapter. I have lots of favorite chapters, but this is my first favorite chapter.

So this is what I believe, if you didn't read another page, that if you just read chapter three in this book, it could really transform your life. So today, we continue our discussion of the ego with chapter three. It's called The Core of the Ego.

Eckhart is going to talk more in depth about what activates the ego, how to become more aware of the ego, and above all, how we can transcend it. I mean, you really can learn to stop it in its tracks for yourself, and also become so aware when it's showing up in other people. So onward to chapter three.

Transformational it is. Again, I thank you, Eckhart Tolle, thank you for joining us. Today's

lesson, chapter three, beginning on page 59, The Core of the Ego.

Most people are so completely identified with the voice in the head, the incessant stream of involuntary and compulsive thinking, and the emotions that accompany it, that we may describe them as being possessed by their mind. My question to you, if we are not that constant stream of thinking, then who are we?

[Speaker 1] (3:08 - 3:18)

Now, that question usually would be answered by the mind, by giving some kind of concept of who we are. Now...

[Speaker 2] (3:18 - 3:31)

Yes, I am female, I am African American, I work on TV, my mother was, my mother is, I live at, my job is. Yes. That's how most people, if you say, who are you?

[Speaker 1] (3:32 - 5:36)

Yes. But beyond that, because concepts refer to who we are temporarily in the world of form. You're a mother, you're a father, you have a certain profession, you belong to a certain race, you're a man or a woman, nationality, all these things.

Now, when you ask, who are we beyond that? There is no conceptual answer to that, that would, no conceptual answer would be absolutely correct. We can give little hints.

We can say, we are the formless consciousness behind all that. We are that which cannot be defined through concepts or words. So, knowing who you are is not, does not mean that suddenly you have some new idea in your head and say, oh, now let me tell you who I am, I've discovered who I am.

You get closer to knowing you, who you are, if you come to a stage where you have that feeling, and I mention it in the book somewhere, when people tell me, I don't know who I am anymore, because they have realized who they are not. They are ultimately not their profession, they are not whatever function they fulfill, they are not their nationality. So, they're beginning to realize that's not really who I am, but then they enter the unknown and say, well, if I'm not, now I'm no longer sure who I am.

And I always congratulate people when they say, I'm not sure who I am anymore. I say... Well, that usually connotes confusion.

Confusion, if you still want to know who you are, but if you can become comfortable with not knowing who you are, with not defining yourself to yourself or to others, mainly to yourself, because the ego is constantly a self-definition to remind yourself who you are, you remember your story of your past, and so on. You have opinions about yourself, and so this is the self-definition.

[Speaker 2] (5:37 - 5:43)

But don't we obviously need the ego, Eckhart? Don't we obviously need it? Otherwise, why would we have it?

Why wouldn't we have evolved past it?

[Speaker 1] (5:44 - 6:50)

We're doing that now. So, it's been a stage in the evolution of consciousness, a necessary stage in the evolution of consciousness. For survival.

Yes. Because? The ego arose because we started to think.

So, the ability in humans, suddenly humans developed the ability to differentiate and to think. To me, the beginning of the Old Testament really describes the beginning of the ability to think, because what it says in the Old Testament is, they ate of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, the ability to say, this is good, this is bad, to differentiate, starting to think. So, the ability to think arose in our species, which was a wonderful thing on the one hand, but over many, many millennia, hundreds of thousands of years, more and more, our original sense of connectedness with life and with being, which the natural world still has.

Animals still have that. They live in a state of natural connection.

[Speaker 6] (6:50 - 6:53)

Some cultures did. Some of ancient cultures. Native Americans.

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (6:53 - 7:52)

They still have that. A sense of being rooted, being comfortable in your own skin, being rooted deeply within and feel that sense of oneness with the totality of life. Oneness with life itself.

And so, we had, humanity had that once, and as you say, some ancient cultures, perhaps there's still remnants of ancient cultures, and they still have that. But humans, as they went into more and more thinking and differentiation, they gradually, their sense of self gradually moved from the center of their being, which I would describe as their heart or the solar plexus, into their mind. Into their mind.

And they, more and more, they began to identify with the movement of thought. And gradually, out of this continuous identification with the movement of thought, a thought-made entity was produced, which is the ego.

[Speaker 2] (7:53 - 7:56)

Yeah. Which is what you're saying is being possessed by our mind.

[Speaker 1] (7:56 - 7:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (7:56 - 8:11)

Okay. By being possessed by our mind. Okay.

You say this is the egoic mind, and we call it egoic because there's a sense of self, of I, in every thought, every memory, every interpretation, opinion, and so forth. And this is unconsciousness, spiritually speaking.

[Speaker 1] (8:11 - 8:36)

Yes. Because you identify with thought rather than being, identifying with your inner essence, which is what we lost, which is the state of Eden or Paradise, as it's described in the Bible. We lost that.

And it's not only in the Bible. There are many ancient cultures where they speak of the golden age that we lost in many different cultures.

[Speaker 2] (8:36 - 8:47)

And you say egos are all the same on the surface. They differ only on the surface. Deep down, they're all the same.

Yes. Okay. Now, Chapter 3 is all about the core of the ego, what makes it thrive.

[Speaker 7] (8:48 - 8:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (8:48 - 9:04)

And you say that what we react to in another, we strengthen in ourselves. Can you give us an example of that? One of the things the ego needs to survive is reacting against other people.

What you react to in another, you strengthen in yourself, you say.

[Speaker 1] (9:04 - 9:41)

Yes. That's usually what we react to most strongly in others. And what we most strongly condemn in others is usually something that we also have, a trait that we also have, but

that we are unconscious of in ourselves.

So when we, for example, we become upset if we encounter somebody who is very greedy, or we could become upset about somebody who is dishonest, no matter who, the force of your reaction usually tells you that something in you that you need to look at.

[Speaker 2] (9:41 - 9:45)

Really? All the time? All the time?

[Speaker 1] (9:46 - 9:55)

Well, it's for you to find out, or anybody to find out in their own lives. When you react strongly, have them become alert and have a look inside.

[Speaker 2] (9:55 - 10:05)

Okay. You say complaining is one of the ego's favorite strategies for strengthening itself. Every complaint is a little story the mind makes up that you completely believe in.

[Speaker 1] (10:06 - 10:33)

Yes. Now, that's a very common thing, and perhaps until people begin to become more aware... And some egos survive on complaining.

Some egos who haven't got much else to identify with, they can survive on complaining alone. So then continuously you are condemning other people, you're continuously criticizing, condemning, or judging negatively situations that you're in, your surroundings, other people.

[Speaker 2] (10:34 - 10:38)

So the ego is the identification with those thoughts. It's not necessarily the thought.

[Speaker 1] (10:38 - 10:43)

No. It's the thing that you become those thoughts.

[Speaker 2] (10:44 - 10:44)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (10:44 - 10:47)

There's no space between you and the thought. Got that.

[Speaker 2] (10:47 - 10:53)

Okay. All right. So name-calling is also a form that the ego defines itself.

[Speaker 1] (10:53 - 11:50)

Yes. And that, of course, one could say, well, it's relatively harmless. On one level, it's relatively harmless to call a person this or that, to attach a label to a person.

But if you follow this up to see, you can actually see how dreadful it is to label another human being or another group of human beings. Because once you have labeled, you've attached a mental label to another human being, you have desensitized yourself to the aliveness and the humanity of that other human being, because you're relating now to a label. So if you say, he's a, whatever it may be, he's a communist, he's this, he's that, any label, and immediately, instead of sensing the aliveness of that human being and have some empathy with that, you have cut yourself off and you have a label.

[Speaker 2] (11:50 - 12:05)

In chapter four, you talk about that, that role-playing, how we do it in temporary ways. I'm the person who's going in the store, I'm the customer, and there's the clerk, the person who labels himself the clerk, and I'm the customer. There's a certain defined behavior that we have.

[Speaker 1] (12:05 - 12:12)

And then when it's done collectively, the labeling, when an entire nation labels another nation in a certain way.

[Speaker 2] (12:12 - 12:14)

Yeah, or I'm the boss and you're the janitor.

[Speaker 1] (12:14 - 12:33)

Yes. Or you're my subordinate. Yes.

All these are forms of mental labeling. So any kind of mental label that you're completely identified with desensitizes you to the humanity and then of the other human being. And then all kinds of things are possible, even violence becomes possible.

[Speaker 2] (12:33 - 13:30)

I got it. Everybody, I just got this. You got this.

What you're saying here is you're labeling people as he's a jerk or he's a whatever. Once you start doing that, you become desensitized to who they really are in the same way that you were when you were labeling things in nature. But okay, we were talking earlier about the ego loves complaining.

First of all, loves to believe, loves to identify with the thoughts in the head and believe those thoughts. And loves to complain. But aren't there some things legitimately worth complaining about?

You know, anybody who's ever gone into a house construction at some point or another is told a story by the construction workers, unless you have the most amazing, you know, that this is going to be finished at a certain time or it's going to be a certain price. And then it often doesn't turn out to be what you expected. That's a complaint a lot of people have.

Isn't that legitimate?

[Speaker 1] (13:31 - 13:31)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (13:31 - 13:34)

Like you talk in the book about how my soup is cold.

[Speaker 1] (13:34 - 13:36)

Yes. In a restaurant.

[Speaker 2] (13:36 - 13:39)

Yeah, in a restaurant. My soup is cold. Sometimes your soup is cold.

[Speaker 1] (13:39 - 13:52)

That's right. So first of all, the complaining that we are talking about, mainly here, the egoic complaining, most of that fulfills no real purpose because it's not meant to bring about change in any situation.

[Speaker 2] (13:52 - 13:54)

Okay. That's complaining and resentment complaining.

[Speaker 1] (13:54 - 14:18)

Yes. And a lot of it for many people happens only in the head. Sometimes they verbalize it also.

But a lot of the complaining happens in the head alone. But no matter whether they verbalize it or whether the complaining happens in the head alone, in probably 90% of cases, it has no real purpose because it's not meant to bring about change. It's meant to strengthen the ego.

[Speaker 2] (14:18 - 14:19)

I see that.

[Speaker 1] (14:19 - 15:11)

And then, of course, as there are situations, of course, where something needs to be said in order to bring about change in the situation. And that's a completely different kind of complaining where you say something so that change can happen. For example, the cold soup in the restaurant, you say, the soup is cold.

Please bring me hot soup. That's fine. You could call that also complaining.

And there are also two ways of, as far as this kind of complaining is concerned, it is connected to a real situation that is meant to bring about change. There's one way of complaining with ego in that situation also. And that is when the ego is attempting to make somebody wrong.

A personal element comes into it, and it's a negativity that flows into it.

[Speaker 2] (15:11 - 15:14)

To make somebody wrong because my soup is cold.

[Speaker 1] (15:14 - 16:03)

Yes. Damn it. That's right.

You're personalizing it. And so you're making another person almost, one could say, into an enemy. Right.

Complaining that way. So whether it's somebody who is a builder, who is working on your home. And so there is a way of complaining.

I wouldn't even perhaps call it complaining, of simply stating what the situation is. Stating the facts. Yes.

Without the negativity that flows into it when the ego does it. And so that can be practiced. And whatever you are stating in order to bring about change is actually going to be much more effective if it's done without the negativity.

Because if it comes with negativity, it provokes a negative reaction in the other. And so the whole situation then becomes a conflict situation.

[Speaker 2] (16:03 - 16:27)

As you say, see if you can catch, that is to say, notice the voice in the head. Perhaps, I'm

on page 64 everybody, second paragraph. Perhaps in the very moment it complains about something, recognize it for what it is, the voice of the ego.

And then later you say, the moment you become aware of the ego in you, this is mid-paragraph, it's strictly speaking no longer the ego, but just an old conditioned mind pattern.

[Speaker 1] (16:27 - 16:47)

Yes. Because ego means you're not aware of it. So ego means unconsciousness.

So a good thing that people can ask themselves when they become aware of this complaining voice in the head or the verbalized complaining voice, is this meant to bring about change in the situation? And if they look at it clearly, often they will say no.

[Speaker 2] (16:47 - 16:54)

No, it's just hearing myself complain because it keeps fueling my sense of righteousness and rightness.

[Speaker 1] (16:54 - 17:02)

And what the complaining voice also loves is to get confirmation from somebody else that, yes, you're right to complain. So then two people join.

[Speaker 2] (17:02 - 17:03)

Oh, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (17:03 - 17:06)

And then you just fuel it on and on and on and on.

[Speaker 2] (17:06 - 17:06)

I love it.

[Speaker 1] (17:07 - 17:07)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (17:07 - 17:12)

Doris from outside of London, England. Doris, what's your question? Hello.

[Speaker 5] (17:13 - 17:41)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart. The book resonated very deeply within me, I must say.

And reading on page 62, the first paragraph, resentment is the emotion that goes with complaining. It started a question within me and I thought like, but where do hurt feelings belong to? Is this something that my ego tells me to feel or where do they come from, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (17:41 - 17:50)

Can you give a situation, an actual situation? It's always easier to talk about this when you can look at an actual situation where, for example, you experience...

[Speaker 5] (17:50 - 18:11)

Hurt feelings, you know, can have most of the time is some outside. Either way, somebody is telling you something that hurts you personally. But what about sadness?

You know, you lose a person or, you know, hurt feelings come from many different sources. Where do they come from? How do they relate to the ego?

[Speaker 1] (18:11 - 18:49)

Thank you. Okay. So often it happens that even let's say somebody criticizes you and you feel hurt because perhaps you were attached to what you were doing and you hurt.

Now, what is it in you that feels hurt? And yes, it is the ego that feels hurt. And so when that happens, all you do is first of all, you can't say, oh, I shouldn't be feeling hurt and I shouldn't have an ego.

It doesn't work. You simply accept that this is what you are feeling right now and you recognize what it is in you that is producing.

[Speaker 5] (18:50 - 18:51)

Okay, just take it in.

[Speaker 1] (18:51 - 19:36)

It's a mental image of yourself that has become hurt because most people think of themselves as good people. And if somebody says you're no good, immediately something feeds. And many people get extremely angry.

They're not only hurt for many people that immediately turns into anger. And so the ego wants to immediately defend itself, even driving in traffic. Let's say you're driving and another driver suddenly calls you idiot.

That hurts on one level. It hurts. It hurts the ego.

And usually immediately the ego goes into self repair mode, as I call it, and will shout

something back in order to repair itself.

[Speaker 2] (19:36 - 19:54)

But I'm laughing at you because I mean, I'm thinking if somebody calls me an idiot, I was one. Somebody gave me the finger once and I was like, gee, that's gave me the finger. But I don't think I don't remember being hurt about it.

I was so stunned by it.

[Speaker 1] (19:54 - 19:56)

But but but many people would be hurt.

[Speaker 2] (19:57 - 19:57)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (19:57 - 19:58)

But you were not because you were.

[Speaker 2] (19:59 - 20:01)

I thought what a bad day he's having.

[Speaker 1] (20:01 - 20:08)

Yes. You were in touch with a deeper level of yourself where nothing is hurt. Yeah.

You can't be hurt.

[Speaker 2] (20:08 - 20:19)

Or when I used to take taxis all the time, when I'd have a taxi driver in a really bad mood, the worse he if he was in a horrible mood, I would tip him double extra so that he'd be nicer for the next person.

[Speaker 1] (20:20 - 20:20)

Really?

[Speaker 2] (20:21 - 20:21)

That's a good one.

[Speaker 1] (20:22 - 20:55)

Even there's a story about an official in Japan, a high government official, went to see a

Zen master and he asked the Zen master, can you explain to me what the self is? Self really means ego because there's talk about the self in Buddhism. Can you explain to me what the self is?

And the Zen master said, what a stupid question is that? Why are you asking such stupid questions? And immediately the the government official said, how dare you talk to me like that?

Don't you know who I am? And the master said, that's the ego. That's the ego.

[Speaker 2] (20:56 - 20:57)

All right.

[Speaker 1] (20:57 - 21:05)

Got it. Got it. Now, this this person got hurt.

But in him, he immediately the hurt turned into.

[Speaker 2] (21:05 - 21:08)

So anytime you have hurt feelings, that is your ego.

[Speaker 1] (21:08 - 21:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (21:09 - 21:49)

OK. Now you say here also, Doris, on page sixty five, he says a longstanding resentment is called a grievance. To carry a grievance is to be in a permanent state of against.

And that is why grievances constitute a significant part of many people's ego. Collective grievances can survive for centuries in the psyche of a nation. We know that or tribe and fuel a never ending cycle of violence.

And so I guess all of us need to ask, what are the grievances that we allow ourselves to carry? Yeah. Family grievances.

Families that carry on. And you don't even forget why you're carrying the grievance.

[Speaker 1] (21:49 - 21:58)

Yes. Personal grievances, family grievances, grievances between tribes, religious groups, nations and so on. Dreadful.

[Speaker 2] (21:59 - 22:06)

And so are you saying no grievance has a justification that all grievances are based in the as the core of the ego?

[Speaker 1] (22:07 - 22:16)

It's an essential part of the ego to hold grievances. The ego keeps itself alive. That's one of the ways in which the ego keeps itself alive.

[Speaker 2] (22:17 - 23:14)

You also say on page sixty six here, Doris, don't try to let go of the grievance. Trying to let go to forgive does not work. Forgiveness happens naturally when you see that it has no purpose other than to strengthen a false sense of yourself.

Forgiveness happens when you realize that being resentful is only to build up your ego. But that resentment is only helping you carry around this false sense of who you are. I got that.

I got that. You got that, Doris? Yes, I got it, too.

Yes. Thank you very much. You got it, too.

Good. All the way in London. Thank you very much.

Thank you. Thank you. You say ego takes everything personally.

Back to what Doris was saying earlier. Ego takes everything personally. Emotion arises, defensiveness, perhaps even aggression.

Are you defending the truth? No, the truth in any case needs no defense.

[Speaker 1] (23:14 - 23:52)

Yeah. Yes. So when people argue, usually an argument, often arguments turn into violence.

If people are very unconscious, and many of you still are, arguments turn into violence. So when people argue about something, usually what happens is they are so identified with their opinion. Of being right.

Yes, being right, their mental position, that any questioning of their mental position, of their opinion, or their viewpoint, is regarded as an attack on them. Yeah. And this is how the ego gets confused with who you are.

[Speaker 2] (23:52 - 24:56)

You know, I will tell you a funny story that I was reading this book, and Stedman and I

were at dinner, just the two of us, talking about what are the most important questions in life. And I said, I believe one of the most important questions in life is to believe whether the universe is compassionate or not compassionate. And he said, well, I disagree with you.

I think the most important thing is whether or not you know how to work on your strengths. And I go, well, that's ridiculous, because the most important thing is, do you believe that the universe is compassionate? So we're arguing about whether or not the universe is compassionate or not compassionate.

And he didn't agree with my view. And I said, well, you know, I know I'm right. I ended up clearing the table, leaving the table, and going upstairs, because I don't want to have the conversation anymore.

And, you know, a half an hour passes, he comes up and he says, OK, you're right. You're right. And I go, never mind.

I don't need to be right. I don't need to be right. And then I realized that, yes, that is exactly what happened.

My ego is arguing because it is defending its right to be right.

[Speaker 1] (24:56 - 25:03)

Yes. Identification with a mental position, with a concept in the head. Yes.

Can happen so easily. Right.

[Speaker 2] (25:04 - 25:08)

And we're talking about compassionate issues. Yes. Or non-compassionate issues.

[Speaker 1] (25:08 - 25:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (25:08 - 25:20)

Yeah. Well, my friend, Kadada Jones, who I was at her father's birthday party, and we started talking about A New Earth. And she had so many questions.

And here you are. Hello, Kadada.

[Speaker 3] (25:20 - 25:48)

Hi, Ocard. Hi, Oprah. How are you?

Hi. And your question? OK, my question is, this book hits me really, really deep in my

heart.

And I know it to be the truth, but I have such resistance. And I feel like if everything in form is an illusion, it feels really disenchanting. And I'm at a point in my life where I have goals.

I'm excited about my career. I want to have kids. I want to meet a great partner.

And if it's all illusion, where's the fun?

[Speaker 1] (25:50 - 25:50)

There's...

[Speaker 3] (25:50 - 25:50)

Is that my ego?

[Speaker 1] (25:51 - 27:01)

You are not meant to believe that all is illusion. You're at a stage in your life where you can simply enjoy the play of form. Eventually, you will come to a point, as every human does, where the forms in your life are no longer completely satisfying.

They leave a certain emptiness. They leave a frustration. But you haven't reached that point yet.

That's fine. In the meantime, you enjoy your life. Be as present as you can, which means don't project yourself continuously into some future moment that promises more and greater fulfillment.

If that happens, and if you can't help it, that's fine too. But why not enjoy this moment as it is? Really, that's all you can do.

This is not to take the joy out of life. It's to really deepen the way in which you live, rather than living on the surface of things and expecting fulfillment through relatively superficial things, going deeper to a place where true joy resides.

[Speaker 2] (27:01 - 27:15)

WINFREY. I know. I think that's a good question, though, that you raised, Kodada.

Especially, I've heard this from a lot of people your age who say, so now where's ambition? Ambition is ambition my ego? Good question.

[Speaker 3] (27:15 - 27:33)

You want to hit career strides. You want to see things happen. You're excited to meet

somebody.

You're going to have a baby that you're going to be madly in love with. And then I hear Eckhart's voice. And I have to remember my ego, remember that it's form.

And it just kind of makes me feel a little unexcited. But I guess it's about being in the moment.

[Speaker 1] (27:34 - 28:31)

No, there comes a point when you can see the truth of this very clearly in your own life. Until you can see the truth of it very clearly in your own life, the book remains on the conceptual level. And so I wouldn't say that there's anything in the book that you should believe in.

If the book works for you, the truth of it is immediately recognized. There's a sense of, ah, yes. But at 20, I would not have understood the truth in this book.

I had ambitions. I wanted to become a great professor. I wanted to be seen as to be successful.

I wanted to show to the world that I can make it. So I was working hard. If at that point I had read this book, I would have said the same as you.

I don't want this right now. I don't need this. The book really, as long as you feel that you don't really need it, it's fine.

You should carry on with what you're doing.

[Speaker 2] (28:31 - 28:33)

I don't even hear a saying, she doesn't need it. I think.

[Speaker 3] (28:33 - 29:01)

I totally need it. I totally know that this book is real and true. It's really, really, really important for me to figure out how to integrate consciousness into this next chapter.

I want to approach it in a very conscious way. But there's still probably a little part of me, a lot of part of me, that's gripping on to the form. I live in Los Angeles.

I'm in a business where form is at the forefront. It's kind of a hard balance. I'm just wondering how do you reap the fruits and not identify to the form?

[Speaker 1] (29:01 - 29:38)

Yes, forms, you can enjoy the forms and you can really only truly enjoy the forms if you

are not completely identified with the forms. Because if you are completely identified with the forms, there's always an element of fear that the form might leave you, the situation that you have, whatever the form might leave you or it will suddenly, the form will no longer be satisfying. So it's the attachment to the form doesn't really mean that you enjoy it.

The attachment to the form produces negativity and produces fear around it, around your life situation.

[Speaker 2] (29:38 - 29:50)

It's doing, Kadada, what I said, I think, on an earlier class, it's like, especially in Los Angeles, you know, great fun, fun city, City of the Angels there. It's like being able to be in the world, but not of it.

[Speaker 1] (29:51 - 29:53)

Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (29:53 - 29:55)

In the world, but not of it.

[Speaker 1] (29:55 - 30:22)

Yes. And a lot of that, the attachment is less likely to be there. The more present you are with any life experience, the more present you are in the moment, then you are not, you're not attached.

The attachment needs future, needs more, looks to the future, either as a threat or hope. So be as present as you can in every situation in your life, in every moment in your life.

[Speaker 2] (30:23 - 30:34)

And what you were talking about, I think in one of the future chapters about being able to be present with your children instead of just sort of going through the motions with your children, being present with your children. Hey, Kadada.

[Speaker 3] (30:34 - 30:35)

Thank you for having me.

[Speaker 2] (30:36 - 31:00)

Okay. This is Melissa from Crab Orchard, West Virginia. She says she's being awakened with worry.

My sister's addicted to drugs. She's been through rehab to no avail. Every day we worry about her.

We fear she may die if she continues. My question is this, how can we live, awaken with this major, major distraction in our lives? That's good.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (31:01 - 33:53)

Well, the first thing you need to take responsibility for your own life and your own state of consciousness, rather than thinking your primary responsibility is your sister's life and your sister's state of consciousness. That's not the case. You have to start with yourself.

Change can only begin with yourself. So are you taking responsibility for your own state of consciousness rather than believing unconsciously that, of course, you're worried and there's nothing else you can do? You have to look at what you call the worry in yourself, the continuous mind activity that dwells on negativity.

See if you can enter that state of acceptance or presence and just be with yourself. I recommend to get out of the mind, go into the body several times a day and connect with the feeling of aliveness within. For yourself.

So that the worry, the worry pretends, worry is part of the ego. It's the compulsion to think incessantly and it serves no purpose because it doesn't get you anywhere. It's similar to the complaining.

It has no useful purpose. It doesn't bring about change in any situation. No matter how much you worry, it's never the worry that brings about any change in the situation.

The mind may tell you you need to worry because it has some purpose. It doesn't. So the essential thing is that you get out of that unconscious habit of continuous worrying.

So find a little bit of peace in yourself first to start with, and it may be more than a little bit of peace, but start with a little. Is there any peace in you underneath this continuous mental noise that we call worry? Is there anything else in you?

And you have to find that you can only be of true service to your sister, you can only truly be an agent for change in this world if something has changed in your state of consciousness. Otherwise you contribute to the turmoil. So find through meditating, through bringing awareness to the present moment as much as possible, through bringing awareness into the inner body, as much as possible get out of the mind and enter presence and realize the mind may tell you you're not helping your sister.

This is the beginning where you may be able to truly be of help to somebody else.

[Speaker 2] (33:53 - 33:55)

Because the only thing you can do is really help yourself.

[Speaker 1] (33:55 - 33:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:56 - 33:56)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (33:57 - 33:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:57 - 33:59)

But the mind tells you I have to save my sister.

[Speaker 1] (34:00 - 34:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:01 - 34:04)

And that's the... And what you're saying is that is not necessarily true.

[Speaker 1] (34:04 - 35:16)

No, ultimately your sister is also responsible. It doesn't mean that one human being cannot help another. But what is essential when we ask whether you can be of help or not to another human being is, is there something in you that can bring about change in the consciousness of another human being?

Unless some change has happened inside you, it can't happen. And this is the problem for many, many people. They wake up in the middle of the night worrying during the day.

They go about worrying about this or that. What does it mean to worry? What does it mean?

It means there is unconscious mind movement projecting itself usually into the future. And you see how dreadful the future is going to be, what's going to happen. You see outcomes that are negative.

Many things, of course, are never going to happen, but worry pretends to be necessary. You have to see very clearly... Worry pretends to be necessary.

[Speaker 2] (35:17 - 35:17)

Oh, I got that.

[Speaker 1] (35:17 - 35:20)

You have to see that it serves no useful purpose.

[Speaker 2] (35:20 - 35:25)

Yeah. Worry pretends to be necessary. Yes.

But serves no useful purpose.

[Speaker 1] (35:25 - 35:33)

And so once you see that it serves no useful purpose, you can sometimes be maybe able to step out of that and see, oh, and then become present.

[Speaker 2] (35:34 - 35:50)

Yeah. You can become present. If you can step out of the worry for a moment, you can become present enough to say, what can I do now?

How can I be now in this moment? Yes. For myself, for my sister, for whatever it is you need.

[Speaker 1] (35:50 - 36:50)

And the greatest gift you can give to somebody, especially somebody who is suffering like your sister, when you are with them, what is your state of consciousness? Are you able to bring presence when you connect with your sister or any other human being that you want to help? Can you be present with them?

Can you give them space to be? That's the healing. Healing.

You can be an agent for healing of another, not in the sense that I am going to heal you, not believing that would be ego gain. I'm going to heal you. No, simply be there as a conscious space of presence, not wanting to do anything, just being there as a conscious presence with another person.

That's very hard for people. Yes. I understand it's very hard.

And that's why we call it the shift. It's a shift. So, but acceptance is also an important part of that.

It's at the moment you need to accept.

[Speaker 2] (36:50 - 36:51)

Stop resisting it.

[Speaker 1] (36:51 - 36:54)

Yes. Stop resisting. Not bringing the resistance always into the relationship.

[Speaker 2] (36:55 - 36:58)

Because whatever you fight, you strengthen, and what you resist persists.

[Speaker 1] (36:58 - 36:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (36:59 - 37:01)

That's at the top of page 75.

[Speaker 7] (37:01 - 37:02)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (37:02 - 37:06)

Whatever you fight, you strengthen, and what you resist persists. Why is that?

[Speaker 1] (37:07 - 37:26)

Because that's how the, by opposing, you bring, this world works in terms of polarities. So if you strengthen one polarity, you immediately strengthen the other. That's an example.

Physics, yes. Exactly the same. It's physics.

[Speaker 2] (37:26 - 37:52)

Yes. Okay. You say, because these days you frequently hear the expression, the war against this or that, and whenever you hear that, you know that it's condemned to failure.

There's a war against drugs, against crime, the war against terrorism, against cancer, against poverty, and so on. And despite the war against all of these things, everything, every one of those things is bigger than ever. That's right.

That's right. Because what you fight, you strengthen, and what you resist persists. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (37:52 - 38:12)

And then the implication, of course, is there is another way of dealing with things, with situations. And that is to make peace with it. Make peace with it.

And then action, take action. The action then comes out of a different state of consciousness. The action comes out of presence.

Presence. It's no longer reaction.

[Speaker 2] (38:13 - 38:17)

Yeah. It comes out of presence and not out of you being defensive about it.

[Speaker 1] (38:17 - 38:24)

That's right. I got it. And the action is much more powerful and effective when it's not defensive and not negative.

[Speaker 2] (38:24 - 39:32)

Somebody just told me this, this happens a lot, you know, with the airlines where, you know, my goodness, you can get from point A to point B on commercial airlines these days without losing your luggage or flights being canceled or sitting on the tarmac or whatever. And they were reading the book. And in the midst of, you know, everything, you know, schedule for the flight.

I'm sure this has happened to many of you. Schedule for the flight. Everything's fine.

You get there and there's no seat. There's no seat. And people, other people didn't have their seats and people around them were just imploding.

And this person said that they decided to remain calm, as my godson, as a matter of fact, and people all around them were going nuts. And suddenly out of nowhere, after about a half an hour, not out of nowhere, about a half an hour, the person behind the counter called the names and of all the names they called, they called his who had been sitting there calm. Now they didn't know him from anybody else, but, you know, it eventually worked out.

Not saying that it always works out, but he realized after reading the book that it makes no sense to get crazy.

[Speaker 1] (39:32 - 39:42)

Yes, it's not only that, but also it's true that things are much more likely to work out when you are in a harmonious state of consciousness and not in resistance.

[Speaker 2] (39:42 - 40:18)

Which brings us to page 77. Do you want peace or drama? You say we all want peace.

There's no one who doesn't want peace, yet there's something else in you that wants the drama, wants the conflict. And whenever you're moving in the drama, you can, as we all can, I think now a little bit anyway, detach from the thought, see yourself having the thought, recognize that you, the you, the I of I am, is the awareness that you're having the thought. When you can see all the drama, just detach a little bit.

You've done what?

[Speaker 1] (40:19 - 40:36)

That's the, that's the vital thing, to see it in the midst of it, to suddenly become aware that this is an old pattern in you, an ego pattern in you. It may not even stop immediately, but at least there is a, suddenly there is a witnessing presence in the background. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (40:37 - 40:42)

But the ego wants to complain. The ego wants to be resentful. The ego wants drama.

[Speaker 1] (40:42 - 41:18)

Yes. And to see that in oneself, one could call it almost, there is in, in humans something that we could call the addiction to unhappiness. When you are unhappy for whatever reason, once you are trapped in that, that energy of unhappiness, you don't want to get out.

That's right. Because your ego loves it. Yes.

So there is a, there is an addiction to the, you're actually on some level, you enjoy your unhappiness. And when you can become aware of that, then suddenly you're stepping out.

[Speaker 2] (41:18 - 41:58)

So let's talk about the power of awareness. You talk about on page 78, a power comes into your life that is far greater than the ego, greater than the mind. All that is required to become free of the ego is to be aware of it.

Since awareness and ego are incompatible, this is page 78, first paragraph. Awareness is the power that is concealed within the present moment. This is why we may also call it presence and the ultimate purpose of human existence, which is to say your purpose is to bring that power or that presence into this world.

Yes. That is why we're here.

[Speaker 1] (41:58 - 42:26)

Yes. That is the universal impulse. The universal impulse is the evolution of consciousness.

That is the, the impulse behind the universe, the universe moving towards the evolution of consciousness. And we are one manifestation of the evolution of consciousness into this world. We're one.

Yes. There are many others, right? Even though a plant is a manifestation.

[Speaker 2] (42:26 - 43:02)

Right, right, right. But our ultimate purpose of human existence is to bring that presence, that awareness into the world and to become more aware in our daily lives so that regardless of what you're doing in your form world, in your form life, that you recognize, as you say on page 79, can I sense my essential beingness, the I am in the background of my life at all times? Yes.

To be more accurate, can I sense the I am that I am at this moment?

[Speaker 1] (43:03 - 43:43)

Yes. And an easy step towards that is the inner acceptance of this moment as it is without wanting it to be different or rejecting it or resisting it. If you can accept, if you can see that the primary thing in your life is the present moment because there is never anything else.

Yes. It's always now. So you must see if you can have a good relationship with the now because if you don't have a good relationship with the now, you don't have a good relationship with life because life is now.

Yes. So accepting this moment as it is can connect you with that dimension of depth in yourself.

[Speaker 2] (43:43 - 43:48)

And that is how we begin to quieten or quiet the ego.

[Speaker 1] (43:48 - 43:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (43:49 - 43:52)

Is by being more fully present now.

[Speaker 1] (43:53 - 44:12)

That's the exit out of the ego, the now. The now is the hidden exit because the ego doesn't want you to know that, that there is an exit and it's called now. Exit is the door out of the ego.

The now is the door. The exit. Yes.

The now.

[Speaker 2] (44:12 - 44:12)

Now.

[Speaker 1] (44:12 - 44:14)

Is the exit door. Out of the ego.

[Speaker 2] (44:14 - 44:14)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (44:15 - 44:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:15 - 44:35)

And so whenever you find yourself complaining, whenever you find yourself the need to feel superior, you feel superior or inferior to someone else, you know that it's your ego. Whenever you recognize that this is my ego and can bring yourself to the present moment of what is going on now and can see yourself doing it.

[Speaker 7] (44:36 - 44:36)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:36 - 44:37)

Yeah. That is awakening.

[Speaker 7] (44:37 - 44:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:38 - 44:42)

Okay. Ginger is a singer, songwriter living in Berlin. Hello.

[Speaker 4] (44:43 - 45:28)

Hi. I feel like I am aware of the things that I do that are destructive and I can't seem to stop them anyway. I feel like I label things that are bad for me and then I resist them like eating fried food or drinking too much or relationships.

I resist them and I feel like it causes a source of anxiety and sometimes the huge decisions in my life come easily, but these little things, little decisions every day, um, they pile up and become a source of anxiety. So my question is, is, um, how can we get to this inspired action and effortless doing? Um, not only when it comes to the big decisions, but when it comes to making healthy choices, um, in our everyday lives.

[Speaker 2] (45:28 - 45:35)

Amen. Good question. Thank you.

Ginger. Yes. How did, yeah.

Cause yeah, I was saying this too.

[Speaker 4] (45:35 - 45:36)

I know I'm doing it.

[Speaker 2] (45:36 - 45:58)

I just do it anyway. Yeah. Yeah.

I was saying, yeah. Aren't you? Yeah.

Why does it have to be a struggle just to, to do the right thing in terms of, you know, for me it's food always, it's always about food. Yes. How can it become effortless?

Isn't that your question, Jen, Ginger? Yeah. And are you talking about, for me, this would be about potato chips.

What is this about for you?

[Speaker 4] (45:59 - 46:02)

For me, it's a red wine, uh, French fries.

[Speaker 2] (46:02 - 46:05)

Okay. A little red wine every now and then.

[Speaker 4] (46:05 - 46:07)

And a few other things of course too.

[Speaker 1] (46:07 - 46:20)

Yeah. Okay. So, uh, you mean when you eat French fries.

And she knows that they're not so good for her. And then there's a voice in the head that says you shouldn't be eating them. Nevertheless, you are eating them.

[Speaker 4] (46:21 - 46:23)

A tennis match is more like it.

[Speaker 1] (46:25 - 48:06)

A lot of eating over eating has a lot to do with the ego also because the ego lives in a constant state of not enough. It always seeks something else to fill itself with. And usually it's experiences to identify with this or that.

Things. Things. But it's also, uh, it, the, the need for more, as I call it, that is built into the ego.

Sometimes it can get transferred to the body and then you experience it as the desire to eat much more than the body really wants. It's to take in more. So really to, to eat consciously really is the way out of it.

For example, I would suggest that when you eat your French fries, to make a meditation out of it and eat them consciously without having a secondary entity in your head that says you shouldn't be eating them. Eat them fully and consciously and at the same time feel how your body feels while you eat them and after you've eaten them. Then you bring some presence into it and you may realize in some cases that the body doesn't actually want to eat them.

It was the mind that wanted to eat the potato. But so bring, eat consciously. If you eat a sandwich, if you feel, if you go to the fridge, sometimes people get up in the middle of the night, they open the door and, and you reach in and there's this need for need to get, the body doesn't need it.

[Speaker 2] (48:06 - 48:07)

You're trying to feed something.

[Speaker 1] (48:07 - 48:10)

Feed something, yes. And so.

[Speaker 4] (48:10 - 48:20)

For me it's also, it's the, the anxiety that the resistance, not just for food but things that I label as bad for me, seem to cause a lot of anxiety in the.

[Speaker 2] (48:20 - 49:19)

What he's saying is stop resisting. Actually after reading this book, I've been trying this lately, exactly what you said, and this is what you will find. If you stop resisting it because the French fries are not bad, it's the thought in your head that has told you that the French fries are bad.

And if you do what he is recommending, if you sit and you consciously make it a meditation, what you will find is you won't eat, you know, two bags of French fries unconsciously, that you will enjoy every single French fry. And in the enjoyment and the pleasure, if you stop when it's, when it's no longer pleasurable, you know, it's, it's no longer pleasurable after three or four or five. By the time you've eaten a whole bag of them, you, you don't even taste it anymore.

So he's saying make it a meditation, be with it, feel it, sense it, allow your whole body to be with it, feel it, sense it, and when you're done with the pleasure of it, let it go. Yes. That is what you're saying, correct?

[Speaker 1] (49:19 - 49:19)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (49:20 - 49:20)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (49:20 - 49:21)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (49:21 - 49:28)

And that's what the red wine too. Yes. And other things as well, I suspect.

And other things as well.

[Speaker 1] (49:28 - 50:04)

Yes, be with it, be with it. When I was in my twenties, as young people do, I would often get drunk. Nowadays, I still enjoy a glass of wine.

Right, you do. I enjoy it very much. Yes.

And I know after I've had one glass of wine, sometimes does my body want another glass

of wine? And usually I cannot drink more than one glass. It's very rare that I would drink two glasses of wine, because that's exactly, the body says no more.

If you can sense your body, it will often tell you whether it's right or not to eat or drink something.

[Speaker 2] (50:04 - 50:25)

That's right. Well, that's a very good point that you just made. I just had an epiphany, because you don't become overweight or even drunk or intoxicated as long as you are acting consciously.

It's when you become unconscious that you eat too much. Unconscious that you drink too much. Unconscious is when you become obsessively indulgent with things.

[Speaker 1] (50:25 - 50:28)

Yes. Yes. All these addictions are unconscious.

[Speaker 2] (50:28 - 50:59)

Are unconscious. Thank you. Page 78, everybody.

Bottom paragraph. What is spiritual realization? The belief that you are spirit?

You say no. That is a thought. A little closer to the truth, the thought that believes you are who your birth certificate says you are, but still a thought.

So, we're not spirit? I thought we were spirit. What is the saying that we are spiritual beings having a human experience?

[Speaker 1] (50:59 - 51:00)

Yes, that's very good.

[Speaker 2] (51:00 - 51:01)

Yes, but we're not spirit.

[Speaker 1] (51:02 - 51:27)

No. That when we say we are spiritual beings having a human experience is not yet the realization that we are. It's the belief that we are.

Oh, okay. So there is a step that goes from the belief. Belief is still, it's a mental concept.

It's a little closer, as I say, to believing that you are what your birth certificate says you are. Yes. But it's not this realization.

No thought that you have about yourself is realization.

[Speaker 2] (51:28 - 51:47)

Okay. Well, this is another thing. You know, a lot of people are still very conflicted about this spirituality and their religion.

And what I hear you saying, feel you saying in this book is, is that this book isn't about believing. No. This book is about what you come to know for yourself.

[Speaker 7] (51:47 - 51:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (51:48 - 51:50)

Yeah. What you become to feel for yourself.

[Speaker 7] (51:50 - 51:50)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (51:51 - 52:15)

And that what you're saying is that God, in the essence of all consciousness, isn't something to believe. God is. Yes.

God is. And God is a feeling experience, not a believing experience. That's right.

And if, and if your, that your religion is a believing experience, if God for you is still about a belief, then it's not truly God.

[Speaker 1] (52:16 - 52:16)

No.

[Speaker 2] (52:16 - 52:17)

That's what you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (52:17 - 53:03)

Yes. The, the best, at best, the belief is a transitional thing that from, from there you go on to the realization that there is no separation between you and God, between you and the source of life, that you are one with the source. And you cannot realize that through believing.

It's not a belief. It's not a thought. Not a thought.

It's a direct realization within yourself. And it's there in the gap between two thoughts. That's right.

And conceptually, you may not know anymore. You may not have an opinion of who you are anymore. And yet, at a very deep level, there is a knowing that cannot be put into words.

[Speaker 2] (53:04 - 53:37)

So, what is spiritual realization? The belief that you are spirit? No.

That's a thought. Closer to the truth than the thought that believes you are who you are, that your birth certificate says you are, but still a thought. Spiritual realization is to see clearly.

On the bottom of page 78, spiritual realization is to see clearly that what I perceive, experience, think or feel is ultimately not who I am. That I cannot find myself in all those things that continuously pass away.

[Speaker 1] (53:38 - 54:14)

Yes. So, you are the space for all those things. You are the consciousness, the awareness in which all those things, experiences, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, come.

They appear. Jesus says, you are the light of the world. That means you are the consciousness in which the world appears, is seen.

And the consciousness itself has no form. It is formless and it has nothing to do with time. It is the dimension of the timeless in yourself.

Eternity is the religious term for it.

[Speaker 2] (54:14 - 54:14)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (54:15 - 54:43)

For most religious people, when they use eternity, it's a very abstract concept. Right. Eternity, what do I do with that?

Or they believe it's continuous time that never ends. That would be extremely boring if you were eternity and there's no end to time, would become very boring. I wouldn't want two things to go on forever in my life, to go on forever, ever, ever.

But finding the timeless dimension is a very different thing in yourself.

[Speaker 2] (54:44 - 54:48)

Timelessness is very different than eternity, as you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (54:48 - 54:54)

The true meaning of eternity is timeless. It's timeless. It's usually misinterpreted as meaning endless time.

[Speaker 2] (54:55 - 54:56)

On and on and on. Yeah. I got that.

[Speaker 1] (54:56 - 55:22)

So, there is in every human being, underneath all the stream of thinking and underneath the emotions, there is that dimension where timelessness or eternity dwells. And that is the essence of who you are. And that is consciousness itself.

And you can know it by realizing that you are the space for whatever happens in your life. Space of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (55:23 - 55:35)

Deep. I must say that's pretty deep there, Eckhart. We're on page 80, everybody.

One of my favorite quotes in the entire book, only the truth of who you are, if realized, will set you free.

[Speaker 1] (55:35 - 56:11)

Yes. Yes. Know who you are and you are free.

But to know who you are doesn't mean that suddenly you have an answer in your head. There's a stillness. And in that stillness, when you accept that you don't know who you are, as I say somewhere in the book, when you completely accept that you've realized all the things that you thought you were is not really who you are.

And then you come to a point where you don't know who you are. And if you can fully accept that you don't know who you are, you're closer to who you are than you were ever before.

[Speaker 2] (56:11 - 56:47)

Once you realize and accept that all structures, page 81, forms are unstable, even the seemingly solid material ones, peace arises within you. This is because the recognition of the impermanence of all forms awakens you to the dimension of the formless within.

That's what you're calling timelessness.

That which is beyond death. Jesus called it eternal life. Eternal life.

So you believe what happens to us at death when the body dies? You don't have a belief. I don't give it any thought.

You don't? No. Well, did you ever think about it at heart?

[Speaker 1] (56:48 - 58:04)

I know that the essence of who I am, which is the essence of who you are, is indestructible. I know that directly on a feeling level. And you can also know it even if you talk to a physicist.

He will tell you that energy never gets destroyed. It can only transform. So whatever it is that animates this physical form, at some point, whatever it is that animates this physical form is going to no longer animate this form.

And that is when you see a dead body. And when you see a dead body, you see, a year and a half ago, both my parents died within a space of a few months. And I saw very clearly, each time I saw my mother's body lying there.

A few months later, I saw my father's body lying in the coffin. And I realized the form was still there, but the essence of that being was not present. So the essence of that being was never the form.

It was gone. It was no longer there. And then when that which animates the form...

[Speaker 2] (58:04 - 58:06)

The essence of that being was never the form.

[Speaker 1] (58:06 - 58:07)

Was never.

[Speaker 2] (58:07 - 58:09)

The essence of that being inhabited the form.

[Speaker 1] (58:09 - 58:09)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (58:10 - 58:12)

And now it no longer inhabited the form.

[Speaker 1] (58:12 - 58:18)

So you could see there was only a shell there. Right. And that was such a clear realization.

[Speaker 2] (58:18 - 58:21)

Many people who've seen their loved ones in the casket see that.

[Speaker 1] (58:21 - 58:53)

Yes. So that which was the life within that form was always invisible. All you could ever see was the form.

Maybe you could sense the life within the form, but the life is always invisible. And the life ultimately has no form itself. And so you see, suddenly somebody dies.

The essence is gone. The life within the form is gone.

[Speaker 2] (58:53 - 59:37)

So what you're saying, again, on page 79, is to be able to be in form and be able to sense the formlessness of yourself. Yes. To be in form and to sense that there is an essential beingness or formlessness, the I am in the background of our life at all times.

And that awareness, that formlessness, is what can hear, see, sense the thoughts that are going on all the time. And there's a little space, just a space between the thoughts and the awareness of the thoughts. Yes.

And that is where we, I, reside. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (59:38 - 59:53)

You are the awareness. You are consciousness appearing as a person for a little while. But in essence, you are consciousness and consciousness is as consciousness.

You are timeless. You are eternal in the sense of timeless.

[Speaker 2] (59:54 - 1:00:01)

And when the form itself is lying there in the casket, that timeless formlessness has gone where?

[Speaker 1] (1:00:03 - 1:00:14)

Transformed to have either to join with the source or to go through further experiences of awakening.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:15 - 1:00:30)

In ways that our mind cannot even comprehend. No. OK.

Before we say goodbye, I want to thank all of you around the world for making this remarkable experience possible. So what did you want to say in conclusion about the core of the ego?

[Speaker 1] (1:00:32 - 1:02:02)

The core of the ego. The ego, sometimes we look at it as if it were an entity. But really, it's just a form of unconsciousness.

It appears to be an entity sometimes. It is not threatening, never regarded as an enemy or something that you need to get rid of. It's only to be recognized for what it is.

So and then the ego has fulfilled its purpose. It has taken you to that point of awakening. So in order to awaken, humans were in the state of oneness with the source when they first came here.

And then they lost themselves. They lost themselves in thinking. They lost themselves in the mind.

They lost themselves in the ego. And then they reached the stage where this state of being lost produces so much suffering that this dream of life becomes a nightmare. And they start waking up in this stage that we have reached now.

So as we wake up, we regain the state that we once had, that we lost the state of oneness with life. So we're waking up now. Oneness with the source.

But when we regain it, we regain it as a deeper level because we are conscious of it now. Wonderful. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:03 - 1:02:14)

Next week, we talk about role-playing all the many faces of the ego, how so many of us believe that we are the roles that we play. Thanks, everybody.

[Speaker 6] (1:02:15 - 1:02:55)

Hey, Supersolars. Looking for a great new read or listen? Well, that's why we're so excited about Oprah's new book, *The Path Made Clear*, *Discovering Your Life's Direction and Purpose*.

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Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : The Discovery of Inner Space (Chapter 8) [gid : //art19-episode- locator/V0/HS2ekllskUEolrL AsALZRRAN Z5y0Qs Dk0r2OYP2dw]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 3:20)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

I have never been happier in my whole life than in this class with Eckhart, sharing all of this information with all of you. So here we are, Chapter 8, which is all about finding more inner space, not even a word I was accustomed to using before reading this book, which is such a great thing to think about. Eckhart reminds us how cluttered our lives have become with things, and he's talking about more than just material things.

It's the things on your to-do list, the things you're worried about, all the things that distract you from being in the present moment right now. So Chapter 8 is all about boosting your awareness, discovering the stillness we all have inside us, and no matter what's going on, you can always go to the still space and truly connect to the present moment, because once you can do that, you're tapping into true consciousness. Eckhart writes at the very end of this chapter that you are never more essentially, more deeply yourself than when you are still.

So we're going deep into Chapter 8. As we head into these final chapters, it's really gratifying to hear from so many of you who feel that your commitment to this work is making a difference in your lives. I know I feel that way, and I'd like to again thank all of the students from around the world who are watching who are willing to awaken to the deeper meaning of your lives.

One of the things that Eckhart said that really struck me, you said that the opposite of death is not life. The opposite of death is birth. Life has no opposite.

Life has no opposite.

[Speaker 1] (3:20 - 3:33)

Life has no opposite. A person is here only for a few years, but you are basically life experiencing itself temporarily as this person.

[Speaker 2] (3:33 - 3:36)

As this person, this personality, this ego.

[Speaker 1] (3:36 - 3:59)

But underlying it, you are life that is eternal. And so when you go into stillness, it's easy to sense that underneath the personality, there is an aliveness, there is a presence, there is a consciousness that is timeless. And that's the life beyond the form of life that you are.

[Speaker 2] (3:59 - 4:01)

And that's why it has no opposite.

[Speaker 1] (4:01 - 4:02)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (4:02 - 4:03)

Because it's forever.

[Speaker 1] (4:03 - 4:07)

Yes. And the opposites only exist in the world of form.

[Speaker 2] (4:07 - 4:14)

In the world of form. I get that. Let's start with an overview of what this chapter is about.

What is inner space? What you just described?

[Speaker 1] (4:15 - 5:26)

I don't remember when this term first came to me. It must have been during a talk. I don't believe I used that term in The Power of Now.

I realized that most people's mind is full of stuff, full of one thought after another, full of continuously arising thoughts, emotions. And the external life is full of things that need doing, one thing after another, one thing after another. So I observed that in many people's lives, there seems to be no space.

There's only one thing after another, one thought after another, one thing to do after another, one thing to be worried about after another. So I noticed this absence of space in human beings. And really, that inner space or spaciousness is what we could also call the stillness.

But I use different terms because any one term limits it. When we talk about stillness, yes, it is stillness, but it's much vaster than just stillness.

[Speaker 2] (5:26 - 5:27)

And vaster than being still.

[Speaker 1] (5:27 - 7:08)

Yes, yes. So it's realizing that within you, there's not only objects in your consciousness that continuously arise in your consciousness as sense perceptions. You experience things, sense perceptions arise continuously, and each sense perception becomes an object in your consciousness.

And then thoughts arise continuously, and every thought becomes also an object that arises in your consciousness. And this is what most people's lives consist of, continuously objects arising in consciousness. And I call that object consciousness.

And that is what most people know, and they also know themselves as an object in their consciousness. They have an image of who they are. They have certain opinions about who they are.

And so you become an object to yourself, and that is the ego. So most a mental object, you make yourself into a mental object, and then you have a relationship with yourself as a mental object. It's a little bit insane, but it's normal.

So the incredible realization, this is where the spiritual dimension starts. There is no spiritual dimension in object consciousness. You can have all kinds of interesting-sounding or even religious-sounding doctrines.

If there is no space in you, spaciousness, where suddenly a gap arises in between

thoughts. If there's no spaciousness, then you haven't touched yet the spiritual dimension. And this book, I believe, is helping many people to find that space within.

[Speaker 2] (7:08 - 7:46)

WINFREY You say on page 227, object consciousness needs to be balanced by space consciousness for sanity to return to our planet and for humanity to fulfill its destiny. The arising of space consciousness is the next stage in the evolution of humanity. Space consciousness means that in addition to being conscious of things, which always comes down to sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions, there is an undercurrent of awareness.

Awareness implies that you are not only conscious of things, but you're also conscious of being conscious. That's what you're talking about. LEON KASSYS Yes.

[Speaker 1] (7:46 - 9:17)

And that's an amazing thing. At first, if you just listen to being conscious of being conscious, the mind says, what does that mean? You can only, you have to experience what that is to know what it means.

So to be conscious of being conscious, for example, you can do it by looking at something, just if people haven't had a taste of this yet. For example, you look at a flower and you're conscious of the image, what you see, the sense perception. Now the question is, can you also be conscious of yourself as the perceiving presence?

Without which there would be no perception. And that is the consciousness. So while you look at a flower, I'm saying flower because natural things can get you in touch with that dimension more easily.

While you look at a flower, can you sense yourself as the presence that is looking, that is making the perception possible? And then you have two dimensions. You're conscious of being conscious and you're conscious of what you're looking at.

You live in two worlds at the same time. And that brings in, that means in the background of your life, there is suddenly a vast but intensely alive peace. You're very, because being conscious of being conscious is very peaceful.

That's where the true inner peace arises.

[Speaker 2] (9:18 - 9:29)

So... WINFREY And that if you don't have that in your life, if you're not able to find that space between the thinking and the perception, perception, perception, if you're not, then...

[Speaker 1] (9:29 - 9:30)

DR. OSTFELD Then you lose yourself...

[Speaker 2] (9:31 - 9:32)

WINFREY In things. DR. OSTFELD In things.

[Speaker 1] (9:32 - 9:40)

You lose yourself in the world. WINFREY Yeah. DR. OSTFELD And you lose yourself in your own mind. You continuously get drawn into every thought that arises.

[Speaker 2] (9:40 - 9:53)

WINFREY Yeah. And so being able to be conscious of your consciousness or aware of yourself as a perceiving entity or perceiving presence is really what the true awakening is about.

[Speaker 1] (9:53 - 9:59)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. Yes. Yes.

Yes. That's the awakening to who you are beyond the external appearance.

[Speaker 2] (9:59 - 10:12)

WINFREY And that is what we're doing when we're angry and you see your ego flare up and all of that is to be able to step back and perceive yourself as the consciousness observing yourself as the angry person.

[Speaker 1] (10:12 - 10:13)

DR. OSTFELD Yes.

[Speaker 2] (10:13 - 10:13)

WINFREY Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (10:13 - 10:15)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. There's in the background...

[Speaker 2] (10:15 - 10:16)

WINFREY The space in between that.

[Speaker 1] (10:16 - 10:17)

DR. OSTFELD That's right.

[Speaker 2] (10:17 - 10:28)

WINFREY And so the inner space you're talking about is the space between, I am angry, I'm, you know, saying all of these things, and then there is the other self that is observing that.

[Speaker 1] (10:28 - 10:44)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. Now if you're angry and if the presence can be there in the background... DR. OSTFELD ...that means there's already, you're already very present because it's not easy to remain present when there's anger because anger has an enormous power. WINFREY Right. DR. OSTFELD So...

[Speaker 2] (10:44 - 10:51)

WINFREY But if you're observing it, then you can say, I'm out of control. WINFREY You know, people have done that. DR. OSTFELD Yes. WINFREY You can say to yourself, I'm out of control. I need to calm down.

[Speaker 1] (10:51 - 10:55)

WINFREY Yes. DR. OSTFELD But if you know that you're out of control, you're not completely out of control.

[Speaker 2] (10:55 - 10:55)

WINFREY That's right.

[Speaker 1] (10:56 - 11:05)

That's right. DR. OSTFELD And so if you know that you are, have been taken over by anger, you haven't been completely taken over because there's a knowing in the background.

[Speaker 2] (11:05 - 11:24)

WINFREY Yeah. And I think a lot of parents have experienced this, you know, when your kids do something and it's so upsetting to you, and you know in that moment, I should not try to discipline them because I'm too angry to discipline them. DR. OSTFELD Yes. WINFREY That part of you that knows that you're too angry to discipline them is the space that you're talking about.

[Speaker 1] (11:24 - 11:33)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. Yes. WINFREY Yeah.

DR. OSTFELD Yes. WINFREY Got that. DR. OSTFELD And so, and that's, if you don't have that space, then you're completely controlled by the anger. You become the anger. WINFREY That's right.

[Speaker 2] (11:34 - 11:44)

That thing that allows you to step back is what you're talking about. DR. OSTFELD Yes. WINFREY I got it.

I got it. I got it. I got it.

That part of you that says, I can step back and see I'm acting a fool.

[Speaker 1] (11:44 - 11:55)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. WINFREY And so, if you know that you are acting a fool, then it's not, there is a sanity there that's observing the insanity.

[Speaker 2] (11:56 - 11:56)

DR. OSTFELD Uh-huh.

[Speaker 1] (11:56 - 11:58)

DR. OSTFELD And if you know that you are...

[Speaker 2] (11:58 - 12:01)

WINFREY But sometimes people know they're acting a fool and they just keep on acting a fool.

[Speaker 1] (12:01 - 12:07)

DR. OSTFELD Yes, that's possible too. DR. OSTFELD For a while, it can happen that the old, certain old behavior patterns...

[Speaker 2] (12:07 - 12:09)

WINFREY But generally, if you know, you can pull yourself back.

[Speaker 1] (12:09 - 12:10)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (12:11 - 12:14)

WINFREY And that which knows is the inner space that you're talking about.

[Speaker 1] (12:14 - 12:15)

DR. OSTFELD Yes.

[Speaker 2] (12:16 - 12:18)

WINFREY Is observing presence and inner space the same thing?

[Speaker 1] (12:18 - 12:22)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. But observing should not be confused with judging.

[Speaker 2] (12:22 - 12:23)

WINFREY I got it.

[Speaker 1] (12:23 - 12:29)

DR. OSTFELD So there's no judgment. It's a clear, it's like a mirror. DR. OSTFELD It's like a mirror showing you what's there.

[Speaker 2] (12:30 - 12:41)

WINFREY Uh-huh. So there are literally two dimensions. There is the personality acting out of form and perceptions and all of that.

And then there is the observer of that.

[Speaker 1] (12:41 - 13:07)

DR. OSTFELD Yes. And the observer is not judging what is being observed. DR. OSTFELD If the observer begins to judge, then it's the mind that has come back in. DR. OSTFELD It just is. And the observer is timeless. And whatever the observer is observing, the behavior, the thinking, is conditioned by the past.

So you're bringing the timeless dimension into this world of time. WINFREY Yes.

[Speaker 2] (13:08 - 13:15)

Peter from Phoenix, you say you were addicted to smoking for 30 years, but quit after reading A New Earth. This ties into your question, correct?

[Speaker 4] (13:16 - 13:30)

DR. OSTFELD Exactly. I applied the techniques to quitting smoking. And with about five minutes work and about three hours time, I completely stopped.

No urges, no more cravings, nothing. No willpower or anything like that. It was so easy.

It was amazing.

[Speaker 2] (13:30 - 13:31)

WINFREY What is it that you applied?

[Speaker 4] (13:32 - 14:05)

DR. OSTFELD Becoming conscious of the feelings. I had run out of cigarettes, and I thought I had to go to the store. But when the craving came, I said, okay, let's be with the craving.

Let's feel it. What does it actually feel like? Usually we just react.

And I actually sat there and closed my eyes and felt it, and it started to dissolve, and it went away. And about two or three hours later, another craving came, and I did the same thing. And this time, the feeling went away even faster.

And then finally, when it came back about a third time, when I put my mind to it, it just completely disappeared. Gone, never came back.

[Speaker 2] (14:05 - 14:23)

WINFREY So were you also doing, I think Eckhart suggests in the addiction section, taking deep breaths sometimes when you feel like you need the craving for, whether it's cigarettes or food or whatever, to take the three deep breaths and see what happens if the feeling dissipates? Did you do that? DR. OSTFELD Yes, I did.

[Speaker 4] (14:23 - 14:52)

I took the breaths to basically create stillness, to become calm. So I took long, deep breaths and just sort of calmed down and then just started to feel the feelings and watch the thoughts. And I've tried to quit hundreds of times and sometimes a couple of months successfully, but there was always willpower involved.

There was always a craving still there. There was always, you know, if I just had one that was always still in the back of my mind, that's no longer there. I can go out with my friends on a Friday night, and they can all be smoking, and I won't even, I don't even want to look at one.

[Speaker 2] (14:53 - 14:54)

WINFREY What in the world happened to you?

[Speaker 4] (14:55 - 14:57)

DR. OSTFELD It was miraculous.

[Speaker 2] (14:57 - 15:18)

WINFREY Yes, that's great. And have you been able to apply the teachings from the book in other areas of your life? I mean, for myself, I've just found that being able to go back to my breath in the middle of the day when things get crazier, I mean, something Eckhart said, I think, on one of the beginning classes about one complete, full breath is a meditation.

[Speaker 4] (15:20 - 15:23)

DR. OSTFELD Well, that's where the question comes in, because I do have other issues.

[Speaker 2] (15:23 - 15:24)

WINFREY One conscious breath is a meditation.

[Speaker 4] (15:25 - 15:28)

DR. OSTFELD Earlier in the book, in the chapter, he talks about going below thought.

[Speaker 2] (15:29 - 15:29)

WINFREY Yes.

[Speaker 4] (15:29 - 15:57)

DR. OSTFELD And he described my situation exactly like he's here. We talk about, you know, alcohol, using food and TV to go below thoughts, sort of to numb the senses, numb your thoughts, and just sort of go into trance, if you will. And I do that a lot.

And I've been trying to break away from that by using the techniques, and I have not had the same success. And you also say, don't make it a problem. I think I made it a problem, and I want to kind of break from that.

[Speaker 2] (15:57 - 16:04)

WINFREY You're asking a question about how to use this more forcefully or whatever for alcohol?

[Speaker 4] (16:04 - 16:22)

DR. OSTFELD Yeah, with alcohol especially, and food. You know, I tend to overeat when I'm tired, and I just want to relax. Food, alcohol, TV tend to be the things I use.

And that brings you below thought when we're trying to be above thought. DR. OSTFELD And when I try and do that, I'm not as successful. I get very frustrated.

[Speaker 2] (16:22 - 16:24)

WINFREY Okay. What do you want to say, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (16:24 - 17:41)

DR. OSTFELD Well, it's a wonderful success story as far as smoking is concerned, and experiencing how awareness can dissolve old patterns. In some cases, instantly. And in other cases, it takes more time for awareness to dissolve the old pattern.

And awareness has to be brought to the pattern when it arises repeatedly. And it does not mean that every time awareness meets the pattern, that awareness is going to win. Win may not be the right word, because awareness, of course, is not never fighting anything.

Awareness is just there as the conscious presence. So bringing conscious presence, for example, into the urge to have a drink, not that one or two drinks are a problem, but if drinking drags you down, drags you down to below thinking, then of course, it is helpful to bring presence into the urge when it arises, in the same way that you did when you felt the urge come upon you to smoke. So have you practiced that?

Have you been able to feel the urge to drink and then bring awareness to that? And what happened?

[Speaker 4] (17:42 - 17:47)

Yes, I have. And it kind of postpones and eventually I kind of break down.

[Speaker 1] (17:48 - 18:55)

Yes, I believe I mentioned in the book that bring awareness to it. And it may well happen that the desire, the urge is still there after 10 minutes of awareness. I believe I mentioned that.

It does not mean that you have lost. It means that the desire is very strong. And at that point, perhaps you will have a drink.

And when it happens again, you bring awareness to it again. Eventually, something will happen to the pattern. It is very rare to have instant success as you did with smoking.

It does happen in some cases. But bring awareness to old patterns, whatever it is, addictive patterns, behavior patterns, bring awareness. And eventually they cannot coexist for that long.

So it is a continuing practice. But do not expect perfection. Do not expect you to be the perfect human being who never touches a drink again or whatever.

As I said to Oprah, I enjoy a drink occasionally.

[Speaker 2] (18:56 - 19:29)

And I said, whoo-hoo. So what he is saying also, and you said this in the beginning, Peter, don't judge it. And as you begin to practice, what I hear you say is this miracle that you experience with cigarettes is just that, because it rarely happens that you start this one time and it works immediately.

What you're saying is the more you apply the practice of bringing consciousness to this desire or craving, to this craving, that it will gradually lessen. It will weaken. It will weaken.

[Speaker 1] (19:29 - 20:02)

Yes. You can also apply it to other things like many people are addicted to television. One day without watching TV would be dreadful for them.

So you could perhaps as a practice, like a spiritual practice, you could say one day a week I'll see what happens if I don't watch television. One day a week I'll practice and then observe inside yourself what it feels like, the need to switch on, the need to be entertained, the need to be stimulated, to absorb what's on the screen.

[Speaker 2] (20:02 - 20:45)

Thank you so much, Peter. The story that you began with the ancient Sufi story from the Middle East about a king who's continuously torn between happiness and depression. On page 223, you write, the slightest thing would cause him great upset or provoke an intense reaction, and his happiness would quickly turn into disappointment and despair.

A time came when the king finally got tired of himself and of life, began to seek a way out. He sent for a wise man who lived in his kingdom, who was reputed to be enlightened. And when the wise man came, the king said to him, I want to be like you.

Can you give me something that will bring balance, serenity, and wisdom into my life? I will pay any price you ask. What is that price the king had to pay?

What is the price all of us have to pay?

[Speaker 1] (20:45 - 21:11)

Well, first of all, of course, the price, the king asked, well, how much does it cost? How much is it going to cost? And the wise man said to him, it is of such value that even your whole kingdom could not pay for it.

Now, what that means is that the primary thing in your life is nothing external. What is primary in your life is your inner state of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (21:11 - 21:12)

I got that.

[Speaker 1] (21:12 - 21:27)

And compared to that, you could have the greatest riches if you are in a state of anxiety or fear, negativity, nothing is worth that.

[Speaker 2] (21:27 - 21:35)

You know, in the Bible and in the church, they, they, I don't know if it's in the Bible, but I know in the church, we sing this song called, it is well with my soul.

[Speaker 1] (21:35 - 21:35)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (21:35 - 21:56)

So unless it is well with your soul, it does not matter what your outward state is. Where are you living? How big, how many square feet you have?

How many cars, whatever, a claim you have received in the world, unless it is well with your soul or your inner state of being. Your inner space, then you're not well.

[Speaker 1] (21:56 - 22:54)

Yes. And so that's the, always to bear that in mind. Yes.

What is, am I at one with life at this moment? What is my inner state at this moment? Your primary concern in any situation needs to be your inner state.

Your secondary concern is the outer situation, because only when you're in a state of rightness, of presence, can you adequately deal with outer situations. So what is the price? There is no price in terms of monetary value or anything like that.

We could say that the price to pay is you let go of the false self. That is the price you pay, the false mind-made self. The price to pay is identification with that false, the false I, the false me.

And so that's a relatively easy price to pay, because it's wonderful to let go of that.

[Speaker 2] (22:54 - 23:02)

But the wise man gives the king a ring. Yes. And inside the ring, the inscription is...

This too shall pass.

[Speaker 1] (23:02 - 23:21)

This too shall pass. And he says, whatever situation arises in your life, before you call it good or bad, before you react, before you judge it, touch this ring and remember the inscription. And this too shall pass.

[Speaker 2] (23:21 - 23:35)

If you're in a difficult stage in your life, you're going through, you know, trauma or divorce or whatever, to know that this too shall pass. But when I'm feeling happy and feeling joyful, I don't want to think this too shall pass.

[Speaker 1] (23:37 - 23:42)

That can actually also be very peaceful. If you know that it is transient, I know that...

[Speaker 2] (23:42 - 23:46)

But you're having such a good time and then you're thinking, this too shall pass, so don't get too happy.

[Speaker 1] (23:46 - 23:52)

If you don't know that this too shall pass, then what can happen? You will cling to the situation internally.

[Speaker 2] (23:52 - 23:52)

I got it.

[Speaker 1] (23:52 - 24:19)

I got that. And if you cling to the situation and then it passes, as it will... As it will.

Or even if it doesn't pass yet, it might last for a little while, even while you... The clinging itself means already some fear is coming in. Oh, I see that.

Through the holding on, you don't want this situation to leave you, or you don't want to leave the situation. The clinging means brings already up some fear, and that means you can't enjoy it as much, really.

[Speaker 2] (24:19 - 24:43)

I just had a great epiphany, not even for myself, but for all the people that I know that our key word here is clinging. So many people do this in relationships. They're holding on to a relationship that has already shown itself to be transient.

It's moving on to the next level. And what so many people do, they want to hold on and let it be as it always was.

[Speaker 1] (24:43 - 24:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (24:44 - 24:45)

And it's in the process of passing.

[Speaker 1] (24:46 - 24:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (24:46 - 24:48)

And you should let it pass.

[Speaker 1] (24:48 - 25:07)

Yes. Allowing change to happen and becoming comfortable with change. This is part of this two shall pass, because we live in this world where things continuously pass away.

The Buddhists call it impermanence. It's one of the deepest truths of the Buddha.

[Speaker 2] (25:07 - 25:15)

And the problem lies when you expect it to be the same as it always was, and that's where so many people get in trouble in their relationships, especially.

[Speaker 1] (25:15 - 25:27)

Yes. And it's an inability to let go. Inability to let go of situations, of people, and that eventually brings suffering.

[Speaker 2] (25:27 - 25:56)

Yet a friend of mine was telling me about her husband had said to her he wasn't sure he wanted to remain in the relationship. He wasn't sure. And there's, you know, seeking counseling about that.

And he's now, you know, sleeping in a different bedroom and all that stuff. And she's trying to hold on and wants things to be the way they were and wants to have a baby and all of that. And you would say, put that ring on.

[Speaker 1] (25:57 - 26:39)

Yes. So especially don't cling. If you don't cling, it means there's no fear in the situation.

The fear comes through the clinging, through not wanting the change. And so if you

approach the situation without fear, then one of two things can happen in a situation like this. There may become a deepening in the relationship.

When a relationship hits a crisis, it may be time for the relationship to dissolve or it may be time for a deepening. And so... How do you know the difference?

When there's no fear, then you will know either it will deepen or it will end. Wow. Or it will pass on.

The fear keeps you stuck where you are.

[Speaker 2] (26:39 - 26:52)

Got it. I got it. Nick has a question about finding his purpose.

And I know it's something that's been on the minds of quite a few of our students. Hello, Nick. Let's hear it.

Hey, Oprah. What's up? Hey.

Everything's up.

[Speaker 3] (26:54 - 27:18)

My question is basically, you have to worry about a lot of stuff in life. You have to go to work. You have to pay your bill.

Your cell phone bill works in the now. But if you don't work today, it's not going to work a month from today. So how do you live in the now and still worry about your IRAs, investing in your future, what you're going to do as far as money, paying your bills, doing what you have to do in this ego-censored world, especially in Los Angeles?

[Speaker 2] (27:20 - 27:25)

What if becoming who we were truly meant to be really isn't financially practical is what you're asking, right?

[Speaker 3] (27:27 - 27:53)

Yeah. What if I wanted to go on a mountain somewhere and just become who I was? I eventually would, I guess, starve or freeze.

But how do you integrate this in your everyday life, sort of being in the now, being the essence of who you are, without suffering in the long run? The squirrel would suffer. The squirrel would die if it didn't put away nuts for the future.

[Speaker 1] (27:54 - 28:57)

Okay. Good question. However, the first few words of your question already contained an error.

And it's easy if an error keeps into a question, then it's hard to answer it truly. The error was, you said, we have to worry about paying our bills and all kinds of things. Is that true?

No. You have to pay your bills, but you don't have to worry about paying your bills. And the squirrel has to put away the nuts, but the squirrel is not worried about the nuts.

Only humans are worried about their nuts. So you can being present with what you do does not mean that you neglect your daily affairs and so on. It means you deal with them in a different and, in fact, more powerful and more effective way.

You give up the worrying part. You still pay your bills, but you let go of the worrying about paying your bills. In that way, you learn from the squirrel how to live.

[Speaker 2] (28:57 - 29:01)

Because worrying is your choice. You see that, don't you, Nick?

[Speaker 3] (29:02 - 29:37)

Worrying is your choice. At times when I don't worry, I've had moments in my life where I didn't worry. I just kind of let the waves of the world roll over me.

And I kind of did nothing about situations and hoped that they would work out themselves. And they didn't. I mean, you know, worrying did help me in the past to actually get things together and get my life on track, I guess, to be for me in my life, to be in the essence, to be with my spiritual self.

It doesn't, it's not enough. I have to really be actively worried about the actual day-to-day business of surviving. Well, most people have to do, you know.

[Speaker 1] (29:37 - 31:06)

I would still argue with that. It is true that you need to take action. It is not true that you need to worry in order to be able to take action.

So you can actually experiment with, in your daily life, start with little situations. Let's say there's a pile of bills that you have to pay. How do you approach these bills?

Are you going to worry the night before or on the day? Or am I going to be able to pay you? You just take one bill after another.

You look at it. You face it. Okay, do I have the money in my bank account or not?

If you don't have the money in my bank account, I have to do something to make more money. What is the possible? What can I do now?

Put that aside. Look, this action I can take. Pick up the phone.

Make a phone call to the present. Effective. Powerful.

But no worry. Then you'll see your whole life will become not only more effective and more powerful, but also much easier. It flows with greater ease.

Nothing in nature is worried. All the animals do what they have to do, but they don't worry about it. They are active.

Everything is active in nature. The trees are active. The grass, the flowers.

Everything is active and putting out energy. It's only the humans that worry about it and think they need worry in order to survive in this world. You don't need worry.

You need action, but not worry.

[Speaker 3] (31:06 - 31:30)

That's an interesting point. That reminds me of the lily in the valley. It doesn't worry about clothing itself in the Bible.

It just does. It just exists. It worries not whether the sparrow or the crow does not worry how it's going to get its next meal.

It just does. That's right there. I guess I'm thinking of those hippies in India that still haven't come back.

They're just broken. They took all their idealism there.

[Speaker 2] (31:31 - 33:35)

Nick is saying, well, that's really good for that Bible stuff and for the lilies in the valley, but listen, I'm living in L.A. and I got to worry about things. I think you really represent a whole lot of people, particularly young people, who have said to me personally or have emailed and think that being in alignment with who you're truly meant to be and awakening to your purpose represents passivity, that you're just sort of sitting around, just waiting on a whoo moment and not really doing anything. The real purpose of this entire book and the work of spirituality is to get you, to get us to align our personalities with our soul or higher consciousness so that the work that you do in the world comes from the place of the higher consciousness and you use your ego or personality to serve that.

You allow your personality to serve the calling of consciousness that has put you here on

the earth in the first place. And when you do that, everything has a flow to it. You're in the right job that gives you the right amount of money for you at any given time because you are in alignment.

So you're not worrying about things because you're not living beyond your means. You're not stressing about things because you're not allowing your ego to determine and define who you are in the world. So you're not acting out of an external self, but acting out of the place of inner space or consciousness.

So everything is in alignment. And that's not passive. That's not whoo, I can't pay my bills.

And so let me find myself later. That is aligning your personality with the higher consciousness so that your higher consciousness, you operate from a place of being and the inner space is directing and guiding your life and not the outer space. You get it?

[Speaker 3] (33:36 - 33:45)

Yeah, I do. I'm sorry if I made you mad, Oprah. But I do.

That's wonderful. Thank you so much.

[Speaker 2] (33:47 - 34:00)

No, I'm not mad, but I hear this. I hear this a lot. No, this isn't about giving up your passion.

It's about feeling your passion more deeply. Yes. And being in alignment with that.

[Speaker 3] (34:01 - 34:23)

How do you know if what you want, what your passion is, isn't just ego driven? What if I just wanted to be like, I don't know, a rock star and that's just completely ego driven and that didn't help the world in any way. But if I kept on working towards it, it would just not be serving anyone but myself.

What if my passion is wrong? You know, what if it's wrong? Too many questions.

[Speaker 1] (34:24 - 34:58)

No, go ahead. Go ahead. Sometimes you may not know until you have achieved what you wanted to achieve, whether it was ego or not.

When you get what you wanted to achieve and very soon you find it does not satisfy you, then it was the ego. So you can, it's a learning process. Nobody's saying you shouldn't try to achieve this or that.

If the impulse is there to have this or that, do it and see what happens. If it doesn't satisfy you, it's the ego.

[Speaker 2] (34:59 - 35:38)

And the greatest rock stars are those who are rock stars because they sing or they perform because they had to and whether they were performing to, you know, grand crowds or in their garage space to just their family members, they sing because they have to. The greatest dancers are those who dance because they have to and they become rock stars or dancing stars because that is coming from such a pure place of passion. And that's what the world feels because those are the people who last, the people who are operating from the passionate, true space and not just doing it because they want to make the money or because of the ego self.

[Speaker 1] (35:38 - 35:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (35:39 - 35:40)

That's what I think.

[Speaker 3] (35:40 - 35:41)

Very good.

[Speaker 2] (35:41 - 35:42)

But it's nice talking to you, Nick.

[Speaker 3] (35:43 - 35:45)

Thank you. Sorry it took so long.

[Speaker 2] (35:45 - 35:48)

Christina lives in Toronto, Canada. Christina, your question. Hello.

[Speaker 6] (35:49 - 35:50)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Akbar.

[Speaker 2] (35:50 - 35:50)

Hi.

[Speaker 6] (35:52 - 36:34)

I have been afraid to drive for about 16 years now. I was in a serious car accident and it has stopped me from, you know, being responsible in my family life. My husband has so much burden.

He has to take our kids to their activities and so forth, take time off of work to take them to doctor's appointments. So my question, but just recently from reading A New Earth, I've started to drive. So yay.

But my question is, how do I remain in the inner spaciousness that you speak about on page 238 so that I can stay behind the wheel? I mean, things are going well right now, but if that fear comes creeping back, how do I handle it?

[Speaker 2] (36:35 - 36:38)

I don't know if I want you behind the wheel if I'm on the road and you try to do that.

[Speaker 7] (36:39 - 36:40)

Oh, don't say that. No.

[Speaker 1] (36:41 - 38:44)

Okay. Okay. So the first, you're now able to drive.

That's wonderful. The old fear is gone. But now a new fear has arisen and that fear is about whether the fear is going to come back or not.

And so that is often the case. People develop a fear about a fear. Is it going?

Am I going to be in fear again? The mind tends to do that kind of thing because it projects itself into the future and says, am I going to remain fearless or is the fear going to come back? So realize that that is your mind trying to figure something out and thereby creating a new level of fear on top of the original fear that has already dissolved.

So trust that it's not going to come back. But something you can do to help it is to actually consciously enjoy the driving and enjoy sitting in the car, enjoy sitting at the traffic light, enjoy the driving itself. I enjoy driving.

It's a very peaceful thing to do for me. So and be comfortable with being in the car. And what I used to do often in the don't do it so much anymore.

I would get into my car and drive out to some lonely place and sit in the car and meditate or write. I liked being in the car. So use the enjoyment.

The more you find the enjoyment, the less likely the fear is going to come back. So seek the enjoyment of it is to do with enjoying the present moment, the driving itself, the movement and so on. And don't go into your mind.

Don't follow up that thought when it says, oh, is it going to last? Is this state of being without fear going to last?

[Speaker 2] (38:44 - 38:45)

Just stay in the moment.

[Speaker 1] (38:45 - 39:17)

Stay in the moment. The more you're in the moment, the less likely fear is going to come back. It can't really come back when you are in the now.

It's only when you leave the now, then it'll come back. Either you go into the past and you remember something that happened in the past. You have left the now or you go into the future and say, am I going to have fear again at some point?

So the more you stay in the now, the more you're keeping out fear. Fear comes through past or future.

[Speaker 2] (39:19 - 39:25)

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Thank you. Natalie lives in Australia. Hi, Natalie.

[Speaker 5] (39:26 - 39:28)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Oprah. How are you?

[Speaker 2] (39:28 - 39:30)

We're both well. Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (39:31 - 40:32)

This is so exciting for me. On page 239 in your book, you say that some people feel more alive when they travel and visit unfamiliar places or foreign countries because those times, sense perceptions, experiencing takes up more of their consciousness and thinking. Since the class on the third chapter, I've been sharing an amazing holiday with my family and our friends here.

I've been able to enjoy my holiday so much more by practicing the teachings that I've read about in the book and the things I've learned from the class. But my life back home is not like my holiday. It's really busy.

I've got a job and three children and my husband has his own business. And on reflection, I think I've filled up any free time I've had so that I wasn't with that constant

noise in my head. I feel really great at the moment.

And I want to feel the same when I go home. So my question is, how do I transition between this wonderful holiday and go back to my normal life at home?

[Speaker 1] (40:34 - 42:43)

Okay. Okay. That's a good question.

Yes. Yes. Thank you.

Yes, it's a good question. The everydayness of many people's lives can really pull you into a place of unconsciousness because of the repetitiveness of one's life. So it's up to you when you get home to invite a different state of consciousness as much as possible into your daily life, into the daily routine of your life.

Invite a state of presence when you are engaged in things that you do every day repetitively. Things that usually are a means to an end. Driving those kids to school, doing the shopping.

You can see how many things are a means to an end in one's daily existence. And that's not a very powerful way to live when almost everything you do in your daily existence is a means to some end because you have to do this. So bring in presence where instead of treating whatever you do as a means to an end, as much as possible, make it into an end in itself.

For example, when you're driving from here to there, be absolutely present every moment. Look around. Be alert as if you were seeing things for the first time.

The trees, the people, the traffic. And you do that by not labeling things. Not labeling mentally what you're experiencing.

Be there as a conscious presence when you're doing shopping at the supermarket. Perceiving without naming is what you call it. Perceiving without naming.

Be there with every step. Look at the things around you. What do I need to get to be conscious of every movement of everything around you so that it's not an everyday thing.

It's that everything that you do is happening just now. It's not a repetition.

[Speaker 2] (42:44 - 43:46)

And I promise you, if you start to do this in your everyday life, what he says on page 252, as much as possible in everyday life, use awareness of the inner body to start to create space. When waiting, when listening to someone, when pausing to look at the sky, all on

page 252, a tree, a flower, your partner or child. Feel the aliveness within at the same time.

This means part of your attention or consciousness remains formless and the rest is available for the outer world to form. Whenever you inhabit your body in this way, it serves as an anchor for staying present in the now, prevents you from losing yourself in thinking, in emotions or in external situations. When you really get that, what he's saying on page 252, Natalie, everything around you takes on a magical quality.

I can really testify to that, that just doing routine things becomes almost like you have wow moments doing the smallest things, you know, washing the...

[Speaker 5] (43:47 - 44:05)

I've been feeling that at the moment because we've been seeing so many amazing things and meeting so many different people and being in places where they speak different languages. But I know at home, what I do is when I'm doing something, I'm thinking about the next thing that I'm going to be doing. So I really need to, I can really take that on.

Thank you so much.

[Speaker 2] (44:05 - 44:13)

What I would like to say to you and everybody else, when you start to put this into practice, when you start to actually put it into practice, everything is amazing.

[Speaker 7] (44:14 - 44:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:15 - 44:37)

Everything starts to be amazing. The fact that you're breathing in and out of your lungs starts to be amazing. That's what the now does.

It brings you into a level of consciousness and presence. So just being is amazing. And you don't have to leave home to experience that.

Isn't that the... That's right.

[Speaker 1] (44:37 - 44:39)

That's the key, isn't it? Yes, that's the key. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:39 - 45:24)

Thank you very much, Natalie. But that's... Bye.

Thank you. What Natalie was talking about is the whole point of awakening to your life's purpose. But what we're going to be talking about next week, Nick, is when you align the inner purpose and let the inner purpose determine what your outer actions are, then you're not worried.

That's right. You never worry. Yes.

No matter how much money you're making. Yes. You're not worried because you're on purpose with your life.

You're on purpose with your life. Yeah. Well, you know, I think a lot of people feel like this is all kind of...

Sometimes they feel like this is ooey-goey stuff. And yes, and I'll get spiritual, but let me make some money first. Yeah.

I want to be spiritual and all that. But I got to make some money first.

[Speaker 1] (45:24 - 45:43)

Yeah. That's actually in the gospel in the New Testament where he says, let me first do this. They invite you to the kingdom of heaven.

That's right. Let me first do this with another... Well, there's another excuse.

Let me first do this. First, I have to do this. Then I'll be ready.

Uh-huh. Of course, it never happens. That's right.

The then never comes.

[Speaker 2] (45:44 - 46:00)

So there is Barbara in Shanghai, China, who writes, I find it really difficult to be the observer of a challenging work environment, especially when I'm frustrated with employees and have to discipline my staff. What are some of the practical steps I can take to overcome the situation?

[Speaker 1] (46:01 - 47:16)

Well, there you use whatever the practical things that are described in the book, one or two conscious breaths as often as possible, getting in touch with the feeling of the inner body, the aliveness of the inner body, while you are listening to people, especially. Then already a different energy is there. You are listening from a different state of consciousness when you're in touch with the inner body while you listen.

Right. And a lot of things, a person who is running an office or whatever our questioner does, they probably have to deal with many people every day, which involves listening to people in addition to, of course, speaking to people. So be there as they feel the aliveness within as you listen as much as possible.

Take conscious breaths while you are engaged in things. That's right. Bringing spaces, little spaces into your daily existence.

Gaps. Little gaps. That is more important than doing.

It's wonderful to do a meditation at the end of the day, but bringing little gaps into your everyday activities is even more important.

[Speaker 2] (47:17 - 47:58)

I love what you talk about on page 232 and 233. You tell people to avoid watching television programs and commercials that assault you with a rapid succession of images that change every two or three seconds. Rather than watching at random, choose the programs you want to see whenever you remember to do so.

Feel the aliveness also inside your body as you watch. Alternatively, be aware of your breathing from time to time, looking away from the screen at regular intervals so that it doesn't completely take possession of your visual sense. What are we doing to ourselves and more importantly to our children through the video games, the television, which is a form of like hypnosis almost for people.

[Speaker 1] (47:59 - 48:28)

And it pulls your attention out of the body. It's like a leaking, an energy leakage, especially for young children when the energy gets drawn out very easily. So it's continuous energy leakage, and they cannot focus because of the rapidly changing images on TV screens in many programs.

The ability to have a prolonged focus on something is greatly diminished.

[Speaker 2] (48:29 - 48:36)

Well, I thought that that's why we have so many children with ADD because they've grown up in a world where they can only, there's 30 seconds, 30 seconds and 30 seconds.

[Speaker 1] (48:36 - 49:16)

Yes. That means the quality of your life is also diminished because the quality of your life very much depends on the degree of your attention. Attention is quality.

So if you cannot give attention to anything for very long, that diminishes the quality of your life and what you can do. So parents need to be careful with their children. I'm not saying remove all these things immediately from your children, but very gently reduce the amount of time they spend with video games and reduce gently the amount of time you spend watching television.

[Speaker 2] (49:16 - 49:31)

Because they cause you, as you say, so when watching television, the tendency is for you to fall below thought, not rise above it. Television has this in common with alcohol and certain other drugs. While it provides some relief from your mind, you again pay a high price, loss of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (49:32 - 49:33)

And here we have...

[Speaker 2] (49:33 - 49:35)

That's what it's designed to do, isn't it? For the most part.

[Speaker 1] (49:35 - 50:10)

Yes. And here we have the interesting concept of rising above thinking and falling below thinking. So what we are engaged in here, now most people are at the thinking level.

They are controlled by their mind. They are identified with their mind. This work that we are doing here, if you can call it work, it's not work really, is rising above thinking.

Being present means you have risen above thinking. You are fully conscious, but there's little or no thought activity.

[Speaker 2] (50:11 - 50:28)

Can you tell me why you say on page 233, make sure you don't go to sleep immediately after switching off the set, or even worse, fall asleep with the set still on. I know my friend Gail sometimes is watching TV and she goes, I don't know if I was watching or my feet were watching, because she goes to sleep with the TV on.

[Speaker 1] (50:30 - 51:06)

So then all the turmoil that you've just been watching and you've just spent a significant amount of time below thought in a state of unawareness and unconsciousness. And if you go from, that will affect the quality of your sleep. And you will notice also when you wake up in the morning, you won't be as refreshed.

It's vital to go into sleep from a place of consciousness rather than unconsciousness.

Then the quality of your sleep will be much better and you will wake up feeling renewed.

[Speaker 2] (51:06 - 51:15)

I noticed that. See, I don't watch television before going to bed. Hardly watch television at all.

But I noticed that if I meditate before going to sleep, I have a better sleep.

[Speaker 1] (51:15 - 51:46)

Yes. And what I recommend to people is as they lie in bed, ready to go to sleep, lie on your back, flat on your back, and bring attention, scan your body with your attention, from your feet to your head, your hands, your arms, and then feel the internal aliveness of the body as you lie there. You lie in the energy field of your body.

That means there's also very little or no thinking going on.

[Speaker 8] (51:46 - 51:46)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (51:46 - 52:06)

Because the attention moves into the body. Into the body. And there, from there, you go to sleep.

Hold that for five, ten minutes. It's a very pleasant way of saying goodbye to that day and of going into sleep. It feels very much alive.

It's joyful, actually, to lie there in that energy field.

[Speaker 2] (52:06 - 52:18)

And that energy field that you're talking about is exactly what this whole chapter is about, is the energy field of inner space. Yes. Go inside the body and allow yourself to be the observer of the body.

[Speaker 1] (52:19 - 52:45)

Yes. And then you connect with the energy. You merge the energy field.

And of course, the body is mostly empty space, 99.999% empty space. Physicists tell us the space between the molecules, the atoms that make up the body, the spaces in between the atoms is so vast that your body is 99.999% empty space.

[Speaker 2] (52:47 - 53:18)

That's a lot for my brain to take in right now. But I do want to thank you for joining us. Get ready for our next class, Chapter 9.

We're coming to the end. Your inner purpose, your inner purpose, for all of you who've read this book, looking for your inner purpose, this is what it's all about, people. Thank you.

Thank you. For bringing us into inner space. Next week is Inner Purpose.

When it defines what you do in the world, puts you in alignment, and all things come. Yes. As they should.

[Speaker 1] (53:18 - 53:22)

And then comes the alignment of inner purpose and outer purpose.

[Speaker 2] (53:23 - 53:26)

Ah, that's it. Thanks, everybody. Good night.

[Speaker 8] (54:07 - 54:07)

Good night.

Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : The Pain Body (Chapter 5) [gid : //art19-episode- locator/V0/hMltjad5gPoYtF5Z4ZS5Jo1o0XKzZ7VZuw2fk2J6G8Y]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 4:03)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls A New Earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

We're nearly halfway through our New Earth series with Eckhart Tolle, one of my favorite spiritual thinkers of all time. So chapter five, wow, it is a really good one. It helps explain a lot.

It is about how all the stuff you're dragging around from your past is causing all kinds of pain and drama right now in the present. Eckhart has a name for this. He calls it the pain body.

Oh, this one's a game changer, I gotta tell you. Once you begin connecting to the idea of the pain body, you can see it. I mean, we all know somebody where it's shown up big time, and it may be showing up in you.

You're gonna have new perspective on those moments when it feels like all your buttons are being pushed. It's that pain body showing up. And if you've ever had long-standing issues with a family member or friend, you might just find the secret to healing a broken relationship.

So let the ahas begin. On to chapter five, the pain body. We're at the halfway mark, and I'd like to thank all of you who are committed to this work and make time every week to share this space with us and to give this to yourself.

So together, I believe that we are beginning to create powerful changes in our lives as individuals, and then putting that out into the world. Before we get started, I wanted to share something with all of you. Our friend Elizabeth Lesser of the Omega Institute sent me a poem that I'd like to share with everybody.

So listen to this, Eckhart. It says, Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you are not lost.

Wherever you are is called here, and you must treat it as a powerful stranger. Must ask permission to know it and be known. The forest breathes.

Listen. It answers. I have made this place around you.

If you leave it, you may come back again, saying here. No two trees are the same to raven. No two branches are the same to wren.

If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you, you are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows where you are.

You must let it find you.

[Speaker 1] (4:04 - 4:06)

Don't you love that? That's beautiful.

[Speaker 2] (4:06 - 4:51)

Yes. What I'm finding too, reading this book and then working with you every week, is that everything starts to be sacred. I mean, everything starts to be.

You can find the sacred in the most ordinary of things. And that there is a calmness and a stillness to almost everything if you can get quiet enough yourself to feel it. That's what's happening to me.

As so many other people are experiencing whatever you're experiencing, how the reading of this book, The Awakening for you, is taking on whatever form it does in your life. That's what I'm seeing for myself. Everything's magical.

You never have to be bored, ever.

[Speaker 1] (4:52 - 5:07)

No, no. And the need for artificial stimulus goes when people continuously need to, whenever they get home, they need to switch something on to have some kind of entertainment. You can still enjoy entertainment, but you're not dependent anymore.

[Speaker 2] (5:07 - 6:15)

On that to fill you up. Well, tonight we're discussing Chapter 5. So glad we're in the pain

body.

So I wanted to just start with my idea of an overview of this chapter. You say that in this chapter, that the human mind seems to be hooked on me and my story, constant mind chatter that keeps negative emotions alive and personalizes everything. You say at the beginning of this chapter on page 129, I'm on everybody, that the greatest part of most people's thinking is involuntary, automatic and repetitive.

It's no more than a kind of mental static and fulfills no real purpose. Strictly speaking, you don't think thinking happens to you. The statement, I think, implies volition, you say.

It implies that you have a say in the matter, that there's a voice involved on your part. But really, you say, I think it's just as false a statement as I digest or I circulate my blood. Digestion happens.

Circulation happens. Thinking happens.

[Speaker 1] (6:16 - 7:08)

Yeah. So it's becoming aware that thinking happens to you all the time. The key is becoming aware of it.

It's happening to everybody. Until the awareness occurs, then you are identified with that voice in the head, with its repetitive thought patterns. And that is what most people are trapped in.

And it makes up their superficial personality with all the continuous repetitive judgments and likes and dislikes and prejudices and whatever makes up the content of their egoic mind. So people are trapped in that and derive their sense of self from that, which is ultimately insubstantial, conditioned by the past, not who they are.

[Speaker 2] (7:08 - 7:27)

Absolutely. And you say also in Chapter 5, The Pain Body, you show how this addiction to being these thoughts in our head, this addiction to these thoughts in our head, to this negativity is at the root of humanity's problems. On page 137, you write, We are a species that has lost its way.

[Speaker 1] (7:27 - 8:15)

Yes. And we are lost. I could say also we are species lost.

We are lost in thought. We've lost ourselves in the mind. So looking for some kind of identity in the movement of thinking without ever really finding it.

So the most important step in any polished awakening is to realize that there is a voice in the head that doesn't stop speaking. When you realize, oh, this, and then you begin to realize what kinds of things the voice is saying, repetitive judgments and so on, negative

thoughts about yourself, about other people, about situations you are in, especially all these repetitive negative thoughts that many people are trapped with, you become aware of that.

[Speaker 2] (8:15 - 8:21)

Yes. And then you become aware that it's really just the story that you've told yourself about yourself.

[Speaker 1] (8:21 - 8:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (8:21 - 8:22)

And that's all it is.

[Speaker 1] (8:23 - 8:23)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (8:23 - 8:25)

All right. That it has no power.

[Speaker 1] (8:25 - 8:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (8:25 - 8:28)

Yes. And the past has no power over it.

[Speaker 1] (8:28 - 8:36)

No power. The power comes in with your awareness that there is a voice. Yes.

Because the awareness is not part of it. And that is part of becoming present.

[Speaker 2] (8:37 - 8:51)

Yes. One of my favorite quotes of this chapter is, on page 141, nothing ever happened in the past that can prevent you from being present now. And if the past cannot prevent you from being present now, what power does it have?

[Speaker 1] (8:52 - 9:27)

Yes. Yes. Because many people are so attached to the past that they carry a burden, like carrying a huge sack on your back, a burden.

You're identified with that. And they believe that they're unable to be present because the past prevents them from being present. But it can't do that.

You can step out of the stream of thinking, take your attention into the present, and immediately the past no longer has that power over you.

[Speaker 2] (9:27 - 9:30)

Because nothing ever happened in the past that can prevent you from being present.

[Speaker 1] (9:30 - 9:31)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (9:31 - 12:01)

Now. You say that the core of all of this is the pain body. On page 141, we read that any negative emotion that is not fully faced and seen for what it is in the moment it arises does not completely dissolve.

The energy field of old but still very much alive emotion that lives in almost every human being is the pain body. And chapter five introduces us to the pain body. Amazing.

You know, when I read this, I thought about my childhood. Now, I've shared my childhood with lots of people. And as a child, I was raised by my grandmother for the first six years.

And my grandmother used to whip me often, like I used to get beatings on a regular basis. And it was really a part of our culture. And I know many of you were raised this way, too, that not only would you get beaten for almost, you know, for doing nothing, for you broke a glass or you, you know, spoke out a turn or whatever the adults deemed was inappropriate for you in that moment.

But I would get beaten. And then I was never allowed to have any emotion about it. I remember feeling many times my grandmother would whip me with switches.

She would braid the switches together and I'd get a whipping. And then in the middle of whipping me, she'd say, stop your crying, stop your crying. And I'd get whipped until I would stop crying.

And then afterwards, she would say, you better wipe that pout off of your face. You better put a smile on your face. So you'd have to now act as though the beating that you just had didn't happen.

And when I read this, that any negative emotion that is not fully faced and seen for what it is in the moment it arises does not completely dissolve. It leaves behind a remnant of pain. I realized that that pain of not being able to express the emotion of just being able to be angry.

I mean, now I see kids today when their parents say something and they don't like it. The kids can say, I don't like you or that upset me or, you know, God forbid, I hate you, which, you know, in my culture was never allowed. You had to suppress that, whatever you're

feeling.

If you're beaten, wipe that pout off of your face, wipe your tears, stop crying right now. And so that would be a huge pain body that I would end up carrying, especially as a child, because you say children especially carry it.

[Speaker 1] (12:02 - 12:09)

So did you find then that as you grew up that there was a lot of unexpressed negative emotion in you?

[Speaker 2] (12:09 - 12:37)

I didn't, it wasn't unexpressed. It was repressed ability to, it's what caused me to have the disease to please for so long. A desire to please everybody because the ability to say in the moment this upsets me or this really bothers me or what you're doing I don't like was not something I felt I could do for the longest time.

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (12:38 - 12:47)

So the, all these negative remnants of negative emotions, they become, they accumulate in the body.

[Speaker 2] (12:48 - 12:49)

I eat mine.

[Speaker 1] (12:49 - 14:44)

Yes. And then together they form what I call, because now we need to realize that any emotion that you have is a form of energy that's acceptable, I think, to most people. Just as every thought you have is a form of energy, every thought is energy, so there's nothing spooky about that.

So when we say, when I say that the pain body can be considered almost an entity in its own right that lives in you, some people find that's a little spooky, but all that I'm trying to say is here that it's an energy form. Entity is another word for it. So an energy form lives in you that you may not be aware of all the time because some of the time it is dormant and it's only active for a certain percentage of time.

So first realization is that there is something in me that seeks unhappiness, that seeks unpleasant experiences, that seeks more negativity because it feeds on those things. Those things, negative thoughts, will feed the pain body. That is one of the favorite ways the pain body to feed is on your own thinking.

So this is very important for people to realize, to observe within themselves that periodically,

in many people, an addiction to negativity arises. And if you can recognize that as it arises, then you're no longer totally at the mercy of it. WINFREY.

[Speaker 2] (14:44 - 14:46)

Right, because the awareness dissipates it.

[Speaker 1] (14:47 - 14:48)

DR. WOLFF. Yes. WINFREY.

Yes. DR. WOLFF. Yes.

WINFREY. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (14:49 - 15:04)

And so, back to this point, though, whenever there is negativity in your life that you never fully dealt with, that negativity, the energy of that negativity has to go someplace. And you're saying where it goes is inside us.

[Speaker 5] (15:04 - 15:04)

DR. WOLFF. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:04 - 15:17)

WINFREY. And for me, everybody knows I've struggled with my weight for years. For me, that's the form that it takes.

For a lot of other people, it makes them outwardly, you know, angry or negative toward other people. DR. WOLFF.

[Speaker 1] (15:17 - 15:18)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:18 - 15:22)

WINFREY. But it has to take some form. For some people, it makes them sick, makes them ill.

[Speaker 1] (15:22 - 15:23)

DR. WOLFF. Yes. WINFREY.

[Speaker 2] (15:23 - 15:23)

Uh-huh.

[Speaker 1] (15:23 - 16:06)

DR. WOLFF. And a very frequent manifestation of it, perhaps the most frequent manifestation of the pain body is in intimate relationships, where periodically partners have to go through their drama. They have to reenact drama every few weeks, in some cases every few days.

They go through intense emotional negativity. And usually, the pain body awakens first in one, in either the man or the woman first. And when the pain body awakens, it wants some kind of reaction, negative emotional reaction.

[Speaker 2] (16:06 - 16:07)

WINFREY. It's seeking that from the other person.

[Speaker 1] (16:07 - 16:08)

DR. WOLFF. Because it feeds on it. WINFREY.

[Speaker 2] (16:08 - 16:09)

Uh-huh. DR. WOLFF.

[Speaker 1] (16:09 - 16:36)

So many people have realized when I've spoken about it, there is, oh, yes, this is happening in our relationship. WINFREY. Uh-huh.

DR. WOLFF. And periodically, the need, the pain body arises, and it then will attempt to push the partner's buttons, as they're called, in some form of psychotherapy. They say pushing the person's buttons means the pain body knows exactly what buttons to push in your partner, buttons that will certainly bring a negative reaction.

WINFREY.

[Speaker 2] (16:36 - 16:51)

Now, is the pain body ultimately this feeling of not being good enough? Is the pain body there because of a feeling of not being worthy, of not knowing its sense of presence or consciousness? Is that why it's the pain body?

[Speaker 1] (16:51 - 17:13)

DR. WOLFF. Well, it's the emotional aspect of the ego. WINFREY.

Yes. DR. WOLFF. So really, pain body is part of the ego, and it's a very unhappy entity.

WINFREY. Mm-hmm. DR. WOLFF. But because its very existence consists of this unhappy vibration, it does not want an end to its unhappiness, because an end to its unhappiness is the end to the pain body. WINFREY. Got it.

[Speaker 2] (17:14 - 17:18)

Got it. Linda, she has a question about the pain body and her sister. DR. WOLFF.

[Speaker 3] (17:18 - 18:57)

I do, and thank you, Oprah, so much for this. I first encountered your book, Mr. Chole, in 2005, and have read it at least four times. You write on page 148 that the pain bodies love intimate relationships and families, because that is where they get most of their food, and that really resonated for me.

I had a huge aha moment, because I have a sister who has always interacted with everyone in the family in a very dramatic way, and I always considered her to be a drama queen who would rather have a problem than solve a problem. But after reading this chapter, it helped me so much understand more about her and what was going on and why she was interacting with us the way that she is. My question is, now that I've seen that—of course, I wanted to call her and have her read the book, but you've already talked about how sometimes that's not necessarily the best way to approach people.

But what is the way? How can I really reconnect the family? She is separated from our family.

She's separated from her children, from us, and we have no relationship at all, and it's really tragic. And I want to do something to help bring us back together and don't know what to do.

[Speaker 1] (18:58 - 19:02)

So at the moment, you have no contact with her at all?

[Speaker 3] (19:02 - 19:18)

She has totally withdrawn everything. I do send her emails every month or so just to check in. Sometimes she responds, but very terse and cold, most times not.

[Speaker 1] (19:20 - 21:08)

I hope an opportunity will arise for you to get together at some point so you can continue to invite her if there's an event at home or whatever, and then just be open. But when she does come, it's very important for you not to buy into her drama. I don't know whether this happened in the past, whether she used to draw other family members into her drama.

That's usually the tendency. So now when you meet her again, then you will realize, of course, you will be in a different state of consciousness because you will see that what she is suffering from is the disease of the pain body, and that is not part of who she actually is in truth. So you can be there as a very compassionate presence.

And when the drama arises again, as it will, because her pain body will be very active again when she meets you or any family member, when it happens again, it is very unlikely that

you will be, you will find yourself forced to react to the pain body because you will be present. So you can simply recognize the pain body in her without the need, as that was there in the past, the need to react to it and therefore buy into her drama and feed her drama. And that will be a very strange experience for her, somebody who simply accepts her the way she is and if accusations come at you, whatever she does, you did this or whatever, whatever form the drama takes.

[Speaker 3] (21:08 - 21:09)

You sound like you know her.

[Speaker 1] (21:10 - 21:56)

I know the pain body. They're all the same basically. So then you can simply accept that she's suffering from this and simply be there as a compassionate presence without reacting.

Allow her to be in her pain body. And that means the drama cannot sustain itself for very long if only one part, one person plays the drama. It needs two.

So you're not feeding her pain body anymore. And then see what happens. She may be confused.

I've experienced that quite a few times when people came up to me with heavy pain bodies.

[Speaker 2] (21:56 - 22:18)

It's a story that you tell in this chapter about the friend, the friend who comes to your house and she has all the papers and she's complaining, and she doesn't know what to do. And she lays out all the papers and she's complaining, complaining, complaining. And Eckhart basically says nothing but just listens and is the presence there for her.

And finally she picks up her papers, confused, and goes home and the next day says, what did you do to me?

[Speaker 1] (22:18 - 22:42)

Yes. Yeah. Yes.

Yeah. But don't underestimate the pain body's ability to draw out some, to make you unconscious again, to push some kind of button and you will find yourself reacting again because pain bodies are very cunning, very clever, and they know exactly what will make you unconscious and what will make you react.

[Speaker 2] (22:42 - 22:46)

You speak of it like it's a creature that's like an alien force inside of us.

[Speaker 1] (22:46 - 22:48)

Yeah. Yes. That's how I see it.

[Speaker 2] (22:48 - 22:59)

Really? Really. But you see that, Linda, that this is, this then becomes your sacred spiritual journey.

This is a part of your spiritual journey to not be drawn into the drama.

[Speaker 3] (23:00 - 23:17)

Well, I, it's so interesting you put it that way, Oprah, because that's what I've kind of come to the conclusion that this is part of my awakening. You know, it's my role in my family is to kind of be the one to help her get out of this.

[Speaker 2] (23:17 - 23:25)

Yeah. And not by judging and not by telling her to, but by being that which you, you know, want, wish to emulate.

[Speaker 3] (23:26 - 23:28)

Yeah. And that's the hard part.

[Speaker 2] (23:28 - 23:29)

Yeah, that's hard.

[Speaker 3] (23:29 - 23:34)

Yes. Not judging because I guess that's the part of the pain body that she activates in me.

[Speaker 2] (23:35 - 23:40)

Because your pain body wants to say, who do you think you are? Exactly. I know.

I've been there.

[Speaker 1] (23:41 - 24:22)

And, and of course, that when the, when the pain body takes over a person, the, the whole personality becomes transformed. And sometimes people are shocked when they, they marry somebody or they start living with somebody. And this, this lovely man or woman that they said that they loved so much one morning, suddenly he or she turns into a little monster and the total energy shift in them, the complete change of energy, like, like it's truly as if they were possessed by a completely different, very negative personality.

And that comes as a shock often to people when they start living together.

[Speaker 2] (24:23 - 24:23)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (24:23 - 24:30)

And again, it doesn't mean that necessarily that you chose the wrong person to live with. It just means for the first time you experienced...

[Speaker 2] (24:30 - 24:31)

The pain body showed up.

[Speaker 1] (24:31 - 24:32)

That person's pain body.

[Speaker 2] (24:32 - 24:39)

And also what you, what we were talking about in the last chapter, you were playing a role up until then. You were playing the role, I am in love with you.

[Speaker 1] (24:39 - 24:40)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (24:40 - 24:45)

And often love you say is about your own possessiveness. Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (24:45 - 24:57)

And so the roles are easy to play as long as you're not living together, then you can sustain the roles. But when you start living together, very soon the roles cannot be played anymore.

[Speaker 2] (24:57 - 25:15)

And also that's why I was thinking with pain bodies, what happens on a lot of holidays, Linda, you've seen this in families, everybody comes together and you have all those pain bodies in a room, clashing and reacting to one another and all living in the past about the past.

[Speaker 1] (25:15 - 25:15)

Oh, yes.

[Speaker 2] (25:15 - 25:19)

That's what all the that's what the coming together for families is about.

[Speaker 1] (25:19 - 25:30)

Thanksgiving and Christmas Day are the best day for the pain bodies because everywhere and often the families go through the same thing year after year.

[Speaker 2] (25:30 - 25:56)

Really? Thank you, Linda, for bringing that up. Thank you so much.

Yeah. The reason why all you have all these pain bodies clashing Thanksgiving on the major holidays that come together and people have a an image in their mind, the courier and lves, the painting of what they want the Thanksgiving dinner to be. And instead it becomes something different because everybody's bringing their past.

[Speaker 1] (25:56 - 25:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (25:56 - 25:58)

And living living that moment through their past.

[Speaker 1] (25:59 - 26:20)

Yes. Yes. That's amazing.

So how do we change that? Well, the it just takes one person to be present and one person not to participate in this. So when next event happens, family gathering, whatever it is, then you will see the usual comments will be made.

[Speaker 2] (26:20 - 26:21)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (26:21 - 26:24)

And the usual reactions will happen.

[Speaker 2] (26:24 - 26:26)

Can you believe he did? Yes. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (26:27 - 27:07)

Yes. Or you visit your parents and your parents don't fully approve of you. And then they say, well, you remember 10 years ago, I told you you should have done that.

You would be better off now if you had done that. Right. And again, immediately, if you're not present, pain body will arise and become defensive.

Anger will arise. So you're in it. You're drawn into the drama.

Yes. So it requires great alertness not to be drawn in. Right.

So because we don't underestimate the pain body's ability to draw in sometimes even very

present people can still be drawn in. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (27:08 - 27:24)

And you were saying that it happens in intimate situations, in family situations more often than not, because I would suppose is because out in the world, everybody's trying to be at least on their best behavior. A lot of people who are taking this class, you know, are working people who see it in their jobs every day with people.

[Speaker 5] (27:24 - 27:24)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (27:25 - 27:59)

Yeah. Every day. I love on page 134 when you say, although the body is very intelligent, it cannot tell the difference between an actual situation and a thought.

It reacts to every thought as if it were a reality. It doesn't know it's just a thought to the body. A worrisome, fearful thought means I'm in danger.

And it responds accordingly, even though you may be lying in a warm and comfortable bed at night. The heart beats faster. Muscles contract.

Breathing becomes rapid. There's a buildup of energy. But since the danger is only a mental fiction, the energy has no outlet.

The rest of the energy turns toxic, interferes with the harmonious functioning of the body.

[Speaker 1] (28:00 - 28:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (28:00 - 28:03)

So that's what you said weeks ago about worry.

[Speaker 1] (28:04 - 28:04)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (28:04 - 28:05)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (28:05 - 28:14)

Oh, to just see in oneself when worry arises, what we call worry is simply repetitive, negative thought patterns.

[Speaker 2] (28:14 - 28:22)

That's right. And your body doesn't know the difference. And so all of that energy is inside your body.

And that's what makes people sick.

[Speaker 1] (28:22 - 29:09)

Yes. Yes. So it's very important to clear up your mind so that you stop the continuous negativity of the egoic self-talk, as we could call it.

So recognize it and then step out of that stream of thinking. Use any device you can. I recommend device number one to step out of the stream of negative thinking.

Come into the present moment. Take one or two conscious breaths. Ah, you've stepped out of the stream of thinking.

Or feel the inner body. Feel the aliveness in your arms, your hands, your legs. Put your attention there.

[Speaker 2] (29:09 - 29:10)

Right.

[Speaker 1] (29:10 - 29:42)

You've stepped out of the stream of thinking. Or look at something and bring your full consciousness to the active perception. For example, a tree or a flower, anything natural is best.

Look at anything natural. Give it your full attention. That takes you out of the stream of thinking.

Or any natural sound, the bird, the wind. To bring you back, really. Or bring you back to the present.

These are all little ways in which you can step out of the stream of repetitive thinking.

[Speaker 2] (29:42 - 29:59)

In the story on page 137, The Duck with the Human Mind. Love that story. You talk about how the human mind creates a me and a my story that keeps negative emotions alive.

Live and personalizes everything. And it's ultimately led our entire species to a precipice. So tell us the duck story.

[Speaker 1] (30:00 - 30:01)

Well, I was...

[Speaker 2] (30:01 - 30:02)

What lessons it has for all of us as humans.

[Speaker 1] (30:03 - 30:54)

I was writing The Power of Now and writing about accumulated emotions. And then I was taking a break and went into the park and sat on a bench by a pond. And I saw two ducks approaching on the pond.

And suddenly, maybe one duck got too close to the other. Suddenly, they started getting into a fight. It lasted for about 30 seconds.

And then they both separated, swam off in opposite directions. They were still agitated, both of them. And then both ducks kind of lifted themselves up on the water and vigorously flapped their wings a few times.

They almost stood up on the water and went, and then suddenly they were totally peaceful again and swam off.

[Speaker 2] (30:55 - 30:56)

They were doing cleansing breath.

[Speaker 1] (30:56 - 30:56)

Cleansing.

[Speaker 2] (30:56 - 30:58)

Which we did from Russia last week.

[Speaker 1] (30:59 - 31:47)

And I realized at that moment I had been actually been writing about this. And the ducks were showing me how to, how they let go of what otherwise would have become accumulated negativity in the body. Wow.

And so that instinctive, natural intelligence takes over. And then I realized they all do it. And all the ducks after a fight do that.

And immediately that... It's like clearing their wings. Clearing.

The energy gets dissipated. Wow. And they are totally peaceful afterwards.

And then, of course, they don't have a human mind, which repeats the story of what this duck did to me and what I'm going to do to this duck next time, or I'm never going to get close to her anymore. Whatever the story is.

[Speaker 2] (31:47 - 31:49)

How dare you come over to my side of the pond again.

[Speaker 1] (31:49 - 32:11)

Oh, yes. And then talk to other ducks about what that duck did to you. And all the story making, because the story making, it still goes on in the human mind, keeps the old emotion alive.

Yes. So you relive it. Again, the negativity is relived.

The body believes it's still happening. Yes. Because the body believes in what your mind is thinking.

[Speaker 2] (32:11 - 32:16)

Because although the body is intelligent, it cannot tell the difference between an actual situation and a thought.

[Speaker 1] (32:16 - 32:30)

Yes. So whatever thoughts you're holding, your body believes that is your reality. And the corresponding emotions will arise.

Wow. And the corresponding physical states of contraction will be there.

[Speaker 2] (32:30 - 32:30)

Wow.

[Speaker 1] (32:31 - 32:36)

So this is how... That was the duck's lesson. So I put it into the book.

[Speaker 2] (32:36 - 32:52)

That's right. I mean, and we see so many people. I know I have friends who've been through divorce and they live and still, you know, hating their ex-spouse and talking about their ex-spouse and what their ex-spouse did to them.

And, you know, years after the spouse is gone.

[Speaker 1] (32:52 - 32:56)

Yes. And so that keeps it alive as if it were still happening.

[Speaker 2] (32:56 - 32:57)

As if it were still happening.

[Speaker 1] (32:57 - 33:10)

And there's an addictive quality. And that's in your mind. It's in the mind and it's addictive.

There's an addictive quality to that. You need to see it in yourself to see that it's still the case for some people who are listening to us.

[Speaker 2] (33:10 - 33:14)

So it's like the monks. Tell the monk story. I like the monk story.

The two monks.

[Speaker 1] (33:14 - 33:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (33:14 - 33:17)

And the one monk picks up the girl on the road.

[Speaker 1] (33:17 - 34:15)

Yes. That's the story of two monks on a pilgrimage. And they come across in a village.

They come across a young 17-year-old girl with a long kimono trying to cross a very muddy road. But she's not daring to step into the mud. So one monk picks her up, carries her across the road through the mud, puts her down.

And so the monks walk on in silence for another four or five hours. Just practicing noble silence. And then after four or five hours, they're getting close to their destination.

One monk says to the monk who had picked up the girl, Oh, you know, you shouldn't have done that because we monks are not supposed even to touch women. So you really, you shouldn't have picked up that girl. You're not supposed to do that.

The other monk says, Oh, are you still carrying that girl? I put her down hours ago. So the other monk was still carrying the girl, the event, in his head.

[Speaker 2] (34:16 - 34:16)

Four hours later.

[Speaker 1] (34:17 - 34:19)

And for four hours, he was walking with this burden.

[Speaker 2] (34:19 - 34:20)

Yes. Right.

[Speaker 1] (34:21 - 34:27)

And that shows the reluctance of the human mind to let go of the past.

[Speaker 2] (34:27 - 34:37)

Yeah. So how many of us reading this chapter are not carrying things from four hours ago, but carrying things from four years and 40 years ago?

[Speaker 1] (34:37 - 34:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:38 - 34:41)

People are still holding on to what was done to them.

[Speaker 1] (34:41 - 34:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:41 - 34:41)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (34:41 - 34:50)

Yes. That's a dreadful burden. It's like carrying a useless weight around with you.

And some people carry it from all their lives.

[Speaker 2] (34:50 - 34:50)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (34:51 - 34:54)

And they even derive some identity from that.

[Speaker 2] (34:54 - 34:54)

Right.

[Speaker 1] (34:55 - 34:55)

Right.

[Speaker 2] (34:56 - 35:09)

I had to learn years ago to let go of what had happened to me as a child, because what I realized, you know, my grandmother, the people who took care of me did the best they knew how to do at the time. And if they had known better, they would have done better.

[Speaker 1] (35:09 - 35:33)

Yes. And that is always the case. Whatever humans have done to you, it's always they didn't know any better, because they could only act according to their level of consciousness.

Nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness. So you cannot expect your parents, if you believe they did something that was wrong. You cannot expect your parents to have acted beyond their level of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (35:33 - 35:34)

Because that's all they knew.

[Speaker 1] (35:34 - 35:47)

Yes. Jesus on the cross said it all when he says, forgive them for they know not what they do, which means they are unconscious. So when you realize that, you naturally forgive.

[Speaker 2] (35:47 - 35:47)

That's what Jesus meant.

[Speaker 1] (35:48 - 35:52)

Yes. If he had lived now, he probably would have said they are unconscious. They don't know.

[Speaker 2] (35:52 - 36:30)

OK. I love when you say that sometimes understanding the science for me, sometimes understanding the science behind these concepts, as you're talking about, makes it easier. And you say on page 146, all things are vibrating energy fields in ceaseless motion.

The chair you sit on, the book you're holding appears solid and motionless, only because that's how our senses perceive their vibrational frequency. That is to say, the increased movement of the molecules. And so we're all vibrating at different frequencies.

And the vibrational frequency of the pain body resonates with that of negative thoughts.

[Speaker 1] (36:30 - 36:36)

Yes. Negative thoughts and other negative emotions coming from other people.

[Speaker 2] (36:36 - 37:27)

And then I love that you say this on page 152. You write on page 152. I think this is great here.

If you were not familiar with our contemporary civilization, if you had come here from another age or another planet, one of the things that would amaze you is that millions of

people love and pay money to watch humans kill and inflict pain on each other and call it entertainment. When I read that, I thought, yeah, if you're from another planet, you think you would think, what is that? So what is that?

That people love that. I mean, the most violent movies, destructive. You know, all those pain bodies up there on the screen.

And what is it about a lot of the public that enjoys that?

[Speaker 1] (37:27 - 38:18)

Well, if it's in some cases, violence may be actually helpful to see because it shows the human madness. If it shows the wider context in which violence happens, if it shows the psychological dysfunction behind violence, and then it can be helpful. But most of these movies contain violence that is actually meant to feed the pain body.

And it is the pain body in the viewers who enjoy those films that enjoys the violence. So it's not actually the people themselves who pay money to see these movies. It's the pain body in them that feeds on the violence that it watches.

So and the people who produce these movies, probably...

[Speaker 2] (38:18 - 38:19)

Your pain bodies are writing them.

[Speaker 1] (38:19 - 38:25)

The pain bodies write them. The pain bodies write the movies. The pain bodies produce them.

And the pain bodies watch them.

[Speaker 2] (38:27 - 39:53)

I think it's interesting what you talk about on page 159, that as there are individual pain bodies that each of us carries because of whatever negativity happened in our lives and we didn't completely deal with that at the moment, that there is also a collective pain body that nations carry and races carry. And you say the collective racial pain body is pronounced in Jewish people who suffered persecution over many centuries. Not surprisingly, it's strong as well in Native Americans whose numbers were decimated, whose culture all but destroyed by the European settlers.

And black Americans too, for whom the collective pain body is pronounced. Their ancestors violently uprooted, beaten into submission and sold into slavery. The foundation of American economic prosperity rested on the labor of four to five million black slaves.

In fact, the suffering inflicted on Native and black Americans has not remained confined to

those two races, but has become part of the collective American pain body. It is always the case that both victim and perpetrator suffer the consequences of any acts of violence, oppression or brutality. For what you do to others, you do to yourself.

This collective pain body that America holds, and I think a lot of Americans, number one, don't know it exists and want to deny that it does exist because they say, I didn't have anything to do with slavery. Yes. Or I didn't have anything to do with the Native Americans.

[Speaker 1] (39:53 - 39:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (39:54 - 39:54)

Correct?

[Speaker 1] (39:54 - 39:55)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (39:55 - 39:59)

Yes. And to not to recognize it is what? Is to be in denial of what is the truth?

[Speaker 1] (40:00 - 40:04)

Yes. And then it continues to be there without you knowing it.

[Speaker 2] (40:04 - 40:04)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (40:05 - 40:06)

So that's...

[Speaker 2] (40:06 - 40:09)

Because the recognition of it is the beginning of being able to change it, right?

[Speaker 1] (40:09 - 40:11)

Yes, that's right.

[Speaker 2] (40:11 - 41:00)

You also talk about this when it comes to women. Pretty River Revolutionary, on page 155, you say, the suppression of the feminine principle, especially over the past 2,000 years, has enabled the ego to gain absolute supremacy in the collective human psyche. Although women have egos, of course, the female form is less rigidly encapsulated than the male and

has greater openness and sensitivity toward other life forms.

If the balance between male and female energies, I found this so fascinating, had not been destroyed on our planet, you say, the ego's growth would have been greatly curtailed. With many people becoming more conscious, the ego is losing its hold on the human mind because the ego was never as deeply rooted in women. It's losing its hold on women more quickly than on men.

[Speaker 5] (41:00 - 41:01)

Yes. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (41:01 - 41:29)

You know what? Reading this, as a female living in the world today, able to make choices and be my own person and express myself, I had forgotten about the years and years of torture and suppression and killing of women. Yes.

For the most natural things, because you liked animals, because you were a midwife, because you were a woman who wanted to have a voice. Yes. Tortured, killed.

[Speaker 1] (41:29 - 41:29)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (41:30 - 41:31)

Hundreds of millions of women.

[Speaker 1] (41:31 - 41:36)

Yes. And it's the, what I'm saying is, it's the arising ego.

[Speaker 2] (41:36 - 41:38)

And that happened because of the ego in the male.

[Speaker 1] (41:39 - 41:55)

Yes, yes. So it's not the male as such. It was the growing ego in the male that had to, that saw the feminine principle and the feminine energy as a threat, because it could not fully establish itself in that.

[Speaker 2] (41:55 - 42:00)

You believe we would have had a new earth a lot sooner if there had been not the suppression of the female.

[Speaker 1] (42:01 - 42:46)

Yes, probably. Yes. But the shift is happening now.

And the interesting thing is that there are more women changing, going through the shift in consciousness than men. So men are going through also, but there are, for example, Elizabeth Lesser mentioned at her, the Omega Institute, about 70, 75% of the people who come there for inner work, consciousness transformation, and so on, are women. So women are more open now to the change in consciousness that is happening than men.

I'm not saying it's not happening to men also, but there's a greater openness.

[Speaker 2] (42:46 - 43:09)

We love it. Audrey in Campbell, California, one of our emails says, I have 20 pounds to lose as a child. My father and brother call me big girl and big fat cow.

Could this be, that's not good. Could this be why, Audrey, that's not good at all. Could this be why I have such difficulty losing the weight?

I've been hearing these words in my head for years and years, and I can't let the words go, help.

[Speaker 1] (43:10 - 44:37)

Yes. So, of course, these words have become lodged in your mind, and they have taken up residence in your mind, and now you can't get rid of them. So they are, again, thoughts are energy formations, and thoughts that get lodged in your mind, sometimes they start in childhood when parents tell you something negative.

For example, some parents tell their children, you are stupid. It's a stupid thing to say. Yes, it's a stupid thing to say that your kids are stupid, yeah.

And if told that repeatedly, this thought becomes lodged in their mind. If you're not, if you don't bring presence to it now, you won't be able to dislodge it. So the first thing is to realize what has happened to you is that something that you were told years ago repeatedly has now become a thought that refuses to leave.

It's an energy, you're possessed, so to speak, temporarily, hopefully, by a thought. So realize, the questioner here needs to realize that this is an old thought, and realize it's no more than a thought. It is not the truth.

It's an old record that has been playing itself.

[Speaker 2] (44:38 - 44:42)

OPRAH WINFREY Over and over in your head. Big fat cow, big fat cow, big fat cow.

[Speaker 1] (44:42 - 44:52)

Yes, no more than an old, no more than a tape. So when you hear it again, when you hear

that in your mind, you realize there's the old tape again.

[Speaker 2] (44:52 - 44:52)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (44:53 - 44:56)

It loses its power because it's no more than that. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (44:56 - 45:00)

There's an old tape for the past, and the past has no power over the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (45:00 - 45:00)

No.

[Speaker 2] (45:00 - 45:36)

All right. I love also when you say that thinking is no more than a tiny aspect of the totality of consciousness, the totality of who you are. I had an awakening moment with that thought, because we all think that we are our thoughts.

Up until reading this book, I think so many of us, I was one of those people, thinking that we were our thoughts. Yes. And then to read that thinking, not only are we not our thoughts, we are the awareness of our thoughts, but that thinking is only no more than a tiny aspect of the totality of consciousness, the totality of who you are.

[Speaker 1] (45:37 - 45:47)

And the awareness, of course, compared to thinking, the awareness is vast, it's limitless, and has infinite potential for anything creative to come into your life.

[Speaker 2] (45:48 - 45:49)

Because that's where all your creativity comes from.

[Speaker 1] (45:49 - 46:03)

Not through thinking. Thinking can become a secondary tool in manifesting something, but not with the creative insight, the creative realization, the creative idea, does not come through the movement of thinking.

[Speaker 2] (46:03 - 46:10)

Wow. Think about that, everybody. That when you have a creative inspiration, does not come through your thoughts.

[Speaker 1] (46:10 - 46:10)

No.

[Speaker 2] (46:11 - 46:12)

It comes through your being.

[Speaker 1] (46:12 - 46:15)

Yes. And so the space of awareness...

[Speaker 2] (46:15 - 46:16)

Space of awareness.

[Speaker 1] (46:16 - 46:49)

Now, to the extent to which you are creative in your life, depends on how much access you have in yourself to that space of awareness, of presence. And it's sometimes enough for brief moments to have access to that. And for some people, that's enough to lead a creative life.

But of course, we want to be more than that. Not just have brief access, but to make it the very foundation of your life.

[Speaker 2] (46:49 - 47:08)

It's like when Quincy Jones was doing the We Are The World tape, and he brought together all of those artists, and he left the door open. First, they had a sign outside the door that said, check your egos at the door. And then they left the door open.

He said, we wanted to leave room for God to walk in the room. Leave enough space for God to walk into the room. Yes.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (47:08 - 47:13)

Yes. So your nature is leaving the space. Leaving the space.

Leaving the space inside yourself.

[Speaker 2] (47:13 - 47:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (47:17 - 47:45)

Also, if you want change in your life, some people don't know, there will be other chapters when we'll talk about life purpose and so on. But the realization of what it is, for example, what it is that you're meant to do in your life, also comes from that inner space. Are you able

to allow the space within to come still?

Right. And then whatever it is that you need to know will arise from there.

[Speaker 2] (47:45 - 47:46)

Will come through that.

[Speaker 1] (47:46 - 48:03)

Yes. And then it may come as a thought, but then it'll be an inspired thought. Right.

Without the space, without the stillness, without accessing that dimension, thinking cannot be inspired. There is no inspired thinking. The inspiration comes from the realm that is deeper than thought.

[Speaker 2] (48:03 - 48:06)

I got that. And you're never going to think your way to a purpose.

[Speaker 1] (48:07 - 48:18)

No. And you're not going to worry your way out of a problem. You're not going to worry your way out of a problem.

It's impossible because worry means to manufacture more problems.

[Speaker 2] (48:18 - 48:25)

The same thing. You're just continuing the same thought over and over. Yes.

Yes. You need a different kind of consciousness. Wasn't it Einstein that said that?

[Speaker 1] (48:26 - 48:38)

Yes. I don't remember whether it was Einstein or Jung, but he said a problem cannot be solved on the same level of consciousness that gave rise to the problem. That created it.

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:38 - 48:50)

We have an email from Judy in Columbia, South Carolina. Could you talk a bit about alcohol and drug abuse in the pain body? Is this an attempt at escape from the pain body, alcohol and drug abuse?

[Speaker 1] (48:50 - 50:41)

Yes. Often it is. And I mentioned that in the book.

It's an escape of not wanting to feel the pain anymore. In some people, the pain body is

active almost all the time. And that is a dreadful way to live.

And those people in whom the pain body is active almost all the time, often they will seek some kind of escape from it because they can't live with that pain anymore. The pain body loves it, but it makes your life more and more miserable. But there is also a good chance, and maybe that connects us to what I said in the book, if people who have a heavy pain body, their chance of awakening is also quite great.

Because when life becomes unbearable because you're creating so much pain continuously for yourself, your desire to awaken, to finally get out of this misery, is much greater than a normal person's desire to awaken. In other words, you could say, when you're having a relatively pleasant dream, you don't mind so much dreaming on. But when your dream turns into a nightmare, then you really want to awaken from that when you can't stand it.

And that was the case with me. I had a very, very heavy pain body that drove me almost very close to suicide until the realization came I cannot live with myself any longer. And that thought was the breakthrough where the separation happened from the consciousness that I am and the ego and the pain body that I had been identified with as the unhappy little me.

[Speaker 2] (50:41 - 50:47)

Were you really actually going to kill yourself? Did you have a plan to kill yourself?

[Speaker 1] (50:47 - 50:59)

Yes, I had my first plans to kill myself. I already had at the age of nine and ten. Really?

Yeah. So I had worked it all out, but somehow I didn't quite have the courage yet to do it.

[Speaker 2] (50:59 - 51:00)

Because the pain body was so heavy.

[Speaker 1] (51:00 - 51:08)

Already then it was quite heavy. Then it subsided a little bit and then it came back again very strongly in my 20s.

[Speaker 2] (51:08 - 51:16)

Wow. And what was it? What was it that caused you to feel you felt depressed?

You felt unworthy? You felt what?

[Speaker 1] (51:16 - 51:33)

It was partly living in almost continuous conflict in the home environment between my parents who were always fighting. There was very little peace at home. I was very sensitive, so it was very hard for me to even be there at home.

[Speaker 2] (51:33 - 51:38)

As you say in the book, for children who watch their parents fight, it's almost unbearable.

[Speaker 1] (51:38 - 52:00)

Yes. And that, of course, contributes to the child's growing pain body. So my pain body grew very quickly.

But if this had not been the case, I would never have awakened. I would have been in a relatively pleasant dream. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (52:00 - 52:05)

If you'd had a nice, happy childhood, you might not be sitting here teaching with us tonight.

[Speaker 1] (52:05 - 52:15)

Certainly not. No, no. So retrospectively, one is grateful for one's suffering because eventually suffering will wake you up.

[Speaker 2] (52:16 - 52:35)

You said when I read earlier on page 141 about any negative emotion that's not fully faced and seen for what it is in the moment it arises, does not completely dissolve, it leaves behind a remnant of pain. So when we are faced with negative emotions on a daily basis, we should embrace them. We should go into them rather than resist them.

[Speaker 1] (52:35 - 52:50)

Yes, accept whatever emotion. Accept it. Accept because it's part of accepting the present moment.

Because if a certain negative emotion is part of what's happening in the present moment, what can you do? It's already happening.

[Speaker 2] (52:50 - 52:50)

So take it.

[Speaker 1] (52:51 - 53:26)

Take it. Make sure, oh, there it is. I can feel that anger.

I can feel the sadness. I can feel it. Be the space for it.

So accept that it is there. The acceptance of the present moment, no matter what form it takes externally or internally, whatever form it takes. Externally, it means whatever situation arises right now, it always is as it is at this moment.

You might as well say yes to it. Internally, it means whatever emotion arises at this moment, it is as it is. You might as well say yes to it.

[Speaker 2] (53:26 - 53:56)

Well, I know next week we're going to be talking about breaking free of the pain body. But just for now, if every time you can see it, show itself and recognize it for what it is. There it is.

There's my pain body again. There's his again. That the awareness of it begins to dissolve it, correct?

Yes. OK. OK.

Somebody asked earlier, there was an email where somebody wanted to know whether or not that pain body allows artists and writers and creative people to be more creative. The pain body.

[Speaker 1] (53:57 - 54:25)

There are, especially in modern art and modern writing, there are some artists who express the pain body in their work. So when you read their work or when you see their visual art, you can see, wow, there's a lot of pain in there. And perhaps that is how they free themselves to some extent of the pain body because they externalize it and make it into an object.

[Speaker 2] (54:25 - 54:28)

Yeah, you can take that suffering and turn it into something else.

[Speaker 1] (54:28 - 55:02)

Now, whether this will be, whether this is really helpful to many humans, I don't know. To see so much pain on a canvas, I'm sure it was helpful for the artist to externalize that. So I believe that the deepest art goes deeper than that, than just show the pain, the human pain.

Right. It goes, it may also include the human pain, but like the great works of literature are not just expressions of human suffering. They also show a dimension that's beyond suffering.

[Speaker 2] (55:03 - 55:24)

Well, another question from Mary in Birmingham, Michigan. Politics in the pain body, she writes. Is it the pain body that leads us to be fascinated with others' downfalls?

Is that our pain body that loves to hear bad things about other people, the tabloids? Yes, hearing- Even watching the news, things that are true, scandals.

[Speaker 1] (55:24 - 55:49)

Loving bad news. Yes, loving bad news. Is also of the pain body.

And so there are some publications actually thrive on emotional negativity. They actually, they sell a negative emotion. Some newspapers do it in their headlines, and because they have realized the more negative the headlines are, the more papers they sell.

Yeah, you're saying the British press- They love it. Love it.

[Speaker 2] (55:49 - 55:52)

Yes. And we do too now in our country.

[Speaker 1] (55:53 - 55:53)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (55:53 - 56:01)

Yeah, more and more tabloid newspapers, tabloid magazines, following the lives of famous people. People love to see famous people fail.

[Speaker 1] (56:01 - 56:02)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:02 - 56:02)

Fall.

[Speaker 1] (56:02 - 56:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:03 - 56:04)

And that's our pain body?

[Speaker 1] (56:05 - 56:28)

Yes, whenever you see that negativity, the enjoyment of negativity in whatever form, or the enjoyment of negative events, the enjoyment of negative things happening to people, the enjoyment of your own negative thinking, all that is the pain body. It loves pain. It lives on it.

[Speaker 2] (56:29 - 56:30)

And loves drama. It seeks drama.

[Speaker 1] (56:30 - 56:32)

Drama is part of that pain. Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:33 - 56:43)

Yes. Yes. So that's what we're going to talk about next week, is how you can begin to free the pain body or any energy that you're carrying from the past.

[Speaker 1] (56:43 - 56:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (56:44 - 56:45)

And you can free it instantly.

[Speaker 1] (56:45 - 57:12)

You free it instantly, but although not the whole of it necessarily instantly, but in the moment, some of it can become transmuted. And the example I give is like, it's like putting a log into the fire. The fire is the fire of consciousness or presence.

And so the pain body can actually become transmuted and becomes presence. We'll talk about that next week.

[Speaker 2] (57:12 - 57:18)

Before we say goodbye though, let's sum up what we've covered in this class today. What do you want people to know about the pain body?

[Speaker 1] (57:19 - 57:54)

The most vital thing is for people to be there when it happens. Now, when it happens means it's either happening to somebody close to you at home, your partner or family member, or more importantly, when the pain body happens to you. Now, it's easier to realize that the pain body is there when you see it arising in somebody else.

Always easier. You require more presence to see it in yourself. But that's the vital thing is to be there and realize it.

That's the pain body.

[Speaker 2] (57:54 - 58:14)

Well, the way you know it's in yourself is when you start to tell yourself the story. The woman who was the big fat cow, her family had called her a big fat cow her whole life. When you start to replaying the tapes in your head over and over again, my story, my story, my story, identifying with that, anything you identify with is ego.

[Speaker 1] (58:14 - 58:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (58:15 - 58:18)

Right. That's how you know it's the pain body.

[Speaker 1] (58:18 - 58:40)

Or a sudden emotion arises, something your partner made a remark, said something, and an enormous emotion arises that is out of proportion to the external trigger. And that could be the beginning of the arising pain body. So then you say, oh, there's the pain body.

Then you're ready. You're not at the mercy of the pain.

[Speaker 2] (58:40 - 58:50)

So let me ask you this. On the night that you had that breakthrough where you said, I cannot live with myself any longer. Did you lose your pain body too?

[Speaker 1] (58:51 - 58:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (58:52 - 58:54)

Well, that just was one happy day, wasn't it?

[Speaker 1] (58:56 - 58:57)

That's quite rare.

[Speaker 2] (58:57 - 58:58)

Oh, my goodness.

[Speaker 1] (58:59 - 59:01)

You lost your ego.

[Speaker 2] (59:01 - 59:04)

You lost your pain body. What a day that was.

[Speaker 1] (59:04 - 59:58)

Well, after years of dreadful suffering. So that's the one more thing to say about the pain body is when you see it in somebody else, you have to be very careful. The pain bodies don't like to hear that they are the pain body.

So when you're talking to somebody like your partner, you have to be very careful because once the partner has already been taken over by the pain body, if at that stage you say, there's your pain body, your partner won't be hearing you anymore. The pain body will be

hearing you and the pain body will say something back. It won't be pleasant.

It won't be pleasant. And you can't argue with the pain body. No way.

You can never win an argument with the pain body. He'll always win. The pain body will win.

It'll go on and on and on. And we'll find another clever argument why the pain is justified and right.

[Speaker 2] (59:59 - 1:00:25)

And so it's like our first caller from Silver Spring was talking about her sister. What we must learn to do is be compassionate. Yes.

Stand still. Yes. Stand still, as I said with the point.

Stand still and allow it to be whatever it is. Yes. And then...

And then you don't feed it. You don't feed it. Don't allow yourself to be drawn into the...
pulled into the drama of it.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:25 - 1:00:55)

And if the pain body is not fed, then it won't sustain itself for that long. It'll have to seek some other place where it will get fed or it will subside. So that's the beauty when you're in a relationship.

If both partners are conscious enough, you can have an agreement that says, if I observe the pain body beginning in you or you observe the pain body beginning in me, please let me know.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:55 - 1:00:55)

I'm gonna point it out.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:55 - 1:01:09)

You have to point it out at the beginning before it takes over completely. Because once it's taken over completely, the person won't be hearing you anymore. But at the beginning, you can still say, could that be your pain body?

Even that is dangerous, but you can try.

[Speaker 5] (1:01:09 - 1:01:11)

Oh, it's not my pain body.

[Speaker 2] (1:01:12 - 1:01:22)

Again, we thank you. Thank you. We thank you.

You're a man without a pain body. We'll see you in class next time. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (1:01:23 - 1:02:03)

Hey, Super Solars. Looking for a great new read or listen? Well, that's why we're so excited about Oprah's new book, *The Path Made Clear, Discovering Your Life's Direction and Purpose*.

Oprah has collected all of the lessons she's learned from thought leaders like Eckhart Tolle and Brene Brown and innovators like Jay-Z and Lin-Manuel Miranda, who all understand what it means to achieve the life of your dreams. *The Path Made Clear* is available now on Apple Books, Amazon, Audible, and at your local bookstore. It really is a game changer for anyone seeking to discover their true calling and start living it.

So what are you waiting for? Get the book now and begin your journey today.

Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : Your Inner Purpose (Chapter 9) **[gid : //art19-episode-locator/V0/0PC4nTMaM6HGcAMVI** **J4lCs5H3UHZSacJOy3z3m6 vQ]**

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 4:21)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls a new earth inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

We're in the homestretch, just two more classes to go. And now that we're at Chapter 9 of A New Earth, we are getting to the heart of why this is absolutely one of my favorite books ever. Last time, we explored who we are at our core.

Now we're taking it to the next level by learning how to discover our inner purpose. That's the reason why we're all here. And today, we'll tackle just how you do that.

That's why this chapter may be the most exciting one of all. It answers the question, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose. One thing is for sure.

Once you find your inner purpose, and then you align with that, everything else that you do, your job, your relationships, your family, everything, then you're in the flow of your life. And that is a very good place to be, the only place to be, really. We're here with author Eckhart Tolle.

Number 9, we're counting down. We're down to the last two chapters of our book. And it is my most sincere hope that all of our classes so far have been leading you to find more purpose and joy in your own lives.

And it's really about bringing clarity to finding your inner purpose. And so I think this is my most exciting chapter of all. I know I say that every chapter.

I didn't say that last chapter, and I'll tell you why in a few moments. Well, we're discussing chapter 9, your inner purpose. Finding your purpose is what I believe we're all put on the planet to do.

So many people spend their lives trying to figure out what job, what job to do, what to do, what to do, what to do. I think when you figure out what your purpose is and you align the outer purpose with the inner purpose, then the job really doesn't matter. Right.

That's the essence of what you're saying in this chapter. Let us begin. Page 257.

As soon as you rise above mere survival, the question of meaning and purpose becomes a paramount importance in your life. Many people feel caught up in the routines of daily living, you say, that seem to deprive their life of significance. Some believe life is passing them by or has passed them by already.

Others feel severely restricted by the demands of their job in supporting a family. Some are consumed by stress, lost in frantic doing. Many people long for the freedom and expansion that prosperity promises.

Others already enjoy the freedom that comes with prosperity and discover that even that's not enough to endow their lives with true meaning. There is no substitute for finding true purpose. So how do we do it?

[Speaker 1] (4:22 - 6:57)

Now, what you just read basically, of course, means that many people spend their lives in a state of almost permanent dissatisfaction. Right. Unfortunately.

They are maybe looking for some purpose or they may have given up hope that there is some purpose for them and they're just surviving or making a living. Or caught up in the doing. Caught up in the doing, in the stress of it.

Right. And so usually when we talk about purpose, when people talk about purpose, they think of purpose in terms of future. Where am I going?

What am I supposed to do? What's the direction I'm going? What is my goal?

The goal that I want to achieve? And that, of course, is there. It has its place.

But I call that the outer purpose. More fundamental than the outer purpose is what most people usually overlook. And that is the realization that what matters most is finding your inner purpose.

Now, to most people that initially doesn't mean anything, inner purpose. And this is why I explain it briefly in the dialogue that is there in that chapter where somebody asks about, I want to know what my purpose is. And I tell that person, your purpose is to be here at this moment and asking that question because this is where you are.

So inner purpose is aligning your life fully with the present moment. So that you are no longer out of alignment with the present moment, which leads to the state of dissatisfaction that we talked about. That is the reality for many people.

So you have to go, first of all, beyond the state of dissatisfaction that is so many people's reality. Right. But you cannot go beyond the state of dissatisfaction through some future goal that says one day I would like to be in a state of fulfillment or satisfaction.

No. You have to enter the state of fulfillment and satisfaction by becoming one internally with the present moment. And your purpose then, your inner purpose is that alignment with where you are right now.

To be totally where you are and whatever you are doing, even if it doesn't look like the life purpose that you want for the next 30 years. Right. Whatever you are doing now, to be total in doing it.

And no matter what it is, to be true to life by being true to this moment.

[Speaker 2] (6:57 - 8:13)

Yeah. As you say on page 271, there is always only this one step. And so you give it your foolish attention.

This doesn't mean that you don't know where you're going. It just means that the step that you're taking right now is primary. The destination is secondary.

And what you encounter at your destination once you get there depends on the quality of this one step. I love this so much because I discovered this when I was in the third grade. I couldn't articulate it this way in the third grade.

When I was in the third grade, I turned in a book report early in Ms. Driver's class. And the reaction that I got from my third grade teacher taught me or informed me that when you do your best, when you do your best in any given moment, that is well received. Because my third grade teacher told all the other teachers in the teacher's lounge, and I became known as this kid who really loved to read.

And that's why we're sitting here today, because of that. But I learned in the third grade

this whole process of whatever you're doing in any given moment, if you do it your best, it leads you to the next best moment. So you don't have to worry about what's the next moment coming if you only do your best in this moment.

[Speaker 1] (8:13 - 8:37)

That's right. Because when the next moment comes, it comes as this moment. Right.

The future, you never experience the future as the future. You experience the future when it comes as the now, because that's all there is. It's all there ever is.

And that's an amazing realization for people to realize life is always just this. It's always the now.

[Speaker 2] (8:37 - 8:47)

Yeah. It's interesting, because last week we had Nick, and you said when Nick was up talking about he had to, well, you have to worry about your bills. And you said, well, you don't have to worry about your bills.

[Speaker 1] (8:47 - 8:48)

You have to pay your bills.

[Speaker 2] (8:48 - 9:02)

You have to pay your bills. But you don't have to worry about paying your bills. So any time I'd find myself, you know, in the mind worrying about something, I don't have to worry about this.

I can either figure out what to do about it or release that thought.

[Speaker 1] (9:02 - 9:02)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (9:02 - 9:02)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (9:03 - 9:08)

Yes. So if the bill is here, but the money is not there right now, I can't do anything, put it aside.

[Speaker 2] (9:09 - 9:09)

Put it aside.

[Speaker 1] (9:09 - 9:18)

And then see what action can I take now. And then you do whatever action you can take now. Yeah.

If you can't take any action, then you just be with it. Yeah. Right.

[Speaker 2] (9:19 - 9:43)

But I love that when I read that there is always only this one step. And so you give this one step your fullest attention. That's in the middle of page 271, everybody.

And this doesn't mean you don't know where you're going. It just means that this step is primary and the destination is secondary. And what happens is most people are living their lives as though the destination, the end, the end is what it's all about.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (9:43 - 10:07)

As if the end were more important than the means. And so the means and the end, however, are one. Right.

So if there's dissatisfaction and a denial of the present moment, which is a denial of life. Right. You're not honoring life if you don't honor this moment by being open to this moment, then that is how you will experience the future, because the future is no more than an extension of now.

[Speaker 2] (10:07 - 11:05)

Right. You also say on page 271, the unconscious assumption behind all such action is, is that success is a future event and that the end justifies the means. But the end and the means are one.

You say that. Let's say you're a business person. After two years of intense stress and strain, you finally managed to come out with a product or service that sells well and makes money.

Success in conventional terms, yes. But in reality, you spent two years polluting your body as well as the earth with negative energy. You made everybody crazy.

Don't say that. Made everybody and everybody around you crazy and affected others you didn't even know. The unconscious assumption behind all of this action is that success is a future event and that the end justifies the means.

But the end and the means are one. And if the means did not contribute to human happiness, neither will the end. Yes.

So whatever the end result is, it's going to carry the energy of what it took to get there.

[Speaker 1] (11:05 - 11:21)

Yes. That's exciting. Yes.

And that means you actually you determine what kind of future you're going to experience by deciding to be totally, totally aligned with the present moment. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (11:21 - 12:07)

It's your it's your state of consciousness now that will determine whatever is manifested in the future. And when that happens, that'll just be now. I got that.

I got that very much. OK, so let's continue with this lesson. You say the true or primary purpose of your life cannot be found on the outer level.

To me, that's the essence of what this book is all about. Everybody who's searching and waiting for answers and looking for it on the outer level, it does not concern what you do, but what you are, that is to say, your state of consciousness. So the most important thing to realize is this.

Your life has an inner purpose and an outer purpose. Inner purpose concerns being and is primary. Outer purpose concerns doing and is secondary.

You want to elaborate on that?

[Speaker 1] (12:08 - 12:53)

So once you realize that the primary purpose of your life is this is the inner and this is what becomes the main purpose, then the secondary purpose, the outer purpose falls into place by being true to life and being true to now. Life will bring to you whatever is most appropriate as far as your inner purpose is concerned. Life will become helpful.

Suddenly, sometimes the helpful idea comes from within a sudden realization. Oh, this is what I want to do. This is what I have to do.

But the realization only came because you were aligned with the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (12:53 - 13:00)

So let's say this. Everybody, everybody who was born is alive and breathing, has an inner purpose.

[Speaker 1] (13:01 - 13:40)

Yes. The inner purpose is the same for all of humanity, which is being aligned with life, saying yes to life by saying yes to now, aligned with the power of the present moment, which is the power of life. That's everybody's purpose.

Then the outer purpose varies from person to person. How that translates into what you do varies from person to person. And even in one lifetime, it can vary.

You may have a certain outer purpose for 10 or 20 years of your life and suddenly it changes completely. So that that varies and is subject to time. It doesn't necessarily last your whole lifetime.

[Speaker 2] (13:40 - 14:03)

You say finding and living in alignment with the inner purpose is the foundation of fulfilling your outer purpose. It's the basis for true success. Without that alignment, you can still achieve certain things through effort, through struggle, to determination and sheer hard work or cunning.

But there is no joy in such endeavor and in such endeavor. And it invariably ends in some form of suffering.

[Speaker 1] (14:04 - 14:18)

Yes. That is, you're struggling to make it. You're struggling and fighting and basically you're making, you're fighting against life or the world.

Me against the universe is what the ego, how the ego sees it.

[Speaker 2] (14:18 - 14:41)

And isn't it sort of like swimming upstream? I always compare it to swimming upstream. When you're like going against the grain of your life, there's a flow to all of our lives.

And if you are suffering, if you are in pain, if you can't figure out what it is you're supposed to do, if you're worried, worried, worried all the time, it is because you're going against the flow or the grain of your life.

[Speaker 8] (14:41 - 14:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (14:41 - 14:47)

Means you're going against inner purpose. Yes. That when you align with inner purpose, everything flows.

[Speaker 8] (14:47 - 14:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (14:48 - 14:48)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (14:48 - 15:13)

And any negative state, whenever negativity arises and you dwell in negative inner states, then you're not going with the flow of life. You're against the flow of life. And then you experience life as not helpful.

You experience life as even as hostile because you are in a state of inner denial. You're in state of negativity. You're not open to life.

[Speaker 2] (15:14 - 15:49)

Okay. I got that. I really got that.

I really got that. Another friend of mine, a teacher who wrote a book called Seat of the Soul, Gary Zukov calls it, says, when the personality or ego comes to serve the energy of the soul or consciousness, we've been calling that, when the personality comes to serve the energy of the soul, that is authentic empowerment. I take that to mean from Seat of the Soul that when you align your personality or use your personality to serve the inner purpose, to serve the soul or the consciousness, then you are your most powerful.

[Speaker 1] (15:50 - 16:05)

Yes. In the world. Yes.

And then you're not run by the mind anymore because the mind becomes the servant of what I sometimes call awareness or presence. The mind then serves something greater than itself, which is the consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (16:05 - 16:33)

You say on page 259, instead of being lost in your thinking, when you are awake or aware, you recognize yourself as the awareness behind it. Thinking then ceases to be a self-serving, autonomous activity that takes possession of you and runs your life. Awareness takes over from thinking.

And instead of being in charge of your life, love this everybody, instead of being in charge of your life, thinking becomes the servant of awareness.

[Speaker 1] (16:33 - 16:44)

Yes. And then the mind is quite helpful. The mind can be used for many wonderful

things.

Right. When it no longer controls you. I got it.

[Speaker 2] (16:45 - 17:07)

So in essence, our goal on earth as human beings, these spiritual beings in the body, higher consciousness inside this flesh-filled membranous whatever body, our goal is to allow the light of inner purpose or consciousness to come through everything that we do.

[Speaker 1] (17:08 - 17:38)

Yes. This is why we're here. And that is then also the entire universe is, the purpose of the universe, one could say, is the flowering of consciousness.

It moves towards more and more consciousness. So we then become bringers of that, which is why we are here. So then the consciousness, you could call it the light, the light of the source, the light of God comes through the human form.

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (17:38 - 17:54)

And so when you allow the light of God, the light of consciousness to come through you, and it is allowed to fuel whatever it is you do, whatever it is you do will be fueled with a spiritual power that will allow you to be the best at what you do.

[Speaker 1] (17:54 - 18:13)

Yes. And then that also means that what you do is not of primary importance, but how you do what you do is what matters, how you do it. And you could be doing something that the world would regard as relatively insignificant and yet make an enormous difference to the consciousness on the planet.

[Speaker 2] (18:14 - 18:22)

Ivy is from Richmond, Virginia. Hi, Ivy. I hear you have a question about one of my favorite quotes.

Go ahead. What is the question?

[Speaker 3] (18:22 - 19:29)

Well, my question deals with trying to find a career path that merges your inner purpose with outer purpose. And on the top of page 274, you say, Eckhart says, there may be a period of insecurity and uncertainty. And he goes on to say that if you're able to live with uncertainty, even enjoy it, you become comfortable with uncertainty, infinite possibilities

open up in your life.

And my question is this. I'm 26 years old. And in the past few months, I've tried to find a career path that merges my inner purpose with my outer purpose and haven't really been able to do so.

I began to think a lot about my life's purpose and question whether or not I would ever find a career that merged my life's work with something I was passionate about. So my question really is twofold. The first is, how should I approach finding a career that is fulfilling but doesn't strengthen my ego?

And secondly, and perhaps the more pressing question for me is, how do I do this while also becoming comfortable and embracing the uncertainty that's defining my life right now?

[Speaker 1] (19:30 - 19:53)

Good question. Yes. So to what extent have you become successful in embracing and accepting at this time of your life that you don't know yet what your purpose is?

To what extent are you able to say, well, see, can I become comfortable with not knowing? Have you been able to do that?

[Speaker 3] (19:53 - 20:02)

There are periods where I've been able to, but mostly it's just a lot of thinking and feeling very uncomfortable about not knowing.

[Speaker 1] (20:02 - 22:09)

Yes, and often the uncomfortableness are certain thoughts that go through your mind that tell you that it's not okay to be in this state. And then you have certain emotions which are the body's reaction to those thoughts. So when these thoughts arise, they tell you it's not okay, the way you are right now is not okay.

Realize that these are thoughts that arise in your mind, conditioned by the surrounding culture and so on. And you don't necessarily need to believe in each thought that comes and tells you it's not okay not to know what to do. Life is an adventure.

It's not a package tour. When you travel, you can take a package tour and everything is already planned. There's no uncertainty.

And every year you go to a nice hotel in a more exotic country, but you won't even know it's exotic because your hotel room is the same as every other hotel room. You're totally sheltered, but everything is planned. You know beforehand where you're going to be in 10 days time exactly.

That's not an adventure and it's unlikely that you are going to evolve internally through a trip like that. But if you went into a true trip into some exotic country, thrown back on your own resources, then you would encounter true adventure and you would probably not be the same person when you come back. Why not?

Because we are constantly faced with uncertainty. And if you're able to accept that, you can actually enjoy the adventure. If you cannot accept it, I'm giving this analogy of a trip because life is a journey.

And so the person who cannot enjoy the uncertainty when adventure comes is going to be in a continuous state of negativity or fear. I don't want to be here. I'd rather be at home.

So realize that life is an adventure and part of the adventure of life is being in that state that you are in now. If everything were already clear to you now, everything were already mapped out, there would be no evolution of yourself as a human being.

[Speaker 2] (22:09 - 22:21)

And may I say, Ivy, that is part of what being 26 is all about. That is what 26 is. You're trying to figure it out.

That is what the 20s are for.

[Speaker 1] (22:21 - 22:53)

Yes. And another very helpful thing to remember is one of the most wonderful things in your period of life is to make mistakes. Yeah.

Because mistakes means you realize, oh, that's not that wasn't my purpose. Yes. And so you're a little bit closer to your true purpose.

And then perhaps you think, oh, baby, that is my purpose. And then after a while you realize, no, that's not. And it's very helpful to make mistakes because gradually you begin to realize what it is that is right for you.

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (22:53 - 24:03)

And many times, as Eckhart says in this chapter, Ivy, and you will find in your 20s, the 20s are about figuring out where you want to be. And there's this frustration. That's why they call that show *The Young and the Restless*, because there's a restlessness about it.

And I know that because I've kept journals since I was 15 in my 20s. I'm just restless, restless, restless. And when I was your age, 26, I was an anchorwoman in television

doing the evening news.

I hated it every single day. And what I now realize, and even then, my displeasure with being in that place every day was really informing me what I needed to do. What I needed to do was to get out of that space.

And many times being in a space that you can clearly identify as, this is, I do not want to do this. I want to be in television, I knew, but I do not want to do this. And I had my father and everybody around saying, you're going to give up that job in television?

I knew I could not do that. News felt exploitive to me. So many times, if you're in a position where you know what you don't want to do, isn't that also helpful, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (24:03 - 24:21)

Oh, yes. Yes. For a while, I thought my life purpose was to be an academic at university.

And then the realization, after years of spending time working hard to become a professor, I realized that's not my life purpose at all. But I had to go through that.

[Speaker 2] (24:21 - 24:24)

Didn't you give up a promising career as an academic?

[Speaker 1] (24:24 - 25:49)

Yes. I gave up the PhD. I gave up the promising career.

And my relatives, my mother thought I was insane to give that up. But I knew this is what I had to do. It was so clear, there was no doubt about it anymore.

For a little while, there was doubt. And then the realization was so strong, I had to walk out of there. And that led to a period of uncertainty.

For a few years, I didn't know what am I supposed to do with my life. Here I am. I was just barely managing to survive.

And gradually, I lived, but I was not unhappy. I was happy with the present moment then already. And then gradually, something evolved.

People started asking me questions. People that I met casually, in parks, casually. And gradually, a kind of spiritual teaching started to happen.

And after a little while, when somebody called me for the first time, oh, you are a spiritual teacher. Oh, that's what I am. And so the purpose came by itself.

It came just out of that state of just being with what is and not being unhappy with not

knowing. Being at ease with not knowing. Then it's much more likely to come to you when you are at ease with not knowing.

So the question that you can ask yourself, can I be at ease with not knowing?

[Speaker 2] (25:49 - 26:12)

Because what you say on 274 that Ivy had mentioned earlier, you become comfortable with uncertainty. Infinite possibilities open up in your life. And it means when you become comfortable with uncertainty, it means fear is no longer a dominant factor in what you do and no longer prevents you from taking action to initiate change.

That's the big thing.

[Speaker 8] (26:12 - 26:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (26:13 - 26:22)

Because as long as you are afraid, you cannot allow the energy of what is supposed to happen to come into your life, as long as you're afraid, right? The fear blocks that.

[Speaker 8] (26:22 - 26:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (26:23 - 26:49)

So be alert and watch your mind to see what kind of thoughts it produces. Feel also there may be the emotion of fear, as Oprah says, arising occasionally associated with a thought. Like what's going to happen to me?

Yes. Because the mind wants to know what the future is going to bring. But how dread life would be, how dreadfully boring it would be if you knew already what's going to happen.

[Speaker 2] (26:49 - 27:17)

Well, part of that is because, too, people get afraid because of, again, what Nick said. Nick is our spiritual teacher this week. Because of what Nick said last week about worrying about your bills.

Because you're living outside yourself. You're creating more debt, creating more debt, creating more debt, allowing yourself to operate from the thinking mind. Yes.

At the time that you made these decisions for yourself, you were living on, in practically,

you said, at the poverty level.

[Speaker 1] (27:18 - 27:34)

Yes. So. Yes.

And so you survive somehow. You make it. One more question before you go.

Is there anything in your life that you truly enjoy? Are there certain things that you enjoy doing that may not be necessarily associated in your mind with career?

[Speaker 3] (27:37 - 27:41)

Not really. That I can think of. Nothing I can think of.

[Speaker 1] (27:41 - 27:48)

OK. Then what's left is for you to enjoy the present moment and make that your spiritual practice. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (27:49 - 27:59)

But I thought you were saying earlier, Ivy, about, you know, trying to align your passion, what you love, and getting paid for it. Is that what you were talking about earlier?

[Speaker 3] (27:59 - 28:09)

Well, something I was passionate about. To align something. To align what I'm passionate about once I figure that out.

I don't really know what that is right now.

[Speaker 2] (28:10 - 28:25)

Yeah. To reiterate something that Eckhart was saying last week, it doesn't come out of your head. For everybody who's looking for that answer, for the purpose of your life, or what should I be doing, it does not come from your head.

It's not something that you're ever going to think up.

[Speaker 9] (28:25 - 28:26)

No.

[Speaker 2] (28:26 - 28:57)

You don't think it. Being still and allowing the presence of a universal energy, the presence of consciousness to come through you in such a way that it's a feeling. It is a

feeling.

It is not something you're going to think up how to do it. And you will just, you will start to feel that I feel better doing this thing than I feel doing the other thing. It's a feeling that comes to you, not something that comes in your head.

[Speaker 1] (28:57 - 29:15)

Correct? That's right. Yes.

And you need to be careful that you are not in a state of dissatisfaction because when you're in dissatisfaction, the answer is not likely to come, neither from within nor from without. So keep your inner space clear, aligned with now, so that no negativity arises.

[Speaker 2] (29:16 - 29:48)

And then may I add also, for you and everybody else who's trying to get this whole idea of purpose, some clarity about that, when you allow yourself to be still with it, you're not afraid of the uncertainty. The universe rises up to meet you. The world, Eckhart says in here, I can't remember what page in this chapter, but he talks about how coincidences happen.

You know, little things and big things happen. So you then have to be alert and paying attention to your life so when the opening shows itself, you're ready.

[Speaker 1] (29:48 - 30:10)

Yes. And that's much more likely to come when you're in a state of clarity, aligned with now, then the answer can come from within or the answer can come from without. Right.

As some chance encounter, something you see in the paper, or something you can't even think where it might come from, a synchronistic event, a coincidence.

[Speaker 2] (30:11 - 30:12)

It shows itself.

[Speaker 1] (30:12 - 30:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (30:12 - 30:35)

That's right. In ways that you hadn't seen before. Thank you, Ivy, from Richmond, Virginia.

Thank you so much. So you say on 261, while you're perhaps still waiting for something

significant to happen to your life, you may not realize that the most significant thing that can happen to a human being has already happened within you. The beginning of the separation process of thinking and awareness.

[Speaker 1] (30:35 - 31:08)

Which is the awakening, which is another way of explaining what the term awakening means, that before your awareness or your consciousness was totally identified with thought processes, but now, and this is the case for everybody who reads this book and finds it meaningful. It means if you are reading this book and you find it meaningful, something within your response, it means you have already begun to awaken. If you haven't, the book will be meaningless.

Got it.

[Speaker 2] (31:08 - 31:34)

You say as long as you are unaware of being on 263, you will seek meaning only within the dimension of doing and the future. That is to say, the dimension of time. Whatever meaning or fulfillment you find will dissolve.

Invariably, it will be destroyed by time. And meaning we find on that level is true only relatively and temporary. So you're saying looking outside yourself, you're not going to find the meaning.

No, that's right. Well, Nick, you're back.

[Speaker 4] (31:35 - 31:35)

Good to be here.

[Speaker 2] (31:36 - 31:37)

Okay. You have a question?

[Speaker 4] (31:37 - 32:21)

Actually, my question kind of relies on a premise that's not exactly stated in the book. But the premise is God is love. And if God is love and you love what you're doing as far as a career, then does God then sanction that career?

And is it then meant to be? Is it right? Let's say if you don't go to church, but if you enjoy doing something like reading, and if you're reading constantly and you get a more spiritual feeling from reading than ever walking into a church, then isn't that right?

Isn't that in alignment with, or is love not anything that matters in a career choice?

[Speaker 1] (32:22 - 35:03)

Well, good question. Now, love, of course, is used in a very loose sense. It means so many different things to different people.

And the expression, I love this or that, or I love doing this or that, is used casually by people, often meaning totally different things. For example, if somebody is obsessed with what they do in an ego way, totally focused, but in a negative way to a large extent, totally obsessed with what they are doing. And an outside observer might say, oh, he loves what he's doing.

He loves it so much that he gets up at five every morning and doesn't leave the office until 10 at night. But he's totally obsessed with what he's doing. And there's no love in it.

It's an obsession. Because love is used in such a loose way, sometimes we call that love. So when you actually love what you're doing, it's a totally different energy field that moves into what you are doing.

It means you are aligned completely with what you do. And then, yes, then you do bring a different consciousness. You bring the unconditioned consciousness into this world through whatever you do.

And it might be a doing, or it may just be being somewhere. You mention a church, you can find God in many places. Any place is holy.

And the present moment, when you only pay attention to it, completely, then you realize, actually, it's sacred. The present moment is sacred when you really bring attention to it. And then it doesn't matter where you are.

You can be in a building. You can be out in nature. You can be in the middle of a traffic.

And you really bring your attention to this moment. And you realize there is a sacredness here. You may be able to feel it more deeply when you're out in nature than in the middle of LA freeway.

But even there, it can be sensed if you are present enough. And there, that's love. There, love arises.

And if you're doing something, you're totally in what you do, not obsessed, not wanting the future more than you want the present, but totally wanting the present, totally wanting what you are doing. Then, yes, then you love what you're doing. That is true love.

And anybody who embodies that energy is creating the new earth.

[Speaker 4] (35:04 - 35:06)

So that's correct, then?

[Speaker 1] (35:06 - 35:06)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (35:06 - 35:45)

There's a difference. I guess I'm thinking of Joseph Campbell, where he talks about following your bliss. And he talks about how appetitive desires like eating and sex and drugs, things through the body, loves that come through the body, are nothing compared to the love that comes from the spirit, which makes everything else pale in comparison.

And that is the bliss that Joseph Campbell talks about. And that's what I think you mean when you say that we are present and we're doing what we're supposed to do, because we feel that feeling that makes everything else pale in comparison.

[Speaker 2] (35:46 - 36:34)

Yeah. Nick, that's what he's talking about at the bottom of 261. So while you're perhaps still waiting for something significant to happen in your life, you may not realize the most significant thing that can happen has already happened within you, the beginning of the separation process of thinking and awareness.

When you take yourself out of your head and take yourself out of the doing, doing, doing, doing, and allow yourself to connect with the consciousness or spirit or soul, whichever word you want to use for it, that is connected to all consciousness. The spirit that is connected to the greater spirit is what he's talking about. Yes.

And... You got it, Nick. It's a lot of hard work.

Nick, listen, I didn't worry this week because he's told you not to worry. Have you been worried about your bills this week?

[Speaker 1] (36:35 - 36:37)

No, he just... Yeah, a little bit.

[Speaker 2] (36:40 - 36:41)

Oh, wow.

[Speaker 1] (36:41 - 37:32)

One more thing when, just to add to this, when the doing, when you're doing in that state of consciousness, that means whatever you do is not primarily a means to an end.

Correct. But an end in itself.

Right. You know what you want to achieve through the doing, that's fine, but the essence of the doing is in the doing, not the goal that you want to achieve through it. So often the question you can ask yourself is, is what I'm doing right now primarily a means to an end or am I total in what I do?

And there's a different quality flows into what you do when it is not just a means to an end. And that is doing in a state of presence and different energy flows into that.

[Speaker 2] (37:32 - 38:21)

I love that. We're at the bottom of 263. You say, for example, if caring for your children gives meaning to your life, because everybody's looking for meaning, what happens to the meaning when they don't need you anymore and perhaps don't even listen to you anymore?

If helping others gives meaning to your life, you depend on others being worse off than yourself so that your life can continue to be meaningful and you feel good about yourself. If the desire to excel, win or succeed, I'm at the top of page 264, everybody, at this or that activity provides you with meaning, what if you never win or your winning streak comes to an end? Making it in whatever field is only meaningful as long as there are thousands or millions of others who don't make it.

So you need other human beings to fail, so that your life can have meaning. I was going to ask though, what if you're making it, you're aligned with your purpose?

[Speaker 1] (38:22 - 38:27)

Yes. Now, after that, it doesn't say that those things should not be pursued immediately after what you just read.

[Speaker 2] (38:28 - 38:43)

Yes. It says, I'm not saying here that helping others, caring for your children or striving for excellence in whatever field are not worthwhile things to do. For many people, they're important.

In the end though, you say it means you should connect them to your inner primary purpose so that a deeper meaning flows into what you do.

[Speaker 1] (38:43 - 39:52)

Yes. For example, then if, for example, we talked about looking after your children and that being the main purpose of your life. Yeah.

And again, we have the two dimensions of purpose. Outer purpose, which is what a good parent does anyway. Right.

You look after the needs of the child. Right. And you protect the child as much as possible.

But is the inner purpose there also? Which the inner purpose is there when a field of awareness arises between you and the child. There's a space.

Are you able to give the child spaciousness or space? Are you able to be open and listen to the child in non-judgmental way? Are you able to be with your child?

Are you able to be with your child or are you continuously doing? Or can you bring being into your relationship with your child? And if you bring being in, that is you're fulfilling the inner purpose.

And then when the child grows up, it's much less likely or improbable that you will get attached to your role of parent. You will then be able to let go of the role and then be able to be whatever you need to be in any given situation.

[Speaker 2] (39:53 - 40:36)

All right. You say if you ignore your inner purpose, that's why I keep reading from the book because I think I want to stress how important it is to connect your inner purpose. If you ignore your inner purpose, bottom of 264, no matter what you do, even if it looks spiritual, the ego will creep into how you do it.

And so the means will corrupt the end. The common saying, the road to hell is paved with good intentions points to this truth. So in other words, not your aims or your actions are primary, but the state of consciousness out of which they come.

Fulfilling your primary purpose is laying the foundation for a new reality, a new earth. Doesn't that mean that it's not just what you do, but it's the intention behind what you do it?

[Speaker 1] (40:36 - 41:21)

Yes, the consciousness that flows into what you do. And there's no future is always secondary in the doing. That is the future is not that you look forward to primarily, but totality in what you do being totally here.

Any performer, any artists know this very well. When you are total, then a completely different energy arises. That's right.

The moment and the artist performs, sometimes there's an empowerment that suddenly comes in because then it's sometimes only then that this person can be absolutely total.

[Speaker 2] (41:21 - 41:36)

Yeah, I see that. So Gwen and Bob have spent years teaching at schools on US military bases throughout Europe. They now live outside Munich, Germany.

Hi, Gwen and Bob from Munich. Hi, what's your question?

[Speaker 5] (41:38 - 42:30)

Well, my question is about apologizing. I'm reading on page 258. You say the most important thing to realize is your life has inner and outer purpose.

And I have found that apologizing when it's the right time helps me get back in alignment. However, when I've been wronged by someone, I expect to hear that apology to help build the relationship and get it back to a positive way. And I like feeling comfortable around others.

And when there's not closure and apologies don't come, I feel very uncomfortable. And I'm beginning to wonder if this is my ego at play and how can I maintain an inner and outer alignment when I don't feel I've had an appropriate apology from the person I expected it from?

[Speaker 2] (42:30 - 42:48)

Well, you just answered your own question, really. I'm going to let Eckhard answer that. But you just answered your own question because you just, key word here, appropriate.

I've not received the appropriate apology from people. That would be your ego that needs that appropriate apology. Take it away, Eckhard.

[Speaker 1] (42:50 - 44:11)

Mr. Thole. And adding to that, of course, the ego, another thing the ego does, it keeps accounts. And it says, you owe me.

And in this case, of course, it says, you owe me an apology. Now, this is good because this is an opportunity for you to become aware of the ego in you. So whenever the ego arises and you recognize it as the ego, it's a great opportunity of saying, oh, there's the ego.

There are the thoughts that the ego produces in my mind which say, he should apologize. She should have apologized. And another thought that comes, I can't be comfortable with this person anymore unless he or she apologizes.

So you can observe the thoughts that the ego produces and you can observe the emotions that are there as the result of those thoughts. So it's a wonderful opportunity

for you to see your own ego, which is no more than the human ego. It means there's anything wrong with you.

Right. But to observe the ego in action. This is always the greatest thing.

And then, at that moment, when you become aware of this kind of thought, emotional, mental-emotional pattern in you, who are you? When you recognize it, you're already in the space of awareness from where you recognize it.

[Speaker 2] (44:11 - 44:14)

And you take away its power. You diminish its power.

[Speaker 1] (44:14 - 44:38)

Yes. And so people, there are many reasons why people don't apologize. People don't apologize because they may not even know that there is anything to apologize in their view of things.

Or they may not apologize because their interpretation of what's happened is the complete opposite of your interpretation. And perhaps they think, or their ego thinks, that you should apologize. Or, or...

[Speaker 5] (44:38 - 44:40)

I like to think I do.

[Speaker 2] (44:41 - 44:42)

And other...

[Speaker 5] (44:42 - 44:43)

I get it.

[Speaker 2] (44:43 - 44:57)

But also, that's how you're using it, based on what you're saying, based on what you've just told us here. It's your ego's way of feeling superior because you like to think you do, and you're the one that goes and says, well, I apologized and you didn't.

[Speaker 1] (44:59 - 46:09)

Or, or you can keep a resentment inside for quite a while. And in a resentment, whenever you think of that person, or you meet that person, there's a little resentment at the back, which is also the ego. The resent...

Ego loves hanging on to resentments. And when resentments go on for a long time, as

I've described somewhere in the book, they become grievances. Right.

Grievances are heavy, long-term resentments. So you can observe that in yourself, and again, be happy that you are observing, able to observe the ego in you. It's a wonderful thing to be able to do that.

And of course, if... And then another person, the other person who is not apologizing, perhaps it's the ego who prevents them from apologizing, because the ego, in many people, this is not a particular function, perhaps, of your ego, but in many other people, the ego finds it almost impossible to apologize, because it believes that it would be losing something by apologizing, which, of course, is a delusion. So these things happen.

It's a wonderful opportunity for you to see your own ego, and by seeing it, realize awareness grows in you.

[Speaker 2] (46:09 - 46:11)

That's right. Bob, what's your question for Eckhart?

[Speaker 7] (46:12 - 46:27)

Yes. On page 265, Eckhart refers to your external purpose becomes charged with spiritual power, because your aims and intentions will be one with the evolutionary impulse of the universe.

[Speaker 2] (46:28 - 46:29)

I love that.

[Speaker 7] (46:29 - 46:32)

What is the evolutionary impulse of the universe?

[Speaker 2] (46:32 - 47:07)

That is so great. Let's read that one more time. Once that foundation, he says, fulfilling your primary purpose is laying the foundation for a new reality, a new earth.

Once that foundation is there, your external purpose becomes charged with spiritual power, because your aims and intentions will be one with the evolutionary impulse of the universe. Thank you. Because I had written, aha, and did three little, I've read it three times, stars, circles, everything around that.

That's great. Thank you for bringing that up, Bob. Okay.

What do you mean by that?

[Speaker 1] (47:10 - 49:11)

Now, I'm not sending you back to the book, but the answer is somewhere in the book. I'm not sending you there now, so let's look at it. The evolutionary purpose of the universe is the growth of consciousness.

It's going towards, something is flowing into this world of so-called matter, physicality. Something is flowing into this world of physicality or matter that comes from a different dimension, almost one could say. Well, how do I know this?

Because I know it in myself. And I know it, I've observed it in other people too. Something is flowing into this world of this, it seems to be very heavy, the heaviness of matter.

Something very different flows in, which I call consciousness, which you can call spirit. So a spirit is beginning, has already started a long time ago, but now beginning more fully through the human form, amongst other forms, to come into this world more and more fully. This is the arising of awareness, the arising of presence.

And all that is part of the greater evolution because there's a famous dictum, which is so true, as above, so below. So whatever happens here on this planet and in the human form will be reflected throughout the universe. These are universal movements, as above, so below, as below, so above.

So what happens here in the microcosm of the earth will also be happening in the macrocosm. So when I say how, people might ask me, how do you know what the purpose of the universe is, the evolution of the universe is? Because I know it in myself.

If you know it in yourself, you know many, many answers, even about the macrocosm, because the macrocosm is no more than a reflection of the inner.

[Speaker 2] (49:12 - 49:27)

And you see it all the time in nature. Yes. You see it all the time in nature.

The whole process that's going on in nature is also going on with humans, if you compare ourselves to nature. Yes. Yeah, the principles are the same.

Yeah. Did that answer your question, Bob?

[Speaker 1] (49:29 - 50:00)

Kind of. No, you have to really know the answer. You have to go within.

It's not through the mind or through somebody like listening to me and then saying, okay, I believe what you said. I don't want anybody to believe what I said. I want people

to really go within and verify within themselves whether or not that is true in their own experience.

So by becoming more conscious of your inner being, many answers will come.

[Speaker 2] (50:01 - 51:54)

Okay, let me take a stab at it, interpreting what I hear Eckhart saying. He's saying that there is, you know, there's a universal source or power of energy that all of us, that we all stem from that universal power or source or energy. You're with me, right?

And you can call it God. You can call it whatever you choose to call it. You can call it, you know, higher consciousness, or you can call it universal energy.

You can call it the divine. When you tap into the part of you that is, we're calling consciousness or presence or inner purpose, when you tap into that, that is connected to the source of all universal power and energy. You're with me so far?

Yeah. Okay. And when you tap into that part of you that is connected to all universal power and energy, your aims and intentions will be one with what all universal power and energy is striving for.

And what it's striving for is for you to allow the consciousness to come through you as a human being. So that's what he means by evolutionary impulse. The impulse of the universe is to support you and you bringing about your higher consciousness.

That's why you're here, is to allow that part of you that is connected to all that is universal energy, the source or God. To better explain it, it is the God in you. When you allow the God in you to come forth, the God of all things supports that.

[Speaker 1] (51:56 - 52:10)

And you just gave us a demonstration of that because the whole energy shifted when you spoke those words, a very powerful energy came through. So beyond what you said, energy that came through with it was actually a demonstration of that.

[Speaker 2] (52:10 - 52:41)

Well, thank you. It's true. Did it?

Good. You got it now, Bob? Yeah.

Thanks Gwen and Bob. Thank you guys. Well, shall we continue here?

You say your inner purpose is to awaken. It's as simple as that. You share that purpose with every other person on the planet because it is the purpose of humanity.

So let's again talk about what it means to awaken. Doesn't the very word purpose imply that you can do something about it? Purpose means on purpose.

[Speaker 1] (52:41 - 52:43)

That's right. I asked that question.

[Speaker 2] (52:43 - 52:46)

You say you can't make it happen that it is an act of grace, this awakening.

[Speaker 1] (52:46 - 54:54)

Yes. And what I talk about is the first moment of awakening. It happens or it doesn't happen.

First moment, which is the disidentification from the stream of thinking and the arising. It might only be a glimpse at first. The arising of awareness.

You're suddenly becoming aware that there is a realm underneath thinking. There's a realm of stillness inside you. You touch it.

Maybe you're out in nature, but that stillness is primarily an inner dimension and it can arise anywhere. But sometimes it's good to have experienced it there where the environment is most conducive to experiencing ultimately the inner because if you don't feel it on the inner, you won't really be aware of the silence around you. That's right.

It's only through the inner that you can be aware of the outer silence. So to be aware of silence, how can you be aware of silence? Only by being still.

Yeah, yeah. Because it's only the stillness in you that is aware of the silence. If your mind were totally occupied with noisy thinking, you wouldn't even know it's still around you.

Or you would say for a moment, oh, it's very still and then you carry on thinking. Right. Wouldn't really experience it.

So there's the equivalent of outer stillness. This is the outer dimension of spirit. You can sense the spirit that's out there in nature but you can only sense it because you already have it within you.

It's that in you that responds, that senses it. So only people whose mind is not totally noisy can actually be aware of silence. And so I sometimes observe when I go for a walk in the forest every day, and often I see people who are jogging or walking their dogs and very few are really there.

They're talking, they're talking on the phone, they have headphones on, they're talking to their friends and all that immersive thinking could be anywhere in the office.

[Speaker 2] (54:55 - 55:12)

Right. Someone asked, Eckhart, everything you say in your book resonates with my spirit so I believe it to be true. However, do people ever ask you how you know all of this?

If so, how do you respond? Where does your knowledge come from? This is Renee in Indianapolis.

Well, that's it. Where does your knowledge come from? How do you know what you know?

[Speaker 1] (55:13 - 56:32)

The essence of it comes through inner realization. In other words, it's by touching the consciousness that one is, that you are. It comes through becoming still and listening for what comes out of the stillness.

It's not primarily based on knowledge, although of course I have read spiritual books, quite a few. I use sometimes some of the terminology that is already in existence, has been in existence for a long, long time. But the book is more than just a compilation of other spiritual books that I have read.

The essence of the book is in my own realization. In other words, the answers come by being still. When I write, I sit there with a notepad, a pen, and become still.

Not on computer? No. Everything is done by hand.

And then I wait for some movement of thought to come out of the stillness. And then gradually a thought formulates itself. And then there is a critical faculty that says, okay, does that make sense?

Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't. If it doesn't make sense, I become still again. And then perhaps a thought that is more suited to what I can sense comes up.

And then I write it down.

[Speaker 2] (56:32 - 56:58)

So did you write this book from the place of inner space? Last week we talked about inner space. And I was a little frustrated until the end of the class, because I was trying to get this concept of inner space across to all of our listeners.

Remember I said to you, I'm a little frustrated. And you said, because you cannot understand it through concepts and language, that inner space isn't something you can understand with your mind.

[Speaker 1] (56:58 - 57:15)

No. So as an explanation, it's not very satisfying when one talks about inner stillness and then people try to understand, okay, what's he actually talking about? And you can see already when you're in your head and say, inner stillness, what's that about?

Well, that doesn't make any sense. It doesn't make, of course it doesn't to the mind.

[Speaker 2] (57:15 - 57:16)

Well, people say, that's all that woo-woo stuff.

[Speaker 1] (57:16 - 57:39)

Yes, that's what some journalists often say. They come to spirituality and say, oh, it's all that stuff. They don't give themselves a chance.

Yeah. You really, you have to give yourself a chance and see whether you can sense in yourself that to which these words point. Yes.

So and only then does it become real and alive.

[Speaker 2] (57:39 - 58:13)

And that is the same thing we're saying to Bob and Gwen. When Bob is trying to say, what do you mean by the evolutionary impulse of the universe? What that really means is that when you are in alignment, when your inner purpose is aligned with what you do, that you will be supported by the spirit of God or by universal energy in such a way that life opens up to you.

And people think, oh, it's about you being lucky or gee, isn't that strange that this happened or serendipitous things happen. Things fall into line. Right, when you are in alignment.

[Speaker 1] (58:13 - 58:44)

Yes, that they fall into line. That's one way or another. Everybody can experience that.

So why not give it a try? Live as if the present moment were more important than past and future. On a practical level, of course, you still use past and future.

But give your attention to this. Spend a few days or a few weeks living in that way. Immediately surrendering negativity when it arises and recognizing it as ego based or pain body based.

[Speaker 2] (58:44 - 58:47)

Because all negativity is ego based?

[Speaker 1] (58:47 - 59:45)

Well, negativity loves ego. It's a denial of life. The moment you identify with negativity, that's part of the ego.

So experiment with, because you've lived in one particular state of consciousness for many years, try something different and see what happens. And what happens primarily and first of all, is an inner shift. And after a little time gap sometimes, it gets reflected in the outer realm also.

But that's no longer the main thing because the main thing is already that you enter that state of peaceful, alive presence in yourself when you're aligned with what is, aligned with the now. And that's what matters. The rest is the icing on the cake.

When good things happen to you, it doesn't mean you now feel good because something good has happened to you. Something good has happened to you because you've already found the goodness within you.

[Speaker 2] (59:45 - 59:50)

That's right. So you can only manifest that which you already are.

[Speaker 1] (59:50 - 1:00:23)

Yes, yes, you already are that. Whatever people are looking for, whatever form, they already are that. They're looking for God.

And I'm not saying that this form is God. I'm not saying that this person is God. I'm saying the essence, if you go deep enough within, there is a realm where you and God merge.

And it's everybody's destiny and purpose to live from that place of connectedness.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:23 - 1:01:10)

Yes, because the I am, the I am, is I am that which comes from God. Yes. I am that which comes from God.

Yes. So here we are at week nine, only one more class to go. And I bet so many people can relate to this.

Many people, you say on page 262, who are going through the early stages of awakening are no longer certain what their outer purpose is. What drives the world, you say, no longer drives them. Seeing the madness of our civilization so clearly, they may feel somewhat alienated from the culture around them.

So what do you do in this case? If you're at this point in your life where reading this book

is shaking you up and you realize more than ever what you don't want to do. You realize I have been on the wrong course.

You realize you have an awakening. Now what do you do? I'm all awakened.

[Speaker 1] (1:01:11 - 1:03:19)

Now what? Well, the awakening, of course, is the realization of your inner purpose primarily. Yes.

So don't come into conflict with where you are now or what you're doing now. If you cannot surrender to what you're doing now and be okay with it, at least bring acceptance. We talk about in the next chapter.

At least bring acceptance to whatever you're doing now so that you're okay with it. That is vital. Then you are in a state of clarity.

You enter a state of clarity when you're no longer in opposition to your present moment, life where you live or what you're doing. If you cannot surrender, if whatever you are doing continues to produce unhappiness in you and no matter how hard you try, then of course it's a clear sign that you need to leave that situation. Right.

So either you let go of the resistance and see if you can. And sometimes people say, no, I can't. But what they really mean is, I'm not willing to.

Not willing to. Which is very different. You need to see the difference between not being able to and not being willing to.

Whatever applies to you, am I not willing to accept this moment or am I truly incapable of accepting this moment? If you find you're truly incapable of accepting this moment where you're doing your job or whatever you're doing, then this is a sign that it's time for change. Got it.

Many times you will be able to have this energy flow into what you're doing already and transform how you do, perhaps what you've been doing for many years, perhaps in a state of resistance. And suddenly how you do it changes. You're no longer doing it in a state of inner resistance.

And then you bring a completely different energy into what you do. Consciousness flows into what you do. And often either this is deeply fulfilling and it affects many people around you.

Or it could also happen that now that you're no longer resisting what you do, change suddenly comes into your life.

[Speaker 2] (1:03:19 - 1:03:48)

I got that. This is a beautiful quote from page 266. You say that the great arises out of small things that are honored and cared for.

Everybody's life really consists of small things. Greatness is a mental abstraction and a favorite fantasy of the ego. The paradox is that the foundation for greatness is honoring the small things of the present moment instead of pursuing the idea of greatness.

Yes. It's that one step.

[Speaker 1] (1:03:49 - 1:06:16)

That's right. So many people have this idea, I want to achieve something great or be somebody great. And they neglect the step that leads to greatness.

They don't honor this step at this moment because they have this idea of some future moment where they're going to be great. Right. And then it's surprising when you truly look at people, perhaps, who you would say have achieved great things, that even in their life, it really is a sequence of small steps because every moment is quite small.

You are wherever you are at this moment. Some people believe, not to mention you, some people believe I'm doing great work. I mean, I am because the consciousness is moving through this form.

I don't feel personally responsible for what I do as such. But even there, it is small steps. When the writing happens, there's a notepad and a pen and there's the present moment and there's the stillness.

Very small. There's not some idea, I'm going to create a work that's going to change everybody's consciousness. No, I'm just true to this moment.

What this moment requires, it's a blank piece of sheet of paper and a pen and the stillness. It's a small thing. Or when I give a talk, talk, maybe 2,000 people come.

If I had this idea, I'm now going to give an important big talk that would lead to stress and fear because maybe it's not going to be that great. But if you can, with every step being present, it's time to, the car comes to pick me up. If you step into the car and I sit in the car, the car moves towards the venue where the talk is going to be.

I look out of the window. Simple. People walking past the tree, the sky.

Just this moment. Step out. Sit in the waiting, the green room to wait for the talk to start.

Breathing. Simple. Nothing big.

Just a little moment. This moment. Being true to that.

Then step onto the stage. There's an empty chair. I sit in it.

Still. Breathe. I know there's 2,000 people there and I also know I have no idea what's going to come out of this mouth.

Being happy with not knowing. Still. Not big.

It's all small. It's all a sequence of very small moments. And by being true to the small moment, something great arises.

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:17 - 1:06:51)

And the biggest lesson from tonight is by being true to the small moments, by being true to this moment, it means to bring the sense of presence, the sense of consciousness to every single moment so that everything that you do is fueled from a deeper level than your ego. Everything you do is fueled from a deeper level than your thoughts. That everything you do is fueled from your being and that is what gives meaning and purpose to whatever you do.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:51 - 1:06:58)

That's the essence. Yes. Right.

It's wonderful to see you when the power comes through. You talk. It's beautiful.

The words are so true.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:58 - 1:07:19)

Thank you. Thank you, everybody. I want to thank you for joining us tonight.

As I said, next week will be our last class on A New Earth, the finale. Get ready for our last class, Chapter 10, A New Earth, how to bring awareness to every moment of your life. There really is no higher calling.

This was great. Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (1:07:29 - 1:08:00)

Discovering your life's direction and purpose. Oprah has collected all of the lessons she's learned from thought leaders like Eckhart Tolle and Brene Brown and innovators like Jay-Z and Lin-Manuel Miranda, who all understand what it means to achieve the life of your dreams. The Path Made Clear is available now on Apple Books, Amazon, Audible, and at your local bookstore.

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Eckhart Tolle A New Earth : Finding Who You Truly Are (Chapter 7) [gid : //art19-episode-locator/V0/CKOn3z1LpNCByrQYjgpSD3-weFSBLudjVimcPYs5xY]

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 4:12)

Hello to all you podcast listeners. We're bringing you something really special. One of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle and I, are giving you a chapter-by-chapter class on what I believe is his groundbreaking masterpiece, Eckhart's best-selling book, A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

This book resonated with me in such a profound way. I truly think that it's the most important book I've ever read. It's changed the way I live my life, so much so that I always have a copy on my nightstand, because I constantly give myself a refresher course.

And now more than ever, we need to create what Eckhart calls a new earth, inside our personal lives, in our communities, and the world. Give it a listen, and over 10 episodes, you too will be opened up and learn how to quiet your mind, get your ego in check, live a fully more present life. We're talking deep, big picture, even delving into consciousness and the reason why we're all really here.

My greatest hope is that Eckhart's quiet wisdom and patient teachings will resonate with you as they have with me. Each podcast episode will start with my conversation with Eckhart about a chapter, and then Eckhart answers questions from people who are reading along in the book. So I encourage you to get your own copy of A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and join us for a thrilling, enlightening, and spiritual experience.

Hi again. So glad you're joining me today, because this class is another one of my favorites. I know I say that.

I've only said it about three times, because I have three really favorite chapters in this book. Chapter seven. Now, you know the full title of Eckhart's book is A New Earth, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose.

And in order to awaken to your purpose, you have to be able to answer the question, who am I? Who are you? Who are you at your core?

Once you take away all the labels, what's really left of you, with a capital Y? Well, figuring out who you are, and perhaps more importantly, who you are not, is what this class really is all about. And hopefully, that is all becoming a little clearer to you as you read the book.

As you'll see, you'll have little epiphanies. I'm a little under the weather. But I can tell you, I love doing this so much.

Nothing dampened my spirits or enthusiasm for these conversations with Eckhart. So my apologies for the stuffy nose and the sniffing. On to chapter seven of A New Earth.

I truly believe that as each one of us becomes more awake and aware in our own lives, so will our families and everyone we encounter, our communities and our countries and eventually our world. And so Eckhart, Tole and I welcome you once again to yet another lesson. Chapter seven, my favorite chapter thus far.

All right, everybody, we're discussing chapter seven, finding who you truly are, which I know is the reason why so many of you picked up this book in the first place, because when I first announced it, I was reading the subtitle that the book is A New Earth Awakening to Your Life's Purpose. Let's start with an overview of what this chapter is really about. You begin with know thyself.

Chapter seven starts with those two words that you say are inscribed above the entrance of a famous Greek temple. You say on page 186, what those words imply is this. Before you ask any other questions, first ask the most fundamental question of your life.

Who am I? And then you say on page 189 that you are not the ego. So when you become aware of the ego in you, it doesn't mean you know who you are.

It means you know who you're not. But it is through knowing who you are not that the greatest obstacle to truly knowing yourself is removed. So let's start off with these two questions.

Who aren't I? And who am I?

[Speaker 1] (4:14 - 8:26)

And of course, the best starting point is the first question. Who aren't I? Because what is left when you realize, and it's usually a process for most people, realizing who you are not letting go of identification with things and so on.

When you realize who you are not, then suddenly who you are becomes revealed to you. And who you are cannot easily be put into words, because if it could, then it could be answered in one simple sentence, and then everybody could repeat that answer and believe that they know who they are. So we start with knowing who you are not, and that begins for people sometimes with loss, where they lose something valuable that they had identified with, or death comes into their lives, some kind of breakdown or disaster happens.

Sometimes those people suddenly... WINFREY. Awaken.

DR. SCHAUER. Awaken. Something has been taken away from them that they had identified with for many years that had become part of their sense of self.

And if something very fundamental that has been part of your sense of self is removed, death, loss, collapse... WINFREY. Even if it's a person, a human being who you loved.

DR. SCHAUER. Yes, it could be somebody close to you who dies. Then of course, at first it leads to enormous suffering, and you feel as if part of you had died also.

And for some people that happens even if they lose possessions, because they were so identified with their possessions that when their possessions are removed, they feel there's nothing left of me. Another, related to possessions, is social position. If people fall from some high social position, there's a scandal that happens all the time in the news.

Not mentioning any names. WINFREY. Yes, don't.

You don't have to. DR. SCHAUER. And then these people can be extremely painful if they had become totally identified with either their possessions or their social position, and they are suddenly faced with a kind of huge emptiness in their lives.

And then the question arises, I'm nobody anymore. And this is the point, a decisive point is reached there where they can either continue to resist and suffer, resist what has happened internally, complain about it, tell themselves story about it, how it's all collapsed. Or they can suddenly come to a point of acceptance of what happened, and acceptance of the present moment.

So the thing that was so important in their lives, actually left behind, I sometimes compare to, if you look at a person's life, it's a tapestry. Consists of all kinds of things that one identifies with. And when a great loss happens, it's almost as if suddenly there's a huge hole in that tapestry of my life.

WINFREY. Correct. DR. SCHAUER. And that is painful when you identify with a tapestry. But behind the tapestry, there's a light that shines through. Because without that light, there wouldn't be anything at all.

That's why you can even see your life. Without the light of consciousness, nothing would be. WINFREY.

Behind the tapestry, there's a light. DR. SCHAUER. I'm using a kind of analogy.

So when you don't resist this hole that has suddenly appeared in this tapestry of your life, then there's a light that shines through then. And I'm using that as an analogy. There's suddenly a peace that comes when the emptiness that is left behind by the form that has dissolved is not resisted internally.

And then through that empty space, there comes what the Bible calls the peace that

passes all understanding. Because you can't explain suddenly. And people have reported that this has happened to them.

They lost, sometimes in some cases, everything. They suffered at first. And then suddenly, an inner shift happened.

They accepted.

[Speaker 2] (8:26 - 10:26)

WINFREY. And this also happens when you are grieving somebody that you loved. Isn't it true?

Because when you come to understand fully who you are, it doesn't mean that you will no longer be saddened when you lose loved ones. But you will also, when you become conscious, you then understand that they have just moved from form to formless, and that the formless can have an easier way to come through, come through now even more strongly than it did in the form, if you allow yourself to be with it and to see it and to experience it. Let's go here to page 186, everybody.

This is one of my favorite things. Unconscious people, and many remain unconscious, trapped in their egos throughout their lives, will quickly tell you who they are, their name, their occupation, their personal history, the shape or state of their body, and whatever they identify with. Others may appear to be more evolved because they think of themselves as an immortal soul or divine spirit.

But do they really know themselves? Or have they just added some spiritual-sounding concepts to the content of their mind? Knowing yourself goes far deeper than the adoption of a set of ideas or beliefs.

Spiritual ideas and beliefs may at best be helpful pointers. But in themselves, they rarely have the power to dislodge the more firmly established core concepts of who you think you are, which are part of the conditioning of the human mind. This is my favorite in this chapter, one of my favorites.

I have three stars, then another star when I read it a second time, and another star. Knowing yourself deeply has nothing to do with whatever ideas are floating around in your mind. Knowing yourself is to be rooted in being instead of lost in your mind.

That was beautifully written.

[Speaker 1] (10:26 - 10:48)

Yes. And so I mentioned that because some people identified, many people identified with external things. You mentioned, I believe, a week or two ago, somebody mentioned to you that they suddenly realized that they are not their car.

They're not their car. That's the beginning, early stage of disidentification. But it's good.

[Speaker 2] (10:48 - 11:06)

But we do think we are, and that's why you wrote the whole chapter, we do think we are our roles. Yes, our roles. Because a lot of people have important roles, roles as parents and roles in important positions that affect a lot of people's lives.

And people think that they are their roles and they identify with their status in the world and what they have achieved.

[Speaker 1] (11:06 - 11:37)

That's right. And of course, it's a question of finding a balance of honoring the role that of honoring the function that you have in this world. So that's fine.

You have to do whatever you're doing. You fulfill your function as mother, as father, or in some other capacity, some public function, business function, whatever it is. So to honor the function without becoming totally identified with the function so that always there's still a human being there, not just a function.

[Speaker 2] (11:38 - 11:42)

So knowing yourself deeply has nothing to do with whatever ideas are floating around in your mind.

[Speaker 1] (11:42 - 12:16)

And also what I meant, what you just read is people sometimes have certain ideas in their mind of who they are. And they may be spiritual ideas. I'm eternal spirit.

That's, of course, wonderful. And basically it is true. But do you truly know that?

Because in order to truly know that you are more, you are much deeper than this form goes far beyond holding certain concepts in your mind. Yeah. It goes to this kind of knowing is a knowing that it goes beyond conceptual.

[Speaker 2] (12:16 - 12:23)

Because if you really knew that you would have a certain way of being or living in the world that would manifest that in the world.

[Speaker 1] (12:23 - 12:35)

Exactly. That would manifest your being. That's right.

And particularly when situations happened, your reaction to a situation always tells you

where you are at as far as your level of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (12:35 - 12:44)

That is why a lot of people become annoyed with people who claim to be so spiritual or so religious who are intolerant of other people.

[Speaker 6] (12:45 - 12:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (12:45 - 13:31)

Intolerant of other ideas. Self-righteous. Imposing their ideas on other people because if you truly were what you say you are.

Yes. So moving on to who you think you are. It's a beautiful statement here.

On page 187, everybody. If small things have the power to disturb you, then who you think you are is exactly that small. That will be your unconscious belief.

What are the small things? Ultimately all things are small things because all things are transient. And you say your sense of who you are determines what you perceive as your needs and what matters to you in life.

And whatever matters to you will have the power to upset and disturb you. So people all the time say, you know, I'm a peaceful person. I'm a loving person.

Yes. I'm a kind person. I'm a generous person.

[Speaker 1] (13:31 - 13:33)

I'm a good person.

[Speaker 2] (13:33 - 13:33)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (13:33 - 14:00)

And then the slightest thing goes wrong and suddenly something else comes up, which is total opposite of the good person. And so this is not the deep knowing of who you are. The deep knowing really is, we use the word no here in a somewhat differently from the conventional way of using the word no.

Usually knowing is conceptual knowing.

[Speaker 2] (14:01 - 14:07)

So to be rooted in being instead of lost in your mind. And what does that mean to be rooted in being?

[Speaker 1] (14:08 - 14:14)

And again, we are using words here to describe something that really is beyond words. It's not describable.

[Speaker 7] (14:14 - 14:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (14:15 - 15:17)

But just a little hint is we always come back, of course, here in this teaching to the present moment. Absolutely. So when your attention moves fully into the present moment, at that moment you go deeper into being.

You could say that life has two dimensions. There's the horizontal dimension of life, past, future, where everything happens. And most people, their whole existence is on that horizontal surface dimension.

And they think that's their life. They think that's all there is. And of course, then life is quite a threatening place because all that is transient.

Very transient. And you've never encountered the deeper dimension. This, by the way, is a few people have interpreted the Christian cross, which we mentioned also last time in a slightly different context, the Christian cross as being, showing the horizontal dimension of life.

And suddenly it intersects with the vertical dimension. It's also the dimension of the sacred.

[Speaker 6] (15:17 - 15:17)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (15:17 - 15:36)

And so you enter the vertical dimension by becoming present, by bringing your attention into the now. So then, because then past and future disappear from your consciousness. At this moment, there's only the now.

And suddenly a depth opens up within you.

[Speaker 2] (15:36 - 15:47)

And so what you've been saying throughout this book is that if you are living your life in the horizontal, the past and the future, then you're not really living. You are making enemies of this present moment.

[Speaker 1] (15:47 - 15:47)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:48 - 15:48)

And you're not truly living.

[Speaker 1] (15:49 - 15:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (15:49 - 16:01)

And that when you say, what I interpret when you say knowing yourself is to be rooted in being instead of lost in your mind, is to, in every encounter, and I've been doing this more and more, coming back to your breath.

[Speaker 1] (16:01 - 16:02)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (16:02 - 16:25)

Coming back to the present moment in such a way that you are aware and conscious of everything that's going on around you and recognizing that you, you, you are that awareness. That's who you are. You are the observer of all these things that are going on in the horizontal plane of your life.

[Speaker 1] (16:25 - 16:43)

Exactly. So the, with the vertical comes the, the witnessing presence. That's right.

The observer. Yeah. Oh, that's, and so that's the liberation.

You, that's, you know, sometimes this word liberation is used in spiritual context. That's the liberation from the horizontal dimension, which Jesus calls the world. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (16:43 - 16:51)

Debbie's from the Netherlands. Einstein, you have a question about the quote on page 187 about small things disturbing you. I love this quote.

Go ahead, Deb.

[Speaker 4] (16:53 - 17:26)

Hi. Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart.

Hi. My question is about high sensitivity. I always considered myself as a sensitive person, and that means I'm easily overwhelmed by day-to-day life things that might be considered small.

I've been practicing staying in the moment with challenging moments, but I think I need some more advice. Is high sensitivity just a narrow egoic state, and do you have some tools that might help me to stop feeling so overwhelmed by all these small things?

[Speaker 2] (17:27 - 17:29)

It does sound like a label you've given yourself.

[Speaker 4] (17:30 - 17:30)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (17:30 - 17:33)

Yeah. I know. I'm a highly sensitive individual.

[Speaker 1] (17:33 - 17:45)

Yes. Yes. Yes.

That is true. So that's, that also we need to address. Can you give two, perhaps two or three examples of what kind of things you are very sensitive to?

[Speaker 4] (17:46 - 17:58)

Well, a lot of things, but usually when I go into a shop and there's loud music there, I just want to run away. I have a hard time dealing with noise and chaos.

[Speaker 1] (17:59 - 18:02)

Yes. Or being in a big city, traffic.

[Speaker 6] (18:03 - 18:03)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (18:03 - 20:37)

Yes. I suggest that you experiment a little bit when these situations arise and you feel the same thing happening again. And if you bring a very alert attention to the situation,

you realize that really there are three levels to this situation.

Level one is whatever it is that disturbs you, the external noise, the chaos, the traffic, whatever it may be. So there is the thing that disturbs you, level one. Level two, there is your reaction to that thing that disturbs you, which could come as, it could be an almost physical reaction as perhaps a contraction in your body.

It could be also an emotional reaction of frustration, irritation, anger. I assume something like that. Right.

And also in addition, the reaction could be certain thoughts in your head about the situation that says, I can't stand being here any longer. It's dreadful, dreadful. Right.

This is level two. Now, be aware of that. These two are first of all separate.

There is the triggering event or situation, and then there is your physical, emotional, mental reaction to that. And now what is level three? That is usually overlooked.

But level three is where ultimately freedom lies. Level three is your awareness of both these levels. You are aware that there is the situation, the event, there is my reaction, physical, emotional, mental, and there is myself being the aware space for those two.

And if you can bring your attention more to that deepest level, then you realize changes will happen on the other two levels. If you recognize yourself not as the reacting entity that happens in you, but that's not who you are, but you recognize yourself as the awareness that is aware of the thing that's happening out there, of the thing that's reacting inside.

[Speaker 2] (20:38 - 20:44)

So it's actually like, Debbie, you're observing your own behavior. You're observing your ego's behavior to it.

[Speaker 1] (20:44 - 20:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (20:45 - 20:46)

You're observing your ego's behavior.

[Speaker 1] (20:46 - 20:50)

With no judgment, just as pure observation, pure awareness.

[Speaker 2] (20:50 - 20:55)

Like, oh, isn't that interesting? I'm getting so upset over this guy pulling in front of me.

[Speaker 1] (20:55 - 21:31)

Just being there as the awareness. And that's already the beginning of freedom. And then increasingly you realize that you are that.

You are not the entity that is reacting. And then, as Oprah said, you can let go of thinking of yourself, of having this concept of yourself as a highly sensitive person that perhaps you might, it's not natural, nothing personal in this, you may have become attached to because you've lived with this concept of who you are for many years. So that's where freedom lies.

[Speaker 2] (21:31 - 21:57)

But in addition to Debbie's question, let's say, and for her, you know, she labels herself or defines herself as a highly sensitive person. But let's say a person gets upset about someone putting a dent in his or her car. Or you spill coffee on your blouse right before an important meeting.

Or your child gets sick. Or you get sick. Or are you saying that if we get upset about these things, these kinds of things, that we don't know who we truly are?

[Speaker 1] (21:58 - 22:12)

If the dimension of presence or awareness is missing, then you are lost in the reaction. You think you are the reaction. Yes, then you become the reaction.

And when you become the reaction, you don't know who you are. It's a misperception of who you are.

[Speaker 2] (22:13 - 22:27)

You got that, right, Debbie? Yeah, yeah, I got it. Yeah.

Yeah, I got it, too. That could help you a lot. Isn't it good when you get it?

Yeah. I got it, too. I got it, too.

And just detaching yourself, it doesn't, that doesn't change the situation.

[Speaker 1] (22:27 - 23:11)

It doesn't immediately change the situation. But you do find that as you practice this, changes suddenly appear. Changes sometimes first appear in the force that is behind your reaction, that lessens.

You react, still react, but less, not as strongly. And miraculously, you sometimes even find that if you, if you're totally, because really the awareness level is also part of the acceptance, completely accepted at this moment, this is what I feel. And this is the external situation is.

With complete acceptance, even changes often happen miraculously in the external situation. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (23:11 - 23:23)

I think acceptance of the situation, which you talk about in Power of Now, and also repeatedly in A New Earth, acceptance, non-resistance to the moment, is one of the most important things we can learn.

[Speaker 6] (23:24 - 23:24)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (23:24 - 23:38)

And that is whether or not you are facing a crisis, whether you're facing someone, you've lost a loved one, or whether you're, you know, in traffic and are a highly sensitive person, non-accepting what is in that moment. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (23:39 - 24:07)

Is the most important. Yes. And you can practice with little things, because little things happen throughout the day that people feel irritated about, angry about, protesting against, and so on.

Or with little things, you will have many opportunities to practice. So it's a wonderful spiritual practice. So you use what before you wanted to get rid of, you use it as part of your spiritual practice, and then as a by-product, you also eventually get rid of it.

[Speaker 2] (24:08 - 24:33)

Thanks, Debbie. Thanks so much. Okay.

Thank you. From the Netherlands. Thank you.

Thank you. Everybody says they want peace, inner peace and peace on Earth. On page 188, you say, peace is really what you want, then you will choose peace.

And if peace mattered to you more than anything else, and if you truly knew yourself to be a spirit rather than a little me, you would remain non-reactive and absolutely alert when confronted with challenging people or situations.

[Speaker 1] (24:33 - 24:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (24:34 - 24:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (24:34 - 25:35)

That's the, so there's, you can either be reactive, act according to your, the way you've reacted for many years, your past conditioning, or you can become more alert when a challenging situation happens so that you don't internally separate yourself from the situation. So that when you completely open yourself to the situation, that you bring an alertness to it, an alertness of presence. So you're facing the situation totally with that state of alert presence.

You're not reactive anymore. And if something needs to be said or done in the situation, the words will suddenly come from that level of consciousness, from that alert stillness. If you need to do something, then you, the right thing, the right doing will happen.

Instinctively, or instinctively is not the right word, intuitively, the right thing, you will do the right thing. So...

[Speaker 2] (25:35 - 25:37)

Because it will be born out of a sense of presence.

[Speaker 1] (25:37 - 25:38)

Out of presence.

[Speaker 2] (25:38 - 25:41)

Or a sense of being, which is another word that we're using.

[Speaker 1] (25:41 - 26:01)

Yes. Yes. That's right.

And so any, whenever you are upset about any situation, there's a line in the Course in Miracles that says, I am never upset for the reason I think. Yes. So because when you're upset, you have lost yourself on the external level, what we call the horizontal.

[Speaker 2] (26:01 - 26:10)

But aren't there some things worth upsetting you? I mean, there are injustices in the world, and there are horrible things happening all the time in the world that we should

be upset about.

[Speaker 1] (26:10 - 26:20)

I wouldn't say that we should be upset about. It would, it is normal for people to be upset about this, but it is not the most effective way of bringing about change. I got it.

[Speaker 2] (26:21 - 26:23)

You can be upset all day long and nothing changes.

[Speaker 1] (26:23 - 26:23)

Nothing happens.

[Speaker 2] (26:24 - 26:26)

Because people have been upset for years and things don't change.

[Speaker 1] (26:26 - 27:04)

Yes. People are upset about violence, they're upset about war, continuous war between nations and so on. It continues to happen.

And you cannot, you cannot fight against... But being upset about it changes nothing. No.

So it's more powerful to face a situation and see this is how it is, and then see if action is possible. What is it that can be done? Got it.

And then there's no negativity in the action. But if you are resisting, if you're complaining about a situation already, whatever you do, the negativity flows into what you do.

[Speaker 2] (27:04 - 28:19)

Yeah. I just got something earlier, and the reason I'm thinking about this, because a friend of mine had lost his brother and was saying that, you know, he was having such a hard time letting go. And what I just had in this moment, something clicked for me, is that when people do finally are allowed to move on from their grief, it's because they have come to the point of acceptance that their loved one is gone.

Yes. And what you're saying is, in any situation, whether it's the loss of a loved one, or loss of a position, or loss of whatever that you're faced with, acceptance of the situation and beginning to deal with what is going on now, instead of wondering or worrying about what could have been, should have been, might have been, changes the situation and the way you feel about it. Yes.

And that your pain and suffering is cause, and stress is cause, because you refuse to accept the now. Yes. You're not one with the now.

Got it. Continuing on with who we are, because I know so many people have this as a prominent question for themselves. You say on page 189, nobody can tell you who you are.

It would just be another concept. So it would not change you. Who you are requires no belief.

In fact, every belief is an obstacle.

[Speaker 1] (28:20 - 28:30)

What does that mean? It means who you are has nothing to do with any thought that you might have about yourself. So does who you are have nothing to do with what you've done?

[Speaker 2] (28:30 - 28:47)

So you spend your life here doing all this work, and working, working, working, working, making money, taking care of your family, doing all the things that people do, and that has nothing to do with you? And then you, at your funeral, they read your, you know, words about you and say, this is who you are?

[Speaker 1] (28:47 - 29:34)

Well, and then there's the gravestone. And on the gravestone, there is the date of birth. And there is a one or two inch dash.

Yes. And then there's the date of your death. And the dash is really all your ambitions, and your fears, and your drama, and your problems.

That's what's left on that level. So I'm not saying not to honor the level of form, because that's what we are talking about. Whatever you do in this life, this horizontal level, where we do things, where we have our functions, and play roles, you honor that level.

But realizing there is something more vital, there is something deeper than just that. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (29:34 - 29:43)

Bridget says, Dear Oprah Decker, can you explain the quote on page 192, but nothing you can find out about yourself is you. Nothing you can know about you is you.

[Speaker 1] (29:43 - 30:59)

Yes. Okay. So I'm making a difference here between knowing yourself and knowing about yourself.

Okay. And I mentioned as an example, if you go to a conventional psychoanalyst, let's say, you will spend some years examining the makeup of your conditioning, of your past, your childhood, and so on. You find out more and more about yourself, things that perhaps you hadn't seen clearly about your emotions, about the makeup of your thoughts, and so on.

And all that is knowing about, it's to do with content. Right. The content of my life, and the content of my mind, ultimately, because my life is, I know it only as the content of my mind.

So that is knowing about yourself, and you can know thousands of facts about yourself and your history, and still not know who you are, because that knowing has nothing to do with conceptual knowing, with bits of information. It's the deeper knowing, I gave the analogy earlier of the honey. The honey.

You can know about the honey.

[Speaker 6] (31:00 - 31:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (31:00 - 31:24)

Or you can taste the honey, because when you taste the honey, the honey becomes you. It merges with you. That's right.

That's right. In that sense, knowing who you are in a non-conceptual way is being fully who you are. It's being in touch with that deeper level of being that you can only access in the present moment, the vertical dimension.

[Speaker 2] (31:24 - 31:38)

Well, if you are reading this book, and suddenly become to understand, or not reading this book, and understand, as you say, many people say, well, I'm a spiritual being. I'm on my spiritual path.

[Speaker 1] (31:38 - 31:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (31:38 - 32:03)

As many people have said. They say, I've been on this spiritual path for many years, or I'm a spiritual person. Aren't you just a little step closer thinking you're a spiritual

person, or is that another form of your ego, saying I'm a spiritual person?

Well, you have to- Yes, that is- Come from the greater spirit. So I can use the word I am consciousness, come out of the greater consciousness that I call God.

[Speaker 1] (32:03 - 32:04)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (32:04 - 32:11)

Or spirit that come out of the greater consciousness, spirit that I call God. Yes. So I recognize that.

I know that intellectually.

[Speaker 1] (32:11 - 33:01)

Yes. So in that sense, you can say intellectually, that is a true statement. Yeah, but I also feel it deeply.

The question is whether, and this is, I know that you do, but any, the question is whether you truly feel that as a reality and a way of finding out how deeply you truly know this is when, how you react to situations in your life, and how you react to other people in your life. It's there that you find out whether your belief that you are spirit, whether you truly know that, or whether it's no more, as I put it, than an idea floating around in your mind. Do you know it in the depths of your being?

Because then the way in which you deal with situations and people is very different. Correct.

[Speaker 2] (33:01 - 33:27)

I've always believed that I really was God's child, that I was, you know, come from, and as I've gotten older and could articulate it better, you know, I use other ways of describing it, but I believe that I came from that which is God. Yes. And was born of that, and so therefore really have no real fears in the world.

I've always believed everything would be okay. No matter what, I'm going to be okay because of that.

[Speaker 1] (33:27 - 33:47)

And that's more than a belief, actually. More than a belief. You can sense that in some way that it's hard to describe, but you can sense that ultimately there isn't you and God.

There is a deep place where you and God merge. There's a oneness with that. Well, I've

just gotten that later in life.

[Speaker 2] (33:47 - 33:50)

Yes. I used to think God was out there. Yes.

Hi, Eleanor.

[Speaker 3] (33:51 - 33:57)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Mr. Tolle. This is such a great experience.

I really thank you so much for it.

[Speaker 2] (33:57 - 33:59)

Well, thank you. Your question is?

[Speaker 3] (34:00 - 34:54)

My question is, on page 192, you say, you may not want to know yourself because you are afraid of what you may find out. Mm-hmm. And my question is about letting go of your insecurities or what you would call your ego.

For many years now, I've been handling, so to say, an eating disorder, and it's pretty much been, it's consumed a great part of my identity. That's how I identify myself, and I feel like that causes a great lacking in me. Mm-hmm.

And in a way, I do want to let go, but then a great part of me just wants to hold on to this identification of myself. And I guess my question is, what is this next step from awakening to the fact that I should move on and acting upon that?

[Speaker 1] (34:55 - 35:23)

Mm-hmm. That's the deriving your sense of who you are from certain thoughts or mental images that you have about yourself. And that's the normal identity that people have.

They derive their sense of self from certain mental images or thoughts they have about themselves, which they repeat to themselves, which they talk to others about.

[Speaker 2] (35:23 - 35:31)

Yes. It's what Debbie was saying to us earlier from the Netherlands. I'm a very sensitive person, so therefore, lots of things overwhelm me.

[Speaker 1] (35:31 - 35:43)

Yes. Yes. And that's already, on one level, that is true.

But if you become too identified with a label like that, then that becomes a hindrance in going beyond it.

[Speaker 7] (35:43 - 35:43)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (35:44 - 35:48)

That's why you immediately said when she said that, ah, there we have a label.

[Speaker 7] (35:48 - 35:48)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (35:48 - 37:14)

And so there's a similar thing, perhaps, that happens to you. So it's really finding within yourself something that is more powerful, more genuine, more truly who you are than any image that you have in your mind. And we have to come back here to really the essence of this teaching, which is present moment.

You have to invite the present moment into your life as frequently as you can. You have to make room for the present moment, because it's only when you make room for the present moment that these images and mental concepts about who you are do not operate. So when you become present, and I've already given hints about how little things you can do to become present, then the alertness rises.

The key is here, another word for presence, is the alertness. And so you become alert also within. You feel the aliveness of your inner body.

Rather than having a mental concept of who you are, you feel the entire energy field, that which animates the physical form. And you are in touch with that.

[Speaker 2] (37:14 - 37:57)

Yeah. And Eleanor, what I would say, add to that is that you haven't done that enough, because once you start to do that, when you get in touch with the inner body, when you begin to feel the inner space, when you begin to feel the presence and being that is really you, you realize you're bigger than your little self with an eating disorder. When you start, and the reason why you're still attached to this idea of having an eating disorder, because that's as big as you know yourself to be right now.

And when you know yourself to be something more, you will choose to be the something more, and not this little me that has an eating disorder. That's how I see it.

[Speaker 1] (37:57 - 37:58)

Yes, that's it.

[Speaker 2] (37:58 - 38:04)

That's how I see it. And that's why you're clinging to it, because you don't know who you are. Because you don't know who you are.

[Speaker 3] (38:05 - 38:17)

It's very difficult to move beyond that. I mean, I may, in my mind, understand that intellectually that I'm greater than this issue, but it's hard.

[Speaker 2] (38:18 - 38:41)

You're not going to help yourself through your mind. That's what Eckhart is saying in this whole book. That real healing, real everything, creativity, real joy, real presence and being comes from that space, the inner space of consciousness or presence and being.

And the reason why you're attached to the idea, because that works for you. That works for you right now.

[Speaker 3] (38:42 - 38:43)

Very easy.

[Speaker 2] (38:43 - 39:06)

Yeah, that works for you because you like playing small right now. And so maybe you're not ready. But what he just described for you is exact.

And it doesn't happen overnight. It doesn't mean that tomorrow you're going to wake up and not have an issue. It's slowly bringing more and more consciousness into your daily way of being that allows you.

[Speaker 3] (39:06 - 39:08)

It's a lot of effort, that's for sure.

[Speaker 2] (39:09 - 39:12)

And I would say this, Eleanor, I would say you're worth it.

[Speaker 3] (39:12 - 39:15)

Thank you. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

[Speaker 2] (39:15 - 39:17)

I would say you're worth the effort. I would say you're worth the effort.

[Speaker 3] (39:17 - 39:18)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (39:18 - 40:01)

Thank you. I want to move on to abundance. And there was a question I had earlier that you had on here about abundance.

I love that question. But there's a lot in Chapter 7 about abundance and that we are not the little me that we think we are. You say on page 190, whatever you think the world is withholding from you, you're withholding from the world.

And you're withholding it because deep down you think you're small and that you have nothing to give. Try this for a couple of weeks and see how it changes your reality. Whatever you think people are withholding from you, praise, appreciation, assistance, loving, care, and so on, give it to them.

What's so great about this, I think, is that it's something people can do every day right now, is to start to give that which you say you most want.

[Speaker 1] (40:02 - 41:14)

Yes. And it starts with recognizing external abundance. That if the act of recognition that there's external abundance, and what that is we'll see in a second.

The act of recognition of external abundance already brings out the abundance that is an essential part of your very being. So when you recognize abundance without, and what I'm suggesting there is just to look at, you're walking past a store where there's a display of fruit, apples, oranges, and you see the abundance and the aliveness that is there. You acknowledge it there.

Abundance doesn't mean that you need to buy many things. You can buy or not buy. But you see the abundance of water, rain falling from the sky.

There's an abundance of water. There's an abundance of aliveness. There's an abundance of joy in the dog that's going past you there.

And so to recognize, to see the abundance that surrounds you, even if you're very poor in the eyes of the world, the abundance is always there around you. But you need to recognize it, acknowledge it. And another word for that is gratitude.

[Speaker 2] (41:14 - 41:17)

I know. I was going to say, that's why I've kept a gratitude journal for years.

[Speaker 1] (41:18 - 41:18)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (41:18 - 41:31)

If you keep a gratitude journal listing, I do this thing, just five things in the day that made you most grateful, what you start to notice is, is that there are more things added to your list and you don't even have time to write them all.

[Speaker 6] (41:31 - 41:32)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (41:32 - 41:40)

And when you start to pay attention to the things, okay? And you also say acknowledging the good that is already in your life is the foundation for all abundance.

[Speaker 1] (41:40 - 42:13)

Yes. And again, many people make that mistake because they believe that there is nothing good in my life. And that's absurd.

It means they are not present. They are trapped in certain stories in their head, which tell them continuously that there is nothing good in my life. And if they only opened their eyes and looked around and if they smelled the air, saw the sunlight, the most abundant thing you can see is the sun.

Well, I think the most abundant thing you can have is your breath. The breath? Come back to your breath.

Yes, come back to the breath. So you can be with that and...

[Speaker 2] (42:13 - 42:16)

When you can't think of anything to be grateful for, go to your breath.

[Speaker 1] (42:16 - 42:20)

Breath or the aliveness in your hands and in your arms to feel that.

[Speaker 2] (42:20 - 42:32)

And you sum this up, this abundance, by using a quote from Jesus saying, Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. That is the truth, so help me.

[Speaker 1] (42:32 - 43:51)

That is just the truth. Yes. It's an amazing, amazing statement.

And also somewhere else, Jesus talks about... You must like Jesus. You talk about him a lot.

Oh, yes. There was a time when I was brought up as a Catholic and then for many years I wasn't interested anymore. And then after I went through this inner shift, a couple of years afterwards, I happened to pick up the New Testament and I happened to read the Gospels and I suddenly saw how deep all this is, these statements.

That's right. It became more than doctrine for you. Yes, yes.

And so Jesus somewhere else says, I want you to have life in its fullness. I want you to have the fullness of life. And that's a beautiful statement and people sometimes don't realize what he means by the fullness of life because in our civilization particularly, the fullness of life means having as many things as possible.

Yes. And of course, I'm convinced that Jesus was not talking about shopping malls. No.

Because if he was talking about shopping malls, then the kingdom of heaven has already arrived and it's in the shopping malls. So he was not talking about many, many things. Eckhart made a joke, y'all.

[Speaker 2] (43:54 - 43:55)

Eckhart made a funny.

[Speaker 1] (43:58 - 44:09)

He was talking about something that is within you. The fullness of life is a dimension within you and he said, I want you to be in touch with that dimension within you.

[Speaker 2] (44:09 - 44:15)

And you are absolutely right. If you get nothing else from this book, if you can get that, then your life will change.

[Speaker 1] (44:16 - 44:16)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:16 - 44:17)

Your life will change.

[Speaker 1] (44:17 - 44:17)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:17 - 44:43)

That abundance comes only to those who already have it. Page 192. It sounds almost unfair, but of course it isn't.

It's a universal law. Both abundance and scarcity are interstates and manifest as your reality. Jesus puts it like this, for to the one who has, more will be given and from the one who is not, even what he has will be taken away.

And he's not talking about things. He's talking about your inner state of gratitude for what you already have.

[Speaker 1] (44:43 - 44:44)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (44:44 - 45:15)

And your life will change. All right. Let's talk about the joy of being.

Unhappiness or negativity is a disease on our planet. What pollution is on the outer level is negativity. Page 213, everybody.

What pollution is on the outer level is negativity on the inner. It is everywhere. Not in just places where people don't have enough.

I love this. But even more so where they have more than enough. Their fluent world is even more deeply identified with form, more lost in content, more trapped in ego.

I thought that was interesting.

[Speaker 1] (45:15 - 46:19)

Yes. Sometimes you see, you know, when you visit certain places where people have relatively little, often you see more happy faces and radiant faces than in our rich society. So the passage is about negativity.

And there's an enormous amount of negativity in the collective energy field of our planet. But it is generated by individuals. So it's everybody's task to be alert so that when negativity arises within them, they recognize it and then ask themselves whether that is what they choose.

When you recognize it, you can be there as the presence and you have a choice. Is negativity ever the optimum way of dealing with any situation? And if you look closely, you'll see it never is a good way of dealing with any situation.

[Speaker 2] (46:19 - 46:53)

OK. You say on page 214, the joy of being, which is the only true happiness, cannot come to you through any form, possession, achievement, person, or event. And that means people who think that I'm with you and I love you and you're going to bring me joy cannot.

Yes. You either are joy or you're not. Yes.

OK. Through anything that happens, that joy cannot come to you ever. It emanates from the formless dimension within you, from consciousness itself, and thus is one with who you are.

[Speaker 1] (46:54 - 47:41)

Yes. It comes from within and not from without. People conventionally expect it to come to them from without, and then it usually doesn't because you need to discover it in yourself first.

And this is why when you try to manifest things in your life, which is a fine thing to do, but the vital question is, have you, first of all, already come to that place of fullness and joy within yourself right now? Have you found a right relationship with the present moment? If you haven't, because that's where it resides.

It's only by having a right relationship with the present moment that the joy can arise from within you.

[Speaker 2] (47:41 - 48:27)

You talk about that on 210 when you say, to awaken within the dream is our purpose now. When we are awake within the dream, the ego-created earth drama comes to an end, and a more benign and wondrous dream arises, this new earth. Also, let's go to page 215, everybody.

The top of 215, you talk about a powerful spiritual practice is consciously to allow the diminishment of ego because what we've been learning through A New Earth is that most of us have, until reading this book, believed we were our egos, believed we were, as Eckhart has said earlier in tonight, we believe we were our horizontal life without the vertical. We believe we were our past. We believe we are what we're going to do and what we have done.

And the now was always just a sort of means to an end.

[Speaker 6] (48:28 - 48:28)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:28 - 49:03)

Okay. So you say a powerful spiritual practice is consciously to allow the diminishment of ego when it happens without attempting to restore the ego. I recommend that you experiment with this from time to time.

For example, when someone criticizes you, blames you, or calls you names, I got to tell you, it's hard to say, is that so? Instead of immediately retaliating or defending yourself, do nothing. Allow the self-image to remain diminished and become alert to what that feels like deep inside you.

So what's that supposed to do for us?

[Speaker 1] (49:03 - 49:34)

Now, it's not, I'm not saying in each case you should do that. Experiment with this from time to time when, particularly when nothing depends on that situation. So you don't have to explain something so that a situation can be put right or whatever.

Somebody just calls you, we talked about it the other day. Somebody cuts you off in traffic? Yes.

So that would be a good practice, but it's totally pointless to retaliate.

[Speaker 2] (49:34 - 49:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (49:34 - 50:08)

It makes no sense whatsoever. But the retaliation when somebody calls you names in traffic or whatever. Or does something to upset you.

Yes. Try doing nothing. Yes.

The retaliation is automatic and unconscious because it comes from the ego. Because when somebody calls you stupid, for example. Or somebody calls you idiot, it injures the ego.

It hurts the ego. And it's the ego that's being injured, not you. Not you.

It's nothing because deep down you know that it's not you. It's just the ego image of who I think I am.

[Speaker 2] (50:08 - 50:15)

Deep down you, well, deep down you know it's not you. But if you are a person who lives

unconsciously, if you live out of your ego, you think it's you.

[Speaker 1] (50:15 - 50:26)

Yes. And immediately the ego will go into what I call instant self-repair mechanism. And this instant self-repair mechanism, which is totally unconscious.

[Speaker 2] (50:26 - 50:28)

Says, I am not stupid.

[Speaker 1] (50:28 - 51:04)

Well, it will call the other person something worse than stupid. And by that, the ego believes that it has repaired itself. And on that level, it has.

So this person has taken something away from you. The imaginary ego. And then you take something away from that other person.

That's how the egos work. And then, of course, it's probably not the end because the other person is going to retaliate again. Right.

And now you're in it. The whole madness starts. You're in the drama.

Yes. So this is a good example where you can practice being non-reactive. So when somebody calls you something, remain total.

[Speaker 2] (51:05 - 51:21)

And you say when that happens, just do it for a few seconds. It may feel uncomfortable, as it will, just to keep your mouth shut. It feels like you've shrunk in size momentarily.

Then you may sense an inner spaciousness that feels intensely alive. You haven't been diminished at all. In fact, you have expanded.

What do you mean by that?

[Speaker 1] (51:22 - 52:05)

So somebody, what you are not defending is your egoic identity, the image identity. And suddenly, that has become diminished by somebody calling you stupid, for example. This entity has become diminished.

You don't resist the diminishment. So it has become smaller, so to speak. And therefore, suddenly, something that is deeper than that can suddenly come through.

Because the ego has shrunk in size. I got it. Now, the ego doesn't like that.

That's right. It's a wonderful experiment when you allow the ego to shrink. And then suddenly, you feel there is a power underneath that that's far greater than the ego.

[Speaker 2] (52:05 - 52:07)

And it shrinks every time you become aware of it.

[Speaker 1] (52:08 - 52:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (52:08 - 52:10)

Even when you don't do what you're supposed to do?

[Speaker 1] (52:10 - 52:11)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (52:11 - 52:28)

Okay. I like this question from Suhad in Clifton, New Jersey. How can we use the high-quality no that you talk about on page 216 in our lives?

Can you please provide us with some real-life examples? 216, high-quality no. What did you mean by high-quality no?

[Speaker 1] (52:29 - 53:36)

In some cases, sometimes people misunderstand when I say, say yes to the present moment. They believe then whenever somebody asks you something, you have to say yes. Yeah.

No, when I say yes to the present moment, it's to do with an inner state of consciousness. Yes. That is open to what is.

That does not resist what is. It does not necessarily mean that every time somebody asks you something, you say yes. So let's say a person comes to you.

You've known him. You've already lent him money five times. He's never returned it.

Or two. Two is enough. Two is enough.

And so he says, I need another \$500 now. And then you perhaps, this may be a good opportunity and occasion where you can use a high-quality no that is not reactive and does not make that person wrong and, say, becomes angry and or shouts at him. And so you are dishonest.

You haven't returned my money. And I'm not giving you a penny more. Well, this is a low-quality no.

It's a low-quality no. A high-quality no is to say.

[Speaker 2] (53:36 - 53:38)

Who do you think you are?

[Speaker 1] (53:38 - 53:41)

All that kind of stuff. Stories in order to make wrong.

[Speaker 2] (53:41 - 53:44)

Yes. I've given you money so many times before.

[Speaker 1] (53:44 - 53:46)

Yes. And then you make yourself into a victim.

[Speaker 2] (53:46 - 53:51)

Yes. It's all part of. Or make yourself into the great person who's been so benevolent.

[Speaker 1] (53:51 - 54:15)

Yes. Whatever the egoic game is. So the high-quality no is to simply state, well, I've already given you that money twice and you haven't returned it yet.

So I won't give you any more. You have to return my money first. I'm not going to give you.

Can you sense that there's no negativity? You simply state clearly, this is what I'm going to do or not do. I won't give you any more because you haven't returned that.

[Speaker 2] (54:16 - 55:06)

I just want to say here that I love this on 220. What you see, hear, feel, touch, or think about is only one half of reality, so to speak. It is form.

In the teaching of Jesus, it's simply called the world. And the other dimension is the kingdom of heaven or eternal life. Then toward the bottom of the page, second to last paragraph, you say, the collective disease of humanity is that people are so engrossed in what happens, so hypnotized by the world of fluctuating forms, so absorbed in the content of their lives, they have forgotten the essence, that which is beyond content, beyond form, beyond thought.

They're so consumed by time that they have forgotten eternity, which is their origin, their home, their destiny. Eternity is the living reality of who you are.

[Speaker 1] (55:06 - 55:52)

And you can actually sense it, although that's a wonderful thing when you can be surrounded by the stillness. Yeah. But the amazing thing is you can actually sense that even in the midst of chaos, even in the midst of noise, I've also very often felt that in nature.

But I have also felt that extreme peace in situations where one wouldn't expect it. I felt it in the middle of London, in busy streets, walking around, especially after I went through this shift. Before I went through this shift, I was always anxious and fearful, and I couldn't stand the traffic and the noise.

And suddenly I was able to just walk along Piccadilly Circus and be totally at peace, as if I were on a mountaintop inside. So when you...

[Speaker 2] (55:53 - 55:54)

A mountaintop inside.

[Speaker 1] (55:54 - 55:55)

Inside, yeah.

[Speaker 2] (55:55 - 55:57)

And that's what presence is, is it not?

[Speaker 1] (55:57 - 55:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (55:57 - 56:00)

Presence is being on the mountaintop inside.

[Speaker 1] (56:00 - 56:22)

That stillness is always there in you as the essence of who you are. And when we call it stillness, we already limit it because it's so vast, you cannot describe it with one word. Right.

So whatever word you use is already a limitation. But words are limited, of course, because words refer to tangible things, but not to the inner reality.

[Speaker 2] (56:22 - 56:29)

So before we say goodbye, let's sum up what we've covered in this class. Knowing who you really are means knowing.

[Speaker 1] (56:30 - 57:23)

Yes. Knowing at a level beyond the level of concepts. Knowing yourself ultimately is being yourself fully.

Being in touch with being, the being that you are. To sense the I am, that is the essence of your identity, when you remove all the identifications that usually... You say, after you say I am, you say what you are.

But if you say I am and add nothing to it, that gives a good practice. It can get you in touch with the essence. I am not this, I am not that.

I am, as a simple meditation, repeat the words I am to yourself. It's so powerful. I started to do that.

It is so powerful when you do that. And don't fill in the blank after the words.

[Speaker 2] (57:23 - 57:23)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (57:24 - 57:53)

Very powerful. Another similar one is, who am I? It's a question, but don't look to the mind for an answer.

In fact, don't look for any answer, especially not on the level of mind. Who am I? And then allow the stillness to be there after the question.

Don't look for an answer. And in not looking for an answer, there's the answer. But it's not a mental concept as of sensing.

Wow. Feeling. I am.

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (57:54 - 58:59)

And just be with that. Yes. And so for whether it's an addiction or an eating disorder or nothing, you think you have a really wonderful life, but you are connected to all the things in your life, to the content of your life.

Just being able to sit with yourself and to say those words to yourself, I am. It's wonderfully liberating. And to recognize them, to know them.

Yes. Like honey. Yes.

To know them. That's right. Thank you again.

Thank you. I want to thank you all for joining us. Get ready for our next class on Chapter 8.

It's the discovery of inner space. I love this. It's my next favorite chapter.

I think 7, 8, 9 are really the essence of the book. Inner space is about allowing the inner space of your life to connect to the outer purpose of your life. The inner and outer purposes of your life.

Right? That's right. Love it.

Again, we thank you. This was a long chapter, lots to cover. Every time I read it, I go a little deeper and awaken a little more.

[Speaker 6] (58:59 - 58:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (58:59 - 59:01)

So this is one you need to be with for a while.

[Speaker 1] (59:01 - 59:02)

Definitely.

[Speaker 2] (59:02 - 59:03)

Over and over.

[Speaker 1] (59:03 - 59:09)

And after you've read it once, you don't need to read long pages. Just read sometimes half a page is enough.

[Speaker 2] (59:09 - 59:29)

Yes. One page. What I do is I go back and read, as you're using your highlighters, just go back and read what you've highlighted and just be with that.

Because the things that you highlight are usually things that resonate with you more deeply. It's a good way of reviewing it. And every time you come back to it, you know, two weeks from now, you'll get something that you didn't get the first time.

Oh, yes.

[Speaker 1] (59:29 - 59:29)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (59:29 - 59:30)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (59:30 - 59:31)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (59:31 - 59:32)

Thank you, Eckhart. Thanks, everybody.

[Speaker 5] (59:34 - 1:00:13)

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