

the
Quiet
Place
Within

Peter
Ingle

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The Quiet Place Within

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The Quiet Place Within



There is a place in you where you
are quiet, calm, and nothing can disturb
you. This quiet place is not a metaphor.
It is a very real thing.

P.D. Ouspensky

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Tranquility

AWARENESS is always tranquil. This tranquility is like a bubble that nothing seen or felt can penetrate. You can think of it as the core of your being. You can also think of it as surrounding you.

A quiet mind and peaceful body do not comprise awareness. Nor do a noisy mind and busy body preclude awareness. Awareness is none of these things. It is the empty, silent, motionless tranquility *always* in the background.

Attachment

ALTHOUGH awareness is its own sanctuary, it can be lured out of its 'place' by anything it perceives. Due to a lack of awareness that it *is* awareness, it gets immediately appropriated by whatever it perceives.

In human beings, awareness is first appropriated by thoughts, emotions, sensations, and movements. Instead of awareness seeing all these functions and knowing that it is seeing them, it grants them identity as a sense of 'me'.

In the East, this is known as 'attachment' to describe how awareness attaches itself to its perceptions. In the West, it is called 'identification' to convey that awareness not only attaches itself *to*, but establishes a sense of identity *in*, what it perceives.

All of this usually happens so quickly that we don't notice it, and we don't notice it because awareness is not noticing itself.

The Meditator

ACHIEVING a sense of inner quiet and calm is often considered a goal of meditation and yoga, yet there is another ingredient that is more important. Although meditation and yoga can still the mind and pacify the body, their greatest value does not lie in mastering a mantra or posture or breathing. It lies in how well they enable mind and body to yield to awareness *on behalf of* awareness.

For this to work fully, a subtle shift has to take place from being the meditator to becoming aware *of* the meditator. Awareness then sees 'me' (the mind and body) practicing. It becomes aware that meditation is an activity of the mind working on the mind, just as yoga is an activity of the body working on the body.

Like prayer, meditation and yoga are an appeal by the person, but they are not for the person. They are platforms for awareness.

Being in Awareness

Awareness is not in the moment. The moment is in awareness. Everything it perceives is simply there as part of itself. From this perspective, it is not a matter of being in the moment. It is a matter of being awareness and welcoming the moment in.

In a Mood

IT is common to say that we are 'in' a mood, as though a mood is a place inside where we go and get bogged down.

Although different moods exist, look carefully and you will see that you are not in them, but that they are in you; that moods unfold inside awareness and awareness attaches itself *to* them.

Storms in the earth's atmosphere arise, develop, and pass away—all inside the atmosphere surrounding them. The same is true of moods and of our entire psychological world.

This is not to say that moods should be eradicated or that it is easy for awareness to extract itself from them. It is just important to know the difference between a mood and being aware of a mood, and to know that awareness can free *itself* from any mood at any moment.

One way to see this is to not let anyone see when you are in a bad mood; to not display and express the bad mood. Instead, try to keep it inside and look at it there. Then realize the difference between the mood and looking at it.

Leaving the Person Behind

WE all live in the same outer world, yet we each live in a different inner world. The combination of our thoughts, feelings, and predispositions varies from one person to another as the material out of which we develop a sense of ourselves as a person.

At the same time, each person is loathe to acknowledge that their *entire* inner world does not matter and can be left behind; not abandoned, but revealed as a false sense of self that is not awareness.

The more awareness is conscious of itself, the less interest it takes in the machinations of the mind and the preoccupations of the body, and the more interest it takes in the mystery of awareness beyond the mind and body.

Awareness Asleep

ALMOST every moment, awareness attaches itself to and identifies itself with one 'I' or a group of 'I's. They become 'me' for as long as awareness stays attached and until it is lured by another 'I'. And so we go from attachment to attachment, day after day, in our inner and outer world.

The fourth way calls this being 'asleep', meaning that awareness has forgotten itself and lost the realization that it is awareness. It is literally asleep *in* the mind and body.

We are usually not consciously aware of our body in the environment, or consciously aware of thoughts and feelings in the mind. Least of all are we consciously aware of being the observer of both worlds.

When awareness remembers itself, it wakes up from the dream of mind and body and realizes itself as awareness.

The Self

THE word 'self' is confusing because it is sometimes spelled with a small 's' to signify the ego, and sometimes with a capital 'S' to signify the enlightened 'Self'. The mind construes from this that large Self is simply an improved version of small self, a more 'mindful' version, a more enlightened *person*.

The small self exists as a feeling of 'I' in the mind and as a sense of 'me' in the body, but there is no such feeling in awareness. It just *is*. It exists as a void of presence that is aware of seeing the mind and body as they function.

Unlike the mind, awareness does not conceptualize or project an identity of itself; and unlike the body, it does not occupy space. It is more akin to a non-self that is aware of being aware of the self.

Into the Distance

LOOK out at the sea or into the sky as far as you can. Then consider that your inner world is infinitely more vast than that.

Most of the time we stay close to shore, hug the surface, cling to the familiar and safe. This is not a bad thing; it just prevents us from realizing how much we contain inside and how far we can go—even with the vehicle of thought, which is more nimble than we suspect.

At a certain point, however, thought reaches its limit. It simply cannot go farther or comprehend more. It cannot venture into the increasing emptiness and darkness where there are no forms, concepts, or words. Only awareness can roam that distance and navigate those depths.

Held in Check

WHEN the mind and body look at people, they perceive physical features, magnetism, mannerisms, and idiosyncrasies. When awareness looks at people, it perceives awareness held in check by a sense of 'I' in the person.