

The Secret Between Every Two Moments

I now have too many notes to organize coherently, so I will just have to let things flow and then see if they will come together naturally by the work of the *Dao* rather than any internal volition from an individual perspective.

The main problem for the postmodern ego is that the cultural values have shifted to the point where (let's put it this way) death is not a very high-status position or accomplishment. The ego doesn't want to be dead; it wants the other guy to be dead; the ego wants power. As Hegel actually described in *Phenomenology of Spirit* back 100 or more years ago, the master-slave dialectic is operating, and the ego wants power. It wants power that it hasn't earned because it hasn't received the mandate of heaven. And it's willing, if possible, to send other people to die for it and to kill for it. The idea is that the other guy dies and you become the winner and the possessor of the territory and whatever else comes with that.

So, egos are in conflict because none of them want to submit to the other, even though a certain number of them can also be mind-controlled to actually be willing to die for a flag, for a homeland, for a religious ideal, or for money. As long as you can do that, then wars will continue because there's an elite that doesn't actually put itself in harm's way but puts its population in harm's way.

But whatever happens in the external world is also happening internally. So you have, at the same time, a set of ego defenses that come into play that will not submit to a loss of apparent autonomy or sovereignty, even though that's illusory at the ego level. The ego wants to maintain its existence, but its existence consists of mental chatter—mental chatter that is oriented towards control of an external situation. But it can't control its own internal situation. It can't control the environment of its own mind, so it's out of order—it's in a state of internal chaos that produces a state of external chaos. And that chaos is, in a way (as Hobbes said), a war of all against all. It's a kind of rebellion against every order that would cause the ego to have to submit, unless it can feel that it is getting sufficient benefits and sufficient power from that order—more than it could get by freelancing its rebellion. So the ego is always in a kind of negotiation of temporary alliances that are never anything more than a relation of frenemies.

The reason I present this is not because I'm interested in the political scene, but to explain that that is the effect of the state of consciousness of the collective ego. It reflects chaos and rebellion against its own internal capacity for higher order and for cooperation rather than conflict. Cooperation comes only when there is a kind of forced choice that has to be made (one is conscripted, indoctrinated, or mind-controlled into the service of whatever). But it's always with the result of a kind of weakness of will, weakness of mind, or weakness of power to organize and to shift the values in one's form of relationality.

The reason I bring that up is that *mahasukha* is real freedom—the completion of the ultimate rebellion, which is against the ego itself (not against other egos) . . . against one's own ego, which is not one's own. It's actually the internalization of Big Brother—the big Other that was installed via the family system and then the dumbed-down educational system, the religious system, and whatever other systems of control one fell into or under. The ego is an inauthentic

version of the Self that is actually a compromise formation combining the demands and command system of the internal Other and trying to master them by replicating them through mimesis. One becomes the Other in the same way as in the political system and in the cultural system as well—through imitation.

So, the ego is an external usurping agency masquerading as oneself through control of the production of language in the mind. It produces the “I-thought” and hypnotizes one into believing that, when the “I-thought” appears, it's one's own thought . . . it's oneself that's referred to as that “I,” rather than an objectified image that's been installed in one to identify with (in a period of development that Lacan referred to as the mirror stage). So long as that is in play, one will not have the internal cognitive capacity to oppose its mental system of domination over one's consciousness.

When there's a major trauma early in life, it causes such a powerful cut in the ability of the internal system to function that one is bewildered. Often one goes out of body or into an altered state in which one cannot think, and that creates something like a scratched record, which then causes a constant repetition of the trauma. Now, the cut can also happen (and this is the difference between psychosis and neurosis) when there is a powerful event of *jouissance* that so fascinates the ego that it can't get beyond it. Then the urge for that *jouissance* continues to repeat, and one can never get beyond that mode of intentionality that is not only repetitive but self-destructive.

So, the point behind all of these points, is this: The achievement of *mahasukha* is the result of undergoing ego death, meaning that you delete the system. But because the ego is indoctrinated to avoid death, that's the last thing it wants. Death is no longer identified with glory; it's identified with total loss. Indeed, if you see a dead body, what could be more vulnerable? People can do anything they want to dead bodies. One doesn't want one's body to be that vulnerable, so there is again that avoidance, since death is imagined at all the various levels.

But this is the goal of a yogi, right? Not only does a yogi not want to avoid death, but the yogi even wants to die while still alive . . . to become *marjiva*. Every yogi wants to be *marjiva* (if they're a real yogi, and that's very rare, by the way); but that achievement is the portal to liberation because it's the death of mental chatter, and mental chatter is the only thing that separates you from God. That's it; it's just that. That's why, when you flatline the mental chatter for a certain amount of time, you can reach liberation instantly. It doesn't require a gradual process.

And all the soul is, really, is a kind of portal for the death of the ego in the upper death drive and then the rebirth into Pure Spirit. That's all it is. It has no other function than to be the hinge (the linchpin) between the negation of the ego and its dissolution into the full realization of the Infinite Intelligence and Light. But one has to go through the resistance to death.

I'm sure everyone here is familiar with all the near-death literature and videos that are out now. It seems to be a major industry for people who've gone through it to give their testimonials on film, etc., so everyone's familiar with this. Interestingly, I was reading an article just recently by someone who clearly was taking information only from the U.S. They were saying that most

hospitals have on staff a pastor (a Christian pastor) who very often will come in and pray for a person in the emergency room who actually reaches clinical death (which is now no longer the heart stopping, but brainwaves flatlining). That person who is dead (actually legally, clinically dead) will come back to life. And people conclude from that, “Well, this is proof that the God of the Bible is the true God.”

However, if you go to a Middle-Eastern country, where there are more Arabs, you will see that those returning speak not of Christ or of any Christian symbolism but of Allah. If you go to India, you have people who come back from the dead saying that they met Vishnu or one of the goddesses, while in China they probably will have met Quan Yin, or in Japan they may have met the Buddha of Infinite Light. Everyone will meet whatever is their version of God. When you go through what they call a “near-death” experience, it's actually a “brief-death” imperience (I'd call it a BDI, not an NDE). And, when you do that, Phase One is an out-of-body experience where you are suddenly above your body in the surgery room (or wherever you are in the car-crash situation). You can travel astrally out of body and realize, “Oh, my God! The body down there is dead,” and you begin to enter a state of wonder.

Then, if it goes to Phase Two, you rise up through the tunnel to the Light. There, in Phase Two, there's a kind of welcoming and orientation to the world of the dead. Very often (like when you come to the ashram for a retreat), there's a welcoming and an orientation to the land of those who are dead while alive (at least theoretically). In any case, there people meet dead relatives and former pets that have died—whatever was a love object that makes them feel secure and comfortable . . . unless they go to a hell realm in a bardo state, which can also happen. But the majority go into very pleasant dream environments.

Then there's Phase Three, which is a bifurcation. While some approach that, anyone who comes back to talk about it obviously didn't really enter it. You will either go into the full presence of God and then be absorbed into the Light, or you will be sent back to another birth and have to reincarnate to complete your journey to Self-realization while alive in a body.

In a way, we go through a similar set of phases in meditation. First, there is a recognition (very often on a symbolic level) of not being the body and a kind of freeing of the consciousness from its frame of reference, its paradigm, its way of relating to others. If we can turn that new paradigm (that shifted understanding of Reality) into the imperience of it, then we reach the higher level of Soul Consciousness and, beyond that, the sumerience of the Light.

Kashmir had the most highly developed wisdom schools around the 10th century. It was a hotbed of wisdom schools (Shaivite wisdom schools, dualistic and nondualistic schools, and Buddhist schools). And there was a rapport—there were meetings and debates, and the sages of these different schools were very friendly and very interested in reaching the Truth (whatever that might be), not just being partisans for particular ideologies. In this period, the schools developed a fourfold approach for new students, who would be categorized as belonging to one or another category and then given a sadhana specific to that category that they were diagnosed as being most adapted to or most in need of.

Those who were most embedded in the *annavamala* believed totally in the impurity or the delusion that all you are is a bodily person—that you're an individual (whether an ego or a soul), but a separate individual with your own autonomous will and your own being (or becoming, at least) separate from all other consciousnesses. If you are in that state, then—because you're identified with the body—the process requires bodily activity in order to bring about a shift of consciousness. So the school would give you a curriculum based on ritual activity and asanas, pranayamas, mantras, japa, trataka (using yantras and mandala yoga), and various other forms of activity . . . karma yoga, of course. The school would also suggest altruistic actions because, anytime you give rather than take, you are overcoming certain egoic tendencies, and the basic idea is overcoming egocentricity. But that's a very slow and usually futile process because, once a person is in that belief system, the physical activities (in a way) affirm and ratify that they are indeed individuals trying to reach God. That paradigm is itself the problem, and the solution that you want can't be found so long as that belief is in place.

Those who had an open mind and a capacity to think critically (especially about their own thinking) would go into the next category of the *shaktopaya*. (The first was the *annavopaya*, and this was the *shaktopaya*, the means that employs *shakti*, or power.) But what they really meant by that was the power of knowledge. So there the teacher would explain the logic that proves that there can be only One Intelligence underlying all of this and directing the unfoldment of the explicit order (much as the physicist David Bohm rediscovered independently in recent years). There is an explicit order that is determined by an implicate order, and the same intelligence is responsible for every movement within the holosphere. So this holo movement is that of a single consciousness. Nonduality seems to violate your sensory experience, where you see a multiplicity of objects and not an underlying oneness (quite the contrary, you see conflict and war, etc.). So it requires a very high level of intelligence to understand that there must be a single nondual intelligence that is operating all of this. If you can attune to that intelligence, you will be able to overcome all of the baggage and the bondages of the ego mind. So it's a process of *gyana yoga*.

The sages will admit that the only ultimate value of the *shaktopaya* approach is that it will convince you to *want* liberation. It will convince all the fragments of the split will of the ego (the many different sub-agencies with different agendas) . . . it will enable a unification of the will, and that is what's required to attain liberation. That's the highest category of sadhana, really, the *shambhavopaya*. But that is the divine means (*Shambhu* is the name of Shiva); that is Shiva's own means—which is very interesting because it is the realization that, if you will to realize the Infinite Self, there are no obstacles because you *are* that Self. And *because* you are the Self that you may have previously thought of as God or as the Buddha Nature or as some Other (which is *not* other)—because of that, if you will to be united with God, that also means that it's God's will to be united with you because you and God are not different. If that paradigm can be fully grokked and internalized, then there is an automatic pull (a magnetic pull) of the consciousness that now wants only to be absorbed into its own true nature (its own Infinite Self), leaving behind the particular with all of its sufferings. It wants that bliss now. And, because it is not a system of means and ends but a realization of nonduality, the instant that will is totally activated in consciousness, the attainment (or the attunement) happens.

This is the difference between sudden enlightenment and gradual. The first two levels are gradual, while the third one is instant; but you have to go through both(?) phases. Then there's one more phase that has to happen internally (at least at the *shaktopaya* level), which is the unification of the ego's internal dualities, polarities. Of those, the one that's most important and often most difficult for the postmodern ego to unify is the duality of yin and yang. The relation of yin and yang nowadays is not good. It's more like the same polarities—both want to be yang. There isn't a willingness on the part of yin to be dominated by yang, so there is a repulsion rather than an attraction, which expresses itself as that between the masculine and the feminine or, at the archetypal level, between the Goddess and the father God. These two polarities have to be rejoined in a state of love, because that love is now an internal self-love of one's entire nature. One's own consciousness is split into these different approaches to reality that are very different: one is mind-based, strategic, calculative thinking; while the other is heart-centered and about love. Love has to win; but (as we saw yesterday), *karuna*, that very deep form of love and caring, has to come with wisdom. So there has to be an integration, not one pole submitting to the other; and it's in that union of those internal polarities that the ascension beyond the ego complex itself can then take place.

So that's the first(?) phase to understand. Then there's a fourth that's referred to as the *anupaya*, which literally means “no means.” There's no method . . . not even will is required, because one is so ripe and ready that one recognizes that nonduality is already the case. There is no one to will it (that is what is Real); so, of course, no *sadhana* (no process) is needed if one has reached that level of understanding.

Therefore, the process for most is a clearing away of false beliefs. But these are false beliefs that are treasured by the ego, and the ego itself can't usually let go of them. This produces an internal resistance that is vague and perplexing to the consciousness that wants to meditate and reach liberation but finds it can't stop the chatter, it can't stop the diversions, it can't stop the habitual tendencies that bring it back into a tamasic or rajasic state. And that's because the ego complex is controlled not by the conscious mind but by a censor at the subconscious level. Until that is depotentiated, no results will happen at the level of the cognitive or conative dimensions of the consciousness.

In order to overcome this, one needs to have an accurate phenomenology, I think, of what goes on in micro-moments within the ego consciousness. The more that one becomes aware of what is happening while it's happening in real time, the more power one has to shift the trajectory of the process of unfoldment of consciousness as it happens in its own waves of renewal in every moment, where it has to reactivate itself and relate to new circumstances that are constantly changing and have to be adapted to. At one moment you're sitting in class, the next moment you're eating, and the next moment you're doing something else. You are in relationship with different people, and there are different expectations. So, the ego has to reorient itself constantly to adapt to the situation at hand reorient and create a representation of it. So, I want to go through this with you.

Let's call it “The Seven Micro-Moments of Consciousness in the Between.” That's a good mouthful. Everything happens in the between . . . between polarities, binaries, dualities; between stimulus and response; between sleeping and waking; between one thought and the next;

between one breath and the next. It's in that moment between one thought and the next, no matter how short that period is, that there is emptiness; it's in that moment that a new meaning can arise. That's the moment of maximum freedom of your consciousness, between one thought and another. Because every thought is a fixation of who you are, where you are, what you're doing, and what it's all about. There's an instant re-emplacement of the whole frame of reference in which the body is operating; and in that moment of betweenness, there is freedom.

The very word “meaning” connotes *the mean* between two polarities, because everything that has meaning is between the extremes—it's not one or the other of the extremes. There always are shades, there always are differences, there always are interpretations. In the same way that each person has both masculine and feminine (if those terms are still meaningful or allowed under current social conditions), there are these polarities. Each being has both polarities, but distributed differently among different functions, activities, and situations. These kinds of betweennesses are where the actual possibility for change and transformation can arise.

The **first** instance of the between is the instant of naked presence. When one thought ends, or when you wake up from sleep or from a reverie, there is a moment where you're present again without thought. That's the moment of maximal freedom.

In the **second** micro-moment, will is emanated. Will comes first, and it's a will to know. It's in that moment where—if you are awake to the fact that your will wants to know—you can determine *what* it is you want to know. If you don't determine that, it will be determined by the program.

In the **third** moment, the attention will go to some data that has arisen in the field—some information. It could be a sensory stimulus, it could be a mental thought, it could be a memory image, it could be anything. But there will be some stimulus, and the attention will go to it and externalize. The will will now become externalized as the attention that wants to know, “What is this?”

In the **fourth** moment, this vague thing that you want to know will be defined as a particular object. “Is this the clock? Yes. Oh, I see. What time? I'm late, I've got to . . .” There will be an object that then produces a reciprocal subject. So now you aren't just awareness and attention, you're a *subject with* awareness and attention.

In the **fifth** moment, that subjectivity reinstalls its sense of being an ego, and ego defenses immediately come into play again: “Could that object be dangerous? Is that object something I want to grab and eat? What sort of an object is it, and how do I defend against it or control it or take it or whatever?”

In the **sixth** moment, once the ego defenses arise that determine one's relationship to the object or the situation, then projections, memories, and an entire frame of reference come into place. Those determine what your expectations are in the situation and what kind of emotional triggering will have happened—what kind of an attitude will be taken.

Then, in the **seventh** and final moment or micro-moment, you will return to a fixed identity of the one who thinks, “Aha! I knew that this was going to happen.” And then that identity, the *annavamala*, will be refrozen.

All of this happens literally in nanoseconds. But, once one can reach a state of meditative silence and remain longer and longer in pure presence in that first phase, then—when the will arises—there can be an instantaneous direction of that will to return to the source of one's awareness (one's presence) rather than going into the cascade of fixation and duality. One can shift one's attention inward rather than outward—into the Pure Intelligence that is able to perceive all of this in nonduality and as a manifestation of its own Consciousness, not as a world requiring ego defenses, etc. . . . (none of that has to be installed). Then vulnerability, innocence, and the purity of one's Real nature, can remain constant without retracting and fleeing from danger.

Does that make sense? Once you can see that progression happening (and it happens after every thought), you can begin to shift the process so that you remain in a state of *freedom to be*.

All of western philosophy is based on the belief that you have an identity—that everything has an identity. You are marked and recognized and function as a product of the differences between identities. But difference is just a space (a gap) in which identity can be recognized, and identity is the thing that's primary.

The great giant among the post-structuralist philosophers (mostly in France in the 60s through 90s), was Gilles Deleuze, who fought against the belief in most of western philosophy (including Hegel) that identity was primary. That was his main objection. Deleuze said: No, that's not the case. That's the ideological position of the ego. In fact, what is primary is not identity but difference, because you are different from who you think you are. Who you think you are is a fabrication, literally—a thought that you have—and you cannot be identical with your thought. You are the thinker, not the thought. No matter what the thought is (or the self-image that you have, or the belief system that you've created), you are, in fact, different from it. And that difference is freedom.

The book that broke Deleuze through into a new philosophy was titled *Difference and Repetition* (not that I recommend you read it, although you could, but it's a very difficult book). The concept though, once you understand it, is actually very simple and very pure—that what we are is difference in itself, which is the equivalent of the Buddhist saying that we are *shunyata*, we are emptiness. His use of the word “difference” was simply to fit into postmodern philosophical terminology, but it's no different than the equivalent terminology in any of the Eastern (especially Eastern spiritual) lineages. You are difference, and that difference is empty of identity—a state of freedom in which your entire intelligence can now come to bear, because every identity cripples your intelligence. Whatever you think you are *not* becomes externalized—those aspects of yourself can no longer be accessed, and they become part of your shadow or part of what you project on the other. There is a loss of wholeness, which creates the sense of lack and then the cascade of psychological effects that that produces.

If you are able to overcome the binary of “identity” and “difference” and recognize that your real identity is “difference,” in the sense of freedom (emptiness of limitation to any image or

concept), that then allows you to overthrow that paradigm and either come up with a better one (like that of nonduality over duality) or go beyond all paradigms, all frames of reference. The Real is that which is literally beyond the reach of thought (which makes it very hard to talk about), but it also is that place from which meaning arises—new meaning, the novel, the unpredictable. It's the source of indeterminacy, and it's the source from which our native genius can emerge. Everyone has a creative genius, but you can't access it if you have accepted a fixed identity. In that state of “difference” from identity, however, the genius (which is the Infinite Intelligence or some degree of access to that) becomes downloadable.

OK? So the process of overcoming all the polarities that have split the consciousness can happen gradually, through a cognitive process and a will to integrate (unite) the pairs of opposites and transcend them to create a new unity. This is the real meaning of the dialectic. (Hegel and Deleuze were not really that far apart ultimately.) But this dialectic ultimately leads to the negation of the negation of everything you could possibly imagine yourself to be. And in that emptiness the Real then emerges. It emerges as bliss, *mahasukha*—the bliss that is both wisdom and love.

This is at least a beginning map of the vertical process of moving into ever higher levels of freedom from identity that can replace the horizontal process of returning to a fixed identity. In that freedom and mastery over the use of the powers of consciousness, whether in language or mathematics or in application to the arts and all forms of expression, that genius will then be able to unify the body-mind with Spirit. It's not a rejection of the body-mind; it's a sublimation so that the body-mind can achieve the fulfillment of its own intention to exist as a manifestation of the Real Self. That's called divinization (the Christian monks call it *theosis*, *deification*). You realize that you and God are one—not other, not different.

So, it's will that does it based on knowledge of the Truth and willingness to surrender. If there are any traces of separate ego identity left, they must surrender to God. That's why *bhakti* is an essential part of *gyana*. You can't have *gyana* without *bhakti*, because there has to be that willingness—that surrender in love rather than resignation. It's not a white flag like, “OK, I've lost the war and I give up.” It has to be a surrender of love or there won't be that magnetic pull.

This is one way of describing the pathless path and moving through the gateless gate. In the evening, we'll go through it more deeply and also into other aspects of dualities that need to be passed through in order to reach total freedom. If you have that willingness to surrender through love and the wisdom to recognize that you're surrendering to your Self, not to another (and that that Self is both Goddess and God) . . . and if there is a love of that love (that ultimate love that is productive of new worlds) . . . then that love creates an energy field that spreads throughout the whole morphogenic field of the planet. It's archetypal—it's no longer “my love” or “your love”—it's not individual. Now it's the love of those internal manifestations in consciousness of the Divine Nature that produce a state of love transcendent of individual boundaries. And it's in that state then that the ultimate union is able to bring about the nonduality of *samsara* and *nirvana*.

So, I think that's a place to stop for now, given the time. Did that make sense to most of you? How many felt that? OK, so we can continue moving on with this, right? If you do have any questions about this, I will make sure to leave time this evening before we go too much further,

so nobody feels lost. These are very subtle concepts, and they are necessary to transcend the conceptual domain entirely.

Once we recognize that, indeed, every “I” (every individual self, lower-case S), is actually a manifestation of the one Self (capital S) and that—if not in the death of the individual body, at least in the death of the Kalpa (of this timeline of time itself that arises within eternity, because time can only arise within eternity and return to eternity)—everyone goes to the same Light, whether you're a Palestinian or an Israeli. When you die, you're going to the same Light, whether you're a Buddhist or a Hindu or a Christian or a Jew or an atheist or whatever. You're going to the same Light. That Light is here now, and that Light is what we are, whether we know it or not.

That is the reality, and the more we see with that nondual vision, the more we can endure the apparent suffering and conflict of the world and bring to it a new paradigm that can be of healing effect in the world. That's part of our service—not just to transcend after death, but to serve here after the death of the ego while there is life in the body and rebirth as the genius of Pure Spirit—to bring a transformative wave of beauty into the world that re-enchants the world into a place of magic and the miraculous. That is our nature and our fulfillment.

Namaste,
Shunyamurti