

A course on self-knowledge

Jay Ghee

Living without resistance to what-is

New age

What could you gain by doing this course?

Can it help you in your daily life?

Let's do a simple test:

Just sit quietly for an hour without thoughts, without any desires, without any conflicting wishes, just observing without comments whatever is happening inside and outside you.

Can you do this peacefully without any disturbance of your thoughts, without nervousness, irritation, depression, emotions, desire for distractions?

Yes? Then you definitely don't need this course!

No? Maybe you should consider reading it and discovering what is really going on in your mind.

A Chinese sage said: "The teacher will appear when the student is ready" There is no purpose to embark in such a journey if you are not ready. This is not an entertainment, a distraction, an escape! Understanding the functioning of our mind and liberation from inner conflicts is never done under pressure.

This course covers the most important subject in our life!

What could be so important?

Three words: "Who am I?"

The course will guide you into questioning what is your true nature, searching if there is anything behind our 'human appearance'!

It is based on the timeless wisdom of the Awakened Sages, integrated with the teachings of the three great sages of the beginning of the 20th century:

-J. Krishnamurti,

-Ramana Maharshi

-Wei Wu Wei!

The course involves no belief systems, no religions, no atheism, no indoctrination. It simply respects totally your 'individual' freedom. There is no requirement to accept or to reject anything; the course will take you through a process of progressive understanding. You'll do it for yourself, not for anyone else!

The core issue is that you want to find out who you really are, not to hear someone else telling you who you are. The various modules address important issues about life as simply as possible and encourages you to observe and question. It places you on a path of self-discovery and you'll be the one looking for answers.

To live a life free of conflicts is simply to avoid using the past to imagine the future, to accept what-is without resistance, to act instead of reacting, to live fully in each now-moment. And that is absence of psychological Time, so it is absence of a 'me'.

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Last century saw the end of the age of Pisces. The 2300 years of that age were indeed quite an incredible journey for humanity. The end of the Egyptian civilization, the apogee of the Greek civilization with Alexander the Great, Rome and its powerful armies controlling a Mediterranean empire, the Moors occupying Spain, the dark ages, the Vikings, the build-up of Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish navies, their foreign conquests and trading posts, the rise of France with Louis the XIV, the French Revolution which opened the path to Napoleon and his short lived empire, the British empire, and finally, at the apogee of quite a troubled age: two devastating world wars....

The Pisces' age was definitely an age of conflicts on our blue planet! It saw the rise of Christianity in the western world, the rise of Islam in the Middle East and the spreading of Buddhism in the Far-East. These organized religions shaped the individual minds, the cultures, politics and history of their regions for many centuries.

Towards the end of the age of Pisces (last century) appeared the three sages whose profound teachings have only been discovered by a few people:

Ramana Maharshi lived in his ashram in India and never travelled abroad. He replied to his visitors' questions with very profound insights.

J. Krishnamurti and Terence Gray (Wei Wu Wei).

What is amazing is that both Krishnamurti and Terence Gray were born in 1895 and died in 1986. In perfect harmony with the end of the age of Pisces and the beginning of the Age of Aquarius!

J. Krishnamurti spoke endlessly to large audiences around the world. Wei Wu Wei spent a considerable amount of time studying in the Far East but didn't teach; he wrote 8 very profound and complex books. Please search the Internet/ Wikipedia to learn more about them.

The teachings of R Maharshi and J Krishnamurti were intuitive and not based on any studies or any readings. They were no guru and never looked for followers. Their teaching was inspired by a profound wish to liberate men and women from suffering.

The future will surely present these sages as the men who opened this new Age of Aquarius.

We have tried to make the following modules accessible to as many people as possible by using simple examples and a large number of exercises that each person may do by himself.

Krishnamurti insisted over and over that words have no meanings if you don't see them at work inside you. One has to go further than intellectual understanding and see within you what is their real, practical meaning, for you. This is the only way to progress into the understanding of who you are.

He also repeated many times that the ability to understand what someone else is saying will only work if the listener can listen. One must listen with full attention and not with ready-made judgments or comments. If you read or listen without any inclination to accept or to reject you will understand these teachings. Then, at the end of the modules, once you have understood fully what they were talking about, the choice remains yours to accept or to reject if you feel like it.

Please also note that if you create a belief out of their teachings you will stop moving with life, with the unknown, with what-is.

We will talk about that in one of the modules.

Our aim is to share with you the amazing feeling of joy, peace, and liberation from all fears brought by the full understanding. Wei Wu Wei said that there are many fellow travellers on the same road and he wished that such material had been available when he entered such 'pathless path!'

As you'll discover through these modules, things happen the way they do and it is of no value to try control events. If these pages fall into your hands, it simply means that they were supposed to fall into your hands. They chose you; you didn't choose them.

In other words, it serves no purpose to try convincing someone else of anything. Truth is a very personal matter! No two persons see life and the world the same way.

Convincing has never been the purpose of any awakened sage. The bibliographies of the 3 above sages are quite clear on the subject.

Our purpose is certainly not to convince you of anything either. But just to 'open doors that you didn't know existed! To see the facts as they are.

Lastly, before you embark on your journey, let us warn you that when you'll go through these various modules you'll most probably feel like one of the bishops who were told that a chap by the name of Galileo said that 'the Earth is round and suspended in Space and rotating around the Sun!'

"My Heaven! Would have he cried, this Galileo is a mad heretic! Things are the way we see them. I see the sun moving in the sky and I see the Earth flat. Who would be stupid enough not to trust his senses!?"

Well, Galileo and Copernicus proved him (and many others) wrong! So, instead of closing blindly the door to what many awakened sages said over the past millenniums (and confirmed more recently by Quantum Physics) why not try to understand what they meant?

We can guarantee you that what you'll then discover is mind blowing and will literally 'blow your mind away'!

Enjoy the ride!

Please note that the list of modules hereunder should not be used to select any module that pleases the reader. In that case it is absolutely certain that you will waste your time!

There is no other way than to move slowly from one module to the next only once it is fully understood. Jumping modules will serve absolutely no purpose but just waste your time.

Modules

- 1 - Space-Time- Dualities
- 2 - Known – Unknown
- 3 - Go within
- 4 - I-concept, self, ‘me’ or ego
- 5 - Understanding conditioning
- 6 - Free will
- 7 - The make-up and structure of an I-concept
- 8 - Thoughts: undercurrent and grasping
- 9 - Identification
- 10 - Questioning Time
- 11 - Real Meditation
- 12 - Images and ‘what-is’
- 13 - Can the mind be free from psychological memories?
- 14 - Resolution of dualities
- 15 - Time revisited
- 16 - The division between observer and observed
- 17 - Concepts

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Module I: Space-Time-Dualities

“Self-enquiry is the one infallible means, the only direct one, to realize the unconditioned, absolute being that you really are.” –

Ramana Maharshi

We are now embarking in a strange journey and I guess that you are quite impatient to discover something new about who you are.

Unfortunately, there is no kind of 'fast-food culture' type of answer here. Drop your impatience! You can't run to the last page! You can't even walk to it! You'll just have to take an easy and relaxed stroll and let life bring you there at its own pace.

The fact is that we all think we know who we are! Many people won't even consider reading these pages simply because 'what else could they know about what they are?'

But 'what' is not 'who'! The notion of 'what' is extremely restricted to body and mind of which most people too often have very vague ideas. 'Who' goes further and deeper within. Unfortunately, in search of 'who', most of us have stumbled too often against the limits imposed by fear, beliefs, guilt and indoctrination.

The heart of the matter is: How will we know who-we-are if we never question what-we-are-not? If we fully understand what we are not, what more is there to discover?

What remains must surely be who-we-are!

So, let's try to understand what-we-are-not.

The first 4 modules will be done in front of a Yin/Yang garden (or looking at the photo on the back cover). Please note that the statue is the face of the Rice Queen of Bali. It is not a religious symbol but a beautiful statue that enhances the eastern look of this garden. The design of this Yin/Yang garden creates a feeling of peace, tranquility and serenity.

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- 1) Sit comfortably. Relax, breathe deeply a few times and let all your
- 2) senses become acute and aware of everything that surrounds you. Do that for a few minutes.

2) Keep all your attention on the Yin /Yang garden. Look, feel, hear, smell with intensity, but without involving your mind. If you have thoughts, come back gently to what your senses bring you.

Spend at least 10 minutes being aware of your sense impressions only.

What do you experience?

Write down your feelings or observations if you wish.

3) *Look*: First realize that the whole garden is in *Space*.

Space is symbolized here by the surface/volume of the garden (length, width, height)

Do you know that we are aware of 3 dimensions because we must be looking from a fourth? That 4th could be 'time' ... (we'll go into that later)

4) The garden is also in *Time* (it takes time to move from one corner to another) You could visualize a line behind the statue going along the wall from left to right. Left of the statue would be 'past' and right would be 'future' And the statue sits in the Present....

Keep that in mind! We'll see later why it sits in the Present.

Time is also represented by the 'S' 'yin/yang' line, that curves from you up to the statue.

(Have you noticed that the face of the statue could be either male or female?)

Space-time is a major constituent of the physical world. Try imagine a world without them! Isn't it impossible for our limited mind to grasp such idea?! However, one can easily understand that without space to move in and time to be, to become and to last our human appearance would be impossible!

*You may have realized that this garden is a metaphor or symbolizes 'our' world with its Space and Time constituents.

*Now, see the contrasts between the right and the left sides of the Yin/yang garden: - *yin/yang* is a symbol for what the Chinese recognized as two opposing forces which play endlessly in the universe, yin for negative and yang for positive or what is called '**Dualities**' or 'dualism.' (yin=female and yang=male, etc...)

Can you look for other dualities of space and of time in the context of the garden? i.e.: White/black - Soft/hard - Long/short - Rough/smooth - Shade/light - New/old - within/without - in/out - big/small - wide/narrow - thin/thick - wet/dry - soft/hard - presence/absence - beautiful/ugly - deep/shallow - long/short - light/heavy - near/far - coming/going - here/there- ...See if you can find others.... No rush! Find at least another 10...

5) *Listen* with intensity to the sounds around you. See if you can also pick up Yin/Yang signs? ... silence/noise - sharp/bass -.... waves coming/going, etc...

6) Do the same with your other *senses*: *touch*: hot/cold.... *smell*: pleasurable/un-pleasurable...etc...

Find another 10 of these...

*So, you have now noticed that within the confines of Space-Time, your mind brings you the awareness of many dualities...

- Out of Space leap 'close and far', 'here and there', left and right', 'up and down', 'long and short', etc...
- Out of Time jump 'now and later', 'before and after', 'early and late', etc...
- Out of Space-Time spring interdependent counterparts like 'subject and object', 'positive and negative', 'yin and yang', etc...

Everything around us has its dual aspect: The *visible* and the *invisible* (still a duality!) Even the particles have a dual 'partner'!

Some dualities are opposites (and they alternate: i.e: love & hate, presence & absence, start & finish, negative & positive) Others are related (and can be present at the same time: i.e: right & left).

You can never choose one aspect and get rid forever of the other (despite what some people think about 'love and hate' for instance) The other is always present in the background. So, both aspects of dualities form one 'ensemble', and, like Space-Time, dualities are really part of the universe, of 'our' world. Just try to imagine a world without dualities! How would you exist without 'day and night', without 'hot and cold', without 'start and finish', without 'me and others'...?!. And, please, don't forget two important dualities that affect our life everyday:

Observer and observed --

What-is and what-should-be

We'll come back on these later.

** Now, have you noticed that in order to be aware of dualities, we have to name them. When you don't think or say: 'It's hot' or 'It's cold!' there is no such thing as hot and cold.

In other words, these are concepts created by 'mind' when mind recognizes them and names them.

Take 'cold' for example: There is first a sensation, then a recognition by the brain on the basis of previous experiences (I've been cold many times before!) then a naming (it's cold). These are done extremely fast by the mind.

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You can do this important exercise:

Observe whatever is around you without naming, judging, comparing. Observe with your full attention without involving any thinking process. Your senses are alert but you need to stop the recognizing and the naming....

Do this for at least 10 minutes

What is happening when there is just a pure ‘observing’?
.....?

Can you notice that there are no dualities anymore! Dualities appear only when you think about them, when your mind conceptualizes, when you compare, label, remember or judge. This means that ‘mind’ creates dualities when it labels what it receives from sense impressions, when it re-cognizes and names it (i.e: I like/I don’t like- It’s nice/it’s ugly.....) on basis of memory. If it says ‘It’s hot!’ it is based on recorded memory that things are either hot or cold. The mind has made a choice subconsciously, based on what you experienced just now and what you know from your past.

If you put a hot boiled egg in the hand of a one year old child, he won’t scream: ‘It’s hot!’ He will just have a painful reaction and cry. He can’t name that feeling since he has never known it before (and therefore the brain cannot re-cognize it) and he has no vocabulary to express that aspect of a duality. There are no dualities yet for him.

It’s only once there is a re-cognition and labeling that mind produces a word to express it. This means that it has put a label on a sense impression, and such tag reflects one aspect of a duality. The mind does that all the time!

Do you understand what a concept is?

If you are not 100% sure please look in a dictionary or ask. But make sure you get a very clear answer.

So if mind creates the dualistic concept when it names one aspect could it possibly mean that it creates the perceived world if dualities are only appearing when mind labels? Is that a little far-fetched?

“Devotion is dualist. One is devoted to a deity. Love and hate are dualist. One loves and hates something. Knowledge is dualist. Its counterpart is ignorance.” Wei Wu Wei – ‘Why Lazarus laughed’

A little observation and common sense shows that nothing can be holy without something else being un-holy, nothing can be good without something else being bad. NB*

To each concept there is a un-concept, an opposite, a contrary. Scientists know that well. They know that a positive cannot exist without a negative!

What does that tell us?

Simply that dualities are inherent in the universe, in the phenomenal world. Consequently, trying to control events, others or even ourselves so as to retain only the ‘good’, the holy, love, positive, is like trying to keep an ant colony inside a bird’s cage!

The word ‘love’ is subject to confusion because there is Love (Pure timeless caritas) and the dualistic ‘love/hate’ type of love. On that dual love/hate, how can you ‘love others’ if you separate yourself from others with borders, an army, a competitive spirit, a desire for gains? This type of ‘love’ is motivated by personal gains (and expresses selfishness!) whilst timeless Love is not exclusive! It includes all.

Timeless Love is like the perfume of flowers: it is there for everyone. It doesn’t expect anything in return. If it does, it is the opposite of hate and as such it will keep on alternating with hate. So, where there is love there must always be hate in the background!

Once it is clearly understood that dualities are constituents of our world (just like space and time) then we realize that we have no power on trying to control or retain any one facet of dualities. However, if you observe them without recognizing or naming, they are not there!

If it seems a little confusing now keep these observations in mind for later.

NB* Remember that good and bad are relative values to the ones who name or express them. What is ‘cold’ to you is not to a polar bear! They are not universal, permanent truth! What then could be universal, permanent truth if each aspect of a duality can’t be? Wouldn’t it be the absence of both? The absence of dualities? This is what we will see later when we’ll look at the ‘resolution or reintegration of dualities’.

- *“Trying to separate dualities would be like walking upstairs with one foot remaining on the ground” Wei Wu Wei*

Move on only once the above is fully grasped/ understood.

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You may now understand that this garden's real theme goes further than just a Yin/Yang metaphor. However, please remember that it is not a shrine, not a temple, not a religious symbol, not a place of worship or prayer.

Its specific design doesn't suggest any beliefs or any 'new religion'. Again, you should rather see it as a part of the Far-East feel of the whole design of the house. Any other theme in that garden would have not been appropriate to that specific general design.

**** Look now behind the statue.** What do you see? A wall, a barrier, an obstacle!

That wall shows the limits of the garden (which is a symbol of our universe, as we have seen previously) The garden also represents the field into which our minds operate, the field of the *known* **NB***.

We cannot know what is 'behind the wall', meaning 'behind' our physical world (beyond Space, Time and Dualities). Can you know what absence of form, absence of duration, absence of space, absence of dualities could be?

Our mind cannot do that and this wall represents that barrier in our understanding. Space-time and dualities make this garden, constitute the world, and when you try to imagine or think about what is beyond the phenomenal world you face a formidable barrier. You could have a vague idea of what infinity and eternity could be but the intellect cannot comprehend what is non-dual or what is without time and without space.

Our physical 'make-up' simply makes it impossible to go beyond that 'wall' and to discover the '*unknown*.'

NB* The '*known*' consists of everything experienced and memorized by mind (the individual and the collective minds).

Whatever the mind thinks, imagines, designs, can only originate from the field of the known. The mind permanently rearranges what it knows. It doesn't create: the mind cannot think something it doesn't know!

Real creativity comes from the Unknown! When sudden, spontaneous intuitions reveal something from the unknown it is not the result of thought. It happens in the absence of thoughts. Thought can only 'rearrange' what it knows.

Limited within the boundaries of the *known*, as we saw with the wall metaphor, our mind can never access the *unknown* out of its own will.

The known, as individual and collective ‘memories’ is the past... and the past is finished, dead! The past doesn’t exist as such but as a recollection of memory! Through the Present, new experiences spring incessantly into the field of the known, becoming the past as soon as they are ‘known’.

In other words, the mind is enclosed within the bubble of what it knows. It can increase the perimeter of the bubble by acquiring new information, new knowledge (that it collects from written or spoken medias and experiences) but it cannot know further than that, or go beyond the boundaries. It keeps rearranging what it knows, adding new experience, new knowledge collected from the collective known or from each new experience, but remaining bound inside that bubble. It cannot go beyond the perimeter.

In other words: ***true creativity*** (the new) can only spring from the Unknown without any specific action being produced by the mind. Such creativity springs through the specific conditioned human entity that ‘receives’ it. Such conditioning is a prerequisite! This is a ***fact!***

All the life stories of inventors, artists, scientists, etc confirm such creativity process. Mozart could have not composed his adagios if he had not been conditioned (genetically and through studying) into learning music! He was humble enough to say that he ‘received’ his music from unknown source, practically complete (his handwritten music sheets show very little corrections and alterations)

In the next module, we will look deeper into the *known* and the *unknown* (also a dualism!)

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NB: Please note that if you give this material to read to anyone without assessing beforehand their readiness to grasp such teachings you will do yourself and the other person a disservice. You will confuse the entire process because of the resulting discursive activities. This will be a total waste of time and energy for both parties and could even make your journey towards understanding more difficult.

Show them the introduction if you wish and let Life take care of the rest.

It is also important here to note that discursive activities are to be avoided. Trying to argue with someone about anything may be a good intellectual game but it won’t help you in your search of what you are. Arguing involves people who have different conditioning, different background. The words used during

discursive activities have different connotations for each person. Words are in fact a barrier to full understanding. Unfortunately, we don't have any other tool but we can use them to 'point the finger to the moon'. After that it is up to each person to follow his/her own path.

So we don't want to argue anything. This is why there is nothing to agree or to reject here. We are just opening new doors and it is up to you to go and look behind them. We provide you with the tools, not with any truth!



Module 2: **Known-Unknown**

We are not expressing some ideas, imagination, beliefs or personal theories when we mention '*known-unknown*'. We are talking about *facts*! A fact is something that we can't deny.

Can we question what the Unknown is? Could we ever hope to *know* it?
Oooooops!

This is obviously a contradiction because *known/unknown* is one of the dualities whose counterparts cannot be present at the same time (it's either the one or the other) like *presence/absence*, *knowledge/ignorance*!

However, because of inborn curiosity and the strong desire to escape the 'bondage' of suffering, all through history people have tried to imagine the Unknown and some have been successful in convincing others that they discovered what it is. Searching for what survives death, they have been looking to extend their 'self' (in the form of what they call 'soul' or 'spirit') after life, further than the field of the known.

Faced with the inevitable fact that the body ages and decays, they have imagined that a sort of conscious state of 'being' in them (soul?) could obtain such rewards. There is that strange impulse for immortality that pushes most people to hope they'll be 'allowed' to enter the Unknown after death. The reason seems to be mainly hope for retribution and permanent happiness (could these ideas or concepts of retribution and happiness be the products of mind?)

In other words, human beings carry a thirst for continuation, for duration into something purer or greater than all the pettiness that they know.

There is however a trap here! How do they know that the Unknown is such a great place to be? Have they been there and back? Or do they simply believe

something that someone else told them or believe in some affirmations from preachers reinforced by the institutions built on their teachings and by fear?

In the humble quest of who we are, wouldn't it be an absolute necessity that we first check by ourselves and for ourselves that the way they presented us the Unknown is correct?

The key question is: *being the Unknown, how do they know it?*

Call it escapism, imagination, search for retribution or desire for some ideals, the call towards something greater than what we think we are is one of the main features of the human make-up.

Motivated by this thirst for duration into permanent bliss, (and the punishment of their enemies into eternal suffering) our ancestors developed beliefs, dogmas that built organized religions. These beliefs may have been built on the teachings of awakened sages and then misunderstood. They are just as varied as the racial and cultural differences around the planet. Some people search for enlightenment, others for salvation accompanied by eternal pleasures whilst atheists strive to escape pain and suffering through scientific progress. Most want some sort of escapes from boring lives, liberation from bondage and suffering and billions hope for a next life more pleasurable than the present!

Now, please ask yourself this very important question:

'Which 'entity' in our human make-up desires rewards, enlightenment, salvation, eternal bliss , etc...? Which part of us hopes to survive after death in order to access the Unknown, God, or whatever you may call it (admit that if you give it a name it is not the Unknown anymore)?'

Let's think about it for a while.

Don't answer with your memories, with what other people may have told you, with what you read in 'holy books'. Try to find the reply by yourself without digging in the field of the known. Is it possible?

Write down what you think, the few options, the few answers you could give to that question.

This is a very important observation! Please take your time. Go for a walk and think about it. Observe your mind at work! See how it resists looking into that question! Be aware of what reactions you have, what thoughts come to you when you are looking for an answer. Be aware but don't be critical. Observe but don't judge or value yourself.

Aware that the body will ‘turn to ashes’ we may reply: ‘The soul. ’But how do we know it exists? Did we hear someone talk about it or did we discover by ourselves that such a thing exists? Is it resulting from thoughts? Have you seen it? Do you *know* it? Is it a **fact** that nobody can deny? Or is it a concept?

You may have an inner feeling about it. Just see deep inside yourself and question such feelings and intuitions. Where are they coming from? If it is a product of thoughts wouldn’t it make sense to question what thinking is?

There is obviously something in us that is aware that human life is not eternal, that the body will age and decay and, as a consequence, refuses to disappear and wants to last forever. That ‘entity’ cannot be ‘Paul, Peter or Mary’ as physical appearances!

From early childhood we have been conditioned to call it a *soul* and to believe it exists, even if nobody has ever seen one! So, we basically never question the validity or the reality of such idea or *concept*.

Fundamentally, *if the ‘soul’ is not a fact but an idea, a concept that cannot be proven would it not be the product of thought?*

The Awakened (Jesus included) named that ‘entity’ *the idea or notion of a ‘me’, self or ego*. Ramana Maharshi called it the ‘*I-concept*’.

These words may surely mean different things to different people (like any other concepts!)

What is that ego, self or ‘me’? And where is it? Have you seen it?

‘Me’, ego, I-concept or self are words that summarize best the idea that we have about the whole content of our consciousness. It is what gives us a sense of being separate and ‘individual’. Such words are also conceptual. But one can also say that they are **fact**: we all relate to a ‘me’ as personal identity.

We all live with the idea of having a self. WE never question it. We all feel regularly a sense of me, myself, my life, my destiny, my family, my memories, etc—Attachment to all these ideas or notions is the shackle that holds us permanently in bondage to the physical.

Detachment to all our ‘my, me, our, ...’ is the key to liberation and to understanding what we are not...liberation to this idea of a me, self, ego.

So, once you have observed that there is a strong link between the concept of a ‘soul’ and the wish to last forever (religions present the soul as an eternal entity) ask yourself who desire to last, to earn salvation, enlightenment.

Write down what you feel, what you understand. Remember that this course is *not about saying ‘I am right’ and ‘you are wrong’ It is not about rejecting or accepting. It is about understanding.*

If you feel that your mind is not clear, not fresh at this moment put these sheets down and take them again whenever you have the ability to tackle the subject. Don't force yourself! It may only frustrate you!

This is not a novel! If you must only read a sentence at a time so be it! There is absolutely no time frame for this course. You'll do it at your own pace. The main thing is simply to come back regularly into it!

You may have perceived that the concept of 'soul' is not a *fact*. It is not something that we can't deny. Some people believe in it; some don't! So, it is a belief not a fact.

To the opposite, the notion of a self, 'me', ego is a *fact common to all humanity*. You may try to deny it but it will always be there.

Every time we say 'I am, I have, I will, I hope, etc..' and 'my body, my house, my money, my husband, etc..' without being consciously aware we reinforce the I-concept. This is a force of habit that drives us from childhood to old age looking in the wrong direction and reinforcing our attachment to the physical world, the only world that such a notion could know.

Most people will tell you that they know themselves well! However very few have questioned deeply where their sense of 'me', ego, self, originates, how it was built up over the years from childhood to adulthood.

Each person is a complex entity with many alternating facets. We are all fragmented. We all change, transform ourselves continuously and subconsciously with new knowledge, new conditioning, new experiences, new insights... There is nothing fixed and permanent in a human being.

You may have been a sporty youngster and now you are a couch potato! You may have been interested by mechanics and now you are by novels. You may have done many different jobs before you started your own business. There may be something you liked when you were young and still like today but look at the rest of your 'personality'. How many aspects have changed or disappeared over the years? Aren't these the proof that you are a fragmented 'personality,' forever changing, adapting, learning, growing, modifying?

Can you see the continuous changes in your children? How many can recognize your daughter in that beautiful young adult?

There could be some aspects that won't change all through your life! But they are few. Once you start to understand all the psychological mechanisms that keep on repeating themselves and their deep motivations you'll become more aware of the whole content of your mind, of what an 'I-concept' consists of.

In the western world, we are not taught to search and to discover what a 'me' consists of, where our personality comes from and how it was built over the years. Spiritual teachers talk about taming the ego and generally have placed a negative

label onto it. For them, the ego is the evil at work within each person. By considering it that way, they create a duality in a person: the bad and a good.... And they teach that the good must control the bad! That duality is a permanent source of conflict. It has created many problems for westerners (subconscious guilt for instance) and has never managed to be proven the right approach to make the world a better place.

We may have complex courses of psychology or philosophy; we may have access to people who have studied human psyche for years (and may have never questioned who they are themselves!) but how many people dare tell you that nobody else than you can question and search what you are or what a 'me' consists of! The answer won't come from a guru, a spiritual guide or a psychologist.

Nobody can turn inward for us. We are each alone in that search. This may be why so few people dare take that path!?

Our fast-moving culture isn't inclined to push us in that direction either. Western culture is based on *outward looking*: job promotions, competition, greed, money, muscle power, sex, cunning politics, entertaining movies, TV, traveling, magazines, sports, internet, distractions, escapes, more distractions, etc....

Isn't one aspect of that '*looking outwards*' the search for eternal rewards and to extend the 'good self' into the field of the Unknown? Organized religions are not asking you to question what is an 'I-concept' but rather to tame it so that it can earn rewards (and last forever)!

Please don't accept or reject the above paragraphs. Just read them without commenting (you'll understand soon why this is required)

Again, whoever is humble and serious about knowing 'who he/she is' would not try to imagine the Unknown or wouldn't be obsessed with the Unknown. The only thing we can do is to understand fully what is the known, to see through without judgment and to understand the structure of the 'me'.

In other words, how can one expect or pretend to know the Unknown if one doesn't know the functioning and full content the mind which is the known?

The impulse, the movement in us that wants *to be, to become and to last* is a fact. Ask yourself what drove you to succeed your exams, to try to achieve in sport, in academics, in business, in social life...?

Let's leave aside now the presumption that we could be divided entities haunted by the dualistic forces of good and evil imposed upon us.

So, the search for eternal life seems generated by the entire content of our human nature, resumed as ‘me’, self, ego, I-concept.

History has shown that in its wish to be and to last, the ‘I-concept’ has developed its own visions of the Unknown (based upon each particular geographic and cultural conditioning: the tales of Osiris, the Bible, the Koran, the Upanishad, Karl Marx, the Upanishad, the teachings of Buddha, Lao Tzu, Zen, all based on the known of that particular culture)

Shouldn’t we try to understand what is the content of the known (the I-concept) rather than try to visualize, invent, copy, create, imagine what the Unknown could be?

Doesn’t it make more sense to question the known (the ‘ego’) before we waste time and energy imagining the Unknown?

Can vast knowledge (still the field of the known) offer any idea of what is that ‘I-concept’ which wants to discover the Universe, how it developed, how it was conditioned, what its hidden motives are?

Now, if it was possible to go beyond the wall of our yin/yang garden, the barrier and reach the unknown, two important questions would come to mind:

- 1) How could it be done (having seen that both known and unknown cannot be present at the same time in our dualistic universe)?
- 2) Which ‘entity’ wants to access the unknown?

*To answer the first question is simple: for the Unknown to appear, the known has to disappear! Logical, but how do you make that happen? We’ll see later what the awakened said about it.

*The answer to the second question is obviously the I-concept, the ‘me’, the ego! The self wants to survive after death and this is what justifies all its efforts to become something in the realm of the unknown, and to extend itself further than the known. In other words, as we noticed above, the basic characteristics of the I-concept are that it wants to be, to become and to last.

Around five thousand years ago, Mesopotamia and Egypt built the foundations of the beliefs that had huge impacts on the Middle-East and the Western world by imagining that a **self** (‘Ka’ or ‘Ba’ or soul) **survives after death** of the body and goes to another world, very similar to the one they knew (the Celestial Nile

of old Egypt!) At that time, the Milky Way looked like being the continuation of the Nile River!

The entire structures of the Judeo-Muslim-Christian organized religions are based on that single idea. In other words, by confusing a *fact* ('me', I-concept) with a belief (soul) their dogmas reinforce the 'ego' pseudo-entity in its wish to last and be saved .

Also around five thousand years ago, the Upanishads were composed in India (oldest spiritual writings in the world) Their core teachings was Advaita or Non-duality. They were followed much later with the teachings of Lao Tzu (Tao) and the Buddha. These Sages didn't waste their time trying to imagine the Unknown but simply said:

The Awakened clearly stated one after each other, during the following centuries, that all we must do is to get rid of our false identification with such 'entity'. And nobody could build any religion on that single idea! They repeated over and over: "Die to your 'self'" whilst the old Greek sages said "Know thyself!"

So, before we choose a 'way', (or invent a new belief!) shouldn't we first question what is an I-concept? Shouldn't we enquire deeply into what is the structure of such 'me'? Then, maybe, we could understand why we are required 'dying to it'!

The first obvious question that arises is 'How can we question the self if we are that self? ***How can the 'me' help the 'me' to discover the make-up of the 'me'?***'

Could we use thought to look for an answer? But isn't thought producing the thinker? And isn't the I-concept the core of the thinker?

Isn't it clear that we can't use thought to understand the thinker? All it would do is pursue imagining, creating illusions on basis of what it knows, and remain forever in the field of the known!

The next module will tackle that specific question.



Module 3: 'Go within'

“Reality’ is what we take to be true. What we take to be true is what we believe. What we believe is based upon our perceptions. What we perceive depends upon what we look for. What we look for depends upon what we think. What we think depends upon what we perceive. What we perceive determines what we believe. What we believe determines what we take to be true. What we take to be true is our reality”

“The dancing Wu Li Masters – G Zukav

NB: This book is all about the new science: Quantum physics and Relativity

So, what is **Reality**?

Is it the ‘known’ or is it the ‘unknown’? Is Reality the world around us, the things that we can feel, touch, the people, trees, animals, mountains, etc.? Is it what G. Zukav describes above?

If we look from a dualistic point of view we could say that: For most of us, reality is what is *manifested* as phenomena, what our senses can cognize (the World of appearance)

For religions, ultimate reality is the *Un-manifested*: God, Allah, etc...

But *Manifested* and *Un-manifested* is a duality! Reality cannot be in one counterpart only! Shouldn’t it rather be in the reintegration of both counterparts? In other word: in their Source?

But to say that reintegration of both counterparts of a duality would ‘reveal’ an ‘entity’ (call it God or whatever) is making another concept. As soon as you name it you make an object out of it. This keeps you rooted in the known....

To our senses, reality is what we can see, hear, smell, touch ... We all certainly believe that ‘what we see, hear, feel is ‘the real thing’!’ isn’t it?

But can our senses be trusted and can a world that ‘came from nothing and will one day disappear,’ can a world that is forever changing be Real?

Wouldn’t Reality rather be something *permanent, unchangeable, limitless, non-dual, and timeless*, i.e. not subject to the confines of time, space and dualities?

The question goes deeper:

- a) The world, as our senses know it, is made out of things. That world is changing all the time, it comes from nothing and eventually will go back to nothing; it consists of the limitations of space and time and is dual.
- b) If it is not Reality (because of impermanence, etc..) then would that mean that Reality is the absence of any things? And of any concepts?

- c) We did notice that the world that our senses know consists of dualities. Could Reality be the absence of dualities: absence of presence and absence, of love and hate, of here and there, of 'me' and 'others', of now and then, ... (make out the list!!!)

-

"Reality, is nothing objective and cannot be conceptualized (thought of)...Being Here, being the looking, it cannot be seen by itself. Of course, 'it' has no 'self'!"
Wei Wu Wei – Posthumous pieces

The impulse or desire to look for the Unknown is motivated by I-concept (the known) to find some security or permanence.

But, as seen before, to look for the Unknown is impossible because mind cannot go further than what it knows. We cannot 'think' about what we don't know!

So, in order to find out if security is possible, to find if there is a state of bliss achievable one can only search via the mind which is the known! Therefore, the only enquiry one can address is into the make-up of that mind. In other words, mind must understand itself fully and not just at the edges. One has to go deep into the known and find out what are all the hidden motivations of the mind, the thinker, the 'me', in order to free oneself from its limitations.

There are no other roads to the ultimate understanding than the inner road to one self. Such self has to be revealed in all its nakedness, made completely visible so that the known doesn't hide any more secrets.

What is the thinker if not the past (memories) projected under the spotlight of the now-moment with the aim to find pleasure, security and rewards in the future?

** Look back at the Garden; don't see the Yin Yang aspect anymore (you are then moving away from dualities, and from Space and Time) Focus all your attention on the face of the statue. Observe how peaceful it is! See its closed eyes! What does that mean?

With its back to the wall, the face seems to say: "Stop here! Don't speculate about the Unknown (behind the wall, behind me)! You'll lose your time and get nowhere. There is no way you can go over that wall; you cannot go from the known here to the Unknown behind me!"

Look at its closed eyes; observe the feeling of peace and quietness reflecting from this face. Isn't that feeling coming from within? Could someone with a busy mind ever reflect such inner peace? Have you noticed the faces of busy and stressed people? Isn't it a fact that only a still, a quiet mind can reflect such tranquility?

We noticed that the sage represented by this statue is turning his/her back to the Unknown. This means that she is not searching outwards anymore; he's not trying to imagine the Unknown.

The sage suggests to forget about the Unknown. He also shows that any outward looking activities maintain you within the confines of the known. The tranquil face isn't looking towards the Unknown or attracted/distracted by outwards experiences. It rather suggests that ***all you can do is to understand what-is, who you are, to go within and observe quietly and search for the 'me', the ego, the I-concept...***

If not, then who am I?

So, through life we may have had some hints at what-you-are-not but we didn't take that seriously because the world of distractions and consumerism was much easier to tackle and 'much more fun!'

It is very difficult to observe what we are. And whatever path we may have taken in this search was a cul-de-sac at the end of which the idea of a 'me' waited to catch 'us' like a spider in its web. In short, the 'me' will always lead us towards the wrong answer. We'll analyze why later.

The Awakened have all suggested that the direct approach, the positive 'way' leads nowhere. They suggest the negative 'way', to **Find out what-we-are-not and, through the process, we may discover who we are.**

The Sage R Maharshi told people: "Ask yourself over and over: "Who am I?" He insisted that this question will eventually direct to the source of the I-concept and help to see clearly how it developed, what sort of influences built it over the years.

When you ask yourself that question don't try to answer it.

Why?

Simply because thought will try search for an answer into its past, into the field of the known! Just ask that question over and over, for weeks, month.... It will make major changes into the neurons, deep inside you and something will happen.

You have surely experienced moments of total peace and serenity in your life. At these times nothing worried you, nothing disturbed you and (if you think about it) the reason was that your mind was quiet!

Did you also realize that 'there was no time, no space and no dualities' and no sense of 'you' during these moments of total peace?

If the serene statue's face reflects peace and tranquility, doesn't it mean that thoughts are not disturbing *her* and that *she* is not anymore attached to the 'preferences' of *her* mind, to judgment, to comparing, to the choices between dualities?.... Could *her* state of 'bliss' result from the fact that *she*'s not attached anymore to 'things' (dualities-space-time), thoughts and 'objects'?

Is such bliss the effect of relaxation, or is relaxation rather the effect of that blissful state?

What then is the 'within' where that face seems to source its state of bliss? That 'within' cannot be a 'me' or 'ego' since they are the source of the turmoil generated continuously by a busy and wandering mind!

A busy mind revolves around the 'known' (the memories of its own experiences and conflicts; everything from the past that is recorded in the brain as sensations and experiences). As we said earlier, all it can do is to keep replaying or rearranging the 'known'.

Krishnamurti, Ramana Maharshi and all the Awakened said that a quiet mind is necessary for the Unknown to reveal itself. This makes sense once you understand that *'known' and 'unknown' cannot be present at the same time!* But how do you quiet the mind then?

Is it at all possible?

And surely if the Unknown is Reality, the most important thing in our life would be to try understand if it can reveal itself, or if it's something that would only be revealed after death! We can either go back into suppositions and imagine (on the basis of what we know) or let things be the way they must be (nonresistance to what-is). Does it mean that we must abandon all search and turn into a couch potato?

Have we understood that a busy mind will get us nowhere in our search (because its activities are limited to the bubble of the known) and only a tranquil mind could open the door to the Unknown? In other words, because an I-concept consists of the entire content of the known it can't discover the Unknown! Again, as we've seen earlier, the dualities 'know- unknown' cannot be present at the same time!

In a similar way 'you can open the door but you can't tell the wind to come inside'. It will come if it has to come in. The same applies to the Unknown.

What are you doing when you observe the content of your mind? You are observing a human mind with all its emotions, its problems, its miseries, its hopes, its greed, its sufferings ...

All these are problems faced by the entire human race. So, by observing in order to understand what your mind is and how it works you are in fact observing humanity.

Once you'll understand the whole structure of a human mind you'll realize that 'the world is us and we are the world.' You'll understand the nature and origin of all human conflicts. This indeed turns your mind away from self-centeredness (which is the state of all minds) towards altruism. Care and love are not initiated by desire to attain anything in exchange, in order to satisfy or give security to a 'me'. It eventually becomes pure caritas!



Module 4: I-concept, ego, 'me 'or self

"If you seek the ego you will find that it doesn't exist. That is the way to destroy it." - Ramana Maharshi

Sitting in front of the garden (or looking at the picture), you may realize there are 2 'entities: the statue out there (the *observed*) and you, here, (the *observer*)

You also realize that there must be a reason why the statue seems to radiate such peace and tranquility. There is obviously a very big difference between the observer and the observed: one reflects tranquility and the other is a constant bunch of worries, activities, conflicts, fears, disturbing wandering thoughts, etc....

Would that mean that an awakened sage has reached a point where thoughts cannot disturb him anymore? Is it why his/her face reflects pure tranquility? This would then be the major difference between most of us and the sages.

In other words, would it be thoughts that prevent us from reaching that state of peace, that tranquil mind which is essential for going beyond the known?

Here, ‘thoughts’ include emotions and concepts.

Is enlightenment/ holiness the result of a quiet mind? Or is a quiet mind the result of enlightenment/ holiness?

The Awakened Sages have said many times that one cannot use the mind to tame the mind! In other words, the thinker cannot work on himself. Mind is extremely devious and keeps playing tricks! It has very good reasons for that (we’ll see them later) Trying to use a ‘me’ to tranquilise a ‘me’ is impossible. This is why so many westerners who learn various meditation techniques (TM, Buddhist, Tibetan, etc..) abandon the practice after a few months.

This is also why the awakened say that real meditation is ‘*the practice of non-practice*’!

Through concentration and repetition, meditation techniques may put the mind in some sort of psychosis state for a limited period of time and increase slightly mindfulness. But they will never make the mind tranquil for good. You will have first a sense of good feeling which is produced by the sitting down, slow breathing, calming of your whole body and the repetition of mantras or prayers. But very soon, once the mind will recognize the process, it will throw thoughts like crazy! It will quickly revert to do what it’s been doing for years!

J Krishnamurti taught that true meditation is through observation.

You will find full explanation in my books “SELF is yourself without the self”, and “The ultimate revolution”

We have to look at another direction if we want to understand how the mind is to become quiet.

The sage represented in our statue is not repeating mantra after mantra or prayer after prayer or concentrating on a sound. He’s *not concentrating*. She’s simply *observing*! **Observing within!**

Praying or chanting ‘holy’ names for hours hypnotizes the mind. Nothing more! Concentration involves effort and creates conflict between *what-is* (I have a busy mind) and *what-should-be* (I should have a quiet mind). Concentration involves wanting and becoming (both initiated by an I-concept, ego ...which always wants to become something it is not)

Concentration (in meditation or prayer) is dual: the ‘entity’ that concentrates and the object it concentrates upon. Concentration doesn’t make the mind quiet. In fact, it does the opposite: it suppresses continuously! Concentration cannot bring us out of the known (and out of dualities), simply because it is a dual activity!

To the opposite, *observation* is not dual if you do it with complete attention. You’ll see that when there is only pure observing there are no more observer and no thing observed. No more sense of ‘a self’ and of ‘a thought’

Imagine you discover suddenly an extremely dangerous snake. You will observe it with complete attention. No thought, no comments, no judgment, just 100% attention! All your senses and your mind will be alert but all wandering thoughts will disappear (because they mean distraction and one second of distraction can mean death!) And in that total attention, complete observing, there is no sense of a 'me' observer or of a 'thing' observed out there called snake!

Observer and observed reappear as soon as the mind names or labels, as soon as thought uses memory to *re-cognize*. "Vow that was a cobra! It's such a dangerous snake...etc" ...and here goes re-cognition, verbalization and the wandering thinking process!

##look at a bird flying or wind shaking branches or grass. Observe without thinking anything. Realise that when there is pure observing you are not aware of yourself or of what is been observed. See that as soon as you put a name to what is seen you create an observed and you are aware of yourself as an observer. See the difference between the two types of observation.

Observation has been revealed by Krishnamurti as the only 'way' to reach a tranquil mind. This is what real meditation is! And mind reaches tranquility because it is free from all influences of authority (including the authority of its own past), conditioning, culture, religion, and education.

Pure observing 'empties' the mind from the past, from the known!

It is obviously still able to operate, to use its working skills, to remember its name or its address but it not any more disturbed by wandering thoughts (products of memory, of the past, of the known) Mind is free from its psychological past!

Pure observing keeps you continuously into 'what-is' and doesn't pull you anymore persistently into the memories, the past, the imagined future.

So, in '*practical terms*' what is observation and why is it the only true meditation? How can we apply it to ourselves without deliberate practice, efforts or techniques (which can only reinforce the 'me', because they are aimed at achieving a result, at becoming something we are not yet, and are dual and need time)?

There are 3 types of observations. Each one is applied without practices, without techniques: i.e: without forcing ourselves through concentration and without judging, comparing, labeling, criticizing....So, in pure observation, we don't go back into our memory to compare and label! We just observe with complete attention, like we did with the dangerous snake! We are fully present in what-is...and not absent in wandering thoughts.

a)-We start by *observing the external world*, nature, people, animals, plants, clouds, wind in the trees, sunset, sunrise, the play of light and shades around us. In other words, we take time to be more aware of the world around us, to be more present, more mindful.

But we do it without thinking: “*This is a rose! This sunset is beautiful! The potholes are terrible! I like it! I hate it!*” We just observe without involving thoughts. We observe everything like if we are a young child discovering the world around and having an empty mind, a mind that does not compare, name or label. There is a looking without recording anything. This increases our ‘presence in the present’, mindfulness and tranquility.

We don’t record more events or images in our brain but all our senses are very alert. All the images, sounds, feelings, are not recorded in memory. They come and go! They are finished issues and don’t leave ‘scars in the brain’ like most other psychological memories do.

If the issue had been resolved, finished it would have not left a memory (good or bad) You may ask ‘*Why then does a pleasant memory remains?*’

Because we record it so that we can have it again, we can replay it, repeat it!

And then we use it to compare with the next, and the next and criticize or judge!

A ‘me’ uses memories in order to pretend to exist and to last. It is in fact entirely built on memories! We’ll see how later.

NB: we are not taking about memories of skills, knowledge of how to build a house, drive a car or heal a body or do any type of job!

As children, we used to be fully aware to everything around us. We observed continuously with an enquiring mind. Time passed very slowly because we were mostly present. As adults, we have acquired so many memories and become so conditioned to wandering thoughts that we spend most of our time with them rather than listening, seeing, feeling, being. Psychological memories are simply robotizing us.

Have you noticed that when you are caught in wandering thinking all your senses are shutting up? Some faint awareness remains in the background and pulls you out of thoughts when something major happens around you. But you can surely say that once caught up in thoughts you are not present anymore. You are then clogged into the past or in the future, re-arranging the known!’ There is no more observation, but just plain distraction into the trap of wandering thoughts! There is ‘no *Life*’ in you during that time! There is only playing with the past, with dead ‘matter’!

The key here is to go back to observe the world like young children do, but this time without recording millions of sense impressions, without feeding an ego/me.

Let's observe things, nature, people, etc...regularly until we consciously realize when we are caught up in thoughts. We'll increase slowly your awareness and the time spent in wandering thoughts will be shorter and shorter. The main point is for you to become aware of your thought pattern and stop being caught up in endless rows of wandering thoughts. Progress is to be found in each single realization that you are caught up in wandering thoughts! This regular awareness will re-wire your neurons in such a way that the process will become second nature. No effort is required. Observing without observer does change your whole psyche without you being aware of it and (very important) without any efforts, any conflicts.

But remember not to judge, criticize, label or compare your thoughts. It takes a while to be more present into observing. Old patterns take a while to disappear. If you land up again and again in wandering thought you mustn't worry or try 'to work hard' against it. The single fact that you become aware of that fact is progress. Don't suppress thoughts. Gently go back to your observing!

Do it patiently, with care, with love.

b) Then, *later*, do the same anytime you are in *relation with other people*. Listen to them with intensity (and not to yourself like most people do most of the time) Observe their faces, clothes, behavior, but, once more, don't judge or put any label on what they say, how they behave, how you react, etc.... Observe things just the way they are. Learn to be 'in relation' with the other person and not solely with your own mind! That means that your naming, judging, comparing are not involved. You just listen with full attention without bringing back everything the others said to your own experiences and labeling. You are fully present in the 'relation'. You reply intuitively and spontaneously to the other and you don't cut the other endlessly with your own thinking, your own mind pattern!

It is not easy! But once more, see things the way they are without trying to control anything. The seeing will do the miracle of transformation.

##Please also use these *observing* sessions to notice how your mind is working. Notice regular patterns. See what is happening but don't judge. Just be aware of how your mind works.

One of the most effective ways to remain in a state of observation is to listen with full attention. When someone talks to you, notice how your mind races fast and goes searching for something to say, to add, to bring into the conversation. Thoughts is in words. There is no thought without words. A word in a conversation can be selected subconsciously and the brain races, opens all its draws to find a link with a previous experience.

If the other person says: “*I had so much fun hiking last week end*”, observe the reaction of your mind! Does it bring you back memories of a hike you did, of some fun you had? Do you then rush into cutting the other and telling him/her that you also once had such fun? In that case it simply means that you are not listening to the other! You are listening to yourself... your... self!

This is what we do most of the time. And no true relation with others is possible when that process is going on! We are then only in relation with our self...

Here is an extreme example:

You may know some people who act as follows:

You tell them: “*I have such pain in my little toe!*”

They reply straight away: “*Me too, my thumb hurts!*”

Whatever you tell them is related straight away to themselves. There is no possibility of conversation or any serious relationship with such people! ...And most of us are acting that way to different degrees! This, again, is a fact!

So, observe that process at work. Observe but don't rush to stop it! Just observe, be conscious of it and don't judge or criticize yourself for it! This is *what-is!*

The constant observation will end that process by itself! No effort is necessary!

Then, the most difficult part is to do the same *observation with ourselves*. This means that we will be going ‘*within*’ to do what the sage of the Ch'an yin/yang garden is doing, observe our thoughts, our emotions, our reactions. Observe continuously, without criticism, judgment or comment the way we act, the way we talk, the way we think and react, the way we nourish emotions or reinforce them. This is part of the ‘looking within.’

Unable to change through efforts and control, we rush from distraction to distraction in order to escape facing the fact of *what-is!*

The reason is that we are in a dual conflict between ‘me’ here and ‘loneliness’ or ‘anger,’ etc...*out there*. We consider greed, loneliness, anger, jealousy, etc... something that can be controlled. But that single vision is dualistic and source of conflict! Whatever we are trying to control gives life to a ‘me’, increases its importance, creates inner conflicts and suffering!

Now, with pure observation, we are ‘required’ to look at ourselves as being loneliness, anger, jealousy, envy... **We are** jealousy, greed, etc...It is not something outside of us! So now there are no dualities, nothing to be controlled by a controller, so no conflict. No observer and observed but only pure *observing* of a thought or an emotional state.

Are you lonely?

That means that you are loneliness.

Are you greedy?

That means that you are greed.

Are you envious.... etc....

This is what you observe (and don't judge, compare, name, criticize etc...)

Know that as soon as we name a feeling or emotion 'loneliness'... 'anger'...etc... we are separating ourselves from it, manifesting an observer and an observed and automatically expressing the wish to control or suppress it.

Don't name! Just observe what you are at that moment. Observe quietly what is going through without naming and recognizing or judging, controlling. By doing so you are cutting the link between the Now and the Past, the Observing and the memories. Observe, be aware ...and emotions will vanish!

Now, it is of utmost importance that we stop criticising or controlling ourselves. Just face the facts of *what-is* with pure observing. Don't judge, compare, accept or reject what you are!

Once we stop involving an 'observer, a censor' or labeling, naming, comparing, we are opening a space inside us for a total revolution.

First, (and of utmost importance) through nameless observation we will come to understand fully what is the make-up of that *I-concept* structure that we think we are, its intentions and motivations.

Second, we'll realise that we can't change *what-is* by trying to control it. We may dream about changing it but that is a product of our thoughts.

Third, we'll just observe without resistance. As soon as we say 'I am terrible!' or 'I am so nice!' or 'I am humble!' there is a judgment, there is resistance against a **fact**! We don't look for judgment.

We take notice of *what-is*, we are conscious of it and we are at peace with it, (whatever it is!) We don't make any efforts any more to change it. *It is a fact*. This is what we are. We acknowledge it!

So yes, again, no effort to control anything, no judgment, no good or bad labeling....

We don't accept and don't reject.

We don't run away from what-is.

We just notice things the way they are.... This increases awareness and leads to mindfulness...

Let's repeat: if we try to control or to change *what-is*, we'll create conflict between *what-is* and *what-should-be*. This won't lead us anywhere and definitely not to quiet our mind! It will only keep reinforcing an I-concept/ego.

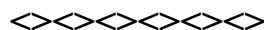
Continuous non-judgmental observing results in the complete understanding of how mind works. It is the only way to quiet the mind! And this is what real meditation is about: understanding the meditator!

Let's keep observing what is happening when it happens.. Observe without comment and judgement what you are, what you say, how you act and behave.... Pure non-judgmental observation will create a transformation that no form of control could ever do!

These observations need to be done often. Don't worry if you fall into the old trap of criticizing or judging. The fact of being aware of it is proof that you are getting somewhere. Just don't criticize yourself for it. See it and go back gently into your daily constant observation. Nothing is 'bad' or 'good' here! Even if you forget to do it there is a part of your mind that will continue to do it subconsciously.

You should now sense that this module 4 leads to a much deeper inner awareness than the first 3 modules. You cannot rush through it! You'll have to come back regularly on the observing and it may take a few month before you can get into the 5th module. This is your course; it is about you, so make sure the words of this module sink deep enough within you in order to be able to grasp fully the future modules. Make sure that your constant observing create a new awareness in you. See with clarity if all the teachings within this module make sense. Go further than the words. See everything at work within yourself!

These observations will enable you to understand some of the processes of your own mind. Constant choice less observations will make you discover (or be more aware) that there are some regular patterns in your particular thinking, your own emotional reactions, the way you behave, etc... Once you'll have noticed this over and over, without criticism or judgment, you will be ready to look at one of the most important feature in the make-up of an I-concept: conditioning!



Module 5: understanding conditioning

Studying conditioning is studying the contents of an I-concept!
You have certainly noticed that you don't greet each other like Chinese people do, you don't have the same social etiquettes as Arabs, you don't pray the same god as Jews, you don't react to events of life the same way as eastern people (as a westerner you may be riddled by guilt whilst Chinese are very much dependent on face value)

All that (and much more) is due to conditioning!

One could say that you were born into your family, your culture, your religion, your blue eyes, etc... It may seem obvious but most people don't realize that the way they react to all life situations depends entirely on their conditioning! If they had been born African rather than Indian they would behave, think, pray, act completely differently!

If you pursued the constant observation of yourself in relationships and in your thoughts, as mentioned previously, you must have become more aware of how you've been conditioned and of what conditioning did to you.

You may have discovered that you fear the dark because, as a child, your father left you alone outside at night as a punishment; you may be greedy because you had a brother who kept 'stealing' your toys... Likewise, you may have discovered the source of your bizarre sexual urges, why you always choose the wrong partner, where your beliefs originate from, why you judge others, why you gossip, what you like or dislike, etc...! You may now look for the source of your anger, your shyness, your need to be successful, to be valorized, your 'good Samaritan' behavior, your love for little birds, your hate of spiders, etc...

All these have their source in the way you were conditioned (conscious and subconscious).

Until you understand fully your conditioning (not analyze it) you cannot be free! You did absolutely nothing to be influenced the way you were

There are many sources of conditioning: cultural, racial, religious, ... There is our personal life conditioning, our genetic background (we often repeat the same racial behavior of some parents, grand-parents etc...) There is the unique way that events 'hit' us, the unique way we have reacted to them, our education, the books we have read, the TV programs that we prefer to watch, the medias we read, our hormonal impulses, our character, the way we have been indoctrinated, our zodiac sign, etc....

We may be conscious of some conditioning and unconscious of others. But to know our entire conditioning can only be done through constant observation of the way we talk, react, think and behave.

Have you noticed that no two persons react the same way to a situation. Some react violently, some want to pacify everyone, some burst into tears, etc.... This all depends on their conditioning. You may say that it depends on their character, but what is a character if not something acquired through genetics, upbringing, specific events and your own specific reaction to events in your childhood and adolescence?

It is a fact that conditioning is the piling up of all sorts of influences on our entire consciousness....And all these influences act on our psyche in a unique way and make us *re-act* the way we do.

But it is not enough to be aware that we are conditioned! We have to see our conditioning at work all the time to realize how it makes us operate, act, talk... An intellectual understanding is not enough! We need to observe it over and over again until its whole content becomes very clear.

Being aware of our conditioning is extremely important if you want to understand the processes of thought, the make-up of who you think you are.

Let's stop running away from ourselves because from now on we are not judging anything, we are not comparing ourselves with others any more.

As an exercise you can question each one of our reactions, our thoughts, our decisions (without analyzing) and ask yourself each time:

"Why did I react like that? Why did I think that way? What is the source of such reactions? What happened in my past for me to be mean, envious, jealous, proud, adventurous, hating authority, selfish, sport fanatic, gossiping, carefree, passionate in (whatever), liking blond girls, or attracted by drunkards or violent men, a drug addict, a smoker, etc.. etc.."-

These observations will lead to our past, to the influences that have left deep scars or deep memories. We must see these very clearly and be aware of the roots of what we are today: each decision, emotion, thought, etc... in order to go further into finding out the structure of an I-concept. But please don't analyze! You are not a psychoanalyst and analyses have absolutely no interest here. Don't try to justify your actions or thoughts. Just observe things the way they are like if you were an observer looking at you from outside your body and mind.

Please make sure you do these regular observations without judgment or comments! See what-is.

Are you afraid to wake up some ghost or devils when you do these observations? But did you ever choose them? Acknowledge that fact but don't involve your thinking process, your guilt, your 'conscience', your judging. Just tell yourself: *"Well, that's what I am! It is a fact! There is nothing good or bad here"*.

(Remember that ‘bad or good’ are concepts, which depend on each person’s mind or each cultural or religious influence)

Just tell yourself simply and honestly:

I am just observing that ‘entity’ called ‘me’ because I want to understand how it was put together. I’ll observe without involving my thoughts or my emotions! I won’t react to what-is, because I don’t want to hide away or to try control what I can’t control. I just want to observe and understand!”

Let’s look at conditioning another way. Your genetics, your personal DNA structure, your parents, your teachers, your siblings, the events of your life, your talents, your trainings, your TV viewings, the books and magazines that you read, etc.... have all programmed the ‘psycho-somatic entity’ or ‘supercomputer’ made of flesh and bones that has your name, to act or react in specific ways, to talk, to behave, to judge or compare in ways which are unique.

Each time you add a new experience, new learning, new knowledge into your brain, each time you talk to someone, you read or watch television, even each time you dream, you are modifying the programming.

And this is done constantly...so constantly in fact that it is one of the reasons why we *identify* so strongly with the body, the brain, the mind and think we are it. This also confirms that we are fragmented ‘entities’, always changing, always modifying, losing some memories, and adding new ones.... Nothing is whole or permanent is us!

What we don’t realize is that all the events, meetings, accidents are out of our control. And, even more, what we “select” to read, to do, to view, to discuss, to say are all based on the ways we were programmed earlier on!

So, this is the *psycho-somatic appearance* called body-mind, Peter or Janet, that we identify with. An entity that had nothing to say about where it was born, about how it was conditioned and what talents it inherited. You may deny this if you believe in reincarnation! But, for a change, just question where that belief comes from...

Is the fact of conditioning deceiving? Many people don’t want to hear about it and reject the idea as plain stupid! Such a pity because once we have jumped that formidable barrier a new world is there to be discovered. And there is no other way than seeing clearly *what-we-are-not* so that *what-we-are*, our true nature could shine through!

Are you convinced that you are a ‘separate independent *individual*, a *subject* entirely able to choose freely and to control its destiny’? Pursue the observation within with humility, without trying to achieve anything.

You may know the words but have you lived them intuitively in you? Have you questioned deeply these qualifications: ‘*separateness*’, ‘*independent*’, ‘*individual*’, ‘*subject*’, ‘*in control of my destiny*’?

Take time to really see all this in your life and see how it affects you and if it has true meaning? Question over and over. Make notes if necessary so that you may come back on them later and see if you are stuck in rigid thinking or able to see the above facts in you.

At each stage, understanding must sink in intuitively, beyond plain intellectual comprehension. It has to reach the cells, the gut, the entire body and mind and become more intuitive than intellectual. It has to reach a level where words cannot explain anymore!

Understanding is never done by the intellect but by intuition. It is always unexpected and sudden. This is what constant daily observation without judgment will do for you.

Do you find these observations difficult?

Grab a sheet of paper and write on top: “What I have chosen in my life:”

Then write on the left margin:

-My parents *yes/no*

-My siblings “

-My family “

-My country *etc*

-My culture

-My race

-My body

and continue with: -The color of my hair-The color of my eyes-My talents-My weaknesses-My genetics-My ancestors-My religion-My education-My brain-My character-My name, my surname-My star sign

-My emotional tendencies-My studies-My friends-My diseases-My health-My career

-My wife/husband- etc..... (just keep adding)

Once you have exhausted the whole list, check how many *yes* and how many *no* you have. See from which period of your life the ‘yes’ are written...

Then, for each ‘Yes’ that you wrote go back into that item and look as far back as possible into the past and all the influences that made you to ‘choose’ that.

See on what basis you took the decisions that you are ‘convinced’ that you took... Take time to do this with a clear and honest mind. If there is resistance question the reasons for such resistance. Who has to gain something by resisting seeing through your conditioning?

The answer should be very clear if you proceed with honesty and without trying to hide anything from yourself....



Module 6 : Free will.

“The moment you start looking for the self (me – ego – thinker) and go deeper and deeper the real Self is waiting there to take you in. As the Self is not outside but inside you, you are asked to dive within, instead of going without.

The ego is an intangible link between the body and pure consciousness. It is not real. So long as one does not look closely at it, it continues to give trouble. But when one looks for it, it is found not to exist.”

Ramana Maharshi - ‘Be as you are’

Once we have really understood conditioning and it is clear that uncontrollable events, accidents as well as daily influences are shaping and changing, each moment, the ‘me-entity’ that we identify with,once we have seen clearly how much of what we thought we chose was indeed subject to previous conditioning, then we are ready to go into this next module.

Continue to observe within, each day, the movement of your thoughts, your reactions, your behaviour. Observe also what is happening moment after moment. Increased mindfulness will make your mind very clear and alert. You’ll then recognise the unrelenting unfolding of life around you and through you.

Don't accept any words without making sure they make complete sense. If you accept or reject on basis of your mind's judgment (conditioning) you'll basically be re-conditioning yourself, not freeing yourself from all conditioning!

So, don't analyse, dissect, study, etc...every sentence. Rather let your intuitive feeling guide you. See intuitively if the course makes sense, even if you don't comprehend everything (yet) Listen to your gut feeling. Don't accept or reject on basis of the baggage of your intellect. Try to understand with a free mind, a mind that has left its 'baggage at the gate' before entering into the course.

Now ask yourself again the one million dollars question: *How much of the make-up of 'your' personality, of 'your' body-mind did you choose?*

In fact, go even further: *What did you choose, really choose* (that is without the basis of a previous conditioning)?

Observing regularly deep inside what influenced your thinking, acting, talking, should have helped you arrive to a definite conclusion.

Let's look at free-will straight in the face:

*If you enjoy free will, you must be responsible, isn't it? Plain common sense!

*If you are responsible, you must be able to control yourself. Right?

*If you can control yourself, you should be able to control your emotions and your thoughts. If you are angry, jealous, greedy you should then be able to put an end to it immediately!

*If you are able to control your thoughts, you must be able to stop thinking at any time. Simple logic!

Now try and see how much of your thinking or your emotions you can control!
.....??

Some people questioned free will long ago. However, most didn't try to look from within. They imagined conclusions: In the West, many concluded that an ultimate agency, a creator was basically doing what it wanted with human life. To a cause there must be an effect, so in order to appease that 'moody' creator, to please it and to obtain rewards, they developed cults, dogmas, prayers, worship and sacrifices. The dual conflicting nature of such thinking had huge consequences on human history: wars, conquests, destructions, inquisitions, slavery, and the guilt complex resulting from all the suffering caused.

More recently, western science looked at the free will problem mechanistically in order to understand it. It failed.

In the East, people looked in a totally different direction: they imagined that life is pre-determined by what happened in previous lives and one has 'must have'

the freedom to change the past by acting properly in the current life. This view had a tremendous effect on the generally peaceful cultures of the East.

These views never questioned the structure of a ‘me,’ ego, self. They tried to extend a ‘me’ in another life but never questioned its reality.

This is the 4th viewpoint, the teaching of the awakened which stressed over and over on searching for a ‘me’ rather than waste time trying to guess if a superior agency exists or trying to guess if reincarnation exists. In other words, the awakened looked at facts (we have an ego, a ‘me’, a self) whilst the religions look at non-factual *possibilities*, which are nothing more than the products of the imagination (based on the known).

Be warned! You’ll now face the huge barriers imposed by cultures and religions. These can only thrive if we believe that we are responsible for our choices and that we have control over our thoughts, our lives and ourselves!

“How could a society function if people are not responsible?” Will politicians scream! “What are we if we can’t control ourselves?” ... “How is evil to be chased away from man if he sees that he has no free will?” will cry the religious.

Yes, the fact is that most of us have been conditioned to ‘believe in free-will’, to believe that man has control over his life! You must have noticed it when you did the previous module?

“Absence of free-will doesn’t make sense!” claimed most teachers and philosophers for the past centuries. “The view that we would just be like wooden puppets is ridiculous!”

As said above, the old Indian cultures concluded that the reason must be ‘past lives’. That belief spread in the East and people built the entire structure of their cultures on the belief in reincarnation (despite the fact that the teachings of Awakened sages like the Buddha deny it)

To believe in reincarnation you have to believe in free will!!

There is obviously absolutely no proof that reincarnation exists apart from a concept inside the mind of the believers! What else did they create if not a concept based on the known? Please question that in the light of your own conditioning if you believe in reincarnation.

Beliefs are extraordinary barriers to understanding. Once a belief is established it is worse than an opinion. It is set in stone.

Someone who has beliefs would see everything in this course through the tinted glasses of his beliefs. He would never be able to grasp what we are talking about. This can only be done with a curious and free mind which is able not to reject and not to accept until full understanding is gained.

The undeniable fact is that absence of free will doesn’t make sense to any ‘me-ego’ pseudo entity. In fact, the bigger the ego, the more it will resist understanding the absence of free will! It wants to hear that he succeeded, she chose, he won,

she made the money, he owns cars, houses, shares, she will reach heaven... and if he became president of his country it is because he made all the necessary efforts, etc... All these give a false sense of security to any 'me.' The continuous desire to become, to succeed, to be rich, happy, etc... reinforces a 'me' through its wishes to *become* (something he's not yet) and to *last*.

However, absence of free will makes complete sense once you see clearly through the numerous influences of conditioning! And that is the difficult part and a formidable barrier for predominant I-concepts!

Yes, once more the entire work has to be done by you with full honesty. And not by believing blindly in any 'authorities' or believing blindly what was said above! Leave them aside for now. You can always go back to them once you are finished with the course! Remember that there is no question of belief or accepting or rejecting in this course but only clear and honest questioning of facts. And this is why only you can do that questioning about yourself. It is your life. It is your choice! No guru, no spiritual guide, no master is here to force you into anything

It could be time now to question what is a belief! Where does it come from? Is that a fact of life, something just as real as the color of your eyes, something you have discovered by yourself, something permanent or some theory that your teachers, parents or any other 'authority' have convinced you about? Did it come to you all nicely packed with your conditioning? Have you just trusted the preachers blindly or have you looked deep, very deep into the foundations of such belief? Have you found foundations of facts that can hold against any earthquake or tsunami or rather foundations in 'emotional feeling good' and in a 'sense of belonging'? Is such belief factual, permanent, eternal, unchangeable, proven...? Or a concept in mind? Are its foundations based on 'fear'?

You noticed in the previous module that some things are very easy to figure out. It is clear that you didn't choose: your parents, your country, your flag, your race, your language, your body, your family, your genetics, the color of your hair/eyes, your religion, your education or lack of it, your 'intelligence' or memory, your abilities, your talents, your sex, your shape, your family social standing, wealth or poverty, etc...etc...

In fact, basically until around 18 years old you can see clearly that you 'didn't choose much'.

The problem comes later when we think that we chose our wife/husband, career, house, future, car, children.....

When something ‘makes sense’ have you questioned on what basis it makes sense to you? Isn’t it on basis of what you know, the values that you have been conditioned to accept? Do you think that everything that made sense to you 5, 10, 15, 20 years ago still make sense today?

So we choose nothing?! Do you already hear the voice deep inside you that resists: “*Rubbish! I am not a robot! I am not dependent on fate or on the goodwill of my conditioning or some ‘higher’ force!*”

Which ‘entity’ in you reacts like that? Isn’t it something in you that wants to believe it exists and *wants to become and to last*? An entity that resists any attempt to question its validity!?

The ‘me’ concept has incredible talents for survival! It is extremely clever and uses anything to be, to become and to last! Once you’ll face it with your new understanding, know that it won’t drop dead at all! To the contrary it will play chameleon; it will camouflage into the most incredible and surprising ‘costumes’. This is once more why observation without comments is so important!

‘*Authorities*’ have always told us: “Control yourself!” They expect us to act according to their rules and their standards of ‘good behavior’. For them, to entertain the idea that there is no free will would be the suicide of society as we know it (and its authorities that prey on us)!

Wouldn’t that leave the way open for a completely new and different society then? A society where people would *act* and not *react*!? What a difference it would make to humanity and to nature!

Think about the incessant *re-actions* of billions of selfish-egos! Are they a good thing for human society and the earth? Have these *re-actions* made the human being less greedy, less angry, less selfish, less brutal?

Re-actions are done by ego and motivated by self-centeredness. *Actions* are intuitive and spontaneous.

The real question is: “Who then is orchestrating PURE ACTION? Is there an outside agency doing that?”

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Keep observing your *actions* and your *reactions*. Try to see the difference between each of them. Keep asking yourself where do they originate from. Notice how an ego re-acts. Isn’t the conditioning and selfishness the foundation of re-action? Isn’t time and thinking involved in reactions and absent in actions? Observe with patience and notice each time you perform a pure, intuitive and spontaneous action.

Is there an 'entity' doing the action? Is there a doer?

Is there an 'entity' doing the re-action? Can you point your attention onto it?
All re-actions are the product of thought, of a 'me'.

If our *actions* are impulsive, immediate, and spontaneous, and our *reactions* are based on the memories of millions of events that conditioned u (each reaction or 'decision' being the result of previous conditioning) and if we still believe in free will, at what stage did we acquire freedom of choice? At what moment would we have become an 'individual'?

PS: '*Individual*' or '*individu*' in French come from the Latin '*individuum*' which means 'what cannot be divided'. We may be indivisible physically (?) but, psychologically, we are extremely fragmented 'entities', divided into many different facets all along our life, definitely not indivisible! One part of us may be fearful, another greedy, another, jealous, another indifferent. One may be a plumber, another a musician, another a chess player, another a lover of cigars, etc...

Let's question, let's go further! ***Observe this interesting fact:***

If there is no free will, who is seeing that and who is questioning it?
Is there some sort of intelligence or awareness in us (different from an I-concept) able to pursue the questioning even if we don't have free will, and if, as 'me,' we are 'programmed by life, by genes, by events and by conditioning'?
Or is such questioning based on our conditioning!

Have you ever felt deep inside you that there could be an awareness, an intelligence that goes much further than the plain physical, much deeper than a sense of 'self' and its limitations?

You may question now who in fact has no free-will? Which 'entity' lacks free-will and will resist any attempts to recognize that ***fact?*** Is it the 'person' made up of body and mind, the 'physical appearance' you've always identified *yourself* with, its entire 'being' from head to toe!?

If you search deep enough, you'll realize that it is what each one of us considers as 'myself'! The 'entity' that says 'my car, my husband, my children, my money, my thoughts, etc...

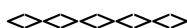
#So, question what is this 'myself'?

Is it the body, the mind, the ego, the self, the consciousness, the idea of being, of living, of thinking, the consciousness and its content!? Is it all that together?

Or is it more? Is it an 'entity' made out of memories and the association with such memories, an 'entity' attached to its past, its 'belongings', its family, its beliefs...? Does it consist of all the accumulated experiences, all the emotional acquisitions from the past, the reactions to events and to learning? Or could it be more than this 'entity' that constantly want to be in charge, to decide, to choose, to control, to make believe that it enjoys free-will?!

This module may be shorter than the previous but it requires lots of continuous observations. Read it a few times. Then observe as suggested, over and over. Take your time. This course is not an easy subject!

Once all the above make sense deep inside you (not that you would have accepted or rejected anything!) then you will be closer to understand the full make-up of an I-concept.



Module 7: The make-up and structure of an I-concept

From the beginning of this course we are not giving you ‘bricks and mortar’ to build up an understanding of what you are but rather help you take away bricks and mortar, disassemble what was built previously and show you that Reality is not in knowledge (or in ignorance) If this is done properly you’ll be left with an empty field where the seeker is the sought!

You’ll understand this soon.

This is a very important module. Please take your time to go through it. Write down questions. Leave them aside and come back to them at the end of the module. See how you progress in understanding.

A Zen master received an academic who wanted to know about Zen. The master offered some tea to his visitor and poured it in his cup. When it was full he continued pouring as the professor watched, surprised. Eventually, the professor said:

‘It is full! You can’t pour more!’

To which the master replied: ‘Like this cup, your mind is full of your knowledge, opinions, judgments, ideas. If you want to know about Zen, you’ll have first to empty your cup!’

And this includes all conditioning, our ‘values’, what we think must be right or wrong, speculations, expectations, what we think are the obvious or the self-evident, the results we want, the things we want to achieve....

Do you expect a result from this course. Think about it and see clearly what your expectations are. Then observe where such expectations come from, what triggered your desire for such ‘achievements’. Are they based on what you read, on what you heard, on the fact that you are unhappy and you want to obtain peace and happiness as a reward for doing this course? Or just a coincidence, a curiosity, a subconscious urge...? Search, see, observe, know yourself, go deep within and observe all the movements and motivations of the self.

Descartes, a French mathematician-philosopher said a few centuries ago: “*I think therefore I am*”

The whole Western world believed him....and still believes him!

Many centuries earlier, eastern sages had discovered an entirely different picture. From India to Tibet and to China, *these sages discovered that there is no such thing as a ‘me-thinker’*. *It is nowhere to be found*. In other words, it is an *illusion*!

Well, to any person brought up in the West it seems plain nonsense, it is quite a shocking statement, isn’t it?

But shocking to who?

For westerners, conditioned generations after generations by a culture and a religion strongly based on the words of Descartes, the ‘eastern sages’ statement is very difficult to understand! And even more difficult to accept! So, let’s forget about accepting or rejecting!

If you have grasped the content of the previous modules, you may have an intuition, a slight feeling that such statement may have some validity.

All the observations you’ve done previously and the clear understanding resulting from self-observation could help you to grasp the meaning of this statement. What you’ve discovered previously (not only read about but experienced, lived within) has prepared you to look in a completely new direction....

If you have an appetite for adventure, if some strange force is pushing you forwards, then embark for a voyage of discovery from where you’ll never return.

Some warnings however: You will find that it is impossible to talk about this to most people and you would be wise not to do that.

Let’s assume that you are curious to know more about the structure of the ‘me’. In that case, study this question:

“Who came first: the thinker or the thought?”

Let's look at the thinking process (not as psychologists but as down to earth people who look at facts):

First (in a newborn baby) there are various impressions from the senses. Sight, smell, sound, hunger, pain....

A sensation is memorized (say hunger) and provokes an action (crying) which results in a reaction from outside (generally a satisfying, pleasurable response). Then that association generates an inner reaction (the neurons start linking each other): i.e painful stomach= hunger... nipple=pleasure. It is a wordless mechanical process. Pavlov proved it with his dog!

The response to crying provokes a reaction and this is first cognized by the baby then re-cognized time after time. It generates a subconscious conclusion: to avoid hunger-pain there must be crying and satisfaction/pleasure is received through the mean of a nipple. It's all instinctive. There are no words in it.

Then that first re-cognition is followed by more and more each time there are other sensations, reactions, and conclusions. All of them are without words, without naming!

Then words appear one by one. For the first years of his life the baby doesn't put words into sentences and doesn't identify with these re-cognitions. So there are no thoughts*NB.

There is no 'me' entity appearing. There are movements of sensations recorded and replayed by the brain, but no thoughts. Why is that? Simply because we think in words! The child can only start thinking once he has a vocabulary and ability to make sentences! A proper vocabulary that enables short sentences comes at about the age of three. That's the age of our first memories! Before that, the brain replays images, emotions but no thoughts yet.

During the next phase, once the child starts to express itself, he'll say "Give a sweet to Charles!" There is no identification yet!

But eventually, one day, the first thought, the I-thought produces an *identified thinker*! This is when the little child suddenly says: "Mom, give me a sweet!" Then all other thoughts follow.

There are progressive recognitions and associations with the secure space and with pleasurable objects surrounding the toddler. And each of these is given a name by the parents: toys, bed, food, mother, etc.... It is a very subtle process accumulating hundreds of thousands of images and words from the close surroundings of the baby. The idea of 'me' starts with the first *I-thought* and builds up progressively. The identification with 'my toys, my mother, my bed, and then my thought' creates the *thinker*....

In other words, a thinker cannot exist without thoughts first and thoughts without words. ***Thoughts create the thinker! Thoughts are memories reorganized and endlessly replayed that create a thinker when identification takes place.***

Memories adding up at an increasing speed link themselves to the body/psychosomatic sensations. The outside pressures of self-recognition or identification encourage the 'human appearance' to declare with increasing sense of identification: 'my body, my food, my toy, my pain, my joy, my pleasure, my anger...!' The body-entity identifies itself with the 'sensations/reactions' after their continuous repetitions. Thought builds up the concept of 'myself,'... and a self-ego- 'me' develops!

Later, through daily life activities, sensations and experiences are recorded continuously, memories add up endlessly and start playing back faster and faster...creating eventually what the eastern sages call '***the undercurrent' permanent flow of thoughts***' (We'll see that a little later) These are recognized as 'my thoughts' and we continuously and subconsciously identify with them, reinforcing day after day, experience after experience an I-concept and the idea that '*I think therefore I am!*'

Please go over them a few times with a very relaxed and clear mind. Take your time. Look at it, paragraph after paragraph, and make sure you grasp within you its entire meaning.

You may want to agree or disagree or maybe to correct something. Leave that aside. We are not competing for scientific explanations here but just looking at a simple progressive process: the process of how thought creates the thinker!

NB* You don't remember what happened before you were 3 years old because there simply were no 'I-thoughts' and not many recorded memories and language to express them.'

Is it now clear that the **thought comes before the thinker**? And consequently, thought creates the thinker!

This is an important observation.

If we look deep enough, we discover that:

- 1) '*thought*' is a product of electro-chemical reactions in the brain triggered by memorized sensations describable with language. Therefore thought is matter.
- 2) '*thinker*' is a consequence of that mechanical process as soon as 'we' identify with 'my thoughts'. The duality 'thought-thinker' is thereby created, and produces a 'me' as the center of such pseudo-entity!

No memories, no thought,

No words, no thought!
No thought, no thinker!
No identification, no 'me'.

Now, we all have lots of *wandering thoughts*, isn't it? And we know that they create havoc in us! And we try all sorts of methods to control them! We go to gurus, we listen to the 'authorities', we go to India to learn the best technique to quiet the mind, to stop the thoughts! We are even prepared to buy a mantra and to pay for trying to transcend....

But, if you understood the above you will admit that *wandering thoughts* are not conscious actions! They are rather subconscious reactions of memory that we identify with because of constant repetition, because of the force of habit!

Organization or creative thoughts are conscious re-actions. We look for them, we put them together, we use skills, abilities, talents to assemble memories in a new orderly fashion.

NB*: 'creative' here means the sort of creativity which comes from skills at reorganizing memories in something that seems to be different, original. But this is not pure creativity (which is intuitive and spontaneous)

The thought is the Thinker! The Thinker is the Thought!
And our authorities are telling us (the thinker) to control our thoughts. And meditation is mostly aimed at controlling thoughts!

Is that possible?

How could it be if thought and thinker are the same thing? And if the thought comes before the thinker? Therefore, trying to control thought is creating a conflict by wanting to divide a *thinking* process into a *thinker* and a *thought*? It is basically like a bee trying to sting itself, a kitten trying to catch its own tail! It is mind trying to control mind!

Basically, many meditation schools teach disciplines and methods that aim at controlling thoughts. But discipline leads to resistance, not understanding! Desire (to have a quiet mind), wanting (to achieve a result), controlling (a subconscious process), can only contribute to the reinforcement of the idea of 'me-ness' (or ego) instead of seeing through its real structure.

Why?

Because thoughts and thinker build the idea of a 'me', an ego! They are produced by memories, the known, so they are the past. Trying to control thoughts or the thinker is trying to control memories. How can you control the past? It is gone, dead. During all the years that you will sit and practice meditation

you'll allow an I-concept to *be* and to *become*. Time is the best friend of such 'me-idea'. ("Give me time and I'll be enlightened!")

Thoughts, thinker, memories and known are the past! Everything we are is the past!

Having understood that you can't control thoughts, you may want to control the process that plays memories back? That is a slightly different issue but just as impossible. We'll analyze it in the next module.

If millions of unconscious memories pop out continuously from the mind to create thoughts and out of these thoughts pop out a thinker, can we really believe that *thought* and *thinker* are real, tangible things?

Should we not rather consider that the only real thing is a process called '*thinking*'?

Could there be *thinking* without a *thought* and a *thinker*? Could there be *observing* without an *observer* and a thing *observed*? Please remember your previous observations of nature and the occasions when you realized that you were not there as an observer!

This understanding is extremely important!

We have seen above that thought creates the thinker, so both result from a mechanical process! A process that we identify with and take as being personal and controllable! Adding all our attachments to the process strengthen continuously that idea of 'being a self'.

If we didn't identify there wouldn't be any idea of 'myself.' Thinking would then be a movement, a functioning that remains (once the 'thought-thinker' duality is reintegrated) into the *nothingness* that they are!

Do you realize that if thought creates the thinker, similarly the sight creates the one who sees, the sound creates the hearer, the observed creates the observer, the act creates the actor.....? In other words there is no observer without the observed, no 'entity' called a see-er without a sight! And what came first is always the sight, sound, observed, etc...

#Question where could your 'individuality' be in all that?

The Awakened Sages said that apart from a wrong identification with sense impressions, there is no see-er or sight but only a *seeing*! No act or actor but only an *acting*! No observed or observer but only an *observing*! No thought or thinker but only a *thinking*!

The one who sees, the hearer, actor, etc...are obviously the psycho somatic 'human entity' that we have questioned previously, the entirely conditioned 'me'

that has no free will and no real ground to stand on. We have discovered that ***it is basically a bunch of memories reorganizing themselves permanently at incredible speed in a very sophisticated apparatus called body-mind.***

So, *sight* creates a *see-er* when such ‘entity’ identifies with ‘**my** sight’ and this consolidates the idea of a ‘me’!

Don’t despair if you have difficulties. In-seeing is not obvious! Understanding is around the corner. Just drop your comparing, judging, labeling, etc...and see everything with a new mind, sensitive, free from all the past, the traditions, the conditioning and the authorities!.

But don’t worry! Exercise persistence and keep coming back on these pages each time your mind is crisp and clear. It will eventually unfold!

Do not try to intellectualize it! And even if you are convinced that you have a complete understanding please come back to previous modules if necessary to make things clearer. In order to complete the puzzle you cannot discard any pieces already placed but refer continuously to them.

We’ll come back to this after we have completely grasped the structure of the ‘me’.

**** We have seen that Sensations/experiences (1) are recorded as Memories (2) which are replayed at random in a subconscious stream. Then a subconscious selection is made by the mind which collects specific memories from this stream and projects them as Thoughts (3) to the conscious...Then mind identifies continuously with these thoughts, (my memories, my old fight, my new boyfriend, my car, my job, etc...Practically all thoughts are about ourselves!) Thoughts create the thinker (4) and the thinker has the ‘me’ as its center.**

The thinker **never** comes before thought or before memories!

And we have seen earlier that memories are the records of events, reactions, accidents, teaching, readings, medias in the conscious ... and influenced by the subconscious genetic, racial imprints ...over which we don’t have any choice (contrary to what we believed!)

Memories are the past and the past is memory! The past doesn’t exist as such but as a memory! It is dead matter! And all the memories are the results of conditioning caused by things that ‘we’ did not choose or control! And these are the content of the field of the known! These are also what we call consciousness!

Where could be such a thing as a ‘me’ in that? Where is it hiding? Can you point your finger to it? Isn’t it a concept, an idea, a false identification?

Expect it back sooner than you think!!

In fact, as soon as you think....

Can you see what an I-concept is, or rather what it is not and why it is not? Can you in see now *what-we-are-not*?

Let’s come back briefly to free will.

Realizing, or understanding that you don’t have free will is not ‘the end of the world’! It may be the beginning of the end for a ‘me’ but it allows you to enter into a ‘path’ of total peace and absence of fear, a path of discovery into what we really are!

Once we realize and accept that we don’t have free will, we are able to live without volition***NB**, letting life guide us without resistance where it wants to take us. We are not dropping our arms and turning into couch potatoes! We do what we must do, at each instant. We continue living the way we were conditioned, with our talents, our trade, our energy, but now, ‘we see ourselves living.’ We don’t take the comedy of life seriously anymore. We do what we need to do when we have to do it, and we try as much as possible not to let a ‘me’ react.

In fact, we realize that the wishes of a ‘self’ are never satisfied and we see that all imaginations, suppositions, expectations, dreams of how the future should be (according to that ‘me’) always turn to be different!

Then, *instead of dreaming the future and being deceived, we prepare ourselves for the future* (in every now moment) and we let it come the way it has to come. And we marvel at the way it unfolds. We don’t resist *what-is*; we don’t go back crying endlessly for *what-should-be* anymore! But we also don’t attach ourselves to *what-is*. If it’s pleasure, so be it! If it’s pain, so be it! We don’t desperately want to repeat pleasure and avoid pain (an I-concept wants it in order to last!)

We live each moment as and when it comes and move towards each next ‘*what-is*’ as something new and marvelous. Life is nowhere else than in ‘*what-is*’! This is living fully HERE and NOW, into PRESENCE. There are no issues unfinished. We don’t record un-resolved issues in memory. So the mind gets quieter and quieter.

We live in full acceptance and **without resistance to *what-is***. And from that comes joy and harmony. And happiness comes searching for us!

*NB: ‘Non-volitional living’ is translated as ‘Wei wu wei’ in Chinese. It is living without the will of an ego but according to Universal will...



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