

THE SILENT SELF

Consciousness Realizing Itself
Beyond the Mind

PETER INGLE

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Foreword

The essence of self-transformation is the realization that your customary feeling of self is not your consciousness of *being*. This becomes clear through the recognition that 'you' as conscious awareness can perceive the feeling of self that projects *in your mind* as a sense of 'I', 'me', 'my' life, 'my' problems, and 'my' suffering.

This feeling includes the sense of 'my' desire to reach and achieve the experience of awakening or enlightenment, which in turn means that, as long as consciousness is entangled in the feeling of self, any *attempt* to awaken remains rooted in the psychological realm of 'I' where it inevitably projects itself as the identity of a seeker, or of a teacher who warrants special recognition and devotion.

What is the truth about consciousness and identity? And how is this truth to be found in the deepest dimensions of your being? These questions lie at the heart of each exchange in this book whose goal is to encourage and inspire the true transformation of consciousness itself.

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The Silence of Being

WHAT IS commonly called the higher Self refers to pure consciousness or awareness which is silent. It is not silent in the sense of how an object or voice is silent. It *is* the silent dimension of the presence of conscious awareness. This presence comprises more than the absence of sound. It is *being*. But the mind cannot register what being is. It needs a conceptual reference, so it calls it silence.



Aren't we trying to use the mind to engage the presence of awareness?

The mind can align with awareness but it cannot engage awareness directly. What it can do is create an atmosphere that is conducive to the presence of awareness. It can do this by thinking in terms of awareness and by stepping out of the way to allow the consciousness of awareness to realize itself. Both of these 'efforts' by the mind promote an atmosphere of silence and stillness that echoes awareness and enables awareness to realize itself.



If I am being aware of my body and mind, is this self-realization?

It is really self-observation, meaning that you are aware *of* the body and mind. But this is how self-realization starts. Usually the mind becomes aware of the body and views it as 'my' body. Then there is a recognition in the mind of thoughts passing

through it, but there is not a distinction between thoughts and the sense of 'I' observing them. There is not enough space between them yet. Awareness may go on, however, to become aware of seeing the body, the mind, and the sense of 'I, and from there recognize that it is beyond all of them. This recognition is the true beginning of self-realization.



How important is it to be aware of time and space?

It is strange that, as a rule, we don't question time, space, existence, or the fact that we can be aware of all these. It can help to be aware of time and space, but more important is to be aware that you are right here, right now, in this place. If you do this without forcing it—without identifying with trying to do it—the rest will start to come by itself. Keep noticing what is around you. This includes everything: the outside world, your body, and your inner world. As you notice all these, add to them the realization that you are noticing them.



You mean focusing in the moment?

Focusing on being present in this moment. It is *always* now in terms of time and space because we cannot be anywhere in time except in this moment, or anywhere in space other than where we are right here, right now. *This is* time and space. Always. The only thing that can expand beyond these parameters is the consciousness of awareness which is infinite in terms of both time and space. This is what eternity means: always here and now in *the same moment*.



The Illusion of 'I'

THE NOTION of yourself as 'I' and 'me' does not exist as an actual entity. It exists as a mental image that is projected through the body as behavior. It takes form as a psychological entity that in turn drives physical action. When these manifestations are infused with the force of negativity they solidify even further and can become petrified. You see this in some older people whose notion of themselves as 'I' has etched itself permanently into their facial expression, posture, and demeanor. The more identified you are, the deeper your sense of 'I' gets entrenched in form. Conversely, the less identified you are, the more simple your sense of 'I' becomes—all the way to the point where it *unforms* and dissolves back into its original substance as essence and pure consciousness.



Why is it so easy for us to become negative?

Because the *possibility* of becoming negative is always waiting, even when we are feeling good. One slight turn and we become negative. Most human beings live in a state of mechanical readiness where they are *always* poised to transfer and discharge negative energy. This is the physiological and psychological basis on which humanity operates and is supposed to operate. It is no accident that so many people become negative so often. Identification and negativity comprise a sort of electric current that vivifies humanity, but the energy behind the current comes originally from consciousness.



What do you mean by mechanical readiness?

Identification. Envision yourself not identified. Completely not identified and fully present rather than always on the verge of being identified and becoming negative in response to things.



Has a man number five escaped from the body?

What the fourth way calls a man number five refers to consciousness having transcended the identity of 'I' in the mind and body. Consciousness is free *inside* the mind and body but it is still inside so to speak. The next step is when it starts to realize itself independently of the mind and body and your whole person, which represents the idea of a man number six.



How can I be sure of that?

Only by experiencing it for yourself—as conscious awareness. You should not believe what I just said, but you may want to think about it and try to connect it to your understanding of what self-remembering means.



Is creation an illusion the same way 'I' is an illusion?

Illusion does not mean that something does not exist. It means it is being perceived in a false or distorted or incomplete way, usually through the

faculties of the mind. What we call creation is highly complex, extraordinary, and mesmerizing, so it is easy for awareness to forget itself and identify with all the *forms* of creation. It is easy for it to remain simply aware *of* things. From there it is a big step for it to realize that it is *aware of seeing* creation, and later to realize that it is *both the seeing and the being aware of seeing*. And even later that it is everything: the seen, the seeing, the awareness of seeing, and the being behind seeing. As Lao Tzu said, "From this mysterious well flows all existence."



Is it helpful to pray for abundance?

Most people think of abundance as plenitude in the sense of overflowing. But it can also be seen as a-bound-ance, meaning without a boundary, which is a characteristic of consciousness. But abundance does not mean that your life will be more full and wonderful and wealthy. It means your true being is limitless. So when you pray for abundance, think in terms of consciousness expanding into the infinity of itself.



Can you say more about why thoughts are not necessary?

They are not necessary in terms of knowing who and what we really are, which is the consciousness of awareness. Thoughts stem from this consciousness, but they are not consciousness. They are reflections of consciousness in the mirror of the mind. This is not easy to comprehend because we

operate almost entirely from thought, not from direct perception. Which means we are living our lives according to reflections, not perceptions of reality. As we are driven by thoughts in the mind, consciousness looms as the background from which thoughts arise, yet it is unaware of itself as the background because it has established itself as a sense of identity in the mind. It is within this experience of identity that we try to resolve our sense of identity, the meaning of our life, and the solution to our suffering. But none of these things can ever be resolved by thoughts in the mind.



My problem with thoughts is the tension they cause both in my mind and in my body.

Although we experience tense thoughts, the cause of the tension is not so much in thoughts themselves. It is in the structure of the mind. Can you see the difference? The furniture in the room does not become tense by itself. The walls and floor and ceiling tighten and this tightening gives rise to tension in their contents. Conversely, if we can remove tension from the structure, that immediately affects the contents. This is what meditation and yoga really mean, or should mean: neutralizing and minimizing tension in the *structure* of the mind and the body. The idea is to loosen the energy that is pent up in the four centers and release it to consciousness. The purpose of self-remembering is to harness this energy consciously.



Investigating ‘I’

THE INQUIRY ‘who am I’ can also be turned around and investigated as ‘I am who’. The first is meant to prompt consciousness and lead you out of the mind. The second is meant to highlight how consciousness, as it identifies, *becomes* the ego. Both are also incomplete because consciousness is not an ‘I’. It is beyond ‘I’. It encompasses ‘I’. This is true even when, as a result of identification, consciousness gets appropriated as a sense of ‘I’.



When you were suggesting to a lady how to scrutinize the ego during periods of victim-hood, I thought of chief feature and that it might be playing a part in all that? Would you agree?

Chief feature is almost always behind our most frequent and most intense negative emotions. As is the case with many people, the feature of vanity plays a large part. But there is more to it than that because each chief feature thinks it is unique, which is an aspect of vanity. In the same way, each chief feature is also compensation for a feeling of fear that is peculiar to each feature. How a person approaches the idea of minimizing their chief feature is often a reflection of their chief feature.

For example, ‘dominance’ thinks that chief feature can be regulated and even be useful when properly controlled, and it is no accident that people with dominance are highly prone to regulating and controlling themselves, other people, and circumstances. ‘Tramp’ on the other hand doesn’t take

the idea of chief feature seriously. It shrugs off the idea even though it likes to ridicule others for their chief features. And, again, it is no accident that people with tramp are prone to not valuing themselves or what might be good for them, so they end up shirking responsibility with the attitude that things aren't that important and don't really matter. 'Vanity' is either worried that other people will see its chief feature and judge it for being vain, in which case it avoids situations where it might fail; or it inflates its image of itself and tries constantly to get attention to keep its image inflated. 'Non-existence' is not sure how to proceed in relation to chief feature and does not actively pursue it, which is true about most of a person's life who has a chief feature of non-existence.

Chief feature is a worthwhile study, and can be a very practical tool for self-observation. It is about much more than external behavior. It is about the psychological roots that drive behavior.



How is chief feature also connected to the instinctive center?

It is connected in the sense that it is part of our physiological makeup when we are born. The fourth way explains this in a more complete way with the idea of body types, and how each type is prone to a specific chief feature as well as a set of complementary features. Chief feature begins as a tendency inherent in essence. It is only when we develop a personality around essence that chief feature becomes a governing characteristic of our personality. This happens as the tendency manifests through

our psychology as well as our physiology. For instance, chief feature enters into most of our emotional decisions and accounts for how we react to other people and situations. The other big area is how features are prone to different kinds of negative emotions. All of these things tie together and inform the identity we experience as 'I'.



So 'I' is the veil that keeps us asleep?

Yes. This veil is also a trap in the sense that the awareness of consciousness is trapped in it but can slip out of it by seeing 'I' as just a psychological image—a projection in the mind—and realizing itself as the consciousness which is aware of 'I'. Another way to say it is that consciousness has to pop out of the notion of you as the person, and pop into itself as consciousness.



What does it mean to empty the mind?

It means to empty the pockets of your mind by not identifying with what is in them. To turn them inside out and let it all drop from your grasp while you remain as pure conscious awareness.



Is it normal to feel spiritually alone?

Aloneness can be healthy in the right context. It is unhealthy when it is the ego feeling lonely, rejected, isolated, or passively hostile in some way. Essence, on the other hand, can be quite happy by



‘I’ and Consciousness

IT IS IMPORTANT to know what you mean when you say 'I' because you may mean the 'I' of consciousness or the 'I' of ego. Self-observation and self-investigation mean exploring both to discover *what you are not* as the identity of a person, and *what you are* as pure consciousness.



Are essence and personality also different dimensions?

Yes, in the sense that they are different dimensions in and through which consciousness manifests. Essence is a higher, finer, lighter dimension. Personality is lower, denser, heavier dimension. Negative emotions are even more dense and more heavy. And conscious awareness is the lightest and purest of all. The model of the ray of creation in the fourth way system enunciates these distinctions. It gives you a clear map with which to comprehend the mechanical dissolution and conscious resolution of the fundamental substance comprising the universe. There are not many maps like this.



The fourth way also talks about food, air, and impressions. How do they affect awareness?

The head, chest, and abdomen are the three 'stories' of the human machine as described in the fourth way. The abdomen absorbs food. The chest absorbs air. The mind absorbs impressions of light and sound. Each of these 'foods' *enters* through our

head—through the mouth, the nose, and the eyes and ears. From there they settle into their respective sections of the body to be absorbed. The idea is that three kinds of matter get distilled in different stories, but only up to a point that serves survival and procreation. To be further distilled, their energy needs to be mixed with consciousness itself. This is particularly true of the impressions of sound and even more of light because whereas the body automatically distills food and air, it barely registers impressions of sight and sound. These impressions can be absorbed far more consciously if we know how to add the influence of consciousness itself.



You mean self-remembering?

Yes. For instance, as you look at me and listen to me, notice that you can be aware of looking and listening. Notice that you can be aware behind your eyes and inside your ears. Normally we leave our perch inside, go out to meet what we see or hear, and then cling to it. We do the same thing with our thoughts and emotions and bodily sensations. Self-remembering refers to consciousness staying in its perch and realizing it is staying here. This has many nuances that you have to discover for yourself, but this is how it begins.



Why do we feel the need to be liked and admired?

Essence wants to be nurtured, but not for the sake of identity. It wants to be nurtured so as to be cultivated as the seedcase of consciousness. There is



Understanding Negative Emotions

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS are chemical byproducts of the mind and the body. The body provides the raw material of negative energy. The mind provides the rational that allows this energy to gather in psychological form. These two ingredients, impelled by the force of identification, produce either a deep implosion or a violent explosion, or both. To fully understand what negative emotions are, we have to see all the way to their source, how they develop from this source, and how they help to shape and sustain the ego.



How can I overcome the tendency to criticize other people and myself?

Keep noticing how this tendency, which is a form of judgment, is a filter obscuring your view. Try to refrain from overcoming it. Try instead to see the feeling in you where this tendency is coming from. The more you see what is behind it, the more it will dissipate.



What is behind it?

An imaginary idea of yourself as a person who exists in relation to other people who, ironically, are caught up in the same imaginary loop. Judgment is really just egos weighing the pros and cons of egos in relation to themselves so as to feel legitimate as a sense of 'I'.



Why is it so hard to stop it?

Because you not only have to step out of the judgment; you have to step out of the entire notion of 'I'. Only consciousness can step all the way out.



How do we convert negative emotions into positive emotions?

Transformation is not a change that takes place in the mind. It is a crossing over from the dimension of mind into the dimension of consciousness. The word 'negative' comes from 'negare' which means to negate or deny. The word 'positive' comes from 'posit' which means to place or position. Whereas negative emotions negate reality, positive emotions arise from the position of seeing reality.

Negative emotions are a reactionary byproduct of the mind while positive emotions are a reflection of pure perception in the moment. You simply see the place—the actuality—of things as they are. You adapt and respond without resistance, and you perceive directly. What is interesting is that this leaves no room for an identity moving through time. In the present there is just living. Just *being* now in the midst of whatever is happening.

Another distinction is that negative emotions operate on the mind's false assumption that we can choose and change things, whereas positive emotions spring from awareness which simply sees things as they are. Positive emotions do not mean you are cheerful in unpleasant circumstances. It means you see the reality of what is happening.



Can we rationalize our way out of negativity?

You can rationalize your way out of the thinking that supports a negative emotion, but that is not always the full solution because the core of 'I' may still remain intact. The idea behind your question seems reasonable, but it assumes that negative emotions are transformed on the same level that they originate and manifest on, which is not the case. You cannot reason with or resolve a negative emotion in yourself or in another person and expect long-term change. For that you have to go above it, and only awareness can do that by not identifying with the projection of 'I' behind the negative emotion. You can prepare for transformation with the intellect, and that is useful, yet true transformation is not psychological work. It is a transcendence of consciousness that evaporates the sense of 'I' and frees the energy behind the negative emotion.



Can you say more about how not expressing negative emotions contains their energy and what to do next?

The idea is that you can either lose the energy of a negative emotion by expressing it, or contain that energy by not expressing it. But containing it does not mean just holding onto it. It means using the energy—the intensity—of the negative emotion as leverage to 'lift' consciousness out of the feeling of 'I' that is negative. You cannot do this if you are identified with the negative emotion. So consciousness has to unlock, unbind, un-attach itself from the feeling of 'I' and step out of the identity of 'I'.

But this is not a mental effort. You have to find the key to this next step for yourself. No one else can turn this key for you. It is what the fourth way calls the 'second conscious shock'. It has to come from deep inside. Deep beyond the sense of 'I'. It is not an effort in the usual sense, and it is not a feeling of 'I am stepping out of 'my' feeling of identity. It is the *influence* of consciousness being aware of itself and knowing itself as pure perception in a different dimension.



You say that negative emotions negate reality. What do positive emotions do?

They don't really do anything. It is more that they absorb reality. They do not necessarily make you feel better or feel 'positive'. They come as a result of seeing reality as it is and affirming the truth of things. What is important to understand is that positive emotions are not the opposite of negative emotions. Negative emotions stem from the instinctive center and the ego. Positive emotions stem from conscious awareness. It is hard to even call them emotions. They are more like reflections of awareness that echo in the emotional center in pure form and have nothing to do with the ego.

Negative emotions are also not really emotions. They are *reactions*. For example, when you are negative you are reacting to something you don't like. Behind this reaction is a feeling of 'I' and 'me' that is trying to protect and defend itself. Positive emotions are very different. They are *reflections* of the openness and expansion of the pure seeing of conscious awareness.



Echoes of the Mind

THE MIND has been studied and talked about for millennia, yet it remains a mystery as to what it is, where it is, why it operates the way it does, and how it produces what we call thoughts and emotions. But the most overlooked factor in all this is that even though we cannot fully understand the mind, we can perceive it at work. Awareness can traverse the mind's caverns, valleys, and peaks. When you realize the significance of this, the mind and its contents become less important. Your concern turns increasingly to the matter of transcendence. Instead of surfing wave after wave in the hope of finally understanding your mind and identity, you lift into the air as pure presence.



How can I keep my mind from racing with thoughts?

There is a tiny switch that enables you to keep attention in the present, focused on what is right here in front of you, whatever you are doing. No one can flip this switch for you. You have to find it for yourself and, above all, you have to *want* to flip it. It is not a struggle against thoughts in the arena of the mind. It is a focus of awareness. You can think of it as a perch on a rock in the middle of a torrential river. Instead of trying to calm the waters of your mind, find this perch in yourself and try to get accustomed to the view from there.



Are you referring to the metaphysical realm?

You could say that, but we have to be clear about what you mean because there is a meta-physical and a meta-psychological realm, and a realm beyond both, and a realm beyond that. The way to keep it practical is to hold to the realization that you can notice the mind racing with thoughts *and* notice that you are noticing that. Then you gently hold onto that awareness and keep it focused.



Does that also apply to the problems in my life?

All problems are in the mind. They are just mental configurations, nothing more. These configurations are attached to the sense of 'I' being projected in the mind, and they usually take on the flavor of our chief feature. In reality they are just clouds in the mind. Pressure still exists in your life, but problems are all imaginary. Try to see the difference. If you take 'I' out of the equation, what happens to the problem? When you are not identified with a problem, how does it change? Try to spend a day facing all the problems in your life without seeing them as problems.



I feel like a stranger on earth. Do you feel that way?

It is not that we are strangers here, but that everything else—all appearances of form—are foreign to the source of consciousness that is behind our awareness of them. Consciousness recognizes, even

without knowing itself, that none of these forms are real, and this produces a feeling of strangeness in the mind. This feeling can also become a sort of cue for consciousness to realize itself more fully.



How can we touch pure being?

We cannot. The best the mind can do is generate a thought about it and try to hold that. Only pure being can know itself and be itself.



The sense of 'me' and 'my' life feels so real. How can I see through this?

Behind all of our thoughts and feelings there is an ingrained belief about our life, its past, its future, and our sense as a person in relation to this reel of film. But it is all a series of images springing from the central pivot of 'I'. These images in turn generate thoughts and emotions that keep the notion of being a person in tact. When you peel them away, you come to the psychological foundation of 'I' which awareness is identified with and believes itself to be. If you manage to look underneath this foundation, there is no identity. There is just being, which is what you are at your deepest core. But consciousness usually passes through the human form without being aware of itself as consciousness.



And when this awareness does appear?

One reason this mystery of awareness goes un-



The Hologram of 'Me'

CONSCIOUSNESS is invisible and real whereas the 'I' of ego, which feels like a legitimate identity, is simply the projection of an image in the mind. The more you see this projection in yourself, the more it appears as a *notion* of self. What sees this, however, is not 'you' as the mind or ego, but consciousness itself which is not an 'I' or a 'you' or an entity with identity. Words can never describe the reality of this self-realization of consciousness.



How does 'I' disappear?

The image of 'I' unforms the same way it formed. The determining factor is identification. The more identified you are, the more real the image appears. The less identified you are, the less real it appears.



How does the mind project this image?

The human mind is based on a similar principle of design as the universe. Both are a structure in whose space objects move and turn and reflect light. Take away the terms 'universe' and 'mind' and you will see essentially the same phenomenon on different scales. Your question could also be, "How does the source of pure consciousness project what appears to be the universe?"



Sometimes enlightenment seems so simple. Then it seems profound. Then it seems ridiculous even.

Enlightenment, self-realization, and awakening, or whatever you choose to call it, is all of these things, depending on where it is being viewed from. To just the intellectual center it may seem far-fetched. To the emotional center it may seem profound. To consciousness itself it is very simple. This simplicity also becomes more and more profound.



In terms of 'I' as an image in the mind, where does that leave difficult past experiences?

The past also resides in the mind around the sense of 'I', 'me', 'my' life. Whatever the experience, it comes down to unlocking this sense of self behind the pain and seeing it as a mental image, a psychological hologram, and realizing that you are realizing that. When this happens there is less need to revisit or purge past experiences. Any genuine pain associated with experiences will surface as the light of consciousness shines brighter and wider and deeper. The energy behind experiences gets released and reabsorbed as consciousness. It has nothing to do with 'I'. 'I' was keeping the pain intact psychologically and physically. When 'I' is dissolved, the energy behind pain is unlocked and made available either for release or for transformation.



Conscious Transformation

THE HIDDEN meaning of all creation is transformation. Everything we can see internally and externally can be transformed into higher and higher forms of itself until it reaches the source from which it sprang, at which point it realizes itself as the source. This is not a philosophical idea. It is reality. It is truth. What makes our manifestation as human beings so remarkable is that the human form is a special kind of conduit for quickening this transformation and making it fully conscious.



Can transformation be thought of as real knowing?

It is not the knowledge, the teaching, the explaining, the understanding. It is about pure being knowing itself as the source of consciousness. This source transforms everything back into itself.



Why does the ego dislike other people?

Because by invalidating others it validates itself. The ego likes and dislikes, approves and disapproves, admires and judges based on its idea of itself, and on its idea of other people *in relation to* its idea of itself—and all of this is influenced by body type, chief feature, and center of gravity. Everyone is subject to these influences which makes for a bizarre masquerade that is the story of humanity. It is primarily a story of egos—of ghosts.



Will it help if I renounce the vanities of my life?

Renouncing external things does not lead anywhere. Real renouncement is internal. It means consciousness renouncing the illusion of 'I'.



Can you say more about how chief feature is entwined around the instinctive center?

The instinctive center and chief feature are directly linked. They are like physiological siblings which together spawn a psychological environment in which the ego can grow. One forms the basis of the body. The other forms the basis of the mind. And from both springs our sense of 'I'. You could also say that our feeling of 'I' is rooted in both. But this is just a short summary in words. It requires considerable self-observation coupled with self-remembering to understand all of this fully. It is a real question, though. A strong question. I hope you will hold onto it and investigate it for yourself.



Can we see when pure consciousness manifests itself?

Pure consciousness does not manifest directly in the dimensions of the mind and body. It manifests *through* them. The mind and body can at best reflect the influences of consciousness that echo through them. Your question shows how the mind keeps trying to grasp, pin down, and conclude the nature of consciousness, but it can never do that. Only consciousness can know itself. Somehow you have

to come to this realization. It has to dawn on you like the sun dawning on the horizon of your mind.



Does the instinctive center drive chief feature?

In a sense, yes. All the other centers depend on the instinctive center for energy and health. They are all infused with this energy. And this same energy transports the influences of chief feature throughout the mind and body. So you can say that the instinctive center is a carrier of chief feature.



Does it also drive the ego?

The instinctive center and chief feature form the basis of the ego. Together they can spot the weaknesses in other instinctive centers and prey upon those weaknesses by belittling, taking advantage of, and manipulating other egos. The instinctive center can even see chief feature in another person without knowing what it is seeing. Sometimes it can see right through to chief feature at its core in another person, which disarms the other person. They feel exposed and vulnerable, and they unwittingly yield and submit. And none of it has anything to do with consciousness.



When I was asking about consciousness manifesting itself, I meant in the sense of seeing that we are aware...

What we call awareness can be conscious of see-

The Silent Self



To be clearly in original spirit
is the sole meaning of your existence.

old man Tcheng