



# The Place of Precious Things

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**The Place of Precious Things**

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Foreword

The expression 'Pure Being' throughout this dialogue refers to the conscious source of being that is *behind* awareness. By way of analogy, although we say the sun shines on the earth, it is actually the sun's manifestation *as* light which enlivens the earth. The source of that light remains as the source even as it extends itself in the *form* of light. It is also true that light is an inevitable part of the heat generated by the sun, so the two are in a sense one. Nevertheless, light cannot assume to be, or to fully know, the sun. Only the sun contains recognition of itself as the source of light *and* as the manifestation of light.

This distinction brings clarity to the idea of being aware of being aware, which is akin to light knowing itself, while beyond that there is a pureness of being that encompasses even the deepest point of awareness. This inexplicable pureness is the same *being* that the ninth-century Zen master Huang Po called 'Pure Mind' and 'The Place of Precious Things'.

In trying to describe the 'recognition' of Pure Being, words inevitably get in the way, yet words can explain *to the mind* what Pure Being is *not*. In doing so, words can open a door into the vastness of Pure Being beyond the mind and beyond awareness.

One purpose of this dialogue is to highlight what Pure Being is *not* by describing the illusory nature of what we experience as 'I' and 'me'. This sense of self

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stems from the psychological formation of an ego which regards the mind as ‘my’ mind and the body as ‘my’ body, and then extends that view to include ‘my’ thoughts, ‘my’ life, ‘my’ experiences, ‘my’ needs and wants, and ‘my’ suffering—all of which are tied to a *mental image of self*. When this image is seen as just a projection of the mind, this ‘reveals’ the reality of Pure Being which recognizes that it is always above, below, and around the projection of ‘me’ even though it had fallen sway to believing the projection was real and that it *was* the projection.

Another purpose of this dialogue is to explain the physiological and psychological basis on which the feeling of identity is built, why it *appears to be* real, how it perpetuates itself in the psyche, and how perceiving it can lead to the recognition of Pure Being *at its source*.

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# Essence and Personality



*What is the difference between our personality and our essence?*

Personality is the shell of socially acquired values, attitudes, preferences, and behavior that stem from the influences of family, culture, religion, education, training. By contrast, essence is your innate human being. It includes your physical traits, body chemistry, artistic and athletic talents, and psychological tendencies. You do not acquire these. You are born with them. Personality, on the other hand, is everything you learn and adopt on top of essence, around essence.

Essence also houses the seed of Pure Being that you see in infants who have no thoughts and no ego. Infants do not force an idea of themselves onto other people and they do not judge anything. Those habits form later as part of the psychological ego and its projections and defense mechanisms as a personality. Before that infants simply look without forcing their looking. They are untainted vehicles through which Pure Being sees the world without identifying with it—without establishing itself as an identity *in relation to* what it sees.



*Why is this such an important distinction?*

The simple being of essence begins its human journey ‘asleep’ in the sense that it is unaware of itself, which causes it to get attached to the mind and body. This attachment becomes what is called ‘identification’ because it leads to the formation of identity as an ego. The awareness of Pure Being in essence attaches to the mind, and the mind uses this attachment to generate a sense of ‘I’, ‘me’, and ‘mine’ which perpetuates itself, in most cases, for the rest of a person’s life. In the process, essence gets obscured, may atrophy, and in some cases ‘dies’ even while the person is still alive. Unbeknownst to itself, the only thing missing in essence is the recognition of itself as the seed of Pure Being.



*Is essence more or less the same in everyone?*

Generally speaking, half the people you know are positively charged, meaning their essence has a positive charge, while the other half are negatively charged. Neither is better, but those who are negatively charged have a harder time accommodating the negative charge of friction caused



by pressure in their lives, whereas positive types experience friction in a more complementary way. For instance, where negative types see pressure as a barrier, positive types often see it as an opportunistic challenge; as something to climb over instead of something they have to go through.



*And personality is more of a mask, yes?*

Although essence is the purest part of us as a human being, it often dons a mask the same way personality does. But the mask of essence is more transparent. You can see essence in a spontaneous smile, a gentle giggle, a look of surprise, an expression of tenderness. You can also see the serious side of essence in someone who is sitting alone, being quiet, reading unobserved, or suffering. In all these instances an innocence and purity shines through.



*What is behind the masks?*

Behind the mask of personality is essence, and behind essence is Pure Being. The deepest

attribute of what is called essence is simple *being*. It is not an identity, a 'me', or an 'I'. It is Pure Being. The true nature of essence is a mystery, which is why science doesn't know anything about it. This part of our nature gets lumped in with the mind and body, but there is more to it. Much more. What makes it a mystery is that essence is a seed that is planted in the soil of a human with the *possibility* of sprouting as the conscious recognition of Pure Being.

Essence is like perfume inside the bottle of the mind and body. They take on the fragrance of essence which lingers in them, but they are not the perfume itself. Recognizing this brings you to a better understanding about the difference between the mind and body which adopt a personality, and the ethereal nature of essence.



*Why do we need these masks?*

Because Pure Being cannot manifest *directly* in the human dimension. Even essence, which is the closest thing to Pure Being, is too delicate to hold up under the heavy forces at work in humanity. We need the masks, especially of personality, as a buffer to soften the impact of life. The trouble is that Pure Being identifies with

these masks. It presumes that it is the masks and that they are real; that the form of identity they project is 'me'. From an early age we learn to view other people and their masks the same way. Everyone interacts *as the identity of their mask* behind which Pure Being is ignorant of itself as the innocence of *no identity*.



*People these days seem more confused than ever about their masks. Is this related?*

More people may be having psychological issues now because they are frustrated with their sense of identity and either want to find a stable mask or want to tear the mask off. When they try to, they find another mask and then another because it is not possible to remove masks as long as the awareness of being behind them is identified. But it is possible not to identify with thoughts, emotions, appearance, and behavior. What is happening instead these days is a burgeoning of identity crises associated with mental disorders, which are often *internal* masks, and which are partly due to a lack of understanding about the distinction between essence and personality and their relationship to the ego.

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# Mind and Ego



*You say that Pure Being is just another name for what Huang Po called Pure Mind. Why the difference?*

He used capital letters. He said 'Pure Mind' to imply something more than and beyond the intellect and emotions. I call it Pure Being to make clear that it has nothing to do with the ordinary mind. Pure Being is a void that recognizes thoughts as material spawned in the mind, but it is usually identified with the mind and takes itself to be the mind having thoughts. Identification means that Pure Being, unaware of itself, takes up residence in the mind *as the self* having thoughts.

We are so used to thoughts that we presume they are 'me'. Yet something can perceive this feeling of 'me' behind thoughts. That something is Pure Being. All it needs to do (although 'do' is not the best word) is realize that it is seeing 'me' and 'my' thoughts within the void of itself.

The fact that the mind projects thoughts inside itself is astonishing. More astonishing is that you can see thoughts inside the mind, see your sense of self having them, *and* be aware of both. Recognizing this brings you beyond the mind to the threshold of the void of Pure Being.



*Does Pure Being control the mind from behind the scenes?*

The mind wants to control the mind, just as the body wants to control the body. Both are dominated by a sense of identity in the ego. Pure Being is not interested in controlling any of them because it is not inherently attached to them. They are all *forms* of energy. It is not. It is their source. It is simply the pure energy of the void of being. But when it identifies it *takes form* as a feeling of self in the mind and body. Every few seconds, this feeling reestablishes itself as a sense of 'I' in the mind which provides a reference point of psychological security, stability, and identity. Without this reference point there is simply the emptiness of being. But the ego fills this emptiness by clinging to a central form of identity as a person.

The ego is an image that forms in the mind as a feeling of 'I'. Most people spend their entire life immersed in the mirage of this feeling of identity. Their Pure Being is attached to a psychological hologram that is producing images about itself in the form of thoughts and emotions. The hologram cannot see that it is a hologram, but Pure Being can see it and when it recognizes this, it recognizes itself as the void in

which the hologram appears. But a hologram cannot appear in a void, so when this recognition occurs the hologram vanishes. It gets absorbed by the void.



*So Pure Being is the awareness of thoughts?*

Thoughts are one thing. The mind is another. Awareness of both is another. And the void out of which *all of these* manifest is yet another. The mind cannot think or feel its way to this void of Pure Being. At some point during the spiritual ‘search’ the ladder of thought comes to its end and the void recognizes itself as the void.

From this perspective, it is interesting to consider what the mind is as a psychological *structure*. For example, what comprises an empty versus a full mind? What is the mind without thoughts? What are thoughts? How do they function in the mind? What do they have to do with the sense of self? What lies beyond the sense of self? Few people in history have penetrated the reality behind these questions.



*What is happening when I try to stop thoughts or control them? For example, if I want to redirect them to another subject?*

If you try to stop thoughts, you will notice that the mind is trying to stop its own thoughts. So stopping thought is not the way out of the mind because that effort is taking place in the mind. The way out is to notice that the feeling of 'me' noticing the mind and the feeling of the mind controlling or redirecting itself are all happening *in the void of being*.

Instead of trying to stop thoughts, the awareness of being can extract itself from the stream of thought. When this awareness focuses *itself*, it sees the mind turning and knows intuitively not to get caught in the web of identification with thoughts.



*Some people practice a technique of watching to see the next thought arise. Is this also the mind?*

It can be, especially if it is a technique. Another technique is to keep noticing that you are watching. Instead of worrying about thoughts, which is what the ego would like you to do, keep



steering the mind toward awareness and steering awareness toward Pure Being. Just simple being behind awareness recognizing all that is going on. When you first start noticing your inner world, it looks like everything is packed together. All the thoughts, emotions, and sensations feel squeezed into a small space. Consequently, it is easy to be identified with *what* you see instead of being aware of *seeing* and recognizing the *being* of seeing. The more you notice and the more you realize you are noticing, the more the space opens up between everything. Pure Being becomes more free as the spaciousness of inner space.



*You mentioned that Pure Being is the source of all these life forms. Can you say more how this works?*

The four centers of the mind and body by themselves have no identity. For that they need the injection of a life force that comes in the form of the rarefied substance of Pure Being. With this energy, human beings can interact psychologically with other human beings. At the same time, this substance—this ‘being’—in everyone is capable of recognizing *itself*, although it does not begin the human journey this way. It

begins it unconsciously, and because it is unconscious, it sticks to the mind, and the more it sticks the more it forms as a parasite of identity that enables the mind to experience itself as ‘me’ and ‘my’ body.



*What about when I use attention to steer my thoughts and hold them in a certain direction?*

All four centers of the mind and body can operate with attention, but there is an important difference between attention and awareness. If you observe closely you will see that attention is a ‘tension’ of the ‘extension’ of awareness as it ‘goes out’ to encounter all the forms of creation. Meanwhile, the source of that awareness—the void of Pure Being—is always at home, even when it sends the attention of awareness on an errand.

We are so accustomed to thoughts and emotions that we never question what they are as forms of energy that manifest psychologically. We also overlook the fact that we can see them. Instead, we identify with them and take them to be our being. We grant them authenticity as identity and give them permission to lead us through life at the expense of Pure Being

recognizing the void of itself—which is more than a void but which, compared to the somethingness of the mind and body, is empty nothingness.

Pure Being is not a function of the mind. It has nothing to do with the mind except when it attaches to, identifies with, and appropriates thoughts and emotions in the form of ‘I’s. But even then it is not a function of the mind. It is simply caught up in the mind by all the ‘I’s produced in the mind, and caught up in the sense of ego created by identification.



*So I should give up trying to control my attention?*

Controlling your attention is a good thing, a useful thing. It is simply that there is more beyond that. For example, in addition to focusing on thoughts themselves, it is possible to focus on being aware of the *structure* of the mind that produces thoughts. This structure is quiet. It is just a container that fills with thoughts. All it is doing is reflecting impulses that surface within it. When you see this, the operation of the mind changes. Thoughts cease to feel personal. You start to see them as objects in the mind, and the structure of the mind starts to resonate with the

emptiness of the void of being. And this is true even when you are controlling thoughts.

Whether you trace a thought or emotion to its origin, or follow it to its conclusion, they both lead to the same thing. You can also turn away from the feeling of 'I' in all thoughts and emotions and simply keep looking for being *as being*.

The same thing applies to the body. Instead of focusing on movements and postures, it is possible to be aware of how the underlying structure of the body is inherently still. Whereas the mind is a silent mirror that reflects thought and emotion, the body is a platform of stillness from which sensation and movement arise. This stillness also resonates with the emptiness of the void of being.



*Do the mind and body perceive on their own?*

Yes, although they both have restricted fields of perception that are not aware beyond the scope of their immediate needs and existence. For example, the body does not see much farther than the next meal or job or home or mate. And the mind does not see much farther than its sense of a person with preferences and opinions.



## Negative Emotions



*Why are we so inclined to perceive things through the lens of negative emotions?*

Negative emotions are not perceptions. They are *reactions* to perception. Awareness perceives and then the ego forms in layers of reaction to what is perceived. There is a perception, then a *physiological* reaction, then a *psychological* response to the reaction—all in conjunction with our sense of ‘I’. It happens so fast that we don’t notice it, but the awareness of Pure Being can see all this and not get snared by it.

The mind and body form a circuit in which negative emotions become a current that passes through the circuit as a feeling of ‘I’ am irritated, ‘I’ am offended, ‘I’ am angry, “I’ am hurt. We usually feel good about our negative emotions because they bring a surge of energy that fortifies our sense of ‘I’.



*Is the non-expression of negative emotions related to controlling this surge?*

The tactic of not expressing negative emotions outwardly comes from the fourth way system. And yes, this ‘non-expression’ is about

containing the surge of negative emotions in the sense of containing the energy *behind* them to make it available for transformation. Once that energy is discharged, this opportunity is lost. Not expressing negative emotions is a way of putting the brakes on their momentum to keep them from combusting. It is not about denying or suppressing or deflecting negative emotions. It is about freeing the energy behind them.



*Why is the energy of the reaction negative to begin with?*

The English word for ‘negative’ comes from the Latin word *negare* which means to negate or deny. That is what negative emotions do; they deny reality by negating the truth of how things really are—including how the ego is just a projection of the mind. But by denying reality the ego affirms itself. And the instinctive center helps it do exactly that because almost every human reaction starts as an impulse in the instinctive center which gets filtered by a sense of ‘me’ in the emotional and intellectual centers. The more negatively charged a reaction is, the more easily it becomes a negative emotion and the more intensely it gets tied to our feeling of ‘I’.

The idea of transforming negative emotions means transcending both the emotional and the instinctive feeling of ‘I’ behind negative emotions. Transcending means Pure Being ‘returning’ to seeing things as they are without the identity of an ego needing to protect itself with a reactionary response.



*Do negative emotions serve as ballast for the ego?*

Negative emotions serve as containers for a particular kind of energy that is highly combustible in the atmosphere of identification. Within less than a second the ego can ignite this energy and use it to inflate itself with a sense of ‘I’ ranging from frustration, irritability, and anger to self-pity, resentment, and depression. Human beings are the only life form on earth—perhaps in the solar system and galaxy—capable of manufacturing this kind of energy and channeling it through the psychological form of an ego.

Transformation means harnessing negative emotions as leverage by not expressing them and thereby gaining access to their energy and passing it to the void of Pure Being where it can be absorbed by *and* expanded into the void. This energy normally reinforces the human ego, but



it can instead engender the conscious recognition of Pure Being.

Negative emotions are part of the human psyche for a reason. It is no accident that this energy in humans provides the perfect combustible material for transformation. Negative emotions have a specific purpose both when they get expressed and when they get transformed. Most of the time, however, they are being indulged in by most of humanity which as a whole is an unwitting instrument for the unconscious discharge of this volatile energy.



*So they are more like fuel than like ballast?*

Yes. They are also reflections of the ego. Although they start as sensations in the instinctive center, this energy gets consolidated in the emotional and intellectual centers and then wrapped like sausage in the skin of the ego. The ego cannot exist for long without negative emotions because without them it has no air to breathe.

Each person's preferred negative emotions and preferred negative moods can also be seen as psychological addictions that have their root in the instinctive center. The impulse toward negativity always starts there and then seeps into the

mind as emotional distress. When negative emotions arise inwardly and you express them outwardly, ask yourself who it is that is feeling negative and expressing the negativity. Ask yourself if that is the most pure part of your being. Ask yourself if you want to keep carrying on like that for the rest of your life or whether there is an alternative. What if this energy could be redirected and converted into a very different form for a very different purpose?



*Isn't it the pain body who is negative?*

You can think of what Eckhart Tolle calls the 'pain body' as the psychological apparatus where negative emotions are manufactured, indulged in, and expressed. Another name for the pain body is imaginary 'I'. It is the sense of self you imagine yourself to be, and it has its deepest roots in negative emotions because the energy behind them has contracted and become embedded as mechanisms of psychological defense.

Imaginary 'I' wants to bear the weight of everything that has gone wrong in the past and may possibly go wrong in the future because that weight gives it substance and significance. In doing so, it squeezes the recognition of Pure Being

out of the picture. And this is the key thing to grasp: that imaginary 'I' behind negative emotions exists *at the expense of* Pure Being.

This is also why not expressing negative emotions is so pivotal because it can put the brakes on the psychological momentum of negativity long enough to free the energy that is fueling the notion of 'I'. That freed energy can then recirculate and transmute as Pure Being.



*Why are negative emotions such a good candidate for transformation?*

Because they mask the ego which we mistake as our real identity. But the truth is that *everything* can be transformed into the void of Pure Being. Everything you perceive, everything you think, everything you feel emotionally, everything you suffer, everything that you see suffering. They are all material for the awareness of Pure Being. But not all of them have the same catalytic power.

For example, negative emotions contain more combustible energy than thoughts, while suffering contains more energy than negative emotions. This is because real suffering (as opposed to psychologically manufactured suffering) is

connected to our *essence* as a human being. Real suffering takes a heavy toll on essence, but in doing so it cleanses and purifies essence in a way that gives Pure Being the possibility of transcending identification with our *whole* person as a human being.



*Ouspensky said two conscious 'shocks' are needed to achieve full transformation and that transformation needs to be preceded by self-remembering. How do you understand this?*

Self-remembering refers to Pure Being recognizing itself as the void of being. Transformation means Pure Being then extracting the energy *behind* negative emotions, absorbing that energy, and resolving it in the void of itself. Whereas identification causes the 'substance' of being to congeal as 'I', non-identification allows that substance to release its *energy* back into its source in the void of Pure Being.

The word 'shock' in the fourth way is meant to imply the force of an influence coming from outside a process so the process can turn in a new direction or keep going in its original direction after having lost enough of its own energy to continue. Conscious shocks come from the

conscious awareness of Pure Being, whereas mechanical shocks occur as automatic reactions in the mind and body.

The two conscious shocks of self-remembering and transformation are distinct yet connected. They are the same light, but the light has to turn on before it can shine. The two shocks also depend on each other and reinforce each other in the sense that a light cannot shine until it turns on, and it cannot keep shining unless it stays on. You will know when the light of awareness of Pure Being turns on and you will realize that it has to stay on if you want to transform negative emotions and transform suffering.



*I assume you consider judgment to be a negative emotion. If so, why is it so incessant?*

Judgment seems innocuous, but it is an invasive negative emotion that is incessant because of what lies behind it, which is the impulse to blame. We blame ourselves (as identities), others (as real people), circumstances (as something we control), the weather (ridiculous), and god (a mental fabrication).

The impulse to judge exists as the first and last defense of the ego. It never goes away until



## Pure Being



*Can you offer a simple description of what Pure Being is?*

It is impossible to define what Pure Being is, but one way to pose it to the mind is to say that Pure Being is the void behind who you think and feel you are as a person with a distinct identity. This background of simply *being* is always 'here' like an invisible expanse of presence that encompasses your entire person and life as well as all creation and all lives.

Pure Being is not a self. It is not a tangible phenomenon. Nor is it an entity such as god or some celestial spirit or being. It is simply the pure reality of *being* behind the manifestations of the human body and mind, and behind the sense of 'I' they generate. This is why some ancient teachings describe it as being invisible yet closer than your own retina.

This void of being is both who you really are as being, and who you are not as a human identity. The mind and body still exist and still live, but the feeling of 'I' entrenched in them is not the real thing; it is a psychological substitute and nothing more. The mind and body can exist as just vessels for Pure Being without 'I'.

To the mind, all this seems impossible on the one hand and nonsensical on the other. How can

you be an empty nothing and a visible something at the same time? How can you possibly live without an identity? And yet there is a much larger reality encompassing what we see and experience as our life as a person.



*Is this what is asleep or are we asleep to it?*

In spiritual terms, what is asleep and what awakens is Pure Being. The mind, body, and sense of 'I' do not awaken. Something else sees these phenomena as an illusion of identity. We use terms such as awareness and consciousness and witness, but these are labels. Pure Being recognizes its deeper reality which can at best be interpreted by the mind as a mystery.

Pure Being can be thought of as 'real I' except that it is not an 'I' or a feeling of 'I' in the usual sense. Compared to 'I' it is nothing. It is empty. It is void. This is why it remains a mystery to the mind and such a joy to itself as Pure Being.



*And this is true for everyone?*

Yes, but most people don't realize that every



few seconds they are poised on a universal threshold where Pure Being can either turn to its source as unmanifest being, or collapse into identification with, and become identity as, the mind and body. Human existence is a hinge between these two dimensions which religions call heaven and hell without most people understanding their inner meaning.



*So how do we shift from the one to the other?*

The way to go from 'I' to Pure Being is to see 'I' as just an image in the mind. It sounds too simple, but that is all you can and need to do. At that point the door starts to open for the reality of Pure Being to recognize the void of its all-pervasive reality. If the instinctive, moving, intellectual, and emotional centers of the mind and body could grasp the metaphysical dimension of Pure Being, they would be Pure Being. But they cannot. Only Pure Being can recognize itself.



*And then? How does the view change?*

Everything appears the same from Pure Being

but it is perceived differently because identification has dissolved and resolved as Pure Being. Things that seemed important are recognized as unimportant or inconsequential. The simplicity of the moment is poetic and sacred in the simplest way. The desires and compulsions of identification give way to the wonder inherent in the void of Pure Being.



*You say it's all we need to do, but it doesn't seem that easy or accessible.*

Some traditions refer to Pure Being as the 'guest', however Pure Being does not arrive or visit. It is here all along. It just makes its presence known to itself. A slight turn of the bulb and the light comes on to expose the illusion of what *seemed like* identity. A simple approach to Pure Being is to notice as consciously as you can what is in your immediate environment, including what is going on inside the mind and body, and to notice that it is being noticed. This aspect of the awareness of Pure Being cannot be grasped by the mind, and it is not the person that becomes enlightened. It is the light inside the person. But it does not turn on *inside the person* so much as it just recognizes *its own light*. And

this recognition happens beyond even the light. You as an identity never gain sight of Pure Being. It gains sight of you.



*You have spoken about it before in terms of awareness. How do you understand it now?*

Pure Being extends itself through awareness the way the sun extends itself through light. For instance, it extends itself as attention in the instinctive, moving, emotional, and intellectual centers where it takes on the hue of each as it passes through them. But at its core it remains Pure Being. *Inside each beam of awareness you will find the thread of Pure Being if you know how to look.*



*But the feeling of 'I' as a person seems to persist, doesn't it?*

When you look at a painting you are seeing it from outside the frame. Only when you identify with the canvas do you fall into the frame. This is the same relationship that Pure Being has with our life. As soon as it identifies with our life it

falls into a dream of identity as a person in the painting. Imagine yourself inside a landscape painting and thinking you are in a real landscape. Then you realize it is just the painting of a landscape. Then you step out of the frame. Then you leave the gallery.

The universe is the ultimate magic theater. You step out of one frame and find yourself inside another and then another. Pure Being keeps stepping out into deeper dimensions of being. As long as we think we are passing through our life, we are in the dream. When we realize that our life is passing through Pure Being *as a manifestation of Pure Being*, Pure Being has stepped out of the dream.



*Is that what Ouspensky was suggesting or hinting at with the idea of divided attention?*

The idea of divided attention is a technique that Ouspensky devised after he heard about self-remembering from George Gurdjieff. When Ouspensky tried to observe the outside world or his internal thoughts while ‘remembering’ himself, he became aware of a division between what he was observing and himself as the observer. The arrow of his attention was pointing in both

directions instead of only in the direction of what was being observed. This realization revealed to him a new understanding.

Divided attention can also be called double attention or double awareness because you are aware of two things simultaneously instead of just one. Without self-remembering, you don't exist. The only thing that exists is what you perceive, be it a tree or a thought. With self-remembering, you also 'exist'. You now appear inside the same circle as what you are perceiving. There is also another dimension of self-remembering where Pure Being becomes aware of both you and of the object you are looking at. Pure Being is then *outside the circle* seeing both your person and the object your person is looking at. Ouspensky called this 'real' self-remembering. Divided attention was just the beginning.



*Where does it go from there?*

Normally when we observe—meaning without self-remembering—as soon as we perceive something, the mind jumps in with associations, and Pure Being identifies with the mind's activity. The result is a conviction that 'I' am having thoughts about what 'I' am seeing. But that

conviction happens in the mind due to Pure Being having lost recognition of itself and becoming identified with the mind.

Self-realization or ‘recognition’ means that Pure Being opens the door of self-remembering, then the door of transforming negative emotions, then the door of transcending suffering. It keeps opening new doors into deeper realms of being. Everything Pure Being encounters, everything it becomes aware of, can be a catalyst as long as it retains recognition as Pure Being. But even then there is no final destination to reach. Pure Being simply plunges deeper and deeper into the source of being which is itself. As it does, the notion of ‘I’ fades in the expanse. The circumference of Pure Being keeps expanding into larger circles as it keeps popping out of each dimension of itself into higher dimensions of being.



*It sounds like a perpetual retreating of the spirit.*

Pure Being is not a retreat. It is an expanding embrace of reality and the energy inherent in reality. True reality is the invisible *energy* of Pure Being manifesting as visible *forms* of reality. Pure Being transforms everything because it

does not rearrange the past or interfere with the present or impose a future. As Huang Po said, it is beyond triple time. It simply resolves everything as infinite being. This sounds both extreme and hollow to say it this way, but that is how it is.



*What can we as a person expect when that happens?*

You the person are not transformed. It is Pure Being that transforms by recognizing itself as the surrounding void that *includes* your person. Some people have described this as a sudden and complete transformation. Other people get glimpses of the next higher dimension, then they visit for short periods, then for longer periods, then they move there and from there Pure Being starts recognizing even deeper expansions into the void.

The egoic sense of ‘me’ may not disappear right away, but the more Pure Being recognizes ‘itself’, the more the ego loses conviction. The feeling of ‘I’ is no longer as compelling or as in charge the way it had been.

The Place of Precious Things



Let there be just a tacit understanding  
and nothing more.

*Huang Po*