

这本书你应该像《圣经》一样放在案头，  
带领着你进入当下，  
重拾宁静，唤起并深入内在的真我！

*The Power of Now II*  
**当下的力量II**

找回每时每刻的自己

[德] 埃克哈特·托利 著  
魏姣 译

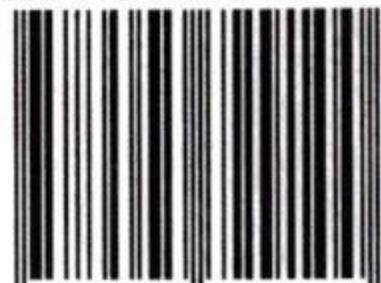
 中国友谊出版公司

当人们活在当下，与内在的寂静有所连结，便可超越  
复杂的心智与情绪，发觉潜藏于内心深处恒在的平静、满  
足与力量。

——埃克哈特·托利


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*The Power of Now II*

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STILLNESS SPEAKS

By Eckhart Tolle

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## 媒体评论

当下的力量能改变你的思维。结果呢？更多喜悦在当下。

——美国著名黑人女主持人奥普拉·温弗里

这是一本激动人心的书，它用最清晰易懂的语言，告诉我们活在当下的真理。

——亚马逊网络书店

《当下的力量Ⅱ》是一本真实、冷静、充满智慧的指南书，它指导你过上更纯粹、更贴近灵魂的生活，协助你达成情感与心灵的圆满。埃克哈特·托利的文字承载着临在状态的高能量振动。这本书在振奋人心的同时，又极为实用，它必将是灵修类作品中的经典。

——新世界图书馆

托利以简而有力的方式，告诉读者何谓内在宁静。

——《出版人周刊》

我想邀请每一位读者，真正敞开你们的心灵，像埃克哈特·托利建议的那样，去慢慢消化《当下的力量 II》里的每一个字，让它们在你们心里沉淀下来，这样你们一定会收获良多。

——夏伦·邓肯，《当下觉察力》作者

精致、坦率、充满灵魂感、亲切易懂、引人共鸣，这就是《当下的力量 II》。

——本·迈尔斯，《North Valley》

埃克哈特·托利再次为世人灵魂送来启蒙大礼。我喜欢翻来覆去地读它，揣摩每一个句子。谢谢托利为世界增添光明！《当下的力量 II》是一本经典之作，它必将大大提升人类整体的精神境界。强力推荐！

——芭芭拉·罗斯，《如果上帝像人》作者

《当下的力量 II》改变了我的生活。每当我忙得头昏脑胀，失去了内心的宁静时，这本书总会让我平静下来，很快便和当下的宁静连结。

——谷歌图书读者

阅读本书的过程中，我找到了平静。它的每一段文字都很简短，因而更容易消化理解。在这个喧嚣的年代，这本书就像一片宁

静的绿洲，可以净化心灵、拂去疲惫。

——（英国）安德鲁

这本书是埃克哈特·托利送给人类的又一个大礼！他完成了一项几乎不可能完成的任务：在肉身之中达到宁静状态。

——（美国）迈克尔·英德金

这是一本比《当下的力量》更引人深思的书。

——（印度）罗西特

敞开心胸去读这本书，放下偏见，遵照书里的指南试验十天，然后告诉我这本书有没有让你的生活变好。

——（澳大利亚）乔恩

每天最多读一段或两段文字。不是我在夸张，这本书真的是我读过的最实用的心灵指南。

——（约旦）哈桑·库图布

不敢相信埃克哈特·托利又一次超越了自己！《当下的力量Ⅱ》是一本完美的心灵进修读本。

——（以色列）尤瓦

埃克哈特·托利有一种化复杂为简单的优雅能力。

——（中国台湾）陈曼

我可以从这本书中重温一切的真理，让心灵再次得到启发。

——（中国香港）陆飞

这是一本美妙、深邃的灵修读本，它在我的床头书架上永远占据着一席之地。读来像散文一样，每一段虽然很简短，但要用心用神去体悟。

——雪莉，Goodreads网站

《当下的力量 II》是每个人的必读书，你要经常读，并用内在觉知来吸纳其中的精髓。这本书帮助我排解压力和忧虑，达到内在平静与和谐。

——PrakashS, Shvoong网站



## 关于作者

埃克哈特·托利，当代伟大的心灵导师，他出生于德国，就读于伦敦大学与剑桥大学。29岁那年，一次意外的经历彻底改变了他的生命轨迹。在接下来几年里，他致力于解释、整合与深化这种内在的心灵转变。之后，他在伦敦工作，担任顾问与心灵导师。1995年起，他定居于加拿大的温哥华。

埃克哈特著有《当下的力量》，该书在《纽约时报》畅销书排行榜名列第一，被翻译成33种语言，被高度赞扬为《新世界》的续篇，这两本书被普遍地看做是当今时代最有影响力的两本心灵读本。埃克哈特的其他著作还包括《当下的力量Ⅱ》和《修炼当下的力量》，前者是《当下的力量》的续篇，而后者是《当下的力量》的节选。

埃克哈特的教导简单却深刻，他已经帮助世界上无数的人找到了他们生命中内心的平和与巨大的满足。埃克哈特教导的核心在于意识的转变，一种心灵的觉醒，他视这种心灵的觉醒为人类

进化的下一个阶段，其本质特点在于超越我们以小我为基础的意识。这不仅是个人的先决条件，也关系到地球上持久的暴力冲突的终结。

埃克哈特目前在世界各地广泛周游讲学，努力把自己的心灵领悟与意识力量传授给世界各地的人们，帮助人们摆脱痛苦并进入内心的和平世界，找到真我的力量。

# 放下等待，回归宁静

□ 华语世界首席身心灵畅销书作家 张德芬

埃克哈特·托利是我最心仪的灵性导师，更是我心目中最伟大、最有深度的心灵作家。

回顾我和托利的邂逅，应该追溯到2003年。那时我第一次拿起了他的著作《当下的力量》，当时我看得一头雾水，觉得朋友推荐的书怎么一个字都看不下去。后来有一位高人在我家暂住，她拿起了这本书，一边看，一边笑，拍案叫绝地说这本书真是太棒了。我纳闷之余，找了英文的原版来看，觉得虽然字字珠玑，可还是难以消化。

后来，我知道《当下的力量》有中文版本，于是赶紧找来原文书看。这一看果然看出味道来，爱不释手，觉得作者的文字真是有如天启，否则不会如此鞭辟入里地直指人心，他为人生及人的灵性追求提供了一个根本的方法。之后，他所有的书和演讲CD，几

乎成了我的枕边书，以及每天入睡前的精神享受。

深入他的作品后，我发现托利并不倾向任何宗教或传统思想，反而浸淫在各种灵性典籍之中，融合基督教、佛教、印度教、伊斯兰教、禅宗、道家等等的精华，把几千年的教导浓缩成一个简洁、现代的方式呈现：我们可以摆脱痛苦，并找到内在的平和，“当下”就是他的主轴立论。

托利的新作《当下的力量 II》虽然字数不多，却很可能会是改变某些读者一生命运的书。它不但很简洁地阐述了托利的一贯主张，更加上了一些日常生活可以操作的练习方法，提供每日修炼的指引，真是兼具了知识性和实用性，非常容易上手。任何人，只要按照书中传授的一种方法，持之以恒地练习一段时间，生命品质一定会有所改变。

许多读者在我的博客里留言分享，托利的书让他们一看再看、爱不释手，有的人因托利的教导，学会了将原本可能演变成冲突的事件，转化为一场愉快的互动；有的人因为托利的启发，而体会到当下的临在，进入了前所未有的平静。

以我自己的个人经验，就算把托利说的道理都弄清楚、想明白了，可是如果不在生活中实行、体验的话，这些灵性的大道理还是会流于空谈。

因此，建议大家无论如何都要试着做做看托利的拿手绝活：观察自己的思想和情绪。这是脱离我们心智认同，也就是我们受苦根源的最佳方法。他提供的诀窍包括尽可能经常地去倾听脑袋里的声音、把注意力导向当下、养成习惯问自己：“此刻我的内在发生了什么事？”觉察呼吸、放下等待、回归宁静、与内在身体的连结等，都是简单实用、不花力气和时间，但又能彻底解决我们人生问题的灵修妙方。

祝福大家在人生的道路上，一起体会意识提高的宁静、自在和喜悦。

## 引言

真正的心灵导师并不会教授文字里蕴含的众所周知的意义，也不会给你提供或者增添新信息、新概念或新行为准则等这些流于表面的东西。真正的心灵导师只有一个作用，那就是帮助你移除障碍，促使你从生命的深处去看清自己本来是谁，去了解自己本来已经知道的事。心灵导师的存在，是为了向你揭示内心世界的秘密，揭示保持平和的法门。

如果你是为了激发新的灵感、寻找某种理论、信仰或者智者言论而意外地闯到这位心灵导师或本书的面前，那你可要失望了。也就是说，如果你是来找寻精神食粮，那么你会无功而返，更错失了寻找过程中真正的精华。

本书的精华不在于字里行间的侃侃而谈，而是存在于你的内心深处。在阅读本书时，请牢牢记住，你要用心去感受它。这些文字不过是路标，你无法在思想领域找到它们的真理，而是在你内在的层面中有所收获，在一个比思维更宽阔、更广袤无垠的层面里。

这个层面的一个特征就是存在一种生机勃勃的平和，一种极富生命力的平和。因此当你读这本书时，若觉察到你内心的平和在袅袅升腾，那么这本书便起了效果，发挥出了心灵导师的作用，它会提醒你：你是谁，为你指明回家的路。

本书不是用来从头读到尾然后束之高阁的，它不是为日积月累的灰尘所苟活的，你要与它在一起，时常翻看它，不过更重要的是要经常合上书放下它，或者让自己花更多的时间思考而非阅读它。相信许多读者会发现自己在读完一个章节后想要暂停下来，不由自主地开始陷入沉思，进而内心宁静如水。在阅读的过程中中止阅读比继续阅读更加有益、更加重要。我们总是有种思维定式，这种命定的模式总是循环往复，备受现实的局限，陈旧而破败，所以发挥本书的作用吧，它将把你从这种思维模式中唤醒，还你自由！

本书的形式可视为是古老印度记载灵性教诲经文的现代再现。古老经文以格言警句或者寓意精深的箴言形式出现，不带任何概念性的设想。《吠陀经》与《奥义书》就是以经文形式记录下来的早期的关于神性的教诲，包含的都是佛陀智慧的结晶。如果把耶稣教导众人的箴言与譬喻，从后人叙事性的语境中摘取出来，那么它也可以被看做是经文，和中国古代的智慧之书《道德经》一样蕴含着深刻的教诲。这种经文的优点在于其形式的简洁，它不提倡任何没

有必要的思考。它从不予人明示，但仅仅有所指向的话远比它说出来的话要重要得多。本书近似经文形式的写作风格于第一章尤为明显，这一章是众章节中文句最简短的一章，但却是全书的精华所在，对于一部分读者来说，也许他们所需要的全部东西都集中在这一章中，而其他的章节则是为了那些需要更多路标的读者而写的。

一如古老的经文，本书的文字是神圣的，它们是一种意识状态的产物，我们称之为宁静。然而，与那些古经文不同的是，它们不属于任何一个宗教或任何一个精神传统，但却能够迅速融入整个人类这个集体之中。于是，人类意识的转变不再是一件奢侈品，也就是说，它不再只属于少数几个人了。如果人类不希望自我毁灭的话，那么意识的转变将是一件必须完成的使命。此时此刻，旧有意识的愚钝和新生意识的崛起正在同时加速进行，而矛盾的是，事情在越变越糟的同时也在朝好的方向进发，只是变糟的那部分因为制造了太多的“噪音”变得更为明显。

当然，阅读本书是让那些文字转换成你头脑中的思想，但这些思想不同于以往重复的、嘈杂的、自私的或者借吵闹引起注意的普通思想。如同那些真正的心灵导师或者古经文一样，本书的思想不会要求你“来看我”，而是希望你“超越我”，因为这些思想是宁静的产物，它们有种力量，能够引领你回到它们诞生的那片宁静



中。那种宁静也是内心的一种平和，而宁静与平和正是你存在的本质，只有内心的宁静才能拯救这个世界，改变这个世界。

### 1 张德芬 推荐序

### 5 引 言

### 1 第 1 章 寂静与宁静——一定能生慧的秘密

智慧是什么？怎样才能找到它？定能生慧，只要保持宁静，去看、去听，无需他法，就能觅得智慧。静下心来，细细地观察，静静地聆听，激发你内在的智慧，让宁静引导你的言行！

### 9 第 2 章 超越头脑的思考——冲破固有思维的牢笼

大多数人一辈子禁锢在自己的思维牢笼里，他们从未超越那受制于过去的、狭隘的、源于大脑的自我感觉。

### 21 第 3 章 小我之我——你为什么不满意？

小我总是忙于寻找，只要你活在小我之中，你会不断将当下的时刻贬低成一种达到目的的手段。你只是在为未来而活，但当你达到目的后，你却依然无法得到满足，至少不会得到长久的满足。

### 31 第 4 章 当下——汲取当下的力量

当你的注意力指向当下，你会清醒，好像从梦中醒来，从思想的梦境中醒来，从过去之梦与未来之梦中醒来。多么清晰，多么简单，再也不用为问题所困扰，因为你只活在当下。

## 41 第5章 真实的你——全然临在于当下

你无法在过去或是未来  
觅得自己，唯一可以找到自  
己的时刻就是当下。

## 51 第6章 接受与屈服——从“不”到“是”的内在转换

当你对生活的“实际情况”俯首称“是”  
时，当你依实际状况全然地接纳了此刻的一切，  
你将在心底感到真正的平静和深沉的喜悦。

## 63 第7章 在大自然中灵修——用宁静激发灵性

感知你的呼吸，并全神贯注于此，你便能够以最亲密、最强大的方式再一  
次接触大自然。它可以治愈你心灵的疾病并赋予你极大的力量。它带来了意识  
中的一次大转换，从思维的概念的世界到无制约意识的内心世界的转换。

## 73 第8章 人与人之间的关系——放弃评判即可开悟

与人交往时，如果她的过去便是你的过去，她的痛苦就是你的痛  
苦，她的意识水平也是你的意识水平，你便会和她一样地思考，一样地  
行动。当你意识到了这一点，你便学会了宽恕与同情，从而获得平和。

## 85 第9章 当死亡与永恒相遇——参透时间的幻象

古往今来，圣贤与墨客，早已关注人类如梦如  
幻的存在特质，那就是：看似如此稳固而真实的世界，  
分分秒秒却在飞逝着，随时都可能烟消云散。

## 97 第10章 小我与痛苦的终结——重获新生的力量

臣服你在此刻所感受到的或是经历到的，全  
部当成是自己选择的，这样你便可以终结痛苦，  
获得真正的自由，并将瞬间拥有强大的力量。

# 第1章 寂静与宁静





意识和宁静是不可分割的。“我是谁”这种自我意识远比你的任何名称或外在形式都要深刻。

\* \* \* \*

宁静是你至关重要的本性。什么是宁静？宁静就是你的内在空间或知觉，借此，本页文字正在被你解读，成为你的思想。没有知觉，便没有解读、没有思想，甚至没有了这个世界。

你就是这种知觉，幻化为人形的知觉。

\* \* \* \*

与外界的喧嚣相对应的是内心思想的嘈杂，而外界的寂静则对应于内心的宁静。

无论何时，当你身边有寂静相伴，请侧耳聆听，留意它，关注它。聆听寂静能够唤醒你内心宁静的乐土，因为只有内心宁静，你才能注意到寂静的存在。



当你看着一株树，并感受着它的宁静，你亦会变得波澜不惊，因为你开始与它有了深层次的交流。在宁静中，透过宁静，你会发现自己与感知的对象融为一体了，这种一体感就是真爱。

注意，当你留意到你身处寂静之中时，你并非在思考。你只是意识到这一点，却并没有在思考。

\* \* \* \*

当你意识到寂静的存在，你便会立刻进入内心宁静的警觉状态，发现自己活在当下，说明你已经跨出了人类数千年来的集体意识的禁锢。

当你凝视一株树、一朵花、一棵草，请用心去感受它。它们是如此的宁静，如此深深地根植于自然之中，让大自然来教会你何谓宁静吧！

\* \* \* \*

当你看着一株树，并感受着它的宁静，你亦会变得波澜不惊，因为你开始与它有了深层次的交流。在宁静中，透过宁静，你会发现自己与感知的对象融为一体了，这种一体感就是真爱。

\* \* \* \*

寂静是有益的，但是寂静并非是获得宁静的前提条件。即使周围喧闹不堪，你仍然能够在这片噪音之下感受到宁静，感受到噪音之源的空旷与宁静，那里便是你纯净的知觉与意识本身的栖



身之所。

\* \* \* \*

能够觉察到知觉的存在，是所有感觉和思想的基础，觉察知觉便可触发内心的宁静。

所有扰人的喧哗，都可以像寂静一样，对我们有所助益。心中停止对喧哗的抗拒，认可它的存在，这种妥协便会将你带入内在平和的国度，也就是宁静所在之空间。

\* \* \* \*

任何时候，当你全然认可当下，无论它以怎样的形式出现，你便即刻获得宁静的心态，你便心平气和。

请留意那些空隙，如两个念头之间的空隙，一则对话词语交锋之间的沉默，一段钢琴或长笛演奏中的音符间歇，乃至我们呼吸之间的停顿。

\* \* \* \*

当你注意到这些空隙，你对“某个事物”的感知就变成了纯粹的知觉。你的内心便衍生出纯粹意识之无形疆土，它取代了你原本对于“形相”的认同。

\* \* \* \*

真正的智慧在寂静中运行，只有保持宁静才能发现解决问题的方法。

\* \* \* \*

宁静仅仅代表喧闹的消失或者空无一物吗？不是的。宁静就是智慧——它是一种潜在意识，它是任何一种有形事物孕育的温床，它怎能与真正的你我他相分离呢？

你所认为的这个有形的你，也是源自于宁静，并一直仰赖着它才得以存在。

宁静是万物的根本，是灿烂星河、郁郁青草、朵朵鲜花、参天大树、啾啾鸟鸣的本质所在。



\* \* \* \*

宁静是这个世界上唯一不具形相的东西，事实上，它并不是一件东西，也不属于这个世界。

\* \* \* \*

当你静静端详着一棵树或一个人时，你知道是谁在端详么？是某个比你这个人更深邃的东西在端详，是你的意识正在凝视着它创造的杰作。

《圣经·创世纪》说，上帝创造了这个世界，凝视着它，并陶醉于它的美好。当你拥抱宁静、心无杂念时，你也能看见神所看见的景象。

\* \* \* \*

你需要更多的知识吗？你以为拥有更丰富的信息、更快捷的电脑、更科学或更智能的分析，我们就可以拯救这个世界吗？此时此刻人类最需要的难道不是智慧吗？

可智慧是什么？怎样才能找到它？定能生慧，只要保持宁静，去看、去听，无需他法，就能觅得智慧。静下心来，细细地观察，静静地聆听，激发你内在的智慧，让宁静引导你的言行！

## 第2章 超越头脑的思考



人类的现状：迷失在思考之中。

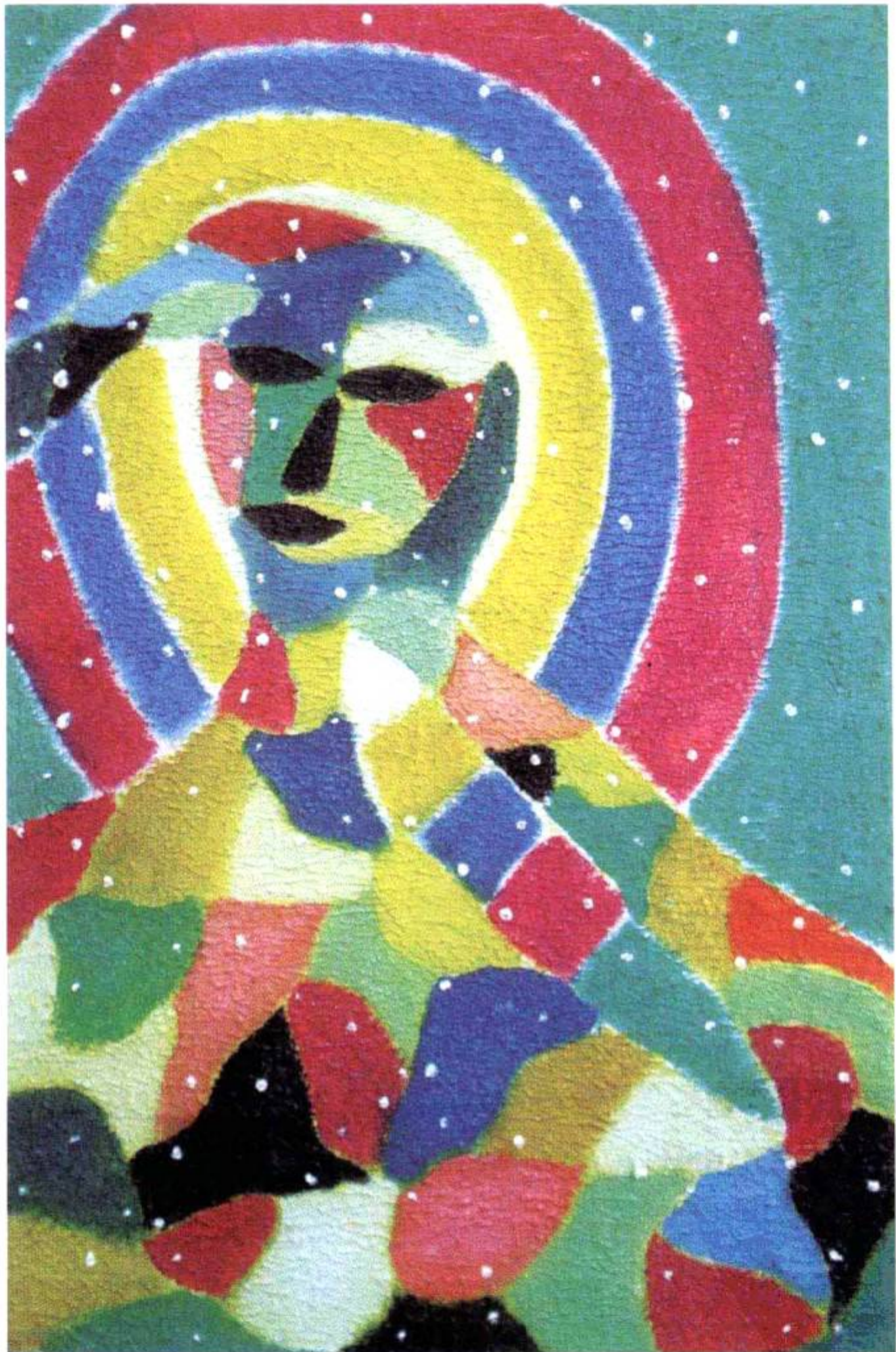
\* \* \* \*

大多数人一辈子禁锢在自己的思维牢狱里，他们从未超越那受制于过去的、狭隘的、源于大脑的自我感觉。

在你的身上，在每个人身上，都存在一种比思想更为深邃的意识层面的东西，它便是你的核心本质，我们可以称之为临在、知觉或者无条件意识。在古老的教义中，它就是人们心中的上帝，是你的佛性。

当你只看见心智所造的“小我”，当你的人生任由它掌控时，你便将痛苦强加于自己和别人。除非你进入那个比思想更为深邃的意识层面，启用那种无条件意识，否则你的人生不可能获得爱、喜悦和创造力的延伸，持久的内在平和也不可能伴随你的左右。

如果你能意识到，哪怕是偶尔地意识到，你心中的想法仅仅是一些想法而已。当你的心智、情绪对外界刺激有所反应时，你能够见证其惯性模式。那就证明，你开始进入那个比思想更为深邃的意



心灵的觉醒，即是从思考的梦境中醒来。

识层面，那便是你的思想和情感所依赖的知觉，那便是你的生命本质所处的永恒的内在空间。

\* \* \* \*

思考的涓涓细流有着极大的动能，它能轻易拉拽着你与之同行。每个念头都假装自己是如此的重要，因为它想要吸引你全部的关注。

有个新的灵修练习交付于你：学会轻视你的思想。

\* \* \* \*

人们是多么容易受困于观念定式的牢笼啊！

人类的大脑渴望知晓，力图了解、掌控一切，常常把自己的想法和观点误认为真理。它会说：道理应该是这样的。但你必须超越大脑的观念束缚，明白无论你怎样理解“你的人生”或者别人的人生、别人的行为，无论你怎样判断各种局面，你的观点也不过是一种见解，是众多可能的想法中的一种，不过是一堆念头而已。然而，实相却是一个整体的存在，万事万物都交织混杂在一起，没有任何事物能够独立存在。思考会割裂现实，将它切分成七零八落的概念碎片。

会思考的大脑是强大的工具。然而，当你还未意识到思维仅是意识的一个层面，而被它完全掌控时，会思考的大脑反而很有



局限性。

\* \* \* \*

智慧并不是思想的产物。我们关注某人或某事，并深刻地理解，智慧便从中萌生。关注便是原始的智能，是意识的本体，它消除了概念化思维形成的阻碍，你进而认识到世上没有什么是可以独立存在的。关注将观察者与被观察者统一于一个知觉体中，它是弥合隔阂的良医。

\* \* \* \*

每当你沉浸在强迫性思考之中无法自拔时，你便在逃避当下的存在。你不愿身处此刻此时。

\* \* \* \*

无论是宗教的、政治的，还是科学的教条，都源自人们错误的信仰——相信思想能够概括一切现实或真理。其实这些教条就像群体性的概念牢笼。奇怪的是，人们乐意被囚禁，只因为能在牢笼中得到一种安全感，以及一种“我知道”的错觉。

没有任何东西比教条给人类带来的痛苦更多了。事实上，教条迟早都会轰然瓦解，因为真相最终会揭穿教条虚假的一面。尽管如

此，除非我们能够看清其幻象的本质，否则旧的教条仍会被新的教条所取代。

那么，幻象的本质是什么呢？就是对思想的认同。

\* \* \* \*

心灵的觉醒，即是从思考的梦境中醒来。

\* \* \* \*

意识所能觉知的范围远比思想所能理解的范围要博大得多。当你不再相信你所思考的一切，你便跨越了思想，清醒地认识到那个思考者与你并非就是一个人。



\* \* \* \*

大脑总是处于“不满足”的状态，因此总是贪恋以期获得更多。当你被大脑左右时，很容易陷入无聊和不安。感到无聊说明大脑渴求更多的刺激、更多的精神食粮，然而这种饥渴永远无法填满。

当你觉得无聊时，为安抚饥渴的大脑，你可能随手拿起一本杂志、打一通电话、打开电视机、上网冲浪、外出购物，最常见的方法就是大吃一顿。

或者，你可以继续无聊，继续烦躁不安，并同时注意观察无聊和烦躁不安究竟是种什么样的感觉。当你带着知觉去观察、去感受时，刹那间，四周便仿佛萌生一种空间感或者宁静感。虽然起初只是一点点，但随着内心的空间感不断滋长，无聊的感觉将逐渐消失，不再那么明显与强烈。所以说，即使无聊的感觉也能教你体验自己的本质。

你会发现那个“感到无聊的人”并不是你。无聊感只不过是体内一种条件反射性的能量运动。同样的，你也绝不是一个愤怒的、悲伤的或者充满恐惧的人。无聊、愤怒、悲伤或者恐惧并非你的专利，它们只不过是处于大脑所处的特定状态，是来去匆匆的过客罢了。

那些来去匆匆的都不是你。

“我好无聊啊！”谁知道呢？

“我愤怒、悲伤、害怕啊！”谁知道呢？

你知道啊，你是“知道”的主体，而非上述种种客体。

\* \* \* \*

任何形式的偏见都意味着你被大脑左右了，意味着你再也看不见“人”，你看到的只是你框定的“那个人”，而将活生生的“人”简化为一个概念就已经构成某种形式的暴力了。

\* \* \* \*

思考若非根植于知觉，将变得自私而紊乱。缺乏智慧的聪明是危险而有害的，而这却是当前大多数人的状态。思想放大成为科学和技术，其本质上并无好坏之分，然而，作为科技源头的思想若非根植于知觉，也会极具毁灭性。

人类进化的下一步是要超越思想，这是我们的当务之急。但这并不意味着我们不再思考，而是不要完全认同于思想，不要被思想所掌控。

\* \* \* \*

感知你体内的能量，精神上的嘈杂便立刻沉寂，甚至停止。感受你双手、双脚、腹部、胸膛里的能量，感受你的生命能量，那个给躯体注入生机的生命能量。

于是身体成为一个入口，通过它你能窥探在起伏的情绪和思绪之下潜藏的生命活力。

\* \* \* \*

你的体内，包括你的大脑，存在一种生命力，你可以用整个人的存在来感知它。生命无需思考，你身体里每一个细胞都在呼吸。如若此时出于某些实际的需要，需要思考，你便会自然去思考。大脑在这时仍可运转，当你的内在生命力与知觉透过思考来表达其自身时，它会运作得更加美妙。

\* \* \* \*

你也许不曾留意，“不思而察”的片刻，早已成为你生命中不请自到的常客。当你在从事某个手工劳动，在房间散步，或者在机场柜台前翘首等候，当你全然地存在于当下，头脑中的思绪便沉寂下来，被一种清醒的存在感所取代。抑或，当你内心纯净如水地仰望天空或是倾听他人，意识不再被思想所遮蔽，这时你的感知会变得如水晶般透明。

对大脑来说，这些片刻的沉寂没什么重要，因为它有“更重要”的事情去考虑。这些片刻的沉寂如流星般转瞬即逝，以至于你难以察觉它们的踪迹。

事实上，这些片刻的沉寂是你生命中所能发生的最有意义的事


情。它们是你从思考转变到清醒的存在感的起步。

\* \* \* \*

安于“未知”的状态吧，它能让你超越大脑的局限。因为大脑总是忙于推断与诠释，却害怕处于未知。因此，当你能够安于“未知”，你便超越了大脑，一种更深刻的非概念化的知觉也将从这个状态里萌生。

\* \* \* \*

从事艺术创作、体育运动、舞蹈、教学、咨询等工作，若想有所建树，思考的大脑就不必介入，至少要退居二线。若你的智性由一种与你同源但更为强大的力量接管，你就不必再作什么决定了，



你也许不曾留意，  
“不思而察”的片  
刻，早已成为你生命  
中不请自到的常客。

正确的行为会自然而然地产生，而且不是“你”强迫为之。掌握生命与掌控生命是对立的，你开始与更强大的意识合作，让它采取行动、发表言论、完成工作。

\* \* \* \*

危机出现会造成思考之流暂时性中断，在此间隙中，你将有机会品尝到临在、警醒与知觉的滋味。

\* \* \* \*

真理远比我们大脑思考所能理解的更为全面。我们的思考无法涵盖真理，最多只能指向真理的方向，譬如说：“一切事物在本质上都是一体的”，它只是一种指向，并非一个明确的解释。你去揣摩这句话，内心便开始感受它所指向的真理。

## 第3章 小我之我





大脑不停地寻找精神的食粮，也不停地寻找对自己身份的认同，小我因而诞生，并不断地进行自我创造。

\* \* \* \*

当你想到或谈及自己的时候，当你说“我”的时候，你一般指的是“我和我的故事”，这个以你的喜好、恐惧和欲望为中心的“我”，是永远不可能持久满足的。这个“我”是一种由大脑创造出来的关于“我是谁”的感觉，受到了过去的制约，并企求在未来得到满足。

你可曾看到这个“我”稍纵即逝？它就像水面的波纹一样，是一种暂时的存在状态。

究竟是谁看到了“我”的稍纵即逝？是谁意识到肉体和精神存在形式的短暂性？是更深层次的“我”，这个“我”与过去或未来无关。



若每一个念头都能够吸引你全部的注意力，那就意味着你认同了你头脑中的那个声音，于是这些思想将充满自我感，这就是小我，一个由大脑造就的“我”。

\* \* \* \*

人生充满困境，当所有的恐惧与欲望占据了你大部分的精力，请问我们还剩下什么呢？只剩下一个一两英寸长的破折号，刻在你墓碑上的出生日期与死亡日期之间。

对小我之我来说，这种想法沉闷而压抑，而对你来说，它却是一种解脱。

\* \* \* \*

若每一个念头都能够吸引你全部的注意力，那就意味着你认同了你头脑中的那个声音，于是这些思想将充满自我感，这就是小我，一个由大脑造就的“我”。这种大脑构造的自我感残缺不全、朝不保夕，因此恐惧与欲望才主导了它的情绪，成为了它的驱动力量。

当你发觉头脑里有一个声音总是假扮你，而且喋喋不休时，你便从对思考的无意识认同中苏醒了过来。当你注意到那个声音，你会发现所谓的你并不是那个声音，也不是那个思考者，而是意识到它存在的人。

这种知晓你就是那隐于声音背后的知觉，便是自由。

\* \* \* \*

小我之我总是忙于寻找，寻找更多各种各样的东西来填补自己，使自己更加完整，这便解释了小我为什么总是不由自主地关注未来。

无论何时，只要你意识到自己在“为下一刻而活”，你便跨越了小我的思维模式，同时，将全部注意力投入当下的可能性也出现了。

当你把全部注意力投入于此时此刻，一种远比小我思维更加伟大的智性便进入了你的生命。

\* \* \* \*

只要你活在小我之中，你会不断将当下的时刻贬低成一种达到目的的手段。你只是在为未来而活，但当你达到目的后，你却依然无法得到满足，至少不会得到长久的满足。

当你更多地关注行动的过程，而不是关注通过它可以达到怎样的结果，你便打破了小我的制约模式。

于是，你的工作不仅会进行得更有效，而且还会带给你极大的满足与愉悦。

\* \* \* \*

几乎所有的小我都包含了一个我们称之为“受害者身份”的因素。有的人心中的受害者形象异常清晰，甚至成为他们小我概念的

核心内容，怨恨和牢骚便成为他们自我感的重要组成部分。

即使你的抱怨已经完全“解除”，你已经为自己构造了一种身份，这个身份更像一个由思维模式筑造的牢笼。看看你在对自己做什么啊，看看你的大脑在对你做什么啊。感受一下你对悲惨故事的情感依赖吧，体会一下你咀嚼、讲述悲惨故事的冲动吧，犹如现场目击证人般地察觉你的内在状态吧。你不需要有任何作为，因为有了知觉，转变与自由便会随之产生。

\* \* \* \*

抱怨与反抗是小我最钟爱的思维模式，通过它们，小我强化了自己。对大多数人来说，对各种事物的抱怨和反抗构成了他们心理活动的很大一部分内容。通过抱怨和反抗，来使别人或者某个情形变成“错的”，而使自己变成“对的”。因为自己是“对的”，你产生一种优越感，从而加强了你的自我感。当然，你只是在强化小我的假象罢了。

你能认清自己内在的心智模式吗？你能明白你头脑中抱怨不断的声音究竟是什么吗？

\* \* \* \*

小我的自我感需要矛盾冲突，通过不断的抗争，通过展示哪个是“我”、哪个不是“我”，小我才得以强化自己的独特性身份。

部落、民族与信徒之间往往通过树立敌人来巩固自己的集体认同感。试问，如果没有“异教徒”，又何来“教徒”？

\* \* \* \*

与人相处时，你能否察觉到自己内在一些细微的感受，一种在别人面前要么盛气凌人要么自卑自贬的感受？这时你察觉到的正是小我，它借由比较而存活。

妒忌是小我的副产品，如果某人遇到了某件好事，或者某人拥有的比你多，知道的比你多，或者能做的比你多，小我便觉有失颜面。小我的身份期待被认可，渴求更多的对比。如果都比输了，小我便将失败归咎于世事的不公、遗传的缺陷，以此来加强虚假的自我感。



你的自我感来自什么样的虚构情节、什么样的故事呢？

\* \* \* \*

小我有一种需求，它需要去反对、抗拒、排外，以此维持它赖以生存的分离感。所以，“我”是用来对抗“他人”的，“我们”是用来对抗“他们”的。

小我需要与某事或某人对立、冲突，这就解释了为什么你总在寻求平和、愉悦与爱，但却无法长时间容忍它们的存在。你说你想要幸福，却对不幸情有独钟。

你的不幸并非源于你的生活境况，而是源于你的大脑机制。

你是否对于做过的某件事或未做成的某件事而感到内疚？可以肯定的是：你当时是依据你的意识或无意识行事的。如果当时你能够更理智、更清醒，那么你就可能会另有所为。

内疚是小我为了构造一个身份、一种自我感所做的另外一种尝试。小我不在乎那个自我是正面的或是负面的。你所成就的、未成就的其实就是一种无意识的表现，是一种人类无意识的外在显化。然而，小我将其拟人化了，说“是我做的。”于是你内心就出现一个“糟糕的”自我形象。

纵观历史，人类彼此施加了无数残忍的伤害行为，这个过程还在延续。这些行为都要受到谴责吗？都是罪过吗？或者这些行为仅仅是无意识的表现，是人类成长的必经之路？

耶稣说：“父啊，赦免他们吧，因为他们不知道自己在做什



么。”这句话同样也适用于你。

\* \* \* \*

如果为了自身的自由、强势，或为了加重自己在别人心里的分量，你设立下小我的目标，那么即使你达成了这些目标，也终究无法得到满足。

你可以设定目标，但要知道，达成目标并不重要。万物均源于临在，当下的时刻并非一种达到目标的手段，这样过程的每一刻都会让我们感到满足。只有小我才会把“当下”贬低为一种达成目标的手段。

\* \* \* \*

“无我，无问题。”当有人问及佛法更深层的含义时，佛祖如是说。

## 第4章 活在当下



表面上看，当下仅是众多片刻中的一刻，生命中的每一天似乎都是由无数的片刻所组成。但若你能看得更真切一些，你不觉得片刻难道不是只有一个吗？生命何不总是“此刻”呢？

当下，是你唯一永远无法逃离的现实，它贯穿了你生命的始终。无论发生什么，无论你的生活改变了多少，有一件事情是不变的：你总是处于当下。

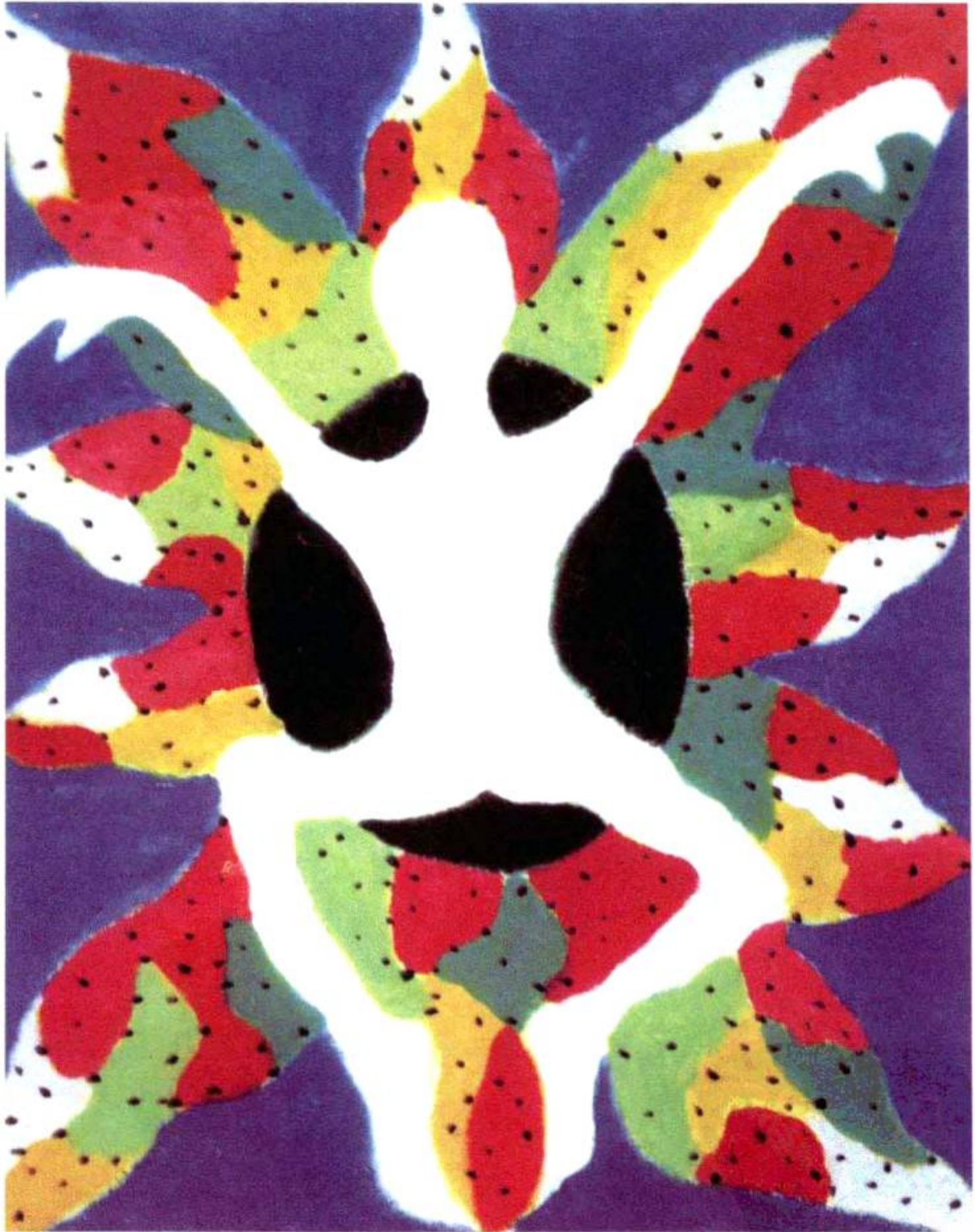
既然无法逃离当下，那么何不欢迎它的到来，与之友善相处呢？

\* \* \* \*

与当下成了朋友，无论身处何方，你都会有种宾至如归的感觉。在当下无法感到自在，无论你去哪里，都会觉得不安。

当下就是当下，从来如此，何不顺其自然呢？

\* \* \* \*



念头、情绪、感知，以及你所经历的一切，构成了你生命的全部。

大脑将人生分成过去、现在和未来，这种划分是多么虚无缥缈啊！过去和未来只不过是一种思维模式、一种精神概念。过去不过是当下的记忆，你记住的也只是发生在当下的事情，你也只能在当下记住它而已。未来降临，便立刻成为当下。因此，只有当下才是真实的、存在的。

\* \* \* \*

专注于当下并非否认生活中的需求，而是明白什么才是最重要的，因此你便能泰然自若地处理其他次要的事情了。不能说“世上只有当下，我不再理会其他了”，绝非如此。首先弄清楚什么是最重要的，然后与当下结为挚友，而非仇敌。认可当下，赞美当下。如果当下成为你生命的基石，生活便能够安然行进。

\* \* \* \*

收拾碗筷，拟定商务策略，或者规划一次旅行，重要的是什么呢？是过程，还是结果更重要呢？是此刻，还是未来某个时刻更重要呢？

\* \* \* \*

你把当下看做是一个需要克服的障碍吗？你觉得未来有更重要

的当下要去费心吗？

几乎人人都是如此，舍弃当下，忧虑未来。既然未来永不可及，就不应该为未来而活，只会带来不安、紧张和不满。为未来而活，就是对生命的不敬，因为生命就在当下，绝非他时。

\* \* \* \*

去感受体内的活力吧，是它让你活在当下。

其实你若不为当下负责，那么你便无法对生命负责，因为只有当下才是生命的唯一栖息之所。

对当下负责，就是指你内心不必抵制当下种种“现实情况”，不必与现状争辩，而与当下友好相处、携手共进。

当下就是当下，始终如一、从未改变，因为它也只能如此。佛教徒早已领悟，物理学家业已证实：宇宙万物绝非独立存在，宇宙万物皆有关联。表象之下，一切事物相互关联、相互影响。表象只是宇宙万物在当下时刻的显形。

当你对现实情况说“是”，你便认同了生命本身的力量与智性。唯有如此，你才能影响这个世界，使之产生积极的转变。

\* \* \* \*


接受当下发生的一切吧，无论是身内之物还是身外之物。这是一个简单而彻底的灵修练习法。

\* \* \* \*

当你的注意力指向当下，你会清醒，好像从梦中醒来，从思想的梦境中醒来，从过去之梦与未来之梦中醒来。多么清晰，多么简单，再也不用为问题所困扰，因为你只活在当下。

\* \* \* \*

当你把注意力指向当下，你会发现，生命是如此神圣。你所接触、感受到的一切，都是那么神圣。你在当下活得越久，你对“存在”的简单而深刻的欢乐，对一切生命的庄严与神圣感受也就越多。



当你对事情的实际情况说“是”，你便认同了生命本身的力量与智性。



\* \* \* \*

大多数人将当下与当下发生的事情混为一谈，其实两者非一体，前者比后者更为深刻，前者不过是后者的栖息之所。

因此，不要再将当下发生的事情与当下混为一谈，当下比当下发生的一切都更深、更广。

\* \* \* \*

当你步入当下，你便挣脱了大脑的桎梏，思想的涓涓细流便放慢了脚步。这时，任何念头都无法完全占据你的注意力。念头与念头之间便产生了空隙，生出了宽广与寂然之感。你会发现，你远比你自己的念头更浩瀚深邃。

\* \* \* \*

念头、情绪、感知，以及你所经历的一切，构成了你生命的全部。此时，“我的生命”便成为自我感的源泉，“我的生命”便心满意足，至少小我之我会这么认为。

你一直在忽视一个显而易见的事实：你心底的“我是”与你生活中发生的任何事情都没有关系，“我是”与内容无关，“我是”永远只与当下有关。无论年少还是迟暮，健康还是疾病，成功还是失败，“我是”，即当下存在的空间，是不会发生根本性改变的。

我们常常将“我是”混同为内容，因此，我们只能模糊地、间接地感受到“我是”或当下。换句话说，你的存在感被你的境遇、思想及许多俗事所遮蔽，于是，当下随着时间的流逝而日渐模糊。

你忘记了你是根植于存在的，忘记了你原有的神性，以至迷失于大千世界之中。当人类忘记了自己是谁，迷惑、愤怒、沮丧、暴力以及冲突便会接踵而至。

然而，要唤回真理，回归本性又是那么容易：你要坚信，我并非我的念头、情绪、感知和经历的产物，我不是我生命的内容，我就是生命，我就是那个万事万物栖身的空间。我就是当下，我就是“我是”！



## 第5章 真实的你



“当下”与最深层的“你”密不可分。

\* \* \* \*

生命中重要的事情很多，但绝对重要的只有一件。

在世俗眼光中，成功与否很重要，健康与否很重要，学识高低与否很重要，富裕与否很重要，这些都会给你的生活带来很大的影响。相对而言，上述事项确实重要，但不是绝对重要。生活中有一件比上述任何事项更重要的事情，就是弄清楚“你究竟是谁”。这个本质问题超越了你有限的个体存在，超越了你那转瞬即逝的个体自我感。

寻得内心的平和，靠梳理你的生活是做不到的，唯一可行的方法就是深刻地理解你是谁。

\* \* \* \*

如果来世你依然弄不清楚你是谁，那么转世投胎也帮不了你。



人不可能成为自己认识的对象。只要你把自己当成认识的对象，小我认同的错觉便会出现。当你说：“那就是我。”你就与自己形成了一种对立关系，你就开始向别人、向自己讲述你的故事了。

\* \* \* \*

地球上所有的苦难，皆源于“我”或“我们”这样的个人意识，它遮蔽了你的真正面目。如果你无法认识你的本体，最终会迷失了自我，就是这么简单。不知道自己是谁，大脑就会创造出一个自我形象来代替你美丽而神圣的本体，渐渐地你对这个害怕而又贪婪的自我产生了依赖感。

保护并强化这种虚假的自我感成为你生活的最重要的驱动力。

\* \* \* \*

许多习惯用语，甚至语言结构本身，都揭示了这样一个事实：人们不清楚自己是谁。人们会说，“他丢了性命”，“我的小命没了”，好像命是你能够拥有或丢弃的东西一样。然而，事实是：你无法拥有生命，你就是生命本身。世上只有所谓的“生命统一体”，它是弥漫于天地之间的纯意识，一块顽石、一片绿叶、一个动物、一对男女、一颗星辰、一个星系，都是意识的形，都是它短暂存在的外在形象。

你从内心深处能够感受到你已经懂了吗？你能够感受到自己其实就是宇宙“生命统一体”的一部分吗？

生活中的绝大多数事情都需要时间去完成：掌握一项新技术、



建造一栋房子、成为一名专家、沏好一杯绿茶……然而，对于生活中最核心的一件事情来说，时间是徒劳无用的。那就是，自我了悟，那就是逾越自我、逾越姓名、逾越躯壳、逾越过去，了解你究竟是谁。

你无法在过去或是未来觅得自己，唯一可以找到自己的时刻就是当下。

灵性的寻觅者期待在未来寻得本我意识，寻得顿悟。如果你信，你就真的需要时间去寻觅，直到你明白你本不需要时间去认清你是谁。

\* \* \* \*

凝视一棵树，你去感知它的存在；有了一闪而过的念头，你察觉它的到来和消逝；遇上快乐或痛苦的事情，你去体会个中的



滋味。

这些表述貌似显而易见、稀松平常，但仔细观察，你会发现它们的句式结构中都包含着一个微妙的错觉，一个语言运用中难以避免的错觉。思想与语言创造了一个实际上并不存在的个体。事实上：你不是觉察到树木、思想、情感、经历的某个人，你就是知觉或意识本身，上述你所察觉的对象就存在于你的知觉或意识当中，并因它们而显现。

当你忙于生计时，你能够意识到自己就是那份知觉吗？你的生命画卷就铺陈于你的知觉之中。

\* \* \* \*

你说：“我想了解我自己。”其实，你就是行为的主体，你就是行为本身，你就是感知到万事万物的意识本身。意识无法感知意识，意识就是意识本身。

这就是最根本的认识，除此之外再没什么需要了解的了，因为你的一切认识都源自于此。作为主体的我无法将自身变成被认知或被感觉的对象。

所以，人不可能成为自己认识的对象。只要你把自己当成认识的对象，小我认同的错觉便会出现。当你说：“那就是我。”你就与自己形成了一种对立关系，你就开始向别人、向自己讲述你的故事了。

\* \* \* \*

但当你明白你就是表象所栖身的知觉时，你便开始摆脱对表象的依赖，不再从环境、地点、状况中寻求自我。换句话说，已发生的事和未发生的事都不再重要，世间的一切都不再沉重，活泼与愉悦开始降临于你的生命。你认识到世界就是一个万花筒，就是一场多彩的人生大戏，不多，也不少，如此而已。

\* \* \* \*

认识到你究竟是谁，一种永恒不变的平和感便油然而生。你可以称之为“喜悦”，因为那就是喜悦，这生机勃勃的平和就是喜悦。喜悦的是，你认识到你自己正是多彩生命的本质核心。这便是“存在”的喜悦，这便是作为真我的喜悦。



\* \* \* \*

正如水有固态、液态和气态之分一样，意识也可以被“固化”为物质，“液化”为大脑和思想，或者“气化”为无形的纯意识。

纯意识就是生命显现前的状态，“生命”透过“你的”双眸看世界，因为你就是意识。当你知晓这一点，你便能从万事万物中认出自己，明白无误，你不再是背负着沉重过去的一个实体，不再是解读人生经历的一组概念。

当你能够抛却这种解读的方式来感知这个世界，你便能够察觉事物的真正面目。在鲜活与宁静中，我们的感知在航行。

通过“你”，无形的意识知觉到了它自己。

\* \* \* \*

多数人的生活都被欲望与恐惧掌控着，得不到自由。

欲望是想给自身添加更多的东西，以使自身更加完整。而一切的恐惧都来源于害怕失去，害怕变得孱弱和渺小。

这两者都掩盖了一个事实，那就是我们无法给予或抛弃“存在”。“存在”已经以一种完整的姿态成为了你的一部分，而且就在“当下”。



## 第6章 接受与臣服



如果可以，请随时“内省”一下，看看你是否在有意无意地制造内心与外在境遇之间的冲突，看看你在哪里，和谁相伴，在做什么，有什么想法和感受。当你与实际状况对抗时，你能感觉到你的内心是多么煎熬、多么困苦不堪吗？

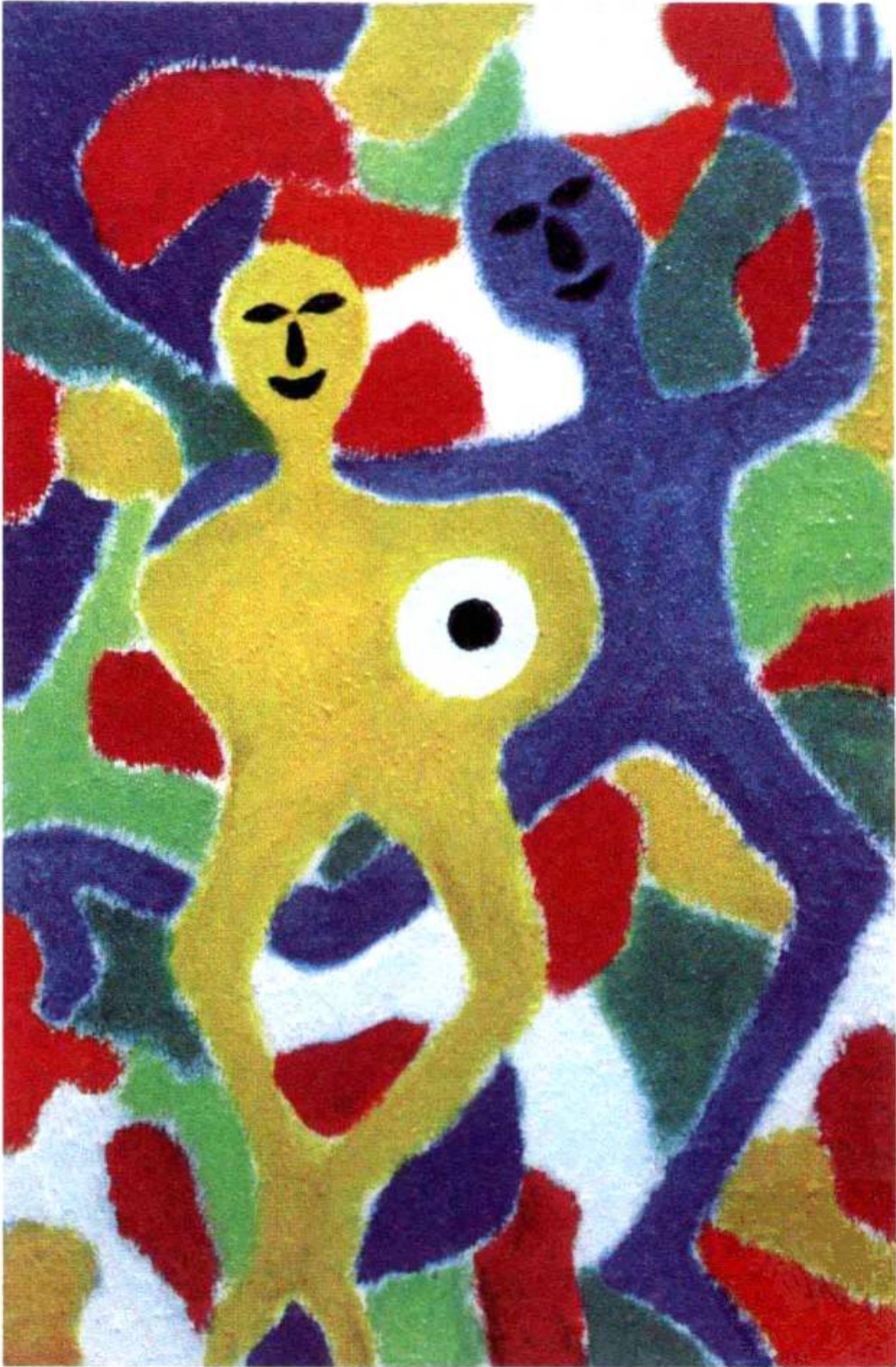
你若有此感觉，你便意识到你能够自由地抛开这种毫无意义的冲突，放弃这种内心的斗争。

\* \* \* \*

如果让你把你内心的真实想法用语言表达出来，那么每一天你有多少次会说“我不想在这里”？当你极不情愿地待在你身处的地方，比如交通堵塞的路段、难熬的工作场所、拥挤的候机大厅，抑或是不愿相处的人身旁，你会有什么感觉？的确，有些地方你确实不想待，而且走开也许是最适当的。然而，许多情况下，离开并不可取。几乎毫无例外，“我不想待在这里”的想法不仅毫无用处，而且于事无补，更使你和他人都感到不快。

常言道：“既来之，则安之。”换句话说，要永远“身在哪儿





当你对生活的“实际情况”俯首称“是”时，当你依实际状况全然地接纳了此刻的一切，你将在心底感到真正的平静和深沉的喜悦。

里，心就在哪里”。这一点真的很难接受吗？

\* \* \* \*

你非得在心里为每一个知觉和每一个经历贴上标签吗？与周遭的人与事发生冲突时，你真的要对生活作出反应，表达出你的好恶吗？这种根深蒂固的习惯难道不可以破除吗？其实，你破除它，根本易如反掌，只需接受这一时刻的存在便可。

\* \* \* \*

习惯性和反应性的“不”恰恰强化了小我，而回应“是”却能削弱它。臣服之后你的身份，也就是这种小我，是无法存活的。

\* \* \* \*

“我有太多事情要做。”是的，但你所做的事情质量如何呢？开车去上班，与客户洽谈，在电脑前工作，跑腿打杂，处理多如牛毛的日常事务时，你到底投入了多少呢？你是心甘情愿的还是心怀不满呢？态度决定一切，心甘情愿的还是心怀不满决定人生成功与否，而且无关乎你付出了多少的努力。因为付出努力意味着你要承受重重压力，绷紧神经，意味着你需要在未来达到一定的目标或是得到一定的结果。

你能否察觉到你内心深处，哪怕最细微的那一点想法，正在抵触你所做的事情吗？这种抵触是对生命的否定，若真是如此，想成功是不可能的。如果你发觉了你内心的这种抵触，那么，你愿意抛开它，全身心地投入到你所做的事情当中去吗？

\* \* \* \*

“一次做好一件事情。”一位禅宗大师如此这般定义禅宗的本质。

“一次做好一件事情”指的是你要全身心地投入到你所做的事情当中，倾注你百分之百的关注。这是臣服的行为，是强化自我的行为。

\* \* \* \*

接受现实情况，你便可能到达更深的层次，在那个层次上，你内心的状态以及你的自我感，将不再依赖于大脑所做出的或“好”或“坏”的评判。

当你对生活的“实际情况”俯首称“是”时，当你依实际状况全然地接纳了此刻的一切，你将在心底感到真正的平静和深沉的喜悦。

表面上，你还是因为艳阳高照而兴高采烈，因为阴雨连绵而闷闷不乐；你也会因为赢得百万大奖而欢欣鼓舞，因为丧失家财而难

过沮丧。然而，幸福或是不幸都不会影响太多。它们都只是你“生命存在”表层泛起的圈圈涟漪而已。无论外在条件怎样，你内心深处始终能够保持一片平和，不为外界的纷繁复杂所打扰。

臣服于“事情的真实状况”，将揭示你内心的深度。它不依赖于任何外部条件，也不由内在持续波动的思想与情绪所控制。它是自由的，是最真实的你。

当你意识到任何经历都是转瞬即逝的，认识到这个世界无法赋予你任何价值永恒的东西时，你会轻而易举地学会臣服。臣服之后，你会继续与别人见面聊天，继续经风雨见世面，继续参与各种活动，完全抛开小我的欲望及恐惧。也就是说，你不再希冀某个情形、某个人或是某件事让你感到满足或是开心了。你认可了事物的短暂与不完美的本质。

当你不再希冀什么时，奇迹发生了——你竟会开始满足于每一



个情形、每一个人、每一个地点以及每一件事，一切都变得更加和谐、更加平和了。

\* \* \* \*

当你完全接受了当下，当你不再与真实状况争辩不休，强迫性的思考便慢慢停歇，取而代之的是一种警醒的宁静感。你拥有清醒的意识，但你的大脑不再以任何方式来标注此时此刻。这种内心没有抗拒的状态会将你带入一种自由意识当中，这是人类大脑无法与之比拟的。这种巨大的智性能够通过你进行自我表达，并由内而外帮助你。这就是为什么在你放下了内心的抗拒情绪之后，往往会发现周遭的一切都变得更加美好。

\* \* \* \*

我在说“快乐地享受此时此刻，高兴起来”吗？没有。  
我是说：接受此时此刻的“实际情况”，足矣。

\* \* \* \*

臣服是对此时此刻的臣服，并不是对一个故事的臣服，也不是要你通过这个故事诠释此时此刻，并向它举手投降，卑躬屈膝。

比如，你可能身有残疾，不能再走路了，情况就是这样。

也许，你的大脑正在编造一个故事：“我命该走到这个地步，我就要在这把轮椅上了却残生了，生活对我太不公平，我不该这么倒霉啊。”

在这种情况下，你能够接受此时此刻的“实际情况”吗？你能够不将它与大脑创造出来的故事混为一谈吗？

\* \* \* \*

当你不再抱怨“我怎么会摊上这事呢”的时候，你，便臣服了。

\* \* \* \*

即使是看似难以接受、痛苦不堪的情况也隐藏了一个更深层次的善意，每一场灾难背后都蕴含着一颗恩泽的种子。纵观历史，人们在损失巨大、疾病缠身、镣铐加身或者临近死亡时，选择接受那看似无法接受的现实的人们，都找到了“不可思议的平静”。

接受无法接受的，便是获得世上恩泽的最好方法。

\* \* \* \*

可能有时一切答案和解释都没有用，生命也失去了意义，或者某个沮丧的人向你寻求帮助，而你却不知道做什么或者对他说

什么。

当你完全接受了你手足无措的事实，放弃了用有限的大脑苦思冥想寻找答案时，一种更伟大的智性便开始在你的身体中运转起来。于是你便能够从中有所收获，因为这更伟大的智性能够沁入你的身体并对你有所启发。

有时候臣服意味着“不再尝试去理解”，尽管“不知道”，也能处之泰然。

\* \* \* \*

你认识这样一些人吗？他们生命的目的似乎就是为自己和他人带来痛苦、散播不幸。请原谅他们吧，因为他们也属于人性觉醒的一部分。他们的作用就是强化小我的意识，强化不臣服的状态。这



一切跟这个人没有关系，因为那不是他们真正的本质。

\* \* \* \*

可以说，臣服是从抗拒到接受，从“不”到“是”的一种内在转换过程。

臣服了，你的自我感便发生了转变，从对某事物有所反感，进行某种评判转变成了容纳这种反感或评判。从对形式的认同，即对思想或情绪的认同，转变到活出自我、认可自我，就是那无形的、宽阔的知觉本身。

\* \* \* \*

完全接受，你便获得平和，包括接受你接受不了的事实，包括你抗拒不受的事实。

不要干扰生命，顺其自然吧！





## 第7章 在大自然中灵修



我们仰赖自然不仅是为了肉体存活，我们也仰仗它找到回家的路，找到逃离思维牢笼的路。因为，我们已经迷失在工作中、思考中、回忆中、期盼中，迷失在在错综复杂的事情中，迷失在问题重重的世界中。

我们已经忘却了那些岩石、植物、动物都知晓的东西，已经忘却了如何生存：求得寂静、活出本我、寻得生命，而这才是生命之所在。

\* \* \* \*

每当你关注于任何自然之物，关注于那些草长莺飞、花谢春红、腐草为萤的生命，关注于任何没有被人类干涉过的存在，你便能够跨越大脑思维的牢笼。从某种程度上说，你与存在于这些事物中的生命本质相连接了。在这存在之中，一切自然之物依然鲜活如初。

把注意力投向一块石头、一棵树木或一只动物，并不是要你动用大脑的力量去思考它，而是要你单纯地去感知它，用你的意识感



当你感知到植物散发出宁静与平和的那一刻，那株植物便是你的心灵导师了。

受它，用你的灵性与它进行一次谈话。

大自然会向你泄露它的些许奥秘，让你感受到它是多么的宁静，因而，宁静便会在你的心中冉冉升起。你能感到宁静是多么深沉地停留在“存在”之中，并完全接受“存在”，与“存在”所处的地方融为一体，互不分离。如此感受之中，你也会渐入佳境，心静如水。

\* \* \* \*

当你在大自然中悠然地漫步或憩息时，请全身心地投入其中吧，并向那个世界致以最崇高的敬意！寂静下来，去看、去听。观察每一只动物，每一株植物，看看它们都是怎样的怡然自得、悠哉乐哉。它们不像人类，不会将自己分裂成两半，它们也不仰赖自我创造出来的形象而存活。所以，它们不需要努力保护和强化那些所谓的形象。小鹿就是小鹿，水仙花就是水仙花，毫不矫揉造作、惺惺作态。

自然万物不仅各自融为一体，彼此之间也血脉相连，同时和整体宇宙浑然一致。它们没有那么强烈的自我感，不会把自己从这个共生的整体中分离出来，不会自称自己是一个独立的存在，更不会骄傲地定义出“我”相对于宇宙的其他部分而存在。

对大自然冥想，把你从“我”——那个麻烦制造者之中解放出来。

\* \* \* \*

将知觉投向大自然那些细微的声音吧！那里有风中落叶的沙沙声，有雨点落下的滴答声，有嗡嗡作响的虫鸣声，有破晓鸟鸣的啾啾声……全神贯注地去聆听吧！在这些声音之外，还有一个更加伟大的东西，那是一种神圣感，一种无法通过思考来理解的神圣感。

\* \* \* \*

你的身体不是你创造的，同样，你也无法控制你身体的各种功能。事实上，那都是由一个比人类思维更加伟大的智性所运作的，它维系着大自然一切生命的繁衍生息。你要学会感知你内在的能量场，感受体力那蓬勃的力量，感受它在你身体内振奋人心的“临



在”，因为这是接近那种智性最好的方法。

\* \* \* \*

顽皮的小狗追逐着简单的快乐，对主人毫无条件的爱，时刻欢庆生命。狗主人的内心状态却与之有着鲜明的反差。狗主人整日忧郁沮丧、烦闷无奈，不堪生活中层出不穷的问题与负荷，总是发呆沉思、郁郁满怀，一颗心全然不在此时此刻，不在当下。我不禁想问：和这样一个人一起生活，这只狗是如何始终保持快乐心态如此喜悦的呢？

\* \* \* \*

当你仅仅通过大脑和思考来感受大自然，你是无法感受到它的鲜活与存在的。你只能看到它的外壳，却意识不到这样的外壳下面有着多么神圣的奥秘。思维将大自然贬低为一种用来追求利益、知识或是其他功利性东西的工具。于是，悲剧发生了：古老的森林变成了木材；鸟儿变成了研究对象；山峦变成了被开采的矿场或是被征服的目标。当你试图感知大自然的奥秘时，请不要运用思想，也不要带上大脑。当你不再用思维和大脑接近大自然时，它会对你做出积极的回应，并且开始参与到人类与地球意识的进化中来。

请看看吧，一朵花是以怎样的方式活在当下？又是以怎样的方式臣服于生命？



\* \* \* \*

你可曾真正地观察过你家里的花草？你可曾允许那熟悉又神秘，被我们称为“植物”的生命体，向你教授它的秘密？你可曾留意过它处于多么深沉的平和之中？你可曾意识到它是如何被宁静所笼罩着？当你感知到植物散发出宁静与平和的那一刻，那株植物便是你的心灵导师了。

\* \* \* \*

凝视一只动物、一朵花、一棵树，看看它是如何安然地停留于存在之中的。它就是它自己，有着无上的尊严、纯真与神圣。然而，你要想看到这些，你需要超越为自然命名和归类的思维习惯。不命名、不标注，你便能感受大自然那妙不可言的维度，那不是大脑思考就能够明白，五官感觉便能够获知的。它是一种和谐、一份神圣，弥漫于整个大自然中，也渗透于你的内心。

\* \* \* \*

你呼吸的空气就是大自然，而呼吸的过程本身也属于大自然。当你全神贯注于呼吸的时候，你就会发现自己并没有在呼吸。呼吸本来就是自然的行为。如果你刻意地去吐故纳新，那么你很快

会窒息而亡；如果你能将自己放松下来，大自然的气息又会重新回到你的身体里。

感知你的呼吸，并全神贯注于此，你便能够以最亲密、最强大的方式再一次接触大自然。它可以治愈你心灵的疾病并赋予你极大的力量。它带来了意识中的一次大转换，从思维的概念的世界到无制约意识的内心世界的转换。

\* \* \* \*

你需要大自然这样一位老师，引导你与“存在”重新联结，重新融为一体。不只你需要大自然，大自然也需要你。

你与自然不可分离，因为我们都是宇宙共同体的一部分，它以无数形式彰显着自己的存在，这些形式之间互相紧密相接、血肉相



连。当你发觉一朵花或一棵树是如此神圣、美丽、宁静与庄严时，你便为那朵花或那棵树添加了些东西。透过你的认识与你的知觉，大自然也逐渐了解了它自己。因为你，它开始了解了它们自身的美丽与神圣。

于是，一个寂静的空间把大自然的一切纳于它的怀里，这其中也包括你。

\* \* \* \*

只有你的内心寂静下来的时候，你才能步入岩石、植株、动物所栖息的宁静所在。只有当你喧闹的思维趋于平静的时候，你才能更深层次地接触大自然，才能超越因过度思考而带来的分离感，才能融入生命。

思维诞生之前，大自然就已存在于纯粹的宁静之中了。丛丛树木、朵朵花开、啾啾鸟禽、重重巉岩美得无瑕而神圣。人变得宁静之后，便能超越思维。而在超越思维的那片宁静之地，你的知觉和认识就得到了升华。

大自然可以带你进入宁静，这是大自然馈赠予你的礼物。当你在宁静之乡感知并拥抱着大自然，你的知觉便融入其中，那便是你给予大自然的礼物。

透过你，大自然开始察觉到自身的存在，千万年来，大自然一直在默默地等待着你。

## 第8章 人与人之间的关系



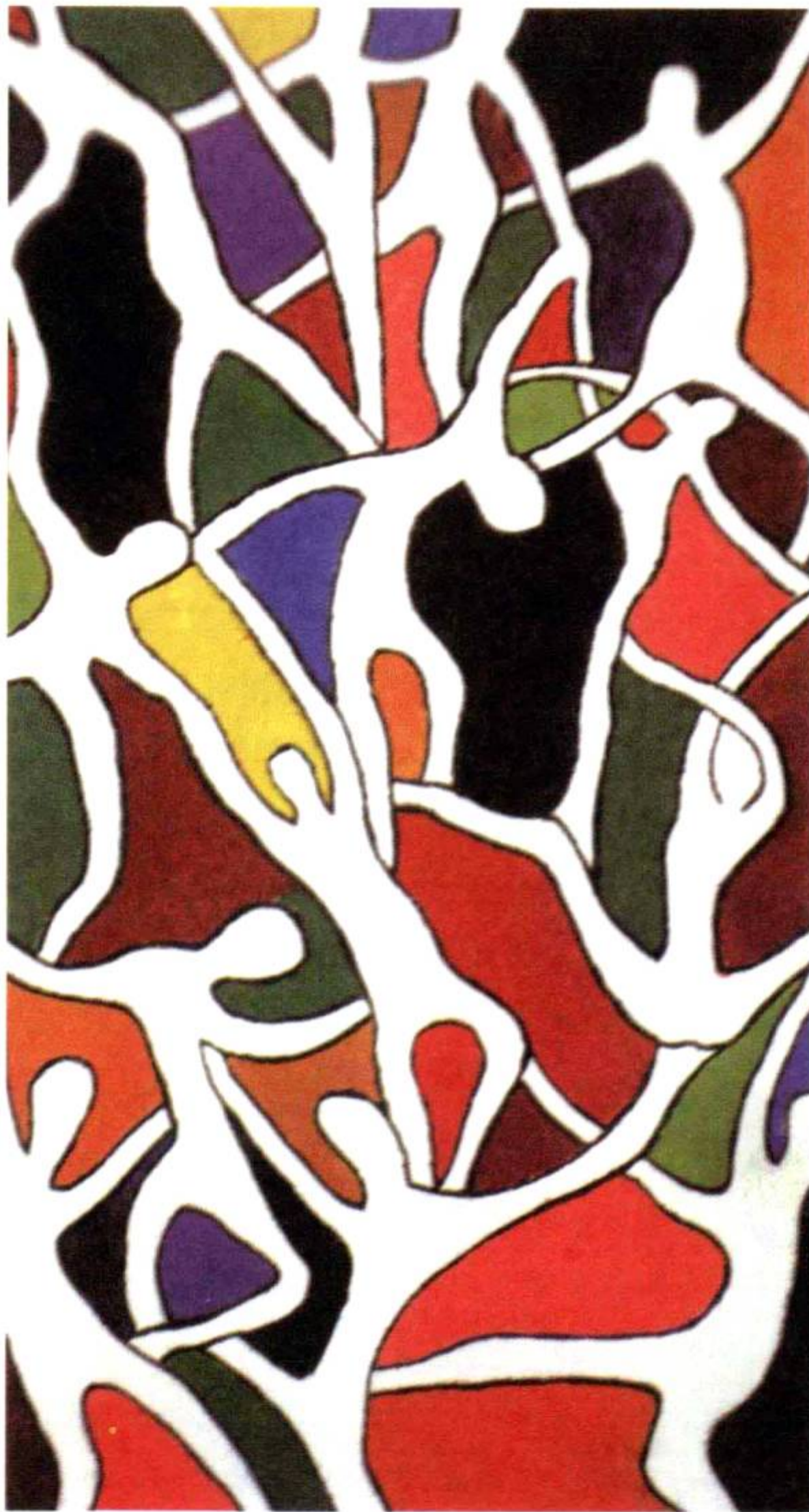
我们总是以迅雷不及掩耳之势形成对一个人的看法，给他下定论。小我总是喜欢给别人贴上标签，给别人一个确定身份，对别人进行道义的裁决。

每个人的思维和行动方式都被限定，限定于遗传基因、童年经历和文化氛围。但这并非他们的真实模样，而是他们所表现出来的外在状态。当你评价别人时，你混淆了自身受限的思维模式和别人的真实情况。因此，评判别人无疑就是严重受制于诸多因素而又源于下意识的行为。你给予别人一个概念性的身份，而这个虚假的身份不仅像一个牢笼一样困住了那个人，同时也套牢了你自己。

\* \* \* \*

放弃评判并不意味着你忽视他们的所作所为，你只需将他们的行为看作是一种条件反射行为而已。你看见了，如实地接受而已，你不必据此为对方建构一个虚假的身份。

放弃评判，让你解脱，也让别人解脱，不再认同那些制约因素、表现形式，以及大脑思维。小我便不再左右你的社会关系。



人类彼此的互动，可以是炼狱，  
但也可以成为伟大的灵性修行场。

\* \* \* \*

一旦小我控制了你的生活，你大部分的思想、情绪和行动就会被为欲望与恐惧所驱动。于是在人际关系里，你不是想从别人那里得到点什么，就是害怕别人给予你些什么。

你想得到的，无非是快乐、金钱、认可、赞赏、关注，或者自我感的强化。通过对比，通过展现你傲人的身份、财富、见识，你得到了你想得到的东西。而你所担心的，则恰好和上述情形相反，你的自我感逐渐被所得到的东西削弱。

当你全神贯注于你所临在的此时此刻，而不是利用它来达到某种目的，你便超越了小我，超越了那种无意识地利用别人强化自身利益的冲动。当你专心与人互动，你们之间不存在过去和未来，除非互动的目的是解决生活琐事。当你专心面对他人时，你便摒弃了你所杜撰的有关他们是谁、他们过去言行之类的概念性的身份意识。你开始与人互动，不再为小我反复感受的欲望与恐惧所支配。专注，即警醒的宁静，就是解决一切问题的关键。

真好啊，能够超越人际关系中的种种欲望与恐惧！爱，无需无惧！

\* \* \* \*

与人交往时，如果她的过去便是你的过去，她的痛苦就是你的痛苦，她的意识水平也是你的意识水平，你便会和她一样地思考，



一样地行动。当你意识到了这一点，你便学会了宽恕与同情，从而获得平和。

当然，小我并不喜欢聆听这样的教诲。当你无法做出反应，不能做出裁决，小我就会失力，走向衰败。

\* \* \* \*

你所认识的人是会改变的，只要你在“当下”接纳他、推崇他、认可他。

\* \* \* \*

要想了解一个人的本性，你不需要真的知晓他的一切，比如



他的过去、他的历史、他的故事。我们往往混淆“了解”和“理解”，后者其实属于非概念性认识。“了解”和“理解”是完全不同的两种认知模式，前者与外在形式有关，后者存在于无形；前者借助思考，后者源于宁静。

“了解”有助于解决现实事务，想解决现实事务离了它确实不行。然而，一旦“了解”成为人际关系的主导模式，它就会具有某种局限性，甚至毁灭性。思想与概念制造了一条鸿沟，二者割裂人际关系，使交流与互动不再植根于“存在”的土壤之中，而是基于大脑的运作。只有消除了概念的鸿沟，爱才可能自然而然地现身于人类的所有互动行为之中。

\* \* \* \*

人类绝大多数的互动都局限于言语的交流，亦即思维领域，所以，互动中引入些许宁静，尤其在亲密关系间的互动中引入些许宁静，就显得非常重要了。

有了与宁静相伴的空灵感，一切的关系都会如火如荼地发展起来。与亲友一起在自然中冥想或共度安静时光吧。不论是外出散步，或是安坐于车上，或闲居于家里，尽量感受宁静与轻松吧。宁静不是创造的，也无需创造。接受业已存在的且为精神喧嚣遮蔽的宁静吧！

如果你失去了这广阔无垠的宁静，那么人际关系会被大脑所掌控，会轻而易举地被源源不断、层出不穷的问题和冲突所替代。但若宁静在，一切便可包容。

\* \* \* \*

真正的倾听是将宁静带入人际关系的另一种途径。当你开始真正地倾听某人时，宁静的疆域便缓缓地铺展开来，成为人际关系中至关重要的一部分。然而，很少有人善于真正的倾听。通常，交谈中思维占据了人们绝大部分的注意力，他们至多在掂量你说的话，或者在准备接下来要说什么。也许他们正忙于思考，根本无暇倾听。

真正的倾听远非听觉感知，它需要警醒的注意力，需要临在空间以感知话语。此刻，言辞变得不那么重要了，它们可能意义深远，也可能毫无意义。比倾听的内容更重要的是“倾听”这个动作本身，是伴随倾听的临在空间。这个空间是一个知觉的统一场，在这个统一场中，你不再受大脑思考创造出的重重障碍所干扰，你能够坦然地面对着另一个人。在这个场中，交际的对方已不再是“别人”，双方融为一体，融为一个知觉体、一个意识体。

\* \* \* \*

在与亲朋挚友交往时，你是否经历重复的戏剧性情节？是否因为芝麻大小的意见相左而激烈争论、伤痕累累？

这一切皆源于小我的基本模式：一方是“正确的”，另一方就是“错误的”。就是说，总想确认孰对孰错。除此之外，小我还有一个需求，就是期望周期性地与某事或某人发生冲突，以增强其在

“我”和“别人”之间的分离感。你要知道，没有了这种分离感，小我就无法存活。

另外，人心深处都存在一种积蓄已久、源于过去的情感伤痛。这些情感伤痛来自很久以前的个人经历，也来自人类久远以来的集体痛苦。这个“痛苦之身”是你体内的一个能量场，它会偶尔取代你，因为它需要经受更多情感上的伤痛来得以继续存活，来充实自己。它会尝试控制你的思想，让它深陷于负面的情绪之中难以自拔。它非常喜欢你的这些负面情绪，因为“痛苦之身”有着和它相同的振动频率，有着一致的步调，它依靠你的负面情绪存活下来。它会在你身边的人的心中，尤其是在你的伴侣心中，激发负面情绪，以期从接踵而至的冲突情节和情感伤痛中汲取存活的养分。

对伤痛毫无意识却又根深蒂固的认同感已经在你的生命中制造了太多的痛苦与哀伤，你将如何从中解脱出来呢？你必须直面情感伤痛的存在，你要清楚它不是真正的你，清楚它的本来面目：它是源于过去的伤痛。当它在你的伴侣或你自己身上出现时，请注意观察它。当你能够打破对它无意识的认同感，当你能够用你的内心察觉它，它便无法再向你汲取存活的能量，它将逐渐丧失其锋芒。

\* \* \* \*

人类彼此的互动，可以是炼狱，但也可以成为伟大的灵性修

行场。

\* \* \* \*

当你看到另一个人，并对他心生爱意的时候，或当你凝视着美妙的大自然并心潮澎湃时，请暂时闭上双眼，感受你心中的爱意和美感吧。你会发现，其实它们与真实的你密不可分。外在形式只是对你的内在本质的暂时映现，爱和美会永远伴你左右，而外在形式最终却会弃你而去，就是这个道理。

\* \* \* \*

你与这个物质构成的世界、与你周边数不胜数的事物，与你每



天需要处理的问题之间究竟有着怎样的关系呢？比如你坐的椅子、用的笔、开的车、买的杯子……对你来说它们只是一种达到目的的工具吗？你会偶尔承认它们的存在，无论这一刻多么短暂，留意它们、关注它们吗？

当你执著于这些物质时，当你利用它们来提高你在自己与他人眼中的价值时，这种对外在物质的关注会轻易地占据你的整个生命。当你的自我认同来自外在的事物，你将不会欣赏它们本身的模样，因为你只是忙于从中寻找自己罢了。

而当你开始欣赏一个物体的本来面貌，当你不带任何意向投射而承认其存在时，你会心怀感激地认可它的存在。你还会觉得它并非真的是了无生趣，至少你的感官感觉是如此。物理学家证实：从分子层面来说，物体确是一个搏动的能量场。忘我地欣赏周围的事物吧，这样你身边的世界会以各种方式变得生机勃勃，仅用大脑思考是无法理解这些方式的。

\* \* \* \*

不论遇到任何人，不管这一刻是多么短暂，你都会对他倾注你百分之百的注意力，承认他的存在吗？或者，你只是把他们当成为达到某种目的的工具、某种功能或角色？

你与超市收银员、停车场管理员、修理工或顾客如何交往呢？

只需片刻的关注就足够了。当你注视着他们，或者倾听他们的时候，你便拥有了片刻警觉的宁静。也许它只持续了两三秒钟，也

许更长一些，可是这段时间已足以让某种更真实的东西显现出来，它比我们通常扮演的角色和所认同的事情更加真实。所有的角色都是受制约的意识，即人类思维的一部分而已。而通过关注产生的东西是不受任何条件限制的，是隐藏在你的名字和外壳下最本质的你。你不再需要照本演出，你就是你自己。若此状态浮出心海，它也会唤醒别人心中的类似状态。

当然，我们见得最多的不是别人，而是自己。我们总是与自己相遇。

## 第9章 当死亡与永恒相遇





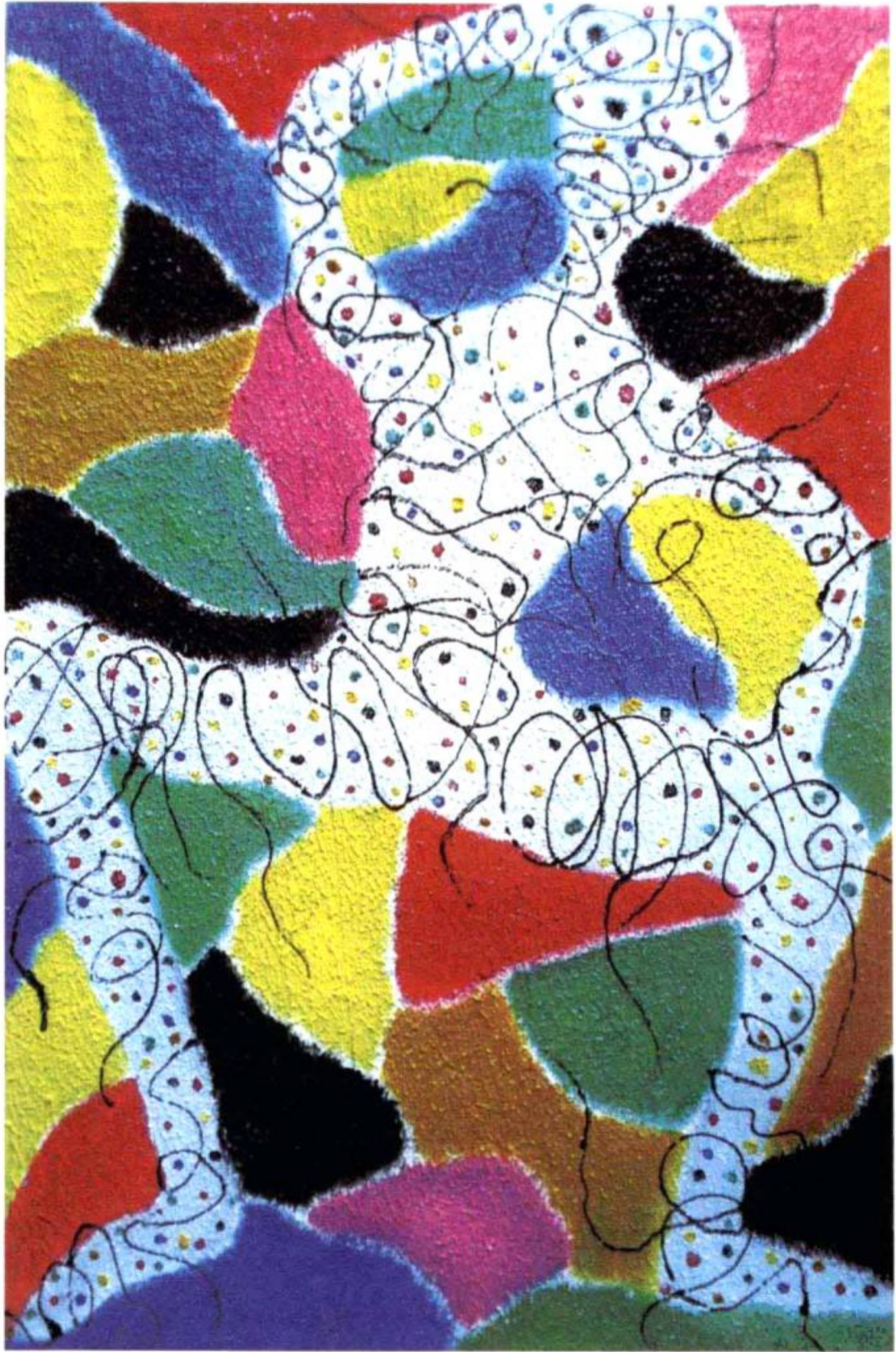
当你在一片未曾被人类足迹侵扰过的森林中漫步时，你会发现周遭丰富多彩的生命，它们世世代代在这里繁衍生息。然而，除了这些勃勃的生机，你还会看到倒下的大树、颓坏的树桩、腐烂的树叶，以及步履所及的一切衰败。环首四顾，你都会在发现生命的同时也会目睹死亡。

然后，上前一步，仔细观察，你会发现这些正在分解中的树枝与腐烂的树叶，不仅牺牲自己来孕育新的生命，它们本身也充满了五彩的生机。你看，微生物们在忙着工作，分子们也在自我重组。所以，这个世界没有死亡，有的只是一种生命形式的蜕变。你从中有何感悟呢？

死亡不是生命的对立面，因为生命没有对立面。死亡与诞生相对，而生命是永无止歇的。

\* \* \* \*

古往今来，圣贤与墨客，早已关注人类如梦如幻的存在特质，那就是：看似如此稳固而真实的世界，分分秒秒却在飞逝着，随时



宁静恩赐与你：内在深邃的平和。

都可能烟消云散。

死亡临近，宛如梦幻一般的生命即将终结。可是即使在梦境中，也必然有一个本质是真实存在的，那就是产生梦境的意识，否则，那个梦便不可能萌发。

究竟是我们的皮囊创造了意识，还是我们的意识创造了我们皮囊的梦境，抑或创造了别人的梦境？

为什么绝大多数经历过濒死状态的人，都不再惧怕死亡？为什么呢？值得反思啊。

\* \* \* \*

你当然会死亡，但死亡对你来说也只是大脑中的一个概念而已，直至你第一次“亲身”体验死亡：也许是你或者你身边的人身患重病，或者发生意外，也许是你心爱的人离开人世，死亡光临你的生活，让你知觉自己终有一死。

大多数人都会万般恐惧地逃避死亡。除非你毫不退缩、勇于面对，知晓你的身体正在消亡，随时都会灰飞烟灭，否则你生理的我和心理的我都可能产生对于死亡的抗拒，即非认同感。当你了解并接受生命的无常，你的内心定会升腾出一种奇异的平和感。

直面死亡，你的意识就可能从对形式的认同中解脱出来。某些佛教流派的僧人需要定期在停尸间打坐、冥想，就是这个道理。

西方文化至今还广泛抵制死亡，甚至老人也不愿谈及或想到死亡，尸体更被远远地隐藏起来。抵制死亡的文化不可避免地会走向

肤浅与浅薄，变得只在意事物的外在形式。抵制死亡，生命便失去深度。人生将失去一个可能性，一个知晓我们名字和形式以外究竟是谁的可能性，失去一个了解至高无上的维度的可能性，因为死亡是通往那个维度的大门，不知死，焉知生？

\* \* \* \*

人们总是对一切的终结无所适从，以为每一个终结都意味着一场小小的死亡，这就是为什么在许多语言中，“再见”等于“回见”。

每当一次经历即将结束，比如一次朋友聚会、一个假期，或是孩子们的长大离家，你都会小死一回。你意识中会出现一种“形式”，通常留下“空虚”的感觉，而大多数人都假装不知，怯于面对。

如果你能学会接受，甚至欢迎生活中种种终结的到来，你会发现自己最初无所适从的空虚感已经转变成了内心广阔而深沉的平和感。

当你学会每天以这种方式体验终结、体验死亡，你便向“生命”张开了双臂。

\* \* \* \*

多数人觉得他们的身份和自我感无比珍贵、难以舍弃，所以，


他们才会惧怕死亡。

“我”将不再存在，这个想法难以想象、恐怖异常。其实，你将那个珍贵无比的“我”和你的姓名、躯壳以及与它有关的故事混为一谈了。那个“我”只是意识场中一个短暂的外在形式而已。

如果你仅知晓你的形式身份，你便无法认识，真正珍贵的是你的本体，你心底最深处的“我是”，也就是意识本身。它与你永远相伴相随，而这才是你唯一不会失去的东西。

\* \* \* \*

每当你的生命中出现任何重大的损失时，比如失去财产、家庭、一段亲密关系，或是失去了名誉、工作或生理机能等，你内在的某些东西也会死去。你的自我感就会缩小，甚至还会有些迷惘：



多数人觉得他们的身份和自我感无比珍贵、难以舍弃，所以，他们才会惧怕死亡。

“没有了这些……我又是谁？”

你无意间认定自己的一部分的某种形式弃你而去，或化为乌有时，你会很痛苦，好像是在你枝枝蔓蔓的生命中留下了一个空洞。

当这一切发生了，不要否认、忽视你所感到的痛苦和哀伤，你要接受它们的存在。时刻注意大脑的动向，因为它会围绕事实编造出一个故事。在这个故事当中，你扮演的角色是一名受害者，而恐惧、生气、愤怒或是自怜等情绪便会跟随那个角色应运而生。除此之外，你还要警惕这些情绪和思维编造的故事背后的因素，警惕那个空洞，那个产生情绪的空间。你能勇于面对、学会接受那种奇异的空虚感吗？如果你能，你便不再惧怕那片空虚，你会惊讶地发现平和正氤氲而生。

每当死亡降临，每当生命形式消亡，无形、无迹的上帝便透过消亡的空隙散播光芒。这就是为什么生命中最神圣的事情便是死亡，这就是为什么慈爱之主能够通过你对死亡的深思与接纳来到你身边。

\* \* \* \*

人生苦短呵，人事无常啊！什么能够避开生与死？什么能永恒存在呢？

试想，如果世上只存在一种颜色，比如是蓝色，假如世界上的一切都是蓝色的，那么蓝色便不会存在。我们需要有个不是蓝色的

颜色来证明蓝色的存在，否则，蓝色便不会“显现”出来，也无法存在。

同样，我们是否需要某些永久性的东西来见证一切事物的短暂？也就是说，如果包括你我在内的一切事物都是短暂的，那么你会意识到它们的短暂性吗？如果你能够知觉并见证包括你我在内的一切生命形式的短暂性，这是否意味着你我都拥有某种东西是永生不灭的呢？

你20岁时，你能感受到自己身体的强健与生机；而60年后，你能感受到自己身体的颓败与衰老。那时，你的思想也许不同于20岁时的思想，但那个知晓你的身体年轻或衰老，知晓你思想在改变的意识却没有丝毫的变化。那种知觉是永恒存在于你体内的，是意识本身，它是无形的“生命统一体”。你能失去它吗？不能，因为你就是它。

\* \* \* \*

有的人在弥留之际变得十分平和，甚至异常清晰，似乎光明正透过消融的天窗倾泻而下、闪闪发光。

有时候病人膏肓或耄耋老人会在他们生命的最后几个礼拜、几个月，甚至几年的时间里，变得轻松、开朗。当他们凝视着你时，你会发现他们眼中若隐若现的光芒，全无心理折磨的痕迹。他们已经臣服，那个人、那个大脑制造出来的小我，都已不复存在。他们“心死先于身死”，却已找到内心深处的平和，领悟到自身不死的



真谛。

\* \* \* \*

每一场意外或灾难都蕴含着一个潜在的救赎，而我们却经常意识不到它的存在。

突如其来的死亡所带来的巨大震撼，会将你的意识从对外在形式的认同中解脱出来。肉体死亡前几分钟，以及死亡的那一刻，你会体验到自己不再是躯壳，而是摆脱了形式的意识体。于是，恐惧立刻无处安身，留下的只有平和和觉悟：“一切安好啊，死亡不过是形式的消亡。”你会发现，死亡终究是虚无缥缈的，就像你曾认同过的自己的躯壳一样，虚幻不实。

\* \* \* \*

死亡并非异常，并不像现代文明要你相信的那样痛苦不堪。其实，死亡是世界上最自然而然的事情，与它的对应体“诞生”同样自然。当你坐在濒死之人身旁时，请提醒自己：死亡就是如此而已。

能够见证并陪伴着一个人步入死亡，是一种神圣的行为，更是一种莫大的恩典。

陪伴濒死之人，不要对这个经历有任何的抗拒，不要否认正在发生的事情，也不要否认你的感受。发觉自己什么也做不了，也许

会让你感到无助、悲伤或者愤怒，但你要接受你的感受，然后更进一步：接受你什么也做不了的事实，完全接受它，你真的主宰不了死亡。臣服于眼前经历的一切，臣服于你的感受，臣服于这个濒死之人可能会经历的任何痛苦与不适。你的臣服状态与随之而来的宁静会极大地帮助那个走近死亡的人，使那个生死转换过程变得更容易一些。如果想要说什么，就说些源于内在的宁静之言吧，不过，此时说些什么也是次要的了。

宁静恩赐与你：内在深邃的平和。



## 第10章 小我与痛苦的终结



佛教信徒很早就知晓一个道理，物理学家已经证实了这点，那就是：世上的一切事物都互相联系着，任何事情的发生都不是独立存在的，它们只是看上去独立存在而已。我们用思维裁决得越多，标注得越多，我们便越发将其孤立了。生命的整体性因为这许许多多的思维而变得支离破碎。其实，所有的事件都是源于生命之整体性。构成宇宙的，正是相互联系的网络中的一部分。

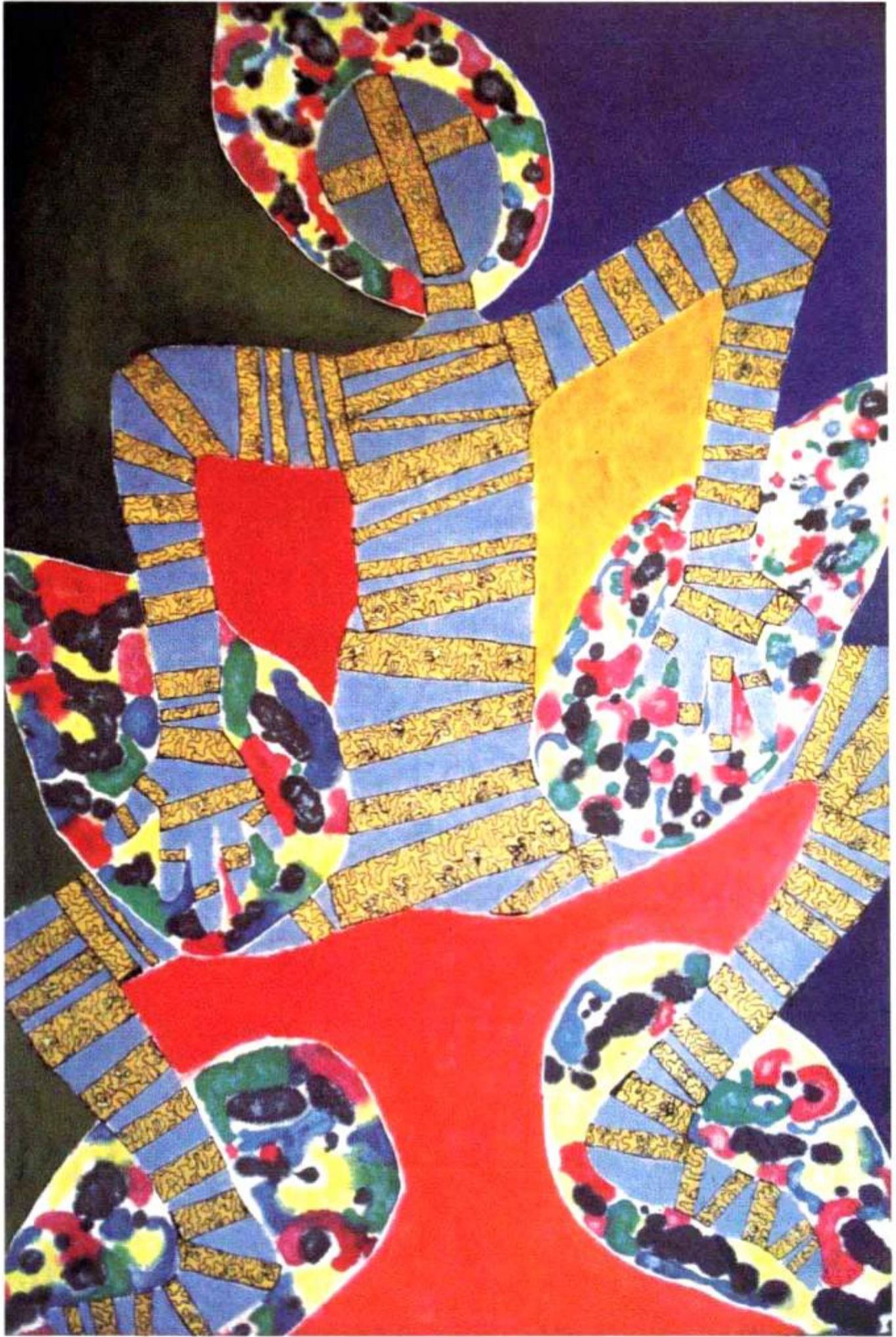
这也就意味着：万物本来如此，也只能如此。

在大多数情况下，我们无法理解，一个看似毫无意义的事件在宇宙这个整体中能够扮演怎样的角色。但当你认识到这个整体的广阔空间的确真实而不可避免地存在着，你便踏上了了解事物本然的旅程，于是，我们便能与生命这个整体重新结盟。

\* \* \* \*

把你在此刻所感受到的或是经历到的，全部当成是自己选择的，这样你便可以获得真正的自由与痛苦的终结。

内心与当下结盟之时，便是痛苦终结之日。



内心与当下结盟之时，便是痛苦终结之日。

\* \* \* \*

受苦真的必要吗？是，也不是。

如果你未曾经历过痛苦，那么你将不具备身为一个人的深度，不懂得谦逊，不懂得同情。那么，你现在也不会阅读这些文字了。痛苦的裂痕启开了小我的外壳，这时它的目的也达到了。在没有发现痛苦是毫无必要之前，痛苦对你来说还是必须的。

\* \* \* \*

“不幸”需要大脑为它制造出来一个“我”，并配套衍变出一个故事，一个概念性的身份，“不幸”需要时间，需要过去与未来。如果你不给它留下任何时间，那么，你留下的就只是此刻的“实际情况”了。

它可能是一种令人沉重、焦虑、紧张、愤怒，甚至恶心的感觉，但那不是不幸，它不是个人问题。人类的痛苦并不是一件个人的事情，它只是你体内某个地方感受到的一种强烈的压力，一种强大的能量。你只要关注它，那种感觉就不会转化为想法和念头，不幸的“我”就不可能被激活而恢复动力。

留心观察，如果你任由这种感觉存在，试试看会发生什么。

\* \* \* \*



当你把头脑中萌生的每一缕念头都当真，你便会遭遇许许多多的痛苦与不幸。你遇到的种种情形不会让你不开心，它们顶多会引起你肉体上的痛楚。真正令你不开心的不是发生的事情本身，而是你的那些念头，是你对状况的解读，是你编造出来的故事，使你心生不快。

“我此刻头脑中的念头令我不开心。”意识到这一点，你便摆脱了自己不自觉中对这些念头的认同感。

\* \* \* \*

今天真是糟透了！

她真没礼貌，竟然没回我电话。

她让我太失望了。

通常，我们讲给自己和别人的故事都以抱怨的方式进行，我们总是不自觉地把自已设定为“对的”，而某件事或某个人是“错的”，以此来增强匮乏的自我感。“我是对的”会把我放在一个充满优越感的位置，因而巩固了虚假的自我——小我。它也同时创造了某些做“错”的敌人，没错，小我需要树立敌人来划定自身的界限，甚至连天气都能被拿来出气。

因为习惯性的思维判断，因为情绪上的紧绷，你会与你生命中

出现的人和事建立一种个人化的互动关系。这些关系都以自我创造出来的痛苦为外在表现形式，但我们感觉不到，因为它们能够满足小我的需求。小我就是通过反应与冲突来强化自身的。

如果没有这些故事，生命将会变得多么简单！

下雨了。

他没打电话来。

我到了，但她没来。

\* \* \* \*

当你痛苦时，当你感到不开心时，敬请莅临当下，所有不幸或



苦恼，都难以在当下存活。

\* \* \* \*

当你从内心认定某件事是讨厌的或不好的时候，痛苦便产生了。当你厌恶某种情境，那种厌恶便会变得个人化，并产生一个互动的“我”。

命名和标注是习惯性行为，但这种习惯是可以打破的。从现在开始练习不再给琐碎的事物“命名”吧。比如当你错过了航班，失手摔碎了杯子，或是在泥泞中滑倒，你能否试着抑制自己不再给这种经历命名为糟糕的或是痛苦的吗？你能否立刻接受那一刻的“实际情况”吗？

把某件事命名为糟糕的，将使你的内心产生一种紧缩感，一旦你顺其自然，不再为事情贴上好与坏的标签，你将瞬间拥有强大的力量。

内心的紧缩感使你无缘于那种力量，阻碍你得到生命本身的力量。

\* \* \* \*

他们吃掉了能够区分善恶的知识树上的果实。

不要继续在内心深处给任何事物贴上好与坏的标签。超越对事物作好与坏的惯性认定，你便可获得宇宙的力量。当你进入一种

“无情绪反应”的状态，那么，你曾经称之为“糟糕的”经历往往会因“宇宙的力量”而很快出现转机。

如果你不再把一个某种经历认定为“糟糕的”，而是从内心深处接受它，在心里对它说“是”，并顺其自然时，试试看事情将会有怎样的变化。

不管你的人生处境如何，如果你“当下”能全然地接受事情的真实状况，你会有什么感受呢？

\* \* \* \*

痛苦有许多或微妙或不甚微妙的形式，它们是如此“正常”，以至于我们往往不会以为它们是痛苦的。它们甚至能满足我们的小我，比如：愤怒、焦躁、生气、对某人或某事有意见、憎恨和抱怨等。

\* \* \* \*

当你感觉到痛苦，学着在痛苦发生时认出它，告诫自己：此时此刻，我在给自己制造痛苦。

假如你习惯性地给自己制造痛苦，你可能也会给别人制造痛苦。若想终止这些无意识的习惯，很简单，只需将它们变为有意的行为就可以了，在痛苦发生时知觉并认识到它们就行了。

你不会在清醒的、意识存在的时候给自己创造痛苦。

\* \* \* \*

令人惊讶的是：每个看似“糟糕”或“邪恶”的人或事的背后，都隐藏着一个更深的善果。从内心接受事情的本来状况，那个深埋的善果便会由内至外地在展现出来。

人生箴言之一就是：不要抗拒不幸。

\* \* \* \*

请读读这段对话：

接受事情的本来状况。

我真的没有办法。我对这件事真的很放不下，很生气。



那么，就接受你现在的状况吧。

接受我的焦虑和愤怒？接受我不能接受的事？

是的。接受不愿接受的事实，臣服不愿臣服的事情。看看会发生什么？

\* \* \* \*

身体上的慢性疼痛便是最严厉的人生导师，教导你：抗拒是徒劳的。

不愿受苦再正常不过了。如果你能放下“不愿受苦”，允许痛苦的存在，你会发现在内心深处你已与痛苦悄然分手了。你和它之间产生了一个空间，而这个空间一直都存在着。这就是所谓有意识地感受痛苦，心甘情愿地承受痛苦，体内的痛楚将很快燃尽你内在的小我，因为，小我主要是由抗拒组成，即使身体严重残疾者，也是如此。

换言之，“将痛苦献给上帝”。

\* \* \* \*

即使你不是基督徒，也该理解十字架象征物所包含的深刻哲理。

十字架原本是一种刑具，代表了人类可能忍受的最残酷的刑罚、最严厉的限制、最无助的绝望。然而，突然间，耶稣受刑并遇难了，不过他死得其所，他有言道：“不要成就我的意愿，只要成就你们的意愿。”此刻，作为刑具的十字架向人展示出它那隐蔽的容颜。

十字架不仅是刑具，还是神圣的符号，是圣子的象征。

因为臣服，那个似乎否定生命存在、否定任何超自然维度的十字架，成为我们通往超自然维度的一个途径。

**THE POWER OF NOW II**  
**ECKHART TOLLE**





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CHAPTER 1  
SILENCE & STILLNESS



When you lose touch with inner stillness, you lose touch with yourself. When you lose touch with yourself, you lose yourself in the world.

Your innermost sense of self, of who you are, is inseparable from stillness. This is the *I Am* that is deeper than name and form.

Stillness is your essential nature. What is stillness? The inner space or awareness in which the words on this page are being perceived and become thoughts. Without that awareness, there would be no perception, no thoughts, no world.

You are that awareness, disguised as a person.

The equivalent of external noise is the inner noise of thinking. The equivalent of external silence is inner stillness.

Whenever there is some silence around you—listen to it. That means just notice it. Pay attention to it. Listening to silence awakens the dimension of stillness within yourself, because it is only through stillness that you can be aware of silence.

See that in the moment of noticing the silence around you, you are not thinking. You are aware, but not thinking.

When you become aware of silence, immediately there is that state of inner still alertness. You are present. You have stepped out of thousands of years of collective human conditioning.

Look at a tree, a flower, a plant. Let your awareness rest upon it. How still they are, how deeply rooted in Being. Allow nature to teach you stillness.

When you look at a tree and perceive its stillness, you become still yourself. You connect with it at a very deep level. You feel a oneness with whatever you perceive in and through stillness. Feeling the oneness of yourself with all things is true love.

Silence is helpful, but you don't need it in order to find stillness. Even when there is noise, you can be aware of the stillness underneath the noise, of the space in which the noise arises. That is the inner space of pure awareness, consciousness itself.

You can become aware of awareness as the background to all your sense perceptions, all your thinking. Becoming aware of awareness is the arising of inner stillness.

Any disturbing noise can be as helpful as silence. How? By dropping your inner resistance to the noise, by allowing it to be as it is, this acceptance also takes you into that realm of inner peace that is stillness.

Whenever you deeply accept this moment as it is—no matter what form it takes—you are still, you are at peace.

Pay attention to the gap—the gap between two thoughts, the brief, silent space between words in a conversation, between the notes of a piano

or flute, or the gap between the in-breath and out-breath.

When you pay attention to those gaps, awareness of “something” becomes—just awareness. The formless dimension of pure consciousness arises from within you and replaces identification with form.

True intelligence operates silently. Stillness is where creativity and solutions to problems are found.

Is stillness just the absence of noise and content? No, it is intelligence itself—the underlying consciousness out of which every form is born. And how could that be separate from who you are?

The form that you think you are came out of that and is being sustained by it.

It is the essence of all galaxies and blades of grass; of all flowers, trees, birds, and all other forms.

Stillness is the only thing in this world that has no form. But then, it is not really a thing, and it is not of this world.

When you look at a tree or a human being in stillness, who is looking? Something deeper than the person. Consciousness is looking at its creation.

In the Bible, it says that God created the world and saw that it was good. That is what you see when you look from stillness without thought.

Do you need more knowledge? Is more information going to save the world, or faster computers, more scientific or intellectual analysis? Is it not wisdom that humanity needs most at this time?

But what is wisdom and where is it to be found? Wisdom comes with the ability to be still. Just look and just listen. No more is needed. Being



still, looking, and listening activates the nonconceptual intelligence within you. Let stillness direct your words and actions.

CHAPTER 2  
BEYOND THE THINKING MIND



The human condition: lost in thought.

Most people spend their entire life imprisoned within the confines of their own thoughts. They never go beyond a narrow, mind-made, personalized sense of self that is conditioned by the past.

In you, as in each human being, there is a dimension of consciousness far deeper than thought. It is the very essence of who you are. We may call it presence, awareness, the unconditioned consciousness. In the ancient teachings, it is the Christ within, or your Buddha nature.

Finding that dimension frees you and the world from the suffering you inflict on yourself and others when the mind-made “little me” is all you know and runs your life. Love, joy, creative expansion, and lasting inner peace cannot come into your life except through that unconditioned dimension of consciousness.

If you can recognize, even occasionally, the thoughts that go through your mind as simply thoughts, if you can witness your own mental-emotional reactive patterns as they happen, then that dimension is already emerging in you as the awareness in which thoughts and emotions happen—the timeless inner space in which the content of your life unfolds.

The stream of thinking has enormous momentum that can easily drag you along with it. Every thought pretends that it matters so much. It wants to draw your attention in completely.

Here is a new spiritual practice for you: don't take your thoughts too seriously.

How easy it is for people to become trapped in their conceptual prisons.

The human mind, in its desire to know, understand, and control, mistakes its opinions and viewpoints for the truth. It says: this is how it is. You have to be larger than thought to realize that however you interpret "your life" or someone else's life or behavior, however you judge any situation, it is no more than a viewpoint, one of many possible perspectives. It is no more than a bundle of thoughts. But reality is one unified whole, in which all things are interwoven, where nothing exists in and by itself. Thinking fragments reality—it cuts it up into conceptual bits and pieces.

The thinking mind is a useful and powerful tool, but it is also very limiting when it takes over your life completely, when you don't realize that it is only a small aspect of the consciousness that you are.

Wisdom is not a product of thought. The deep *knowing* that is wisdom arises through the simple act of giving someone or something your full attention. Attention is primordial intelligence, consciousness itself. It dissolves the barriers created by conceptual thought, and with this comes the recognition that nothing exists in and by itself. It joins the perceiver and

the perceived in a unifying field of awareness. It is the healer of separation.

Whenever you are immersed in compulsive thinking, you are avoiding what is. You don't want to be where you are. Here, Now.

Dogmas—religious, political, scientific—arise out of the erroneous belief that thought can encapsulate reality or the truth. Dogmas are collective conceptual prisons. And the strange thing is that people love their prison cells because they give them a sense of security and a false sense of “I know”.

Nothing has inflicted more suffering on humanity than its dogmas. It is true that every dogma crumbles sooner or later, because reality will eventually disclose its falseness; however, unless the basic delusion of it is seen for what it is, it will be replaced by others.

What is this basic delusion? Identification with thought.

Spiritual awakening is awakening from the dream of thought.

The realm of consciousness is much vaster than thought can grasp. When you no longer believe everything you think, you step out of thought and see clearly that the thinker is not who you are.

The mind exists in a state of “not enough” and so is always greedy for more. When you are identified with mind, you get bored and restless very easily. Boredom means the mind is hungry for more stimulus, more food for thought, and its hunger is not being satisfied.

When you feel bored, you can satisfy the mind's hunger by picking up a magazine, making a phone call, switching on the TV, surfing the web, going shopping, or—and this is not uncommon—transferring the mental

sense of lack and its need for *more* to the body and satisfy it briefly by ingesting more food.

Or you can stay bored and restless and observe what it feels like to be bored and restless. As you bring awareness to the feeling, there is suddenly some space and stillness around it, as it were. A little at first, but as the sense of inner space grows, the feeling of boredom will begin to diminish in intensity and significance. So even boredom can teach you who you are and who you are not.

You discover that a “bored person” is not who you are. Boredom is simply a conditioned energy movement within you. Neither are you an angry, sad, or fearful person. Boredom, anger, sadness, or fear are not “yours”, not personal. They are conditions of the human mind. They come and go.

Nothing that comes and goes is you.

“I am bored.” Who knows this?

“I am angry, sad, afraid.” Who knows this?

You are the knowing, not the condition that is known.

Prejudice of any kind implies that you are identified with the thinking mind. It means you don't see the other human being anymore, but only your own concept of that human being. To reduce the aliveness of another human being to a concept is already a form of violence.

Thinking that is not rooted in awareness becomes self-serving and dysfunctional. Cleverness devoid of wisdom is extremely dangerous and destructive. That is the current state of most of humanity. The amplification

of thought as science and technology, although intrinsically neither good nor bad, has also become destructive because so often the thinking out of which it comes has no roots in awareness.

The next step in human evolution is to transcend thought. This is now our urgent task. It doesn't mean not to think anymore, but simply not to be completely identified with thought, possessed by thought.

Feel the energy of your inner body. Immediately mental noise slows down or ceases. Feel it in your hands, your feet, your abdomen, your chest. Feel the life that you are, the life that animates the body.

The body then becomes a doorway, so to speak, into a deeper sense of aliveness underneath the fluctuating emotions and underneath your thinking.

There is an aliveness in you that you can feel with your entire Being, not just in the head. Every cell is alive in that presence in which you don't need to think. Yet, in that state, if thought is required for some practical purpose, it is there. The mind can still operate, and it operates beautifully when the greater intelligence that you *are* uses it and expresses itself through it.

You may have overlooked that brief periods in which you are "conscious without thought" are already occurring naturally and spontaneously in your life. You may be engaged in some manual activity, or walking across the room, or waiting at the airline counter, and be so completely present that the usual mental static of thought subsides and is replaced by an aware presence. Or you may find yourself looking at the



sky or listening to someone without any inner mental commentary. Your perceptions become crystal clear, unclouded by thought.

To the mind, all this is not significant, because it has “more important” things to think about. It is also not memorable, and that’s why you may have overlooked that it is already happening.

The truth is that it is the most significant thing that *can* happen to you. It is the beginning of a shift from thinking to aware presence.

Become at ease with the state of “not knowing”. This takes you beyond mind because the mind is always trying to conclude and interpret. It is afraid of not knowing. So, when you can be at ease with not knowing, you have already gone beyond the mind. A deeper knowing that is non-conceptual then arises out of that state.

Artistic creation, sports, dance, teaching, counseling—mastery in any field of endeavor implies that the thinking mind is either no longer involved at all or at least is taking second place. A power and intelligence greater than you and yet one with you in essence takes over. There is no decision-making process anymore; spontaneous right action happens, and “you” are not doing it. Mastery of life is the opposite of control. You become aligned with the greater consciousness. *It* acts, speaks, does the works.

A moment of danger can bring about a temporary cessation of the stream of thinking and thus give you a taste of what it means to be present, alert, aware.

The Truth is far more all-encompassing than the mind could ever

comprehend. No thought can encapsulate the Truth. At best, it can point to it. For example, it can say: “All things are intrinsically one.” That is a pointer, not an explanation. Understanding these words means *feeling* deep within you the truth to which they point.



**CHAPTER3**  
**THE EGOIC SELF**



The mind is incessantly looking not only for food for thought; it is looking for food for its identity, its sense of self. This is how the ego comes into existence and continuously recreates itself.

When you think or speak about yourself, when you say, “I”, what you usually refer to is “me and my story”. This is the “I” of your likes and dislikes, fears and desires, the “I” that is never satisfied for long. It is a mind-made sense of who you are, conditioned by the past and seeking to find its fulfillment in the future.

Can you see that this “I” is fleeting, a temporary formation, like a wave pattern on the surface of the water?

Who is it that sees this? Who is it that is aware of the fleetingness of your physical and psychological form? I Am. This is the deeper “I” that has nothing to do with past and future.

What will be left of all the fearing and wanting associated with your problematic life situation that every day takes up most of your attention? A dash—one or two inches long, between the date of birth and date of death on your gravestone.

To the egoic self, this is a depressing thought. To you, it is liberating.

When each thought absorbs your attention completely, it means you identify with the voice in your head. Thought then becomes invested with a sense of self. This is the ego, a mind-made “me”. That mentally constructed self feels incomplete and precarious. That’s why fearing and wanting are its predominant emotions and motivating forces.

When you recognize that there is a voice in your head that pretends to be you and never stops speaking, you are awakening out of your unconscious identification with the stream of thinking. When you notice that voice, you realize that who you are is not the voice—the thinker—but the one who is aware of it.

Knowing yourself as the awareness behind the voice is freedom.

The egoic self is always engaged in seeking. It is seeking more of this or that to add to itself, to make itself feel more complete. This explains the ego’s compulsive preoccupation with future.

Whenever you become aware of yourself “living for the next moment”, you have already stepped out of that egoic mind pattern, and the possibility of choosing to give your full attention to this moment arises simultaneously.

By giving your full attention to this moment, an intelligence far greater than the egoic mind enters your life.

When you live through the ego, you always reduce the present moment to a means to an end. You live for the future, and when you achieve your goals, they don’t satisfy you, at least not for long.

When you give more attention to the doing than to the future result

that you want to achieve through it, you break the old egoic conditioning.

Your doing then becomes not only a great deal more effective, but infinitely more fulfilling and joyful.

Almost every ego contains at least an element of what we might call “victim identity”. Some people have such a strong victim image of themselves that it becomes the central core of their ego. Resentment and grievances form an essential part of their sense of self.

Even if your grievances are completely “justified”, you have constructed an identity for yourself that is much like a prison whose bars are made of thought forms. See what you are doing to yourself, or rather what your mind is doing to you. Feel the emotional attachment you have to your victim story and become aware of the compulsion to think or talk about it. Be there as the witnessing presence of your inner state. You don’t have to *do* anything. With awareness comes transformation and freedom.

Complaining and reactivity are favorite mind patterns through which the ego strengthens itself. For many people, a large part of their mental-emotional activity consists of complaining and reacting against this or that. By doing this, you make others or a situation “wrong” and yourself “right”. Through being “right”, you feel superior, and through feeling superior, you strengthen your sense of self. In reality, of course, you are only strengthening the illusion of ego.

Can you observe those patterns within yourself and recognize the complaining voice in your head for what it is?

The egoic sense of self needs conflict because its sense of a



separate identity gets strengthened in fighting against this or that, and in demonstrating that this is “me” and that is not “me”.

Not infrequently, tribes, nations, and religions derive a strengthened sense of collective identity from having enemies. Who would the “believer” be without the “unbeliever”?

In your dealings with people, can you detect subtle feelings of either superiority or inferiority toward them? You are looking at the ego, which lives through comparison.

Envy is a by-product of the ego, which feels diminished if something good happens to someone else, or someone has more, knows more, or can do *more* than you. The ego’s identity depends on comparison and feeds on more. It will grasp at anything. If all else fails, you can strengthen your fictitious sense of self through seeing yourself as *more* unfairly treated by life or *more* ill than someone else.

What are the stories, the fictions from which you derive your sense of self?

Built into the very structure of the egoic self is a need to oppose, resist, and exclude to maintain the sense of separateness on which its continued survival depends. So there is “me” against the “other”, “us” against “them”.

The ego needs to be in conflict with something or someone. That explains why you are looking for peace and joy and love but cannot tolerate them for very long. You say you want happiness but are addicted to your unhappiness.

Your unhappiness ultimately arises not from the circumstances of your life but from the conditioning of your mind.

Do you carry feelings of guilt about something you did—or failed to do—in the past? This much is certain: you acted according to your level of consciousness or rather unconsciousness at that time. If you had been more aware, more conscious, you would have acted differently.

Guilt is another attempt by the ego to create an identity, a sense of self. To the ego, it doesn't matter whether that self is positive or negative. What you did or failed to do was a manifestation of unconsciousness—human unconsciousness. The ego, however, personalizes it and says, “I did that”, and so you carry a mental image of yourself as “bad”.

Throughout history humans have inflicted countless violent, cruel, and hurtful acts on each other, and continue to do so. Are they all to be condemned; are they all guilty? Or are those acts simply expressions of unconsciousness, an evolutionary stage that we are now growing out of?

Jesus' words, “Forgive them for they know not what they do”, also apply to yourself.

If you set egoic goals for the purpose of freeing yourself, enhancing yourself or your sense of importance, even if you achieve them, they will not satisfy you.

Set goals, but know that the arriving is not all that important. When anything arises out of presence, it means this moment is not a means to an end: the doing is fulfilling in itself every moment. You are no longer reducing the Now to a means to an end, which is the egoic consciousness.

“No self. No problem,” said the Buddhist Master when asked to explain the deeper meaning of Buddhism.

CHAPTER4  
THE NOW



On the surface it seems that the present moment is only one of many, many moments. Each day of your life appears to consist of thousands of moments where different things happen. Yet if you look more deeply, is there not only one moment, ever? Is life ever not “this moment”?

This one moment—Now—is the only thing you can never escape from, the one constant factor in your life. No matter what happens, no matter how much your life changes, one thing is certain: it’s always Now.

Since there is no escape from the Now, why not welcome it, become friendly with it?

When you make friends with the present moment, you feel at home no matter where you are. When you don’t feel at home in the Now, no matter where you go, you will carry unease with you.

The present moment is as it is. Always. Can you let it be?

The division of life into past, present, and future is mind-made and ultimately illusory. Past and future are thought forms, mental abstractions. The past can only be remembered Now. What you remember is an event that took place in the Now, and you remember it Now. The future, when it comes, is the Now. So the only thing that is real, the only thing there ever

is *is* the Now.

To have your attention in the Now is not a denial of what is needed in your life. It is recognizing what is primary. Then you can deal with what is secondary with great ease. It is not saying, “I’m not dealing with things anymore because there is only the Now.” No. Find what is primary first, and make the Now into your friend, not your enemy. Acknowledge it, honor it. When the Now is the foundation and primary focus of your life, then your life unfolds with ease.

Putting away the dishes, drawing up a business strategy, planning a trip—what is more important: the doing or the result that you want to achieve through the doing? This moment or some future moment?

Do you treat *this moment* as if it were an obstacle to be overcome? Do you feel you have a future moment to get to that is more important?

Almost everyone lives like this most of the time. Since the future never arrives, except *as* the present, it is a dysfunctional way to live. It generates a constant undercurrent of unease, tension, and discontent. It does not honor life, which is Now and never not Now.

Feel the aliveness within your body. That anchors you in the Now.

Ultimately you are not taking responsibility for life until you take responsibility for *this moment*—Now. This is because Now is the only place where life can be found.

Taking responsibility for this moment means not to oppose internally the “suchness” of Now, not to argue with what is. It means to be in alignment with life.

The Now is as it is because it cannot be otherwise. What Buddhists have always known, physicists now confirm: there are no isolated things or events. Underneath the surface appearance, all things are interconnected, are part of the totality of the cosmos that has brought about the form that this moment takes.

When you say “yes” to what is, you become aligned with the power and intelligence of Life itself. Only then can you become an agent for positive change in the world.

A simple but radical spiritual practice is to accept whatever arises in the Now—within and without.

When your attention moves into the Now, there is an alertness. It is as if you were waking up from a dream, the dream of thought, the dream of past and future. Such clarity, such simplicity. No room for problem-making. Just this moment as it is.

The moment you enter the Now with your attention, you realize that life is sacred. There is a sacredness to everything you perceive when you are present. The more you live in the Now, the more you sense the simple yet profound joy of Being and the sacredness of all life.

Most people confuse the Now with *what happens* in the Now, but that’s not what it is. The Now is deeper than what happens in it. It is the space in which it happens.

So do not confuse the content of this moment with the Now. The Now is deeper than any content that arises in it.

When you step into the Now, you step out of the content of your



mind. The incessant stream of thinking slows down. Thoughts don't absorb all your attention anymore, don't draw you in totally. Gaps arise in between thoughts—spaciousness, stillness. You begin to realize how much vaster and deeper you are than your thoughts.

Thoughts, emotions, sense perceptions, and what-ever you experience make up the content of your life. “My life” is what you derive your sense of self from, and “my life” is content, or so you believe.

You continuously overlook the most obvious fact: your innermost sense of *I Am* has nothing to do with what *happens* in your life, nothing to do with content. That sense of *I Am* is one with the Now. It always remains the same. In childhood and old age, in health or sickness, in success or failure, the *I Am*—the space of Now—remains unchanged at its deepest level. It usually gets confused with content, and so you experience *I Am* or the Now only faintly and indirectly, *through* the content of your life. In other words: your sense of Being becomes obscured by circumstances, your stream of thinking, and the many things of this world. The Now becomes obscured by time.

And so you forget your rootedness in Being, your divine reality, and lose yourself in the world. Confusion, anger, depression, violence, and conflict arise when humans forget who they are.

Yet how easy it is to remember the truth and thus return home:

I am not my thoughts, emotions, sense perceptions, and experiences. I am not the content of my life. I am Life. I am the space in which all things happen. I am consciousness. I am the Now. I Am.

CHAPTER5  
WHO YOU TRULY ARE



The Now is inseparable from who you are at the deepest level.

Many things in your life matter, but only one thing matters absolutely.

It matters whether you succeed or fail in the eyes of the world. It matters whether you are healthy or not healthy, whether you are educated or not educated. It matters whether you are rich or poor—it certainly makes a difference in your life. Yes, all these things matter, relatively speaking, but they don't matter absolutely.

There is something that matters more than any of those things and that is finding the essence of who you are beyond that short-lived entity, that short-lived personalized sense of self.

You find peace not by rearranging the circumstances of your life, but by realizing who you are at the deepest level.

Reincarnation doesn't help you if in your next incarnation you still don't know who you are.

All the misery on the planet arises due to a personalized sense of “me” or “us”. That covers up the essence of who you are. When you are unaware of that inner essence, in the end you always create misery. It's as simple as that. When you don't know who you are, you create a mind-made self

as a substitute for your beautiful divine being and cling to that fearful and needy self.

Protecting and enhancing that false sense of self then becomes your primary motivating force.

Many expressions that are in common usage, and sometimes the structure of language itself, reveal the fact that people don't know who they are. You say: "He lost his life" or "my life", as if life were something that you can possess or lose. The truth is: you don't *have* a life, you *are* life. The One Life, the one consciousness that pervades the entire universe and takes temporary form to experience itself as a stone or a blade of grass, as an animal, a person, a star or a galaxy.

Can you sense deep within that you already know that? Can you sense that you already are That?

For most things in life, you need time: to learn a new skill, build a house, become an expert, make a cup of tea.... Time is useless, however, for the most essential thing in life, the one thing that really matters: self-realization, which means knowing who you are beyond the surface self—beyond your name, your physical form, your history, your story.

You cannot find yourself in the past or future. The only place where you can find yourself is in the Now.

Spiritual seekers look for self-realization or enlightenment in the future. To be a seeker implies that you need the future. If this is what you believe, it becomes true for you: you *will* need time until you realize that you don't need time to be who you are.

When you look at a tree, you are aware of the tree. When you have a thought or feeling, you are aware of that thought or feeling. When you have a pleasurable or painful experience, you are aware of that experience.

These seem to be true and obvious statements, yet if you look at them very closely, you will find that in a subtle way their very structure contains a fundamental illusion, an illusion that is unavoidable when you use language. Thought and language create an apparent duality and a separate person where there is none. The truth is: you are not somebody who is aware of the tree, the thought, feeling, or experience. You are the awareness or consciousness in and by which those things appear.

As you go about your life, can you be aware of yourself as the awareness in which the entire content of your life unfolds?

You say, "I want to know myself." You *are* the "I". You *are* the Knowing. You *are* the consciousness through which everything is known. And that cannot *know* itself ; it *is* itself.

There is nothing to know beyond that, and yet all knowing arises out of it. The "I" cannot make itself into an object of knowledge, of consciousness.

So you cannot become an object to yourself. That is the very reason the illusion of egoic identity arose—because mentally you made yourself into an object. "That's me." you say. And then you begin to have a relationship with yourself, and tell others and yourself your story.

By knowing yourself as the awareness in which phenomenal existence happens, you become free of dependency on phenomena and

free of self-seeking in situations, places, and conditions. In other words: what happens or doesn't happen is not that important anymore. Things lose their heaviness, their seriousness. A playfulness comes into your life. You recognize this world as a cosmic dance, the dance of form—no more and no less.

When you know who you truly are, there is an abiding alive sense of peace. You could call it joy because that's what joy is: vibrantly alive peace. It is the joy of knowing yourself as the very life essence before life takes on form. That is the joy of Being—of Being who you truly are.

Just as water can be solid, liquid, or gaseous, consciousness can be seen to be “frozen” as physical matter, “liquid” as mind and thought, or formless as pure consciousness.

Pure consciousness is Life before it comes into manifestation, and that Life looks at the world of form through “your” eyes because consciousness is who you are. When you know yourself as That, then you recognize yourself in everything. It is a state of complete clarity of perception. You are no longer an entity with a heavy past that becomes a screen of concepts through which every experience is interpreted.

When you perceive without interpretation, you can then sense what it is that is perceiving. The most we can say in language is that there is a field of alert stillness in which the perception happens.

Through “you”, formless consciousness has become aware of itself.

Most people's lives are run by desire and fear.

Desire is the need to *add* something to yourself in order to *be* yourself

more fully. All fear is the fear of *losing* something and thereby becoming diminished and *being* less.

These two movements obscure the fact that Being cannot be given or taken away. Being in its fullness is already within you, Now.





CHAPTER 6  
ACCEPTANCE & SURRENDER



Whenever you are able, have a “look” inside yourself to see whether you are unconsciously creating conflict between the inner and the outer, between your external circumstances at that moment—where you are, who you are with, or what you are doing—and your thoughts and feelings. Can you feel how painful it is to internally stand in opposition to what is?

When you recognize this, you also realize that you are now free to give up this futile conflict, this inner state of war.

How often each day, if you were to verbalize your inner reality at that moment, would you have to say, “I don’t want to be where I am”? What does it feel like when you don’t want to be where you are—the traffic jam, your place of work, the airport lounge, the people you are with?

It is true, of course, that some places are good places to walk out of—and sometimes that may well be the most appropriate thing for you to do. In many cases, however, walking out is not an option. In all those cases, the “I don’t want to be here” is not only useless but also dysfunctional. It makes you and others unhappy.

It has been said: wherever you go, there you are. In other words: you are here. Always. Is it so hard to accept that?

Do you really need to mentally label every sense perception and experience? Do you really need to have a reactive like/dislike relationship with life where you are in almost continuous conflict with situations and people? Or is that just a deep-seated mental habit that can be broken? Not by doing anything, but by allowing this moment to be as it is.

The habitual and reactive “no” strengthens the ego. “Yes” weakens it. Your form identity, the ego, cannot survive surrender.

“I have so much to do.” Yes, but what is the quality of your doing? Driving to work, speaking to clients, working on the computer, running errands, dealing with the countless things that make up your daily life—how total are you in what you do? Is your doing surrendered or non-surrendered? This is what determines your success in life, not how much effort you make. Effort implies stress and strain, *needing* to reach a certain point in the future or accomplish a certain result.

Can you detect even the slightest element within yourself of *not wanting* to be doing what you are doing? That is a denial of life, and so a truly successful outcome is not possible.

If you can detect this within yourself, can you also drop it and be total in what you do?

“Doing one thing at a time” is how one Zen Master defined the essence of Zen.

Doing one thing at a time means to be total in what you do, to give it your complete attention. This is surrendered action—empowered action.

Your acceptance of what *is* takes you to a deeper level where your

inner state as well as your sense of self no longer depend on the mind's judgments of "good" or "bad".

When you say "yes" to the "isness" of life, when you accept this moment as it is, you can feel a sense of spaciousness within you that is deeply peaceful.

On the surface, you may still be happy when it's sunny and not so happy when it's rainy; you may be happy at winning a million dollars and unhappy at losing all your possessions. Neither happiness nor unhappiness, however, go all that deep anymore. They are ripples on the surface of your Being. The background peace within you remains undisturbed regardless of the nature of the outside condition.

The "yes" to what *is* reveals a dimension of depth within you that is dependent neither on external conditions nor on the internal conditions of constantly fluctuating thoughts and emotions.

Surrender becomes so much easier when you realize the fleeting nature of all experiences and that the world cannot give you anything of lasting value. You then continue to meet people, to be involved in experiences and activities, but without the wants and fears of the egoic self. That is to say, you no longer demand that a situation, person, place, or event should satisfy you or make you happy. Its passing and imperfect nature is allowed to be.

And the miracle is that when you are no longer placing an impossible demand on it, every situation, person, place, or event becomes not only satisfying but also more harmonious, more peaceful.

When you completely accept this moment, when you no longer argue with what is, the compulsion to think lessens and is replaced by an alert stillness. You are fully conscious, yet the mind is not labeling this moment in any way. This state of inner nonresistance opens you to the unconditioned consciousness that is infinitely greater than the human mind. This vast intelligence can then express itself through you and assist you, both from within and from without. That is why, by letting go of inner resistance, you often find circumstances change for the better.

Am I saying, “Enjoy this moment. Be happy”? No.

Allow the “suchness” of this moment. That’s enough.

Surrender is surrender to *this moment*, not to a story through which you *interpret* this moment and then try to resign yourself to it.

For instance, you may have a disability and can’t walk anymore. The condition is as it is.

Perhaps your mind is now creating a story that says, “This is what my life has come to. I have ended up in a wheelchair. Life has treated me harshly and unfairly. I don’t deserve this.”

Can you accept the *isness* of this moment and not confuse it with a story the mind has created around it?

Surrender comes when you no longer ask, “Why is this happening to me?”

Even within the seemingly most unacceptable and painful situation is concealed a deeper good, and within every disaster is contained the seed of grace.

Throughout history, there have been women and men who, in the face of great loss, illness, imprisonment, or impending death, accepted the seemingly unacceptable and thus found “the peace that passeth all understanding”.

Acceptance of the unacceptable is the greatest source of grace in this world.

There are situations where all answers and explanations fail. Life does not make sense anymore. Or someone in distress comes to you for help, and you don't know what to do or say.

When you fully accept that you don't know, you give up struggling to find answers with the limited thinking mind, and that is when a greater intelligence can operate through you. And even thought can then benefit from that, since the greater intelligence can flow into it and inspire it.

Sometimes surrender means giving up trying to understand and becoming comfortable with not knowing.

Do you know of someone whose main function in life seems to be to make themselves and others miserable, to spread unhappiness? Forgive them, for they too are part of the awakening of humanity. The role they play represents an intensification of the nightmare of egoic consciousness, the state of non-surrender. There is nothing personal in all this. It is not who they are.

Surrender, one could say, is the inner transition from resistance to acceptance, from “no” to “yes”.

When you surrender, your sense of self shifts from being identified



with a reaction or mental judgment to being the *space around* the reaction or judgment. It is a shift from identification with form—the thought or the emotion—to being and recognizing yourself as that which has no form—spacious awareness.

Whatever you accept completely will take you to peace, including the acceptance that you cannot accept, that you are in resistance.

Leave Life alone. Let it be.

CHAPTER 7

NATURE



We depend on nature not only for our physical survival. We also need nature to show us the way home, the way out of the prison of our own minds. We got lost in doing, thinking, remembering, anticipating—lost in a maze of complexity and a world of problems.

We have forgotten what rocks, plants, and animals still know. We have forgotten how to *be*—to be still, to be ourselves, to be where life is: Here and Now.

Whenever you bring your attention to anything natural, anything that has come into existence without human intervention, you step out of the prison of conceptualized thinking and, to some extent, participate in the state of connectedness with Being in which everything natural still exists.

To bring your attention to a stone, a tree, or an animal does not mean to *think* about it, but simply to perceive it, to hold it in your awareness.

Something of its essence then transmits itself to you. You can sense how still it is, and in doing so the same stillness arises within you. You sense how deeply it rests in Being—completely at one with what it is and where it is. In realizing this, you too come to a place of rest deep within yourself.

When walking or resting in nature, honor that realm by being there fully. Be still. Look. Listen. See how every animal and every plant is completely itself. Unlike humans, they have not split themselves in two. They do not live through mental images of themselves, so they do not need to be concerned with trying to protect and enhance those images. The deer *is* itself. The daffodil *is* itself.

All things in nature are not only one with themselves but also one with the totality. They haven't removed themselves from the fabric of the whole by claiming a separate existence: "me" and the rest of the universe.

The contemplation of nature can free you of that "me", the great troublemaker.

Bring awareness to the many subtle sounds of nature—the rustling of leaves in the wind, raindrops falling, the humming of an insect, the first birdsong at dawn. Give yourself completely to the act of listening. Beyond the sounds there is something greater: a sacredness that cannot be understood through thought.

You didn't create your body, nor are you able to control the body's functions. An intelligence greater than the human mind is at work. It is the same intelligence that sustains all of nature. You cannot get any closer to that intelligence than by being aware of your own inner energy field—by feeling the aliveness, the animating presence within the body.

The playfulness and joy of a dog, its unconditional love and readiness to celebrate life at any moment often contrast sharply with the inner state of the dog's owner—depressed, anxious, burdened by problems, lost in

thought, not present in the only place and only time there is: Here and Now. One wonders: living with this person, how does the dog manage to remain so sane, so joyous?

When you perceive nature only through the mind, through thinking, you cannot sense its aliveness, its beingness. You see the form only and are unaware of the life within the form—the sacred mystery. Thought reduces nature to a commodity to be used in the pursuit of profit or knowledge or some other utilitarian purpose. The ancient forest becomes timber, the bird a research project, the mountain something to be mined or conquered.

When you perceive nature, let there be spaces of no thought, no mind. When you approach nature in this way, it will respond to you and participate in the evolution of human and planetary consciousness.

Notice how present a flower is, how surrendered to life.

The plant that you have in your home—have you ever truly looked at it? Have you allowed that familiar yet mysterious being we call *plant* to teach you its secrets? Have you noticed how deeply peaceful it is? How it is surrounded by a field of stillness? The moment you become aware of a plant's emanation of stillness and peace, that plant becomes your teacher.

Watch an animal, a flower, a tree, and see how it rests in Being. It *is* itself. It has enormous dignity, innocence, and holiness. However, for you to see that, you need to go beyond the mental habit of naming and labeling. The moment you look beyond mental labels, you feel that ineffable dimension of nature that cannot be understood by thought or perceived through the senses, It is a harmony, a sacredness that permeates not only

the whole of nature but is also within you.

The air that you breathe is nature, as is the breathing process itself.

Bring your attention to your breathing and realize that you are not doing it. It is the breath of nature. If you had to remember to breathe, you would soon die, and if you tried to stop breathing, nature would prevail.

You reconnect with nature in the most intimate and powerful way by becoming aware of your breathing and learning to hold your attention there. This is a healing and deeply empowering thing to do. It brings about a shift in consciousness from the conceptual world of thought to the inner realm of unconditioned consciousness.

You need nature as your teacher to help you reconnect with Being. But not only do you need nature, it also needs you.

You are not separate from nature. We are all part of the One Life that manifests itself in countless forms throughout the universe, forms that are all completely interconnected. When you recognize the sacredness, the beauty, the incredible stillness and dignity in which a flower or a tree exists, you add something to the flower or the tree. Through your recognition, your awareness, nature too comes to know itself. It comes to know its own beauty and sacredness through you!

A great silent space holds all of nature in its embrace. It also holds you.

Only when you are still inside do you have access to the realm of stillness that rocks, plants, and animals inhabit. Only when your noisy mind subsides can you connect with nature at a deep level and go beyond

the sense of separation created by excessive thinking.

Thinking is a stage in the evolution of life. Nature exists in innocent stillness that is prior to the arising of thought. The tree, the flower, the bird, the rock are unaware of their own beauty and sacredness. When human beings become still, they go beyond thought. There is an added dimension of knowing, of awareness, in the stillness that is beyond thought.

Nature can bring you to stillness. That is its gift to you. When you perceive and join with nature in the field of stillness, that field becomes permeated with your awareness. That is your gift to nature.

Through you nature becomes aware of itself. Nature has been waiting for you, as it were, for millions of years.





CHAPTER8  
RELATIONSHIPS



How quick we are to form an opinion of a person, to come to a conclusion about them. It is satisfying to the egoic mind to label another human being, to give them a conceptual identity, to pronounce righteous judgment upon them.

Every human being has been conditioned to think and behave in certain ways—conditioned genetically as well as by their childhood experiences and their cultural environment.

That is not who they are, but that is who they appear to be. When you pronounce judgment upon someone, you confuse those conditioned mind patterns with who they are. To do that is in itself a deeply conditioned and unconscious pattern. You give them a conceptual identity, and that false identity becomes a prison not only for the other person but also for yourself.

To let go of judgment does not mean that you don't see what they do. It means that you recognize their behavior as a form of conditioning, and you see it and accept it as that. You don't construct an identity out of it for that person.

That liberates you as well as the other person from identification with

conditioning, with form, with mind. The ego then no longer runs your relationships.

As long as the ego runs your life, most of your thoughts, emotions, and actions arise from desire and fear. In relationships you then either want or fear something from the other person.

What you want from them may be pleasure or material gain, recognition, praise or attention, or a strengthening of your sense of self through comparison and through establishing that you are, have, or know more than they. What you fear is that the opposite may be the case, and they may diminish your sense of self in some way.

When you make the present moment the focal point of your attention—instead of using it as a means to an end—you go beyond the ego and beyond the unconscious compulsion to use people as a means to an end, the end being selfenhancement at the cost of others. When you give your fullest attention to whoever you are interacting with, you take past and future out of the relationship, except for practical matters. When you are fully present with everyone you meet, you relinquish the conceptual identity you made for them—your interpretation of who they are and what they did in the past—and are able to interact without the egoic movements of desire and fear. Attention, which is alert stillness, is the key.

How wonderful to go beyond wanting and fearing in your relationships. Love does not want or fear anything.

If her past were your past, her pain your pain, her level of consciousness your level of consciousness, you would think and act exactly as she does.

With this realization comes forgiveness, compassion, peace.

The ego doesn't like to hear this, because if it cannot be reactive and righteous anymore, it will lose strength.

When you receive whoever comes into the space of Now as a noble guest, when you allow each person to be as they are, they begin to change.

To know another human being in their essence, you don't really need to know anything *about* them—their past, their history; their story. We confuse knowing *about* with a deeper knowing that is nonconceptual. Knowing *about* and knowing are totally different modalities. One is concerned with form, the other with the formless. One operates through thought, the other through stillness.

Knowing *about* is helpful for practical purposes. On that level, we cannot do without it. When it is the predominant modality in relationships, however, it becomes very limiting, even destructive. Thoughts and concepts create an artificial barrier, a separation between human beings. Your interactions are then not rooted in Being, but become mind-based. Without the conceptual barriers, love is naturally present in all human interactions.

Most human interactions are confined to the exchange of words—the realm of thought. It is essential to bring some stillness, particularly into your close relationships.

No relationship can thrive without the sense of spaciousness that comes with stillness. Meditate or spend silent time in nature together. When going for a walk or sitting in the car or at home, become comfortable with

being in stillness together. Stillness cannot and need not be created. Just be receptive to the stillness that is already there, but is usually obscured by mental noise.

If spacious stillness is missing, the relationship will be dominated by the mind and can easily be taken over by problems and conflict. If stillness is there, it can contain anything.

True listening is another way of bringing stillness into the relationship. When you truly listen to someone, the dimension of stillness arises and becomes an essential part of the relationship. But true listening is a rare skill. Usually, the greater part of a person's attention is taken up by their thinking. At best, they may be evaluating your words or preparing the next thing to say. Or they may not be listening at all, lost in their own thoughts.

True listening goes far beyond auditory perception. It is the arising of alert attention, a space of presence in which the words are being received. The words now become secondary. They may be meaningful or they may not make sense. Far more important than *what* you are listening to is the act of listening itself, the space of conscious presence that arises as you listen. That space is a unifying field of awareness in which you meet the other person without the separative barriers created by conceptual thinking. And now the other person is no longer "other", In that space, you are joined together as one awareness, one consciousness.

Do you experience frequent and repetitive drama in your close relationships? Do relatively insignificant disagreements often trigger violent arguments and emotional pain?

At the root of such experiences lie the basic egoic patterns: the need to be right and, of course, for someone else to be wrong; that is to say, identification with mental positions. There is also the ego's need to be periodically in conflict with something or someone in order to strengthen its sense of separation between "me" and the "other" without which it cannot survive.

In addition, there is the accumulated emotional pain from the past that you and each human being carries within, both from your personal past as well as the collective pain of humanity that goes back a long, long time. This "pain-body" is an energy field within you that sporadically takes you over because it needs to experience more emotional pain for it to feed on and replenish itself. It will try to control your thinking and make it deeply negative. It loves your negative thoughts, since it resonates with their frequency and so can feed on them. It will also provoke negative emotional reactions in people close to you, especially your partner, in order to feed on the ensuing drama and emotional pain.

How can you free yourself from this deep-seated unconscious identification with pain that creates so much misery in your life?

Become aware of it. Realize that it is not who you are, and recognize it for what it is: past pain. Witness it as it happens in your partner or in yourself. When your unconscious identification with it is broken, when you are able to observe it within yourself, you don't feed it anymore, and it will gradually lose its energy charge.

Human interaction can be hell. Or it can be a great spiritual practice.



When you look upon another human being and feel great love toward them, or when you contemplate beauty in nature and something within you responds deeply to it, close your eyes for a moment and feel the essence of that love or that beauty within you, inseparable from who you are, your true nature. The outer form is a temporary reflection of what you are within, in your essence. That is why love and beauty can never leave you, although all outer forms will.

What is your relationship with the world of objects, the countless things that surround you and that you handle every day? The chair you sit on, the pen, the car, the cup? Are they to you merely a means to an end, or do you occasionally acknowledge their existence, their being, no matter how briefly, by noticing them and giving them your attention?

When you get attached to objects, when you are using them to enhance your worth in your own eyes and in the eyes of others, concern about things can easily take over your whole life. When there is self-identification with things, you don't appreciate them for what they are because you are looking for yourself in them.

When you appreciate an object for what it is, when you acknowledge its being without mental projection, you cannot *not* feel grateful for its existence. You may also sense that it is not really inanimate, that it only appears so to the senses, Physicists will confirm that on a molecular level it is indeed a pulsating energy field.

Through selfless appreciation of the realm of things, the world around you will come alive in ways that you cannot even begin to comprehend

with the mind.

Whenever you meet anyone, no matter how briefly, do you acknowledge their being by giving them your full attention? Or are you reducing them to a means to an end, a mere function or role?

What is the quality of your relationship with the cashier at the supermarket, the parking attendant, the repairman, the “customer”?

A moment of attention is enough. As you look at them or listen to them, there is an alert stillness—perhaps only two or three seconds, perhaps longer. That is enough for something more real to emerge than the roles we usually play and identify with. All roles are part of the conditioned consciousness that is the human mind. That which emerges through the act of attention is the unconditioned—who you are in your essence, underneath your name and form. You are no longer acting out a script; you become real. When that dimension emerges from within you, it also draws it forth from within the other person.

Ultimately, of course, there is no other, and you are always meeting yourself.



CHAPTER9  
DEATH & THE ETERNAL



When you walk through a forest that has not been tamed and interfered with by man, you will see not only abundant life all around you, but you will also encounter fallen trees and decaying trunks, rotting leaves and decomposing matter at every step. Wherever you look, you will find death as well as life.

Upon closer scrutiny, however, you will discover that the decomposing tree trunk and rotting leaves not only give birth to new life, but are full of life themselves. Microorganisms are at work. Molecules are rearranging themselves. So death isn't to be found anywhere. There is only the metamorphosis of life forms. What can you learn from this?

Death is not the opposite of life. Life has no opposite. The opposite of death is birth. Life is eternal.

Sages and poets throughout the ages have recognized the dreamlike quality of human existence—seemingly so solid and real and yet so fleeting that it could dissolve at any moment.

At the hour of your death, the story of your life may, indeed, appear to you like a dream that is coming to an end. Yet even in a dream there must be an essence that is real. There must be a consciousness in which the

dream happens; otherwise, it would not be.

That consciousness—does the body create it or does consciousness create the dream of body, the dream of somebody?

Why have most of those who went through a near-death experience lost their fear of death? Reflect upon this.

Of course you know you are going to die, but that remains a mere mental concept until you meet death “in person” for the first time: through a serious illness or an accident that happens to you or someone close to you, or through the passing away of a loved one, death enters your life as the awareness of your own mortality.

Most people turn away from it in fear, but if you do not flinch and face the fact that your body is fleeting and could dissolve at any moment, there is some degree of disidentification, however slight, from your own physical and psychological form, the “me”. When you see and accept the impermanent nature of all life forms, a strange sense of peace comes upon you.

Through facing death, your consciousness is freed to some extent from identification with form. This is why in some Buddhist traditions, the monks regularly visit the morgue to sit and meditate among the dead bodies.

There is still a widespread denial of death in Western cultures. Even old people try not to speak or think about it, and dead bodies are hidden away. A culture that denies death inevitably becomes shallow and superficial, concerned only with the external form of things. When death is

denied, life loses its depth. The possibility of knowing who we are beyond name and form, the dimension of the transcendent, disappears from our lives because death is the opening into that dimension.

People tend to be uncomfortable with endings, because every ending is a little death. That's why in many languages, the word for "good-bye" means "see you again".

Whenever an experience comes to an end—a gathering of friends, a vacation, your children leaving home—you die a little death. A "form" that appeared in your consciousness as that experience dissolves. Often this leaves behind a feeling of emptiness that most people try hard not to feel, not to face.

If you can learn to accept and even welcome the endings in your life, you may find that the feeling of emptiness that initially felt uncomfortable turns into a sense of inner spaciousness that is deeply peaceful.

By learning to die daily in this way, you open yourself to Life.

Most people feel that their identity, their sense of self, is something incredibly precious that they don't want to lose. That is why they have such fear of death.

It seems unimaginable and frightening that "I" could cease to exist. But you confuse that precious "I" with your name and form and a story associated with it. That "I" is no more than a temporary formation in the field of consciousness.

As long as that form identity is all you know, you are not aware that this preciousness is your own essence, your innermost sense of *I Am*,



which is consciousness itself. It is the eternal in you—and that's the only thing you *cannot* lose.

Whenever any kind of deep loss occurs in your life—such as loss of possessions, your home, a close relationship; or loss of your reputation, job, or physical abilities—something inside you dies. You feel diminished in your sense of who you are. There may also be a certain disorientation. “Without this... who am I?”

When a form that you had unconsciously identified with as part of yourself leaves you or dissolves, that can be extremely painful. It leaves a hole, so to speak, in the fabric of your existence.

When this happens, don't deny or ignore the pain or the sadness that you feel. Accept that it is there. Beware of your mind's tendency to construct a story around that loss in which you are assigned the role of victim. Fear, anger, resentment, or selfpity are the emotions that go with that role. Then become aware of what lies behind those emotions as well as behind the mind-made story: that hole, that empty space. Can you face and accept that strange sense of emptiness? If you do, you may find that it is no longer a fearful place. You may be surprised to find peace emanating from it.

Whenever death occurs, whenever a life form dissolves, God, the formless and unmanifested, shines through the opening left by the dissolving form. That is why the most sacred thing in life is death. That is why the peace of God can come to you through the contemplation and acceptance of death.

How short-lived every human experience is, how fleeting our lives.

Is there anything that is not subject to birth and death, anything that is eternal?

Consider this: if there were only one color, let us say blue, and the entire world and everything in it were blue, then there would be no blue. There needs to be something that is not blue so that blue can be recognized; otherwise, it would not “stand out”, would not exist.

In the same way, does it not require something that is not fleeting and impermanent for the fleetingness of all things to be recognized? In other words: if everything, including yourself, were impermanent, would you even know it? Does the fact that you are aware of and can witness the short-lived nature of all forms, including your own, not mean that there is something in you that is not subject to decay?

When you are twenty, you are aware of your body as strong and vigorous; sixty years later, you are aware of your body as weakened and old. Your thinking too may have changed from when you were twenty, but the awareness that knows that your body is young or old or that your thinking has changed has undergone no change. That awareness is the eternal in you—consciousness itself. It is the formless One Life. Can you lose It? No, because you are It.

Some people become deeply peaceful and almost luminous just before they die, as if something is shining through the dissolving form.

Sometimes it happens that very ill or old people become almost transparent, so to speak, in the last few weeks, months, or even years of their lives. As they look at you, you may see a light shining through their

eyes. There is no psychological suffering left, They have surrendered and so the person, the mind-made egoic “me”, has already dissolved. They have “died before they died” and found the deep inner peace that is the realization of the deathless within themselves.

To every accident and disaster there is a potentially redemptive dimension that we are usually unaware of.

The tremendous shock of totally unexpected, imminent death can have the effect of forcing your consciousness completely out of identification with form. In the last few moments before physical death, and as you die, you then experience yourself as consciousness free of form. Suddenly, there is no more fear, just peace and a knowing that “all is well” and that death is only a form dissolving. Death is then recognized as ultimately illusory—as illusory as the form you had identified with as yourself.

Death is not an anomaly or the most dreadful of all events as modern culture would have you believe, but the most natural thing in the world, inseparable from and just as natural as its polarity—birth. Remind yourself of this when you sit with a dying person.

It is a great privilege and a sacred act to be present at a person’s death as a witness and companion.

When you sit with a dying person, do not deny any aspect of that experience. Do not deny what is happening and do not deny your feelings. The recognition that there is nothing you can do may make you feel helpless, sad, or angry. Accept what you feel. Then go one step further: accept that there is nothing you can do, and accept it completely You

are not in control. Deeply surrender to every aspect of that experience, your feelings as well as any pain or discomfort the dying person may be experiencing. Your surrendered state of consciousness and the stillness that comes with it will greatly assist the dying person and ease their transition. If words are called for, they will come out of the stillness within you. But they will be secondary.

With the stillness comes the benediction: peace.



CHAPTER 10  
SUFFERING & THE END OF SUFFERING



The interconnectedness of all things: Buddhists have always known it, and physicists now confirm it. Nothing that happens is an isolated event; it only appears to be. The more we judge and label it, the more we isolate it. The wholeness of life becomes fragmented through our thinking. Yet the totality of life has brought this event about. It is part of the web of interconnectedness that is the cosmos.

This means: whatever *is* could not be otherwise.

In most cases, we cannot begin to understand what role a seemingly senseless event may have within the totality of the cosmos, but recognizing its inevitability within the vastness of the whole can be the beginning of an inner acceptance of what *is* and thus a realignment with the wholeness of life.

True freedom and the end of suffering is living in such a way as if you had completely chosen whatever you feel or experience at this moment.

This inner alignment with Now is the end of suffering.

Is suffering really necessary? Yes and no.

If you had not suffered as you have, there would be no depth to you as a human being, no humility, no compassion. You would not be reading



this now. Suffering cracks open the shell of ego, and then comes a point when it has served its purpose. Suffering is necessary until you realize it is unnecessary.

Unhappiness needs a mind-made “me” with a story, a conceptual identity. It needs time—past and future. When you remove time from your unhappiness, what is it that remains? The “suchness” of this moment remains.

It may be a feeling of heaviness, agitation, tightness, anger, or even nausea. That is not unhappiness, and it is not a personal problem. There is nothing personal in human pain. It is simply an intense pressure or intense energy that you feel somewhere in the body. By giving it attention, the feeling doesn't turn into thinking and thus reactivate the unhappy “me”.

See what happens when you just allow a feeling to be.

Much suffering, much unhappiness arises when you take each thought that comes into your head for the truth. Situations don't make you unhappy. They may cause you physical pain, but they don't make you unhappy. Your thoughts make you unhappy. Your interpretations, the stories you tell yourself make you unhappy.

“The thoughts I am thinking right now are making me unhappy.” This realization breaks your unconscious identification with those thoughts.

What a miserable day.

He didn't have the decency to return my call.

She let me down.

Little stories we tell ourselves and others, often in the form of

complaints. They are unconsciously designed to enhance our always deficient sense of self through being “right” and making something or someone “wrong”. Being “right” places us in a position of imagined superiority and so strengthens our false sense of self, the ego. This also creates some kind of enemy: yes, the ego needs enemies to define its boundary, and even the weather can serve that function.

Through habitual mental judgment and emotional contraction, you have a personalized, reactive relationship to people and events in your life, These are all forms of self-created suffering, but they are not recognized as such because to the ego they are satisfying. The ego enhances itself through reactivity and conflict.

How simple life would be without those stories.

It is raining.

He did not call.

I was there, She was not.

When you are suffering, when you are unhappy, stay totally with what is Now. Unhappiness or problems cannot survive in the Now.

Suffering begins when you mentally name or label a situation in some way as undesirable or bad. You resent a situation and that resentment personalizes it and brings in a reactive “me”.

Naming and labeling are habitual, but that habit can be broken. Start practicing “not naming” with small things. If you miss the plane, drop and break a cup, or slip and fall in the mud, can you refrain from naming the experience as bad or painful? Can you immediately accept the “isness” of

that moment?

Naming something as bad causes an emotional contraction within you. When you let it be, without naming it, enormous power is suddenly available to you.

The contraction cuts you off from that power, the power of life itself.

They ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Go beyond good and bad by refraining from mentally labeling anything as good or bad. When you go beyond the habitual naming, the power of the universe moves through you. When you are in a nonreactive relationship to experiences, what you would have called “bad” before often turns around quickly, if not immediately, through the power of life itself.

Watch what happens when you don’t name an experience as “bad” and instead bring an inner acceptance, an inner “yes” to it, and so let it be as it is.

Whatever your life situation is, how would you feel if you completely accepted it as it is—right Now?

There are many subtle and not so subtle forms of suffering that are so “normal” they are usually not recognized as suffering and may even feel satisfying to the ego—irritation, impatience, anger, having an issue with something or someone, resentment, complaining.

You can learn to recognize all those forms of suffering as they happen and know: at this moment, I am creating suffering for myself.

If you are in the habit of creating suffering for yourself, you are probably creating suffering for others too. These unconscious mind patterns

tend to come to an end simply by making them conscious, by becoming aware of them as they happen.

You cannot be conscious *and* create suffering for yourself.

This is the miracle: behind every condition, person, or situation that appears “bad” or “evil” lies concealed a deeper good. That deeper good reveals itself to you—both within and without—through inner acceptance of what *is*.

“Resist not evil” is one of the highest truths of humanity.

A dialogue:

Accept what is.

*I truly cannot. I'm agitated and angry about this.*

Then accept what is.

*Accept that I'm agitated and angry? Accept that I cannot accept?*

Yes. Bring acceptance into your nonacceptance. Bring surrender into your nonsurrender. Then see what happens.

Chronic physical pain is one of the harshest teachers you can have. “Resistance is futile” is its teaching.

Nothing could be more normal than an unwillingness to suffer. Yet if you can let go of that unwillingness, and instead allow the pain to be there, you may notice a subtle inner separation from the pain, a space between you and the pain, as it were. This means to suffer consciously, willingly. When you suffer consciously, physical pain can quickly burn up the ego in you, since ego consists largely of resistance. The same is true of extreme physical disability.

You “offer up your suffering to God” is another way of saying this.

You don't need to be a Christian to understand the deep universal truth that is contained in symbolic form in the image of the cross.

The cross is a torture instrument. It stands for the most extreme suffering, limitation, and helplessness a human being can encounter. Then suddenly that human being surrenders, suffers willingly, consciously, expressed through the words, “Not my will but Thy will be done.” At that moment, the cross, the torture instrument, shows its hidden face: it is also a sacred symbol, a symbol for the divine.

That which seemed to deny the existence of any transcendental dimension to life, through surrender becomes an opening into that dimension.