

Author's Note

Prologue: The Enigma of Enlightenment

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Abstract

The journey to awakening is only a process of breaking the hypnotic spell of personal identity. The only real power one has to break this hypnotic spell is one's focus of attention, which is how one makes choices. One breaks the hypnotic spell of personal identity by choosing to negate the false belief in personal identity, which always requires a shift in the focus of one's attention. One negates the false belief by shifting one's attention on one's own sense of beingness. The negation process narrows down the issue of choice to a single question: Who am I? Everything written here is only a movement toward that final seeing and knowing, which paradoxically is known as knowing nothing. Everything written here is written in that spirit of being nothing and knowing nothing, which paradoxically is the ultimate knowledge.

Keywords: Enigma, enlightenment, God, awakening, identity, beingness, ultimate knowledge.

The writings included here document my own ongoing individual journey to awakening, and are not meant to convey any kind of absolute truth. In my own journey, in one hand I held what I felt were valuable scientific principles based on my training in theoretical physics, while in the other hand I held newly discovered nondual concepts that I intuitively knew were pointing toward an absolute truth that I really could not comprehend. The only way I could go forward was to reconcile the scientific principles with the nondual concepts. To a very good approximation, the world we observe is guided by scientific concepts. For example, the magnetic moment of the electron has been theoretically calculated and experimentally measured to an accuracy of about eleven significant figures, and the results of theory and experiment are in total agreement. If nondual concepts are indeed pointers to the absolute truth of reality, then they could not be incompatible with the scientific concepts that at some level appear to govern the world, at least at the probabilistic level of quantum theory. For reasons that may be peculiar to my own journey, I found that I needed to reconcile these apparently incompatible concepts.

Remarkably, almost as soon as I started my journey, I discovered the harmonizing principle, which physicists refer to as the holographic principle. Every time I was stuck on some nondual concept that did not seem compatible with science, I would appeal to the holographic principle and it would come to the rescue with a compatible explanation. Every time I was unable to wrap my mind around some nondual concept, the holographic principle would suggest a way to see beyond that limitation. It was kind of freaky how well the holographic principle reconciled all the concepts. Actually, it worked both ways. Nondual concepts made sense in terms of the

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holographic principle, and in return, nondual concepts allowed for a deeper understanding of the holographic principle. It would seem that at a very deep level the holographic principle is telling us something fundamental about the nature of reality. I have attacked every nondual concept I could discover, from those of Advaita Vedanta to the Taoist tradition to Zen Buddhism, and every time the holographic principle gave a way to reconcile the nondual concept with scientific principles. All I have really done in these ramblings is to document that reconciliation.

If anyone else is interested, they can document it for themselves, but I suspect this peculiar approach is particular to my own individual journey. Since the final destination of the journey is a place without concepts, whatever concepts one holds onto, whether scientific or nondual, must eventually be given up in order to move forward in the journey. Since everything perceived is conceptual, including space and time, this ultimate place without concepts is empty and kind of weird, and isn't a place that one can ever wrap one's conceptual mind around.

A discussion of the nature of concepts is germane to any discussion of the final destination of the journey to enlightenment, which is this very strange place without concepts. In the process of becoming enlightened, one becomes aware of oneself as a self-emanating source of light that illuminates everything in one's world. This is not physical light, but what can best be called the light of consciousness. This experience of oneself can be called the *I Am* or the Atmanic Self. It can also be called the Ascended Self, since when one experiences oneself in this way one sees things from a higher level and with a sense of distance. Even one's own body is seen in this way.

However, this is not the final destination of the journey. One must go further to reach the ultimate place without concepts. It is the going further part of the journey that one can never wrap one's conceptual mind around. The reason for this strange state of affairs is actually pretty easy to explain and understand. In some sense, one's mind is like a screen that is projecting images to the mind's eye, which is perceiving the mental images. The Atmanic Self is not only the mind's eye, but has an outgoing projecting aspect in addition to an incoming perceiving aspect. The outgoing projecting aspect is the light of consciousness that is reflected off the screen of the mind as the projected mental images are perceived by the mind's eye. All concepts are mental images.

Just like a computer screen projects images, the mental images projected from the mental screen to the mind's eye only arise as configuration states of information encoded on the mental screen, which must be animated in the flow of energy. Just like a computer screen encodes bits of information, the mental screen encodes bits of information. Just like computer images arise as forms of information, mental images arise as forms of information in terms of configuration states of information encoded on the mental screen. Just like computer images are animated as energy flows through the computer, mental images are animated as energy flows through the mind. Just like computer images are projected from a screen to an observer outside the screen, mental images are projected from the mental screen to the mind's eye. All mental concepts are mentally constructed forms of information. The consciousness of the observer that gives

meaning to these mentally constructed forms of information can only do so in the energetic context within which they are constructed. Meaning is always given to concepts in an energetic context, which we intuitively recognize as an emotional context. All meaning is inherently emotional.

The emotional nature of meaning given to concepts has profound implications for the meaning given to belief systems. Although not often recognized, all belief systems begin with a core belief, which is one's belief in oneself. One must believe in oneself before one can believe any belief system. Belief systems are notoriously hard to break because one almost never examines one's core belief in oneself. One's belief in oneself is only a perception of one's emotional state of mind that is called a self-concept, which is inherently body-based. One feels self-limited to the emotionally animated form of one's body as one perceives the flow of emotional energy that animates that form. This emotional perception is at the core of all concepts of self.

This way of understanding the mind as a mental screen is screaming holographic principle. The holographic principle basically says that all the bits of information that describe the configuration states of everything we can perceive in the world are encoded on a bounding surface of space that acts as a holographic screen. These bits of information are the dynamical degrees of freedom that are quantized in quantum theory, which in thermodynamics are called entropy. Everything we can perceive in the world includes all mental concepts constructed in the mind, including the concept of self. Everything we can perceive in the world also includes the dynamical nature of space-time geometry. In a very deep sense, everything we can perceive in the world, including space-time geometry, is conceptual. Mental concepts are only like the tip of the iceberg.

Everything that we can perceive in the world, which includes the dynamical nature of space-time geometry, is a form of information, which means it's all conceptual. Mental concepts are also forms of information. All the bits of information for everything that can be perceived in the world, including space-time geometry, are encoded on a bounding surface of space that acts as a holographic screen. The mind understood as a mental screen is another aspect of that holographic screen. The holographic screen is fundamentally a bounding surface of space that encodes bits of information and limits the observer's observations of things in space, like an event horizon. Forms of information are like images projected from the screen to an observer outside the screen that is perceiving the images. When the observer becomes enlightened, the observer also sees that it is its own light of consciousness that is projecting the images, like the light of a movie projector that projects movie images as that light is reflected off the screen.

An enlightened observer that sees all of this is the nature of the Atmanic or Ascended Self, but that is not the final destination of the journey to enlightenment. The final destination is the ultimate place without concepts. One must go further than the Atmanic Self, which is the highest level of self. It is this going further that one can never wrap one's conceptual mind around. The

mind in the final analysis is a holographic screen that is a bounding surface of space that limits the observer's observations. The mind as a mental screen is always a limitation of consciousness.

Going further means going beyond the limitations of the mind, which is beyond the limitations of a holographic screen. When the observer has no holographic screen, there are no limitations of the observer's observations, but paradoxically, there is also nothing to observe and there is no observer. When there is no limitation of a mind or holographic screen, the highest level of self, the Atmanic Self, no longer exists, but consciousness does not stop existing.

William Blake wrote about the doors of perception as the gateway to the truth of one's being. When he wrote the doors of perception must be cleansed before one directly experiences this truth, he was alluding to cleansing the sense of self. Nisargadatta Maharaj also discusses this doorway and the need to cleanse oneself of the sense of self before passing through the doorway. In *I Am That*, Nisargadatta says "I am is the door. Stay with it until it opens. It is always open, but you are not at it". In Zen, the gateless gate paradox is alluding to the same cleansing of the sense of self. One can only pass through the gateless gate when one is without a sense of self.

In the journey to enlightenment, one brings oneself to this doorway as one focuses one's attention on one's own sense of being present or beingness. Being present at the doorway means knowing oneself as the highest level of self or the highest level of consciousness present at the center of one's world, which is the point of singularity of that world. When one knows oneself to be this conscious presence, one brings oneself to the edge of the abyss that separates being present to observe one's world as that world appears to come into existence from the disappearance of that world when one is no longer present to observe it. At this point of singularity, the highest level of self, the *I Am Self*, becomes an *I am not*. The edge of the abyss is crossed, the abyss opens, and one dissolves into the abyss, like a drop of water that dissolves back into the ocean. Crossing over the edge of the abyss to the other side is described as falling into the void.

The journey to enlightenment is always taken by a self in a time-bound world, but this crossing over to the other side and the experience of enlightenment is outside of time and has no sense of self. One can only cross over if one is without a sense of self. In a very real sense, the doorway or gate is the highest sense of self that one can ever have while one perceives one's world, which is the highest level of consciousness one can have while one is present to observe one's world. The gate only opens or becomes gateless when one becomes selfless.

The grail legend is a metaphor for discovering the true nature of one's being. When one searches for the grail as a person in the world, one is wasting one's power to awaken to the true nature of one's being. That power is one's focus of attention, which one wastes as one focuses attention on the world. This waste of time and energy is the meaning of the wasteland in the grail legend. One only discovers the grail if one withdraws one's focus of attention away from one's life as a person in the world and shifts one's focus of attention onto the true nature of one's being.

The search for the grail is all about the search, and is never really about finding the grail. One can never really find the grail. One is the grail. One can only be what one really is. The grail is the true nature of one's being. Everything else that one takes oneself to be is delusional.

Living a life in the world is never about finding one's true self. Such a thing does not really exist. Living a life in the world is only about creating a false self. One is actually creating a false self through one's false belief in it, and that creation process is inherently emotional. Awakening from delusion is only a process of giving up the desire to create this false self so that one can discover one's true being. This discovery can only be made when one is without a sense of self.

In the journey to awakening, one can only go further if one kills the Buddha. The Buddha is the highest sense of self, the ascended Atmanic Self at the central point of singularity, which is the highest level of consciousness one can have while one still perceives one's world. As long as one has a sense of self, one is seeing two, while in reality, there is only one. As long as one has a sense of self, one also has a sense of other. To go further into the source of consciousness, one must become selfless. The source is pure oneness, and has no sense of self. To go further, one must kill one's own sense of self before one can experience this ultimate state of No-self.

"If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him" is another version of the Zen saying: "When you reach the top, keep climbing". The highest sense of self is not the final destination of the journey. There is still further. One is not done with one's journey until one is without a sense of self, no matter how high and glorified that self might be. The goal of the journey is not to become a high and mighty self, but to become selfless. One is only done when one is truly selfless.

The final destination of the journey to enlightenment, the ultimate place with no concepts, the furthest reaches of further, is unlimited consciousness. There is no further or going beyond unlimited consciousness since infinity has no boundary. This ultimate unlimited nature of consciousness can be called Brahmanic consciousness. In the sense of being unlimited, it is infinite. In the sense of being unchanging, it is timeless. In the sense of being undifferentiated or undivided, it is one. In the sense of being nothingness, it can be called emptiness or void. In the sense of being the source of Atmanic consciousness, it is the source of the light of consciousness, but in-and-of-itself, it can only be described as darkness. In the sense of being nonconceptual and without a sense of self or a concept of self, it can be called No-self.

In the sense that everything is conceptual and that all concepts, including all concepts of self, arise from a limitation of consciousness, everything is an illusion of unlimited consciousness, including the sense of self. There is only one truth, which is the unlimited nature of consciousness. Everything is an illusion of unlimited consciousness that arises from the limitation of consciousness. In Advaita Vedanta, this is expressed as Brahman is the only truth. In the sense of ultimately bringing that illusion of limitation to an end, Atman is Brahman.

Mooji recently commented that truth is very simple, only the mind is complex, but to convince the mind to even consider the truth requires a great deal of repetition and practice, like any new skill that one learns. There is only one truth, which is very simple, so simple it cannot be further simplified. It isn't possible to remove anything from nothing. Nisargadatta would say that the only thing that ever stops one from recognizing the truth is delusion, essentially all the lies and false beliefs one believes about oneself that get in the way of seeing the truth. He would say only these false beliefs need to be removed in order to see the truth. Both of them would say that it is only one's focus of attention on the false belief of a personal identity, like a hypnotic spell that one is under that monopolizes one's attention, that stops one from redirecting one's attention onto the truth of who one really is. Ironically, the truth of who one really is, is the one who is seeing everything, which in-and-of-itself cannot really be seen except as nothingness. One can only be what one really is, even if one is really nothing.

The journey to awakening is only a process of breaking the hypnotic spell of personal identity. The only real power one has to break this hypnotic spell is one's focus of attention, which is how one makes choices. One breaks the hypnotic spell of personal identity by choosing to negate the false belief in personal identity, which always requires a shift in the focus of one's attention. One negates the false belief by shifting one's attention on one's own sense of beingness. The negation process narrows down the issue of choice to a single question: Who am I?

The paradox is when one becomes enlightened and knows what one really is, one also knows what one isn't. One isn't a person in the world one perceives. The truth of what one is sets one free from the bondage of personal self-identification. Ultimately, one has no need to live a life in that world, and need not even be present to perceive that world. One is always free to choose to exist as nothingness. An enlightened being can just as easily answer the Who am I question with I am not as with I am.

Everything written here is only a movement toward that final seeing and knowing, which paradoxically is known as knowing nothing. Everything written here is written in that spirit of being nothing and knowing nothing, which paradoxically is the ultimate knowledge.

A Note on the References:

All the references for these articles are listed at the end of the final article and are divided into scientific and non-dual references. I really don't see these articles as scientific articles that need a formal system of reference, but instead, they're more like a contemplative expression of my own peculiar personality. Maybe the better description is a creative expression of the universe through the particular instrument of my peculiar personality. At least that's how it felt as the articles were written. The references listed in the last article were instrumental in that creative expression and had an important influence on the final result of how all these ideas came together.