



Becoming Aware

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There is one communal element that we all come across when we compare our personal life experiences, when we read the biographies of the theosophists of the past, or when we listen to the stories of those who have ventured upon the spiritual path before us: this communal element is that we have all started our spiritual journeys by asking ourselves meaningful questions.

“Who am I?”, “What is the meaning of life?”, “What am I made of?”, “Where do my emotions come from?”, “What happens after death?”, and many others, which reveal a desire to know the world around us and our connections with it.

Questions, in general, are a way for us to be propelled forward on our spiritual journey. When we ask ourselves these questions, in order to make progress on the spiritual path and to know oneself, each and every one of us has to be able to tackle a moment of crisis which becomes a way for us to let in that light which illuminates our lives and allows our growth in awareness.

Let's make an example of how meaningful questions can trigger those crises which project our souls forward. For instance, we might consider how fundamental it is to deconstruct our own selves as soon as we start treading on the spiritual path: Like the

great sculptors of the past, who used their chisels to set the figures they sculpted free from the marble that surrounded them, at the beginning of our spiritual journey it is more important to take away what is unnecessary and make room for what we will receive.

In order to do so, we need to give up our prejudices, our beliefs and convictions, our dogmas, and we need to overcome our limits which represent the heavy burden we carry inside of us and are often the result of an imbalanced upbringing, based solely on the material aspects of life. Such an upbringing which does not provide us with the suitable tools to answer our fundamental questions and to embrace the deepest and most intimate part of ourselves, who we really are.

The first achievement is therefore to become aware of the fact that matter, at any stage of aggregation, also contains the spiritual principle, that there is no separation between spirituality and what we call “life”, but rather that spirit and matter are the natural manifestation of the one movement, both internal and external.

We acquire a spark of higher awareness when we perceive that there is more than meets our physical eyes, and we look beyond the world's duality and illusoriness, thanks



to a progressive dissolution of the sense of separateness, accompanied by the understanding that we belong to one undivided reality.

In this respect, Theosophy provides us with amazing tools while still not giving readymade answers: Theosophy is not dogmatic, nor can it give us certainties, as the motto of the Theosophical Society reminds us by saying that “There is no religion higher than Truth” or, better yet in the literal translation of the Sanskrit '*Satyannasti parodharmah*' “There is no Truth but Dharma” or in other words “There is no Truth, there is Dharma”.

Theosophy rather provides us with the tools which we can use to find our own way, our points of reference. It is able to stimulate our evolution and to guide us in finding a sense and the answers to our enquiries.

In the process of deconstructing and getting to know more about ourselves (and therefore about the universe), we become increasingly more conscious of the constitution of our bodies. We learn to observe our physical body, our body of desire and our mind (which together constitute our personality) and we find out about the existence of our higher bodies.

In our complexity of spirit and matter combined, we understand that, as members of the fifth race of the fourth round, we are almost ready to complete that evolution which is the conquest of the mind – *manas* – together with the liberation from desire – *kama*. It is here, on this Earth, through our personality, that we become conscious of the responsibility we have in being able to change ourselves and, as a consequence, the world

around us.

If we carefully look at the principles of our conscience, we come to realise that these can work towards both higher or lower purposes, according to the will power which we decide to exert: our actions can tend either towards materiality or towards inner (or higher) states of consciousness.

Let me quote our Brother Eldon Tucker's words:

"Raising one's consciousness to union with the divinity comes in stages, as one learns to shift the seat of consciousness from the lower principles to the higher. [...]"

The higher principles are present and functional the whole time, it's just that we're so preoccupied with the activity of the lower that we don't pay attention to them, although they are still there as an active component of our consciousness.

The entire seven principles are present in us as fully embodied beings. [...]"

We likewise sense higher things as “a gift” via a higher instinct, because of a lack of self-consciousness in our highest principles.”

Now, going back to the theme of asking oneself meaningful questions, with which we have started our reflections, let's ask ourselves: “How can we learn to focus on the higher principles? How can we come into contact with our higher instinct?”

The three fundamental propositions of the Unity of Life, of its Cyclicity and of the participation of all Souls to the Universal Soul, which we can find in the Proem to the Secret Doctrine by HPB, undeniably represent the best starting point. It is necessary, as Madame Blavatsky pointed out, that all



phenomena be considered under the three fundamental principles on which they are founded. The simple understanding of the three principle does not suffice: it is instead paramount to live according to these propositions.

The three fundamental propositions undeniably represent the best starting point, under which, as Madame Blavatsky pointed out, all phenomena must be considered. But The simple understanding of the three principle does not suffice: it is instead paramount to live according to these propositions.

In order to attain a higher comprehension of life, not only do we need to acquire knowledge but also to take action and to follow our intuitions which all together constitute our awareness.

The possibility to elevate oneself towards a higher awareness comes from the inside and not from the outside. To be aware means to deeply feel and perceive that there is something that goes beyond the ordinary, which we are not able to explain; it means to understand things with our heart, to open up to the divine and, drawing from Tucker's words, to become conscious of our highest principles. This elevation opens the way for intuition, which then opens the way for awareness, and so on.

As I said before, it is not enough to know, we need to be.

There is therefore a *way of living* which we have to pay constant attention to.

The Dhammapada reads:

"Attention leads to immortality. Carelessness leads to death. Those who pay attention will not die".

While Jiddu Krishnamurti said: *"I am not a reader. I have observed tremendously all my life."*

In order to build our awareness in a new way it is necessary to adopt certain behaviours, to put ourselves in special conditions and to lead a specific lifestyle. In this perspective, the physical-sensual-behavioural aspect of our way of being acquires a fundamental role. As Theosophists, we need not only to be conscious of the fact that Theosophy provides us with a method, but we need to become able to use it, by learning how to encompass the specific disciplines of Meditation and Study, together with the responsibility of Service and the magic of letting life flow so as to make intuitions emerge.

Krishnamurti's thoughts and teachings can particularly help us with this latter aspect, as they provide us with a "method non-method" that can help us decode reality and correct our thoughts and actions. This will make us find our answers in personal experiences and not in theories.

In our everyday life, at work, with our family or in our relationships with our friends and the people we hang out with, we tend to identify ourselves solely with our personality and to pursue pleasure while avoiding pain. We don't always find total fulfillment in our life and the world around us. We often find ourselves in discomfort, without realising that this often happens because we are too engrossed in satisfying our senses, to the point that we forget who we really are.

When we read Krishnamurti's works or listen to his conferences we are faced with a reality which we can totally identify with,



and with situations that sooner or later in life we will have to experience. I am thinking in particular of those difficulties and discomforts which we would like to overcome. And we can definitely do this by learning how to live according to the three fundamental propositions, as said before.

Krishnamurti's fundamental teaching is that we should observe ourselves without references or terms for comparisons, without judgement. It is through disidentification that we can attain the perception of "what really is" and by doing so we can accept and understand the universe and its laws. Krishnamurti said: "*The beauty of the universe is in the "what is"; and to live with "what is" without effort is virtue.*"

For what concerns awareness, the process we should be able to carry out according to Krishnamurti, is that of being *passively* aware, which means to be impartial when facing our conscience. We need to be constantly alert without worrying about choosing what is right and what is wrong. In this way, we will be able to observe the problem without identifying with it, and only then will it reveal its true nature, as we will not be filtering it through our own interpretations.

Most of us are actually incapable of entering this state of *passivity*, because we cannot be impartial. On the contrary, we usually let prejudices, ambitions and repetitive behavioural patterns influence us. When faced with this difficulty, Krishnamurti's suggestion is to focus on the observation of our thought process itself: this should allow us to understand ourselves in relation to the problem. We therefore need to be constantly aware, second by second, of our thoughts and feelings. Our mind needs to understand itself and its own functioning, and only then can the unknown become known and we will be aware of what we are.

To conclude, we know that it is through disidentification that we can have access to the higher planes and perceive the beauty of "what really is". Every time we will be able to tune to "that intimate faculty which enables us to 'know' without mediations, to understand the intimate functioning of life" (P. G. Parola), or in other words when we are able to connect to our inner Master, a spark of awareness will ignite within ourselves.

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