

Appendix of Non-Dual Wisdom

Adapted from Nisargadatta Maharaj:

Mere knowledge is not enough; the knower must be known.

Without knowledge of the knower there can be no peace. I know myself as I am in reality. I am neither the body nor the mind. I am beyond all these.

You are accustomed to deal with things, physical and mental. I am not a thing, nor are you. We are neither matter nor energy, neither body nor mind.

Once you have a glimpse of your own being you will not find me difficult to understand. You must gain your own experience.

We believe so many things on hearsay. We never cared to verify.

The entire universe exists only in consciousness, while I have my stand in the Absolute (Paramakash). In pure being consciousness arises; in consciousness the world appears and disappears.

Awareness comes as if from a higher dimension.

Awareness is beyond all. Awareness is undivided-aware of itself.

Awareness is primordial; it is the original state, beginningless, endless, uncaused, unsupported, without parts, without change. Consciousness is on contact, a reflection against a surface, a state of duality.

The supreme state is the very centre of consciousness, and yet beyond consciousness.

The centre is a point of void and the witness a point of pure awareness; they know themselves to be as nothing.

But the void is full to the brim. It is the eternal potential as consciousness is the eternal actual.

In the ocean of pure awareness, on the surface of the universal consciousness, the numberless waves of the phenomenal worlds arise and subside beginninglessly and endlessly.

Nothing lasts. The void remains.

Awareness is not of time. Time exists in consciousness only.

In reality only the Ultimate is. The rest is a matter of name and form. As long as you cling to the idea that only what has name and shape exists, the Supreme will appear to you non-existing.

Names and shapes are hollow shells. What is real is nameless and formless, pure energy of life and light of consciousness.

All is consciousness. Consciousness itself is the source of everything.

Everything is a form of energy.

You are not the body. You are the immensity and infinity of consciousness. Consciousness is the subtle counterpart of matter. Inertia and energy are attributes of matter.

Whenever matter organizes itself into a stable organism, consciousness appears spontaneously. With the destruction of the organism consciousness disappears.

Consciousness arising the world arises.

You are confused because you believe you are in the world, not the world in you.

Realize that you are dreaming a dream you call the world. When you have seen the dream as a dream you have done all that needs be done.

The dreamer is one. I am beyond all dreams. I am the light in which all dreams appear and disappear.

The objects in the world are many but the eye that sees them is one.

I am not my body. I am the witness only. All things are in me. I am not among things. You are so accustomed to thinking of-bodies having consciousness that you cannot imagine consciousness as having bodies. Bodily existence is but-a movement in consciousness.

The very purpose of creation is the fulfillment of desire. Things happen by their own nature. From my point of view everything happens by itself, quite spontaneously. I do nothing. I just see them happen.

You are and I am-only as points in consciousness.

I am not an object in consciousness but its source, its witness, pure shapeless awareness.

The source of consciousness cannot be an object in consciousness. To know the source is to be the source.

Realization is in discovering the source and abiding there.

All consciousness is consciousness of change.

The very perception of change-necessitates a changeless background.

The ocean of consciousness is infinite and eternal.

Timelessly the source actualizes itself without exhausting its infinite possibilities.

Every moment returns to its source-just as every wave subsides into the ocean.

You know yourself only through the senses and the mind. You take yourself to be what they suggest; having no direct knowledge of yourself. You have mere ideas.

Whatever you think you are you take it to be true-imagining yourself perceivable.

I see as you see, hear as you hear. I also feel thirst and hunger. When starved or sick my body and mind go weak. All this I perceive quite clearly, but I am not in it.

I feel myself as floating over it, aloof and detached. There is aloofness and detachment as there is thirst and hunger; there is also the awareness of it all and a sense of immense distance as if the body and the mind and all that happens to them were somewhere far out on the horizon.

I am like a cinema screen-clear and empty. The pictures pass over it and disappear, leaving it as clear and empty as before. In no way is the screen affected by the pictures, nor are the pictures affected by the screen.

The screen intercepts and reflects the pictures. These are lumps of destiny, but not my destiny; the destinies of the people on the screen.

The character will become a person when he begins to shape his life instead of accepting it as it comes-identifying himself with it. To myself I am neither perceivable nor conceivable; there is nothing I can point out and say "this I am".

Only the onlooker is real, call him Self or Atman. To the Self the world is but a colorful show, which he enjoys as long as it lasts and forgets when it is over.

Whatever happens on the stage makes him shudder in terror or roll with laughter, yet all the time he is aware that it is but a show. Without desire or fear he enjoys it, as it happens.

You must begin by being the dispassionate observer. Then only will you realize your full being. As long as you are enmeshed in the tribulations of a particular personality, you can see nothing beyond it. Ultimately you will come to see that you are neither the particular nor the universal. You are beyond both.

When the body is born, all kinds of things happen to it and you take part in them, because you take yourself to be the body. You are like the man in the cinema house, laughing and crying with the picture, though knowing fully well that he is all the time in his seat and the picture is but a play of light. It is enough to shift attention from the screen onto oneself to break the spell. When the body dies, the kind of life you live now-succession of physical and mental events-comes to an end. It can end now-without waiting for the death of the body. It is enough to shift attention to the Self and keep it there.

The world is but a show, glittering and empty. It is, and yet is not. It is there as long as I want to see it and take part in it. When I cease caring, it dissolves. It has no cause and serves no purpose. It just happens when we are absent-minded. It appears exactly as it looks, but there is no depth in it, nor meaning.

All happens as if there is a mysterious power that creates and moves everything. Realize that you are not the mover, only the observer, and you will be at peace.

As the tiny point of a pencil can draw innumerable pictures, so does the dimensionless point of awareness draw the contents of the vast universe. Find that point and be free.

It is pure awareness of being, without being this or that, without any self-identification with anything in particular, or in general. In that pure light of consciousness there is nothing, not even the idea of nothing. There is only light.

Without the light and the screen there can be no pictures. To know the picture as the play of light on the screen gives freedom from the idea that the picture is real.

Some memories are needed to identify and guide the body and such memories do remain, but there is no attachment left to the body as such; it is no longer the ground for desire or fear. Having seen that you are a bundle of memories held together by attachment, step out and look from the outside.

I may perceive the world just like you, but you believe to be in it, while I see it as an iridescent drop in the vast expanse of consciousness.

In reality I only look. Whatever is done, is done on the stage. Joy and sorrow, life and death, they are real to the man in bondage; to me they are all in the show, as unreal as the show itself.

This is all imagination. In the light of consciousness all sorts of things happen and one need not give special importance to any.

The world just sprouts into being out of nothing and returns to nothing.

As long as you are outside my state, you will have Creators, Preservers and Destroyers, but once with me you will know the Self only and see yourself in all.

In my world nobody is born and nobody dies. Some go on a journey and come back, some never leave. What difference does it make since they travel in dreamlands, each wrapped up in his own dream. Only the waking up is important. It is enough to know the 'I am' as reality and also love.

Whatever happens, I remain. At the root of my being is pure awareness, a speck of intense light. This speck, by its nature, radiates and creates pictures in space and events in time-effortlessly and spontaneously. As long as it is merely aware there are no problems. But when the discriminative mind comes into being and creates distinctions, pleasure and pain arise. During sleep the mind is in abeyance and so are pain and pleasure. The process of creation continues, but no notice is taken. The mind is a form of consciousness, and consciousness is an aspect of life. Life creates everything, but the Supreme is beyond all.

Every sensation is contemplated in perfect equanimity. There is no desire for it, nor refusal. It is as it is and he looks at it with a smile of affectionate detachment.

Suffering-is there, but it does not matter. Whatever state I am in, I see it as a state of mind to be accepted as it is.

In terms of consciousness the Supreme is both creation and dissolution, concretion and abstraction, the focal and the universal. It is also neither. Words do not reach there.

To me dependence on anything for happiness is utter misery. Pleasure and pain have causes. My state is my own, totally uncaused, independent, unassailable.

The Supreme state-neither comes nor goes. It is. It is a timeless state, ever present.

Go beyond, go back to the source, go to the Self that is the same whatever happens. See everything as emanating from the light which is the source of your own being.

Seeing the false as the false is meditation. This must go on all the time.

For the path of return naughting oneself is necessary. My stand I take where nothing (Paramakash) is; words do not reach there, nor thoughts. To the mind it is all darkness and silence.

It is. It cannot be denied. It is deep and dark, mystery beyond mystery. It is, while all else merely happens.

It is like a bottomless well, whatever falls into it disappears.

What is liberation? To know that you are beyond birth and death. By forgetting who you are and imagining yourself a mortal creature you create so much trouble for yourself that you have to wake up, like from a bad dream.

Liberation is never of the person, it is always from the person.

Self-identifications are patently false and the cause of bondage.

What you call survival is but the survival of a dream. It is your desire to hold onto it that creates the problem. Let go. Stop imagining that the dream is yours. Look at the dream as a dream. When you see your dream as dream you wake up.

When you refuse to open your eyes, what can you be shown?

Investigate your world, apply your mind to it, examine it critically, scrutinize every idea about it. See your world as it is, not as you imagine it to be.

See the person you imagine yourself to be as a part of the world you perceive within your mind and look at the mind from the outside, for you are not the mind.

The person is never the subject. You can see a person but you are not a person.

The difference between the person and the witness is as between not knowing and knowing oneself.

The person may be conscious, but is not aware of being conscious. It is completely identified with what it thinks and feels and experiences. It sees the false as real.

I see only consciousness, and know everything to be but consciousness, as you know the pictures on the cinema screen to be but light.

Movement is illusory. What moves is the film-which is the mind.

Your desires just happen to you along with their fulfillment or non-fulfillment. You can change neither. It all merely happens. As long as there is the sense of identity with the body, frustration is inevitable. It is because of your illusion that you are the doer.

Everything is as it is because the entire universe is as it is.

The person is a very small thing. Actually it is a composite, it cannot be said to exist by itself. Unperceived it is just not there. It is but the shadow of the mind, the sum total of memories. Pure being is reflected in the mirror of the mind as knowing. What is known takes the shape of a person based on memory and habit. It is but a shadow or projection of the knower onto the screen of the mind.

There is no such thing as a separate person. Everything is the cause of everything.

The reward of self-knowledge is freedom from the personal self. Freedom means letting go. Spiritual maturity lies in the readiness to let go of everything.

Giving up is the first step. The real giving up is in realizing that there is nothing to give up, for nothing is your own.

Know yourself as you are-against fear there is no other remedy.

All attachment implies fear, for all things are transient-and fear makes one a slave.

Your attachment is your bondage. You cannot control the future. There is no such thing as free will. Will is bondage. You identify yourself with your desires and become their slave.

Destroy the wall that separates, the 'I-am-the-body-idea', and the inner and the outer become one.

This battle is always won, for it is a battle between the true and the false. The false has no chance.

A false question cannot be answered. It can only be seen as false. The question "Who am I?" has no answer. No experience can answer it.

All I can say truly is "I am". I cannot tell what I am because words can describe only what I am not. I am, and because I am, all is. I am beyond consciousness and therefore in consciousness I cannot say what I am. There is nothing wrong in the idea of a body-but limiting oneself to one body only is a mistake. In reality all existence, every form, is my own, within my consciousness.

My world is real, while yours is made of dreams.

Investigate your world, apply your mind to it, examine it critically, scrutinize every idea about it. Everything must be scrutinized and the unnecessary ruthlessly destroyed. There cannot be too much destruction. For in reality nothing is of value.

Discrimination will lead to detachment. You gain nothing. You leave behind what is not your own and find what you have never lost-your own being.

Once you realize that there is nothing in this world which you can call your own you look at it from the outside as you look at a play on the stage or a picture on the screen.

Remove the obstacles to its flow-and life flows naturally-unselfish and desireless action. Selfishness is due to self-identification with the body-it cannot be removed by effort, only by clear insight into its cause. A man who knows he is neither body nor mind cannot be selfish-he has nothing to be selfish for. Effort is a sign of conflict between incompatible desires. If they are seen as they are-only then they dissolve. What remains is that which cannot change. Reality remains. It cannot be conveyed through words. It is waiting for you to experience for yourself.

Reason tells you that you are neither the body, not its desires and fears, nor the mind with its fanciful ideas, not the roles society compels you to play.

The person is a nuisance and a hindrance-an obstacle-to be done away with-eliminated as a factor in consciousness. Remove the obstacles-desire for the false and fear of the true-and nothing will remain-all will remain. The sense of identity will remain but no longer identification with a particular body. Awareness will shine in its full splendor.

As long as you have the idea of influencing events, liberation is not for you. The very notion of doership, of being a cause, is bondage. Once you realize that all comes from within, that the world in which you live has not been projected onto you-but by you, your fear comes to an end. Without this realization you identify yourself with the externals, like the body, mind, society, nation, humanity, even God. But these are all escapes from fear. You have put so much energy into building a prison for yourself. Now spend as much on demolishing it. Demolition is easy, for the false dissolves when it is discovered.

To question-is the essence of revolt. Without revolt there can be no freedom.

What is done under pressure of society and circumstances does not matter much, for it is mostly mechanical, mere reactions to impacts. What has been done blindly, may add to one's-destiny, otherwise it hardly matters. It is enough to watch oneself dispassionately to isolate oneself completely from what is going on. The very reality of the world must be questioned.

Abandon all self-identifications. Abandon all self-concern. Abandon every desire. You are complete here and now-you need absolutely nothing. That which makes you think that you are a human is not human. It is a dimensionless point of consciousness, a conscious nothing. All you can say about yourself is 'I am'.

If you seek reality you must set yourself free-of all cultures, of all patterns of thinking and feeling. Even the idea of being-human should be discarded.

What you see as false dissolves. Desirelessness comes on its own when desire is recognized as false.

Whenever a thought or an emotion of desire or fear comes to your mind, just turn away from it. Just turn away-refuse attention-look between the thoughts rather than at the thoughts. When you walk in a crowd you do not fight with every man you meet-you just find your way between. When you fight you invite a fight. But when you do not resist you meet with no resistance-when you refuse to play the game you are out of it.

Find the immutable center where all movement takes birth. Be the axis at the center-not whirling at the periphery. Nothing stops you-except fear. You are afraid of impersonal being. Turn away from your desires and fears and the thoughts they create and you are in your natural state.

To realize that is the end of all seeking. You come to it when you see all you think yourself to be as mere imagination and stand aloof in pure awareness. It is not difficult but detachment is needed. It is the clinging to the false that makes the truth so difficult to see. Discard what is not your own until nothing is left which you can disown. You will find that what is left is nothing.

You are not a human. You just are. A point of awareness.

The knower rises and sets with the known. That in which both the knower and the known arise and set is beyond time.

What begins and ends is mere appearance. The world can be said to appear but not to be.

The world lasts but for a moment. It is your memory that makes you think that the world continues. Memory creates the illusion of continuity. I don't live by memory. I see the world as it is, a momentary appearance in consciousness.

It is my own reality that I impart to the present event. The past is in memory, the future in imagination. I am real for I am always now, in the present, and what is with me now shares in my reality.

Reality is essentially alone. To know that nothing is, is true knowledge.

Nothing perceivable is real.

Absolute reality imparts reality to whatever comes into being. It is the very source of reality. Realize that whatever there is true, noble and beautiful in the universe, it all comes from you. You are at the source of it.

What is caused by desire can be undone only in freedom from desire.

I am free of desire and fear because I do not remember the past or imagine the future.

Where there are no names or shapes how can there be desire and fear?

I am dead already. Physical death will make no difference. I am timeless being.

Before the mind happens-I am.

Before all beginnings, after all endings-I am. All has its being in the "I am" that shines in every living being.

Abandon the idea of a separate "I". By focusing the mind on "I am", on the sense of being, "I am so-and-so" dissolves; "I am a witness only" remains and that too submerges in "I am all". Then the all becomes the One and the One-yourself.

You see yourself in the world, while I see the world in myself. To you, you get born and die, while to me, the world appears and disappears. Our world is real, but your view of it is not. There is nothing wrong with the senses, it is your imagination that misleads you. There is a deep contradiction in your attitude which you do not see. You cling to the idea that you were born into a world. Don't assume what is not true and you will see things as I see them.

All this is in the mind only. In the great mirror of consciousness images arise and disappear-only memory gives them continuity. On such flimsy foundations we build a sense of personal existence-'I am so and so'-intermittent and dreamlike-which obscures the changeless state of pure awareness and makes us believe that we are born to suffer and die.

In ignorance the seer becomes the seen and in wisdom he is the seeing.

To take appearance for reality is a grievous sin-the cause of all calamities.

Everyone lives in his own world. The mind that projects the world, colors it its own way. Everything is subjective. You remain as pure being. You are watching only, all else happens.

Your mind projects a structure and you identify yourself with it. It is the nature of desire to prompt the mind to create a world for its fulfillment.

You identify yourself with everything so easily; I find it impossible.

Watch your mind.

The world you can perceive is a very small world-entirely private. Take it to be a dream and be done with it. The world is but a reflection of imagination. My world is just like yours. I see, I hear, I feel, I think, I speak and act in the world I perceive. With you it is all-with me it is almost nothing. Knowing the world to be a part of myself, I pay it no more attention than you pay to the food you have eaten.

A tremendously complex work is going on all the time in your brain and body. There is a mysterious power that looks after them. That power is awareness.

I know nothing about miracles, and wonder whether nature admits exceptions to her laws. Unless we agree that everything is a miracle-there is no such thing. There is consciousness in which everything happens.

The totality of all mental projections is the Great Illusion. When I look through the mind I see numberless people. When I look beyond the mind I see the witness. Beyond the witness is infinite emptiness and silence.

Witnessing is natural. The problem is excessive interest leading to self-identification with what you take to be real. Do not identify yourself. There is no such thing as mind apart from thoughts which come and go obeying their own laws. They dominate you only because you are interested in them-when you think yourself to be a person, caught between good and evil. Wake up and see things as they are. The sense 'I am a person in time and space'-prevents you from seeing there is nothing you need. See its falseness. In time all things come to an end-new things are born-devoured in their turn. It is the nature of time to put an end to everything. Step out of time and see it devour the world. What is dependent and transient is unreal. What is unattached is real. The witness that is enmeshed in what it perceives is the person. The witness that stands aloof-is the watchtower of the real-the point at which awareness, inherent in the unmanifested, contacts the manifested.

Once you realize that the person is merely a shadow of the reality, but not reality itself, you cease to fret and worry. You agree to be guided from within and life becomes a journey into the unknown.

To act from desire and fear is bondage. I am not bound by your dreamlike world. Your only problem is the eager self-identification with whatever you perceive. See the person you imagine yourself to be as a part of the world you perceive within your mind and look at the mind from the outside, for you are not the mind. You are not what you perceive. As long as you imagine yourself to be something-actually existing in time and space, short-lived and vulnerable-naturally you will be anxious to survive. But when you know yourself as beyond space and time-in contact with them only at the point of here and now, all-pervading and all-containing, invulnerable-you will be afraid no longer.

Non-identification is liberation. You need not know what you are. Enough to know what you are not. The discovery of truth is in the discernment of the false. You can know what is not. What is-you can only be. Unless the person becomes the object of observation rather than the subject, realization is not feasible. It is the witnessing consciousness that make realization attainable. In reality all is one, the outer being merely a projection of the inner.

The person is in resistance to the very end. It is the witness that works on the person-on the totality of its illusions. The mind craves for experience, the memory of which it takes for knowledge. The mind craves for formulations and definitions, always eager to squeeze reality into ideas. Without ideas the mind is not. The mind deals with the unreal.

Desire for embodied existence is the root-cause of trouble. You imagine you were born and you will die if you do not take care of your body.

Selfishness is self-concern for the protection, preservation and multiplication of one's own body-all that is related by family, tribe, country, race. To be attached is to be selfish. As long as you have a self to defend you must be violent.

Self-interest and self-concern are the focal points of the false. Your daily life vibrates between desire and fear. Trace every action to its selfish motive. Look at the motive intently until it dissolves. Discard every self-seeking motive as soon as it is seen and you need not search for truth; truth will find you. The way of intelligence and understanding-discrimination and detachment-is open to all.

As long as we imagine ourselves to be separate personalities, one quite apart from another, we cannot grasp reality which is essentially impersonal. First we must know ourselves as witnesses only, dimensionless and timeless centers of observation, and then realize that immense ocean of pure awareness, which is both mind and matter and beyond both. Your being a person is due to the illusion of space and time. You imagine yourself-occupying a certain volume; your personality is due to your self-identification with the body. Your thoughts and feelings exist in succession; they have their span in time and make you imagine yourself, because of memory, as having duration. In reality time and space exist in you; you do not exist in them. They are modes of perception.

As long as you take yourself to be a person, a body and a mind, separate from the stream of life, having a will of its own, pursuing its own aims-you are living merely on the surface, and whatever you do will be short lived and of little value, mere straw to feed the flames of vanity. The essence of bondage-is the mixing of the real with the unreal-because you have not understood that you are dreaming. Once you have seen that you are dreaming, you shall wake up. But you do not see because you want the dream to continue. A day will come when you long for the ending of the dream-willing to pay any price-with dispassion and detachment-the loss of interest in the dream.

Dive deep into yourself and find the source from where all meaning flows. It is not the superficial mind that can give meaning. You are not what you think yourself to be-you cannot think yourself to be what you have not experienced. You are the perceiving point, the non-dimensional source of all dimensions-which is as nothing and yet the source of everything. You can know what you are not, but you cannot know your real being. You can only be what you are. The entire approach is through understanding, which is in the seeing of the false as false. To understand, you must observe from outside.

Once you realize that there is nothing in this world which you can call your own you look at it from the outside as you look at a play on the stage or a picture on the screen.

By its very nature the mind is outwardly turned; it always tends to seek for the source of things among the things themselves. To be told to look for the source within is the beginning of a new life. In consciousness there is the 'I', who is conscious. Awareness is beyond all. Awareness is undivided-aware of itself.

Theories are neither right nor wrong. They are attempts at explaining the inexplicable. You are being offered several plans of your prison, none of them quite true. Theories may be good as starting points, but must be abandoned, the sooner-the better.

Within the prison of your world appears a man who tells you that the world of painful contradictions, which you have created, is neither continuous nor permanent and is based upon a misapprehension. He pleads with you to get out of it by the same way by which you got into it. You got into it by forgetting what you are and you will get out of it by knowing yourself as you are.

The Guru who gives you information is not the real Guru. The real Guru knows the real, beyond the glamour of appearances. To him your questions do not make sense, for in his eyes the person you take yourself to be does not exist. Your questions are about a non-existing person. What exists for you does not exist for him. What you take for granted he denies absolutely. The Guru stands for reality, for truth, for what is. He is a realist in the highest sense of the term. He knows the state in which there is neither the world nor the thought of it, the state in which imagination is no longer taken for reality. He comes to take you to the real; don't expect him to come to terms with the mind and its delusions. Whatever you think yourself to be is just a stream of events; while all happens, you alone are-the changeless among the changeful.

The seeker is he who is in search of himself. Give up all questions except one: 'who am I'? The only fact you are sure of is that you are. 'I am' is certain. 'I am this' is not.

Struggle to find out what you are in reality. To know what you are you must first investigate and know what you are not. Discover all that you are not-body, feelings, thoughts, time, space, this or that-nothing, concrete or abstract, which you perceive can be you. The very act of perceiving shows that you are not what you perceive. The clearer you understand that on the level of mind you can be described in negative terms only the quicker will you come to the end of your search and realize that you are the limitless being.

Through the film of destiny your own light depicts pictures on the screen. You are the viewer, the light, the picture and the screen. Even the film of destiny is self-imposed. The spirit is a sport and enjoys overcoming obstacles. The harder the task, the deeper the self-realization.

The way to truth lies through the destruction of the false. To destroy the false you must question your most inveterate beliefs. Of these the idea that you are the body is the worst. With the body comes the world, with the world-fears, religions-all sorts of systems-all to protect and support the child-man, frightened out of his wits by monsters of his own making. Realize that what you are cannot be born or die-and with the fear gone all suffering ends.

To be what you are, you must go beyond the mind, into your own being. Whatever can be described cannot be yourself, and what you are cannot be described. You can only know yourself by being yourself without any attempt at self-description. Once you have understood that you are nothing perceivable or conceivable, that whatever appears in the field of consciousness cannot be yourself, you will apply yourself to the eradication of all self-identification.

You progress by rejection. You know many things-but the knower you do not know. Find out who you are-the knower of the known. Whatever you see, hear or think-you are not what happens-you are to whom it happens. The perceived cannot be the perceiver. Delve deeply into the sense 'I am' and you will discover that the perceiving center is universal. All that happens in the universe happens to you, the silent witness. Whatever is done is done by you, the universal and inexhaustible energy. There can be no universe without the witness-no witness without the universe. When you know what you are, you also are what you know-you know yourself as pure being.

What you call survival is but the survival of a dream. It is your desire to hold onto it that creates the problem. Let go. Stop imagining that the dream is yours. Look at the dream as a dream. When you see your dream as dream you wake up. You need not bring your dream to a definite conclusion, or make it noble, or happy, or beautiful; all you need is to realize that you are dreaming. Stop imagining, stop believing. See the contradictions, the incongruities, the falsehood and the sorrow of the human state. Death is preferable to it. There is a chance of waking up.

To be a person is to be asleep. To insist, to resist, are contained in the will to be. Remove the will to be and what remains? Existence and non-existence relate to something in space and time-which are in the mind. The mind plays a guessing game-ever uncertain, anxiety ridden and restless. You insist on being treated as a person because you are not sure of your own existence and do not want to give up the comfort and assurance of a personality. You may not be what you believe yourself to be, but it gives you continuity, your future flows into the present and becomes the past. To be denied personal existence is frightening.

Desires are strong. It is desire that causes repetition. The memory of past suffering and the fear of its recurrence make one anxious about the future. Until we can look at fear and accept it as the shadow of personal existence, as persons we are bound to be afraid. Abandon the personal and you shall be free from fear. Desirelessness comes on its own when desire is recognized as false.

Being nothing, I am all. Being all, what am I to be afraid of? I see things as they are and therefore I am not afraid of them. It is ignorance of yourself that makes you afraid and also unaware that you are afraid. I am nothing that can experience fear or can be in danger. It is attachment to a name and shape that breeds fear. I am not attached. I am nothing, and nothing is afraid of no thing. Everything is afraid of the Nothing, for when a thing touches Nothing it becomes nothing. People are afraid to die because they do not know what is death. The moment you know your real being you are afraid of nothing. The Supreme is the universal solvent, it corrodes every container, it burns through every obstacle. Everything dissolves into pure being. The Supreme is the great harmonizer, the guarantee of the ultimate and perfect balance-of life in freedom. It dissolves you and thus reasserts your true being. You must die in order to live. Death gives freedom. To be free in the world you must die to the world.

Having realized that I am one with, and yet beyond the world, I became free from all desire and fear. Pain is physical; suffering is mental. Beyond the mind there is no suffering. Pain is merely a signal that the body is in danger and requires attention. Suffering warns us that the structure of memories and habits, which we call the person, is threatened by loss or change. Pain is essential for the survival of the body. Suffering is due entirely to clinging or resisting; it is a sign of our unwillingness to move on, to flow with life.

A saintly life is free from suffering. The essence of saintliness is total acceptance of the present moment. A saint does not want things to be different from what they are; he knows-that they are unavoidable. Everything happens as it does because the universe is as it is. He is friendly with the inevitable and therefore does not suffer. Pain he may know. If he can he does the needful to restore the lost balance-or he lets things take their course. What does he gain by living on and what does he lose by dying? What was born must die; what was never born cannot die. It all depends on what he takes himself to be.

Have your being outside this body of birth and death and all your problems will be solved. They exist because you believe yourself born to die. Undeceive yourself and be free. You are not a person.

When you see the world you see God. There is no seeing God apart from the world. Beyond the world, to see God is to be God. The light by which you see the world, which is God, is the 'I am'. Without the 'I am' there is nothing. You remain as pure being. All knowledge is about the 'I am'. False ideas about the 'I am' lead to bondage, right knowledge leads to freedom.

Look at yourself in total silence. You are not what you see. Reject what you are not-until it emerges in its glorious nothingness-its 'not-a-thing-ness'. There is a vastness beyond the mind. That vastness is my home-that vastness is myself.

There is trouble only when you cling to something. When you hold onto nothing, no trouble arises. Give up all and you gain all. Then life becomes what it was meant to be: pure radiation from an inexhaustible source. In that light the world appears dimly like a dream.

Love does not cling; clinging is not love. In the dream you love some and not others. On waking up you find you are love itself, embracing all. Personal love-invariably binds; love in freedom is love of all.

Self-surrender is the surrender of all self-concern. It cannot be done-it happens when you realize your true nature.

When there is total surrender-complete relinquishment of all concern with one's past, present and future, with one's physical and spiritual security-when the shell of self-defense is broken-a new life dawns, full of love and beauty. Complete self-surrender by itself is liberation.

Love says "I am everything". Wisdom says "I am nothing".

By itself nothing has existence.

Your true home is in nothingness.

Adapted from Jed McKenna:

Nothing but the subjective 'I am' is true.

You are nothing but consciousness.

Truth is one, is non-dual, is infinite, is one-without-other. Truth is dissolution, no-self, unity. There's nothing to say about it, nothing to feel about it, nothing to know about it. You are true or you're a lie, as in ego-bound, as in dual, as in asleep.

The truth of the situation is that eventually, there's nothing. Infinity. Eternity. The void.

In the void of undifferentiated consciousness-awake is awake.

Enlightenment is really nothing more than-waking up from a dream. This is the dream. The question is, who is doing the dreaming and how do we wake up?

Realizing that you have no idea who you are is the beginning of finding out who you are.

Ignorance isn't an aspect of self; it's the essence of self. It's not nothing where there should be something, it's the delicate weaving of something from nothing. That nothingness woven into somethingness is what you call reality. The part you call you is ego.

The you that you think of as you is not you. The you that thinks of you as you is not you. It's just the character that the underlying truth of you is dreaming into brief existence. Enlightenment isn't in the character, it's in the underlying truth.

Everyone has an underlying truth-but no one knows it any more than dream characters know they're products of the sleep state of a larger self.

The enlightened view life as a dream, so how could they possibly differentiate between right and wrong or good and evil? How can one turn of events be better or worse than another? Of what real importance is anything in a dream? You wake up and the dream is gone as if it never was. All the characters and events that seemed so real have simply vanished. The enlightened may walk and talk in the dream world, but they don't mistake the dream for reality. Members of movie audiences don't leap out of their seats to save characters in the film. If they did, they would be hauled off to the nearest mental health facility and treated for a delusional disorder.

Before enlightenment I believed my ego was me, then enlightenment comes along and no more ego, only the underlying reality. Now it's after enlightenment and this ego might be slightly uncomfortable or ill-fitting at times, but it's all I've got. The idea that your ego is destroyed in the process of becoming enlightened is roughly correct, but it's not complete. Before enlightenment, you're a human being in the world, just like everyone you see. During enlightenment you realize the human being you thought you were is just a character in a play, and that the world you thought you were in is just a stage, so you go through a process of radical deconstruction of your character to see what's left when it's gone. The result isn't enlightened-self or true-self, it's no-self. When it's all over it's time to be a human being in the world again, and that means slipping back into costume and getting back on stage. Now you're actually in the audience, watching the drama. I could never mistake the play for reality again, or my character for my true state. Happily, I never know what my character is going to do or say until he does it or says it, so the whole thing stays interesting.

There's no comprehending the vastness and complexity of the influences that go into creating the false self-but that's not a problem because there's no benefit to comprehending it either. There is a benefit to realizing that who you are has little or nothing to do with you. It may be difficult to imagine not taking yourself personally, but it can be done when you see clearly that who you are has little or nothing to do with you.

Even now it takes a conscious effort to maintain my false self, my dream character-to animate it, to keep it running. And this trajectory I'm on will take me as close to non-existence as anyone can get and still have a body. In other words, I will continue to channel progressively less and less energy into my dreamstate being, my teaching will reduce down to it's most refined and least tolerant form, my interest will withdraw from the world, and I will become as minimal as a person can be.

The simple fact remains that enlightenment and mysticism have little or nothing in common. The critical distinction is that one is in the dream and the other is not. One is truth-realized and the other is not. One is within consciousness and one is independent of consciousness. The enlightened have awakened from the dream and no longer mistake it for reality. Naturally, they are no longer able to attach importance to anything.

The fact is that no amount or combination of knowledge can bring about truth-realization. It's not an emotion or a state of consciousness. Emotions are states of consciousness. Drugs, breath work, meditation and other things can alter your state of consciousness, but self-realization, truth-realization, isn't a state of consciousness.

The only thing to get a handle on is negation-the tearing down process.

Spiritual awakening is about discovering what's true. Anything that's not about getting to the truth must be discarded. Truth isn't about knowing things. It's about unknowing. It's not about becoming true, it's about un-becoming false so that all that's left is truth.

For many sincere people-spirituality is a walk in the park on a sunny day, bubbling with pretty notions of peace on earth and good will toward men. Real spirituality is a savage insurrection, the oppressed rising up in a do-or-die bid for freedom. It's not something people do to improve themselves or earn merit or impress friends or to find greater joy and meaning in life. It's a suicidal assault on a foe of unimaginable superiority.

Lessons aren't delivered as quaint little parables and allegories, but as irreparable losses; lesson after lesson, loss after loss. Every step is a loss and as long as there's more to lose, there are more steps to take. Everything is lost. Nothing is gained.

With every step we leave behind that which we move beyond. No baggage is carried because releasing baggage is the essence of progress. The pain giving thing is the thing removed; when it's gone, so is the pain. All that's left in its place is relief and a mild, short lived curiosity-a pleasant nothing.

It doesn't require knowledge to be enlightened any more than it requires knowledge to obey the law of gravity or to be bathed in sunlight. Enlightenment is nothing more than truth realization. If anything requires knowledge and effort and seemingly superhuman powers of imagination it's not truth but delusion.

The only sin is ignorance. Ignorance of what? It's not the kind where you don't know something. It's the kind where you do know something that's not true. The false self is ignorance. Ego. The personality. Everything you think of as you.

Battling past the ego to get to the truth has been at the heart of countless spiritual teachings. Ego-death as a means to no-self is what this journey is all about. Anyone headed for truth is going to get there over ego's dead body or not at all. The caterpillar doesn't become a butterfly, it enters a death process that becomes the birth process of the butterfly. One thing ends and another begins.

Duality is always finite. Duality is always contained, always within a finite sphere outside of which it cannot exist. It's the sphere that defines the context within which opposites exist. Once you've arrived at the conclusion that reality as we think of it isn't reality at all, then the question becomes, what is? What's beyond the dualistic illusion? What's beyond context? The truth is out there-the void, the abyss, no-self. The illusion of opposites-good and bad-aren't available out in infinite reality. Our fragile little bubbles are what let us float around in the infinite, able to enjoy the experience of somethingness where only nothingness exists.

Enlightenment is about truth. It's not about becoming a better or happier person. It's not about personal growth or spiritual evolution. There is no higher stakes game in this world or any other, in this dimension or any other. The price of truth is everything, but no one knows what everything means until they're paying it. In the simplest terms, enlightenment is impersonal, whereas what is commonly peddled as enlightenment is personal in the extreme.

The deepest truth of any person is no-person. You don't wake up by perfecting your dream character-you wake up by breaking free of it. There's no truth to the ego so no degree of mastery over it results in anything true. Putting attention on the ego merely reinforces it.

There's nothing wrong with being a dream character, unless it's your goal to wake up, in which case the dream character must be ruthlessly annihilated. If your desire is-to become the best dang person you can be-then rejoice-you're in the right place-the dream state, the dualistic universe. If your interest is to cut the crap and figure out what is true then you're in the wrong place and you've got a very messy fight ahead and there's no point in pretending otherwise.

Truth is a uniquely challenging pursuit because the very thing that wants it is the only thing in the way of it. It's a battle we-must die to win.

Have you already confirmed duality as truth? Have you-confirmed that you are a separate physical being in a physical universe with the ability to perceive?

This isn't about personal awareness or self-exploration. It's not about feelings or insights. It's not about personal or spiritual evolution. This is about what you know for sure, about what you are sure you know is true, about what 'you are' that is true. With this process you tear away layer after layer of untruth masquerading as truth. It burns bridges that can never be rebuilt, and the only real reason to do it is because you can no longer stand not to.

Enlightenment is evolution derailed. Evolution is about change and enlightenment is about truth, which is unchanging. Evolution takes place in a larger context than day to day existence, but it is still encased within a dualistic context. Evolution, growth, development, change-are all parts of the dramatic events of dualistic being. Enlightenment isn't. Will I experience growth beyond truth-realization in this life? Will I reincarnate back into an ignorant state? No. The question assumes the existence of a differentiated true self-a separate entity-and that wouldn't be an accurate assumption. Differentiated and true are mutually exclusive. Truth and non-truth are irreconcilable. Truth is, non-truth isn't. The false is purely an apparition; it exists only in the eye of the beholder. There is no true self and the false self is irrelevant-a character in a dream.

Playing a fictional character in a fictional world. In a game without stakes.

People completely in character. No inkling that things may be other than they seem. Still shackled in Plato's cave. The degree to which one is unaware of one's fraudulent nature might be considered the degree to which one is the grip of Maya-delusion, the dream-state. Increased awakesness would naturally translate into greater dissatisfaction with fraudulence, falseness and delusion, and a corresponding desire to know what is real. Extend the line forward and it results in a complete break with ego and an awakening into-one's true nature.

The process of waking up can look a lot like a massive breakdown-a complete break from what one has assumed to be reality. That's why depression-can be a perfectly rational response to a highly irrational situation-namely, life-especially when the depression revolves around futility and insignificance. You can't be much more futile or insignificant than a character in a dream. The way to defeat rational depression is not to try to turn back from it or to cling to the illusion of meaning, but to plow right on through it and see what's on the other side.

From my perspective, unenlightened people seem like characters in a soap opera. That's what I see when I watch people with all their concerns and hopes and dreams and conflicts and dramas. That's not meant to diminish the human experience in any way, and anyone watching from my seat would say the same thing, but when I say soap opera, that's what I mean. A maudlin, hysteria-ridden, unconvincing, poorly scripted and clumsily acted fiction of no importance and limited entertainment value. I used to be the same as anyone else, of course, living my life as an unwitting character in the soap opera, but now I'm not. Now I'm out of it and free to come and go. But what I can't do-is ever mistake the soap opera for reality again.

We need the boundaries ego provides. They're a necessary part of life in the amusement park. Self is the complex, shifting set of dimensions that give us shape and form and which distinguish us from other shapes and forms. The amusement park isn't 'come as you are'-it's a costume party. Who you come as doesn't matter, only that you come as someone. You can't come as no one.

The wearer has no hands to use or will to use them. It is effectively the costume itself which must summon the will to ruthlessly rip itself away. Ego must slay ego. Only ego can. Physical suicide is just a shadow of this true self-destruction.

You are nothing but consciousness. Everything that tells you more than that is like a built-up crust of hard-packed emotional energy that has formed around you like a shell. All true growth and development is first and foremost a process of chopping away this crust. Ego sends us searching in the direction of learning, of becoming more and adding on to ourselves. Everything we claim to seek lies in the opposite direction; of unlearning, of letting go, of reducing. We think the goal is to become someone, but the universe can only be ours when we become no one.

It's all energy, consciousness. There is nothing else.

It is the emotional energy of fear that erects and maintains the egoic shell. We are madly, desperately, insanely afraid of the truth, and it is that fear that walls us off from our unbounded nature.

Fear of what? Fear of no-self. The nameless, faceless dread of non-being. Not just fear of death, which anyone can deny or explain away, but fear of nothingness, which no fairytale can fix.

We erect ego to compensate for the lack of direct self-knowledge. There is no true self to perceive-there is only false self and no-self. One looks for true self and finds nothing. It's the dread of that nothingness that keeps one's attention outwardly fixed.

We spend our lives and our life-force cultivating and grooming our appearance in the eyes of others. That's how we know that we exist. That's how we know who we are. That's where we find reassurance that we are real and not just hollow dream characters. That's how the illusion is constantly maintained.

It's not fear of death that drives humans, it's fear of nonbeing.

Maya is the intelligence of fear.

All belief systems are just the stories we create in order to deal with the void. Ego abhors a vacuum, so everybody's scrambling to create the illusion of something where there's nothing. Belief systems are simply the devices we use to explain away the unthinkable horror of no-self.

The idea of the individual self, valid and separate, unravels very quickly under any serious scrutiny. All beliefs do. What takes time and effort is-to put the idea of self under such scrutiny and make sense of what's left after the belief is gone.

If you want to be more true, then the way to do that is by becoming less false. Go inside yourself with the spotlight of discrimination-and illuminate it. Illumination destroys it. Lies disappear when you really look at them because they never had real substance, they were only imagined. That's how icebergs get melted back into the ocean.

To know the lie is to hate it; to see it is to slay it.

Turn the light of your mind upon it. See it everywhere. Learn to recognize the workings and reasonings of ego. Dissect thoughts, words and actions to find the kernel of fear within.

Spiritual enlightenment is the state in which the self is free of all delusion, including self itself. The process of becoming enlightened is a deliberate act of self-annihilation. It is the false self that does the killing and the false self that dies; a suicide in all but the physical sense. Because there is no true self to fill the vacancy created by the passing of the false self, no self remains. Hence No-Self is True Self.

Enlightenment isn't when you go there, it's when there comes here. It's not a place you visit and then remember wistfully and try to return to. It's not a visit to the truth, it's the awakening of truth within you. It's not a fleeting state of consciousness, it's permanent truth realization-abiding nondual awareness. It's not a place you visit from here, this is a place you visit from there.

I myself am enlightened, right here, right now. I am free of delusion and unbound by ego.

I view dualistic reality as a dream.

Every step in the process of awakening has three components: Seeing what needs to be killed, killing it, and cleaning up the mess. A step begins with seeing and understanding. That seeing and understanding becomes the very thing that destroys the thing seen and understood. But it doesn't end there. Just because you killed something doesn't mean you killed your attachment to it. Seeing the thing is the beginning of killing the thing, and killing the thing is the beginning of detaching from it.

The prize to be won in this battle is not wealth or fame or power, but the transition from untrue to true, from dream to awake, from delusion to reality.

The dreamstate is the state in which a person sees what's not and doesn't see what is; eyes closed, imagining reality instead of eyes open, observing it.

The dreamstate is an absurd fiction, and to dwell within it we must, despite being possessed of reason, be able to maintain a healthy level of absurdity. This is the vital function that belief systems play in our lives. Beliefs provide us with the emotional ballast. By cutting away the ballast of ignorance-wrong knowing-we ascend to an altitude-where a universe previously thought to be composed of innumerable separate parts can be seen as one undifferentiated ocean of being. As soon as we think we know something that wrong knowledge acts to restrict our natural upward tendency. When we relinquish the illusion of knowledge-we come to reside at the loftiest of dreamscape altitudes. Transcending opposites we awaken from the dream of many parts into the reality of the unified whole. Once seen this vision of unity cannot be unseen.

I inhabit the same dreamstate as you, but I am lucid within it. Those who are non-lucid within it live behind closed eyes in an imagined world, an imagined reality. This imagined belief structure has no inherent stability and requires constant emotional reinforcement. Practically everyone who talks about awakening and enlightenment is really talking about some degree of simply opening their eyes-nothing at all to do with truth-realization. This is what all mystical teachers and poets are really talking about. They've gotten a glimpse of the integrated state, a taste of lucidity, and it's the most extraordinary thing to them. It's only extraordinary because we are so cut off from it.

Your thoughts and emotions are your dreamstate-you are just consciousness. Once that goes from thought-level concept to full-immersion awareness, you naturally merge with the currents instead of being tossed about by them.

I'm dismissing spiritual aspirations within the sleeping dreamstate; quality of life issues like happiness, peace, health, prosperity, and so on-and salvation and life everlasting to take it a small step further. Greed, vanity, ego, all arising from fear. It is the muck and mire in which mankind wallows, and from which sincere aspirants must extricate themselves.

Truth is beyond opposites. Duality is a dream. The truth contains no element of the false and the false contains no truth. There is only truth and illusion, and within illusion there is only fear and denial. Fear of truth is the foundation upon which delusion is erected. Denial of fear is the motivation underlying all activities in which humans engage. We must constantly project the illusion of self because if we don't, we aren't.

The process of awakening looks like it's about destroying ego, but that's not really accurate. You never completely rid yourself of ego-the false self-as long as you're alive, and it's not important that you do. What matters is the emotional tethers that anchor us to the dreamstate; that hold us in place and make us feel that we're a part of something real. We send out energetic tendrils from the nexus of ego like roots to attach ourselves to the dreamstate, and to detach from it we must sever them. The energy of an emotion is our life force, and the amount of life force determines the power of the emotion. Withdraw energy from an emotion and what's left? A sterile thought. An empty husk. In this sense, freeing ourselves from attachment is indeed the process of awakening, but such attachments aren't what we have, they're what we are.

All attachments to the dreamstate are made of energy. That energy is called emotion. All emotions, positive and negative, are attachments. Humans are emotion-based creatures and all emotions derive their energy from one core emotion; fear. Fear cannot be confronted or slain because it is fear of nothing, of no-self. The desire to slay fear is itself a fear-based emotion. Fear can only be surrendered to; the thing feared, entered.

To be awake is to behold this ocean of being and not to imagine ourselves apart from it. There is nothing more mystical or spiritual than to see this ocean and to live in harmony with it. There is no other freedom than to cast off egoic restraints and to live in accord with what is.

We can know things directly-without any need for thinking. Remove the artificial barrier of ego from the perceiver-perception-perceived union-the three become one and perfection is the certain result-an undistorted, unfiltered perspective.

We can read the world right. We can stop seeing mystery where there are clearly defined patterns and inviolable laws. We can open our eyes and see where we are and how it works and how we work in it, with it. Nothing is hidden. Everything makes sense once you see at the level of patterns; everything flows naturally from the thing before into the thing after. Beginnings and endings are not known to us, only patterns.

That's what the whole thing really is-life-a free flowing dynamic creative process.

Our perception of time makes some things look permanent and other things look temporary, but in this dynamic ocean of being, everything is constantly swirling in and out of existence-forming and unforming. It's your energy. "Who am I?" is the question. That's what awakening is about. Start by bringing yourself into focus.

All there really is, is consciousness and energy. They're the same thing, and what they really are, is what we really are, which is just another way of saying: life is but a dream. There is nothing else.

Why is nothingness better than somethingness? Why is unity better than duality? Why is truth better than the lie? Why is the infinite better than the finite? Why is awake better than dreaming? Our fragile little bubbles are what let us float around in the infinite, able to enjoy the experience of somethingness-good and bad-where only nothingness exists. The bubble is a magnificent amusement park and leaving it is a damn silly thing to do unless you absolutely must.

Understanding consensual reality as a dreamstate is unbreakable. Life is but a dream. Reality has no basis in reality.

There is no such thing as objective reality. Nothing can be shown to exist. Nothing but the subjective I am is true.

You're not struggling to climb from hell into heaven, you're just having an in-the-body experience. It's not evil, it's just life, and when it's over, you die-easy as falling off a log.

The worms won't care how your epitaph reads and the truth of you will outlive time itself.

We live in fear of death. We don't want to think about it, we don't want to look at it, we don't want to acknowledge that it exists. No matter how we might try to deny it, death is the fact of life. We can turn away from it, but we can't push it away. It is always with us. Death is what's left when everything else is gone. Death awareness is a vehicle out of the state of death denial in which we reside. Burn everything. What gets destroyed was never yours. Burn it all and see what's left. When we do that in the dreamstate, what we find out doesn't burn is death. We spend our lives and our life force running away from this monster called death. This state of incessant denial takes all our time and energy. That's what it means to be asleep within the dream.

This isn't about death in the abstract; it's about death in the most personal, intimate sense. Death is the meaning in the dream, the dreamstate shadow of no-self. Death is the boogeyman. You can't kill him or hide from him or get away from him, you can only turn toward him or away from him. If you turn toward him-fully embrace him-as your own essential truth, then death is the demon you can ride into every battle. Death is the key to life. Death defines life-gives it meaning and context-the one true thing in the dreamstate.

We have taken death out of life and that allows us to live unconsciously. Death never left-we just turned away from it. If we wish to awaken-and that's a mighty big if-then we must welcome death back into our lives. Death awareness is the universal spiritual practice. Death always delivers. It slices through every lie, ridicules every belief, mocks every vanity and reduces ego to absurdity. Death doesn't lie. Death awareness is about life awareness and life awareness is about waking up. Death isn't morbid, fear is morbid. Death doesn't oppose life, fear opposes life.

What's more mind bending than your own looming death? What could be more devastating to ego than the contemplation of meaninglessness and insignificance, of nothingness, of no-self?

Death denial, the fear of no-self, is at the very heart of the paralysis that grips all spiritual aspirants and everyone else as well. Face the facts. Face death. Face your own mortality, your own meaninglessness. Death denial, in all its many forms, is the hole at the bottom of which we sit huddled and trembling, scared to death of our own lives. Death awareness is the act of coming out of that hole and beholding the world in which we live and the creation of which we are a part. To venture out of that hole, to declare freedom from childish beliefs, to turn toward death, to look the unslayable arch-demons of futility and insignificance in the eye, this is where the journey begins, and no journey begins elsewhere.

We're all just killing time in death's waiting room-distracting ourselves-waiting to be called and pretending we're not. We are oblivious to where we are and what's going on. Every minute that we are unaware of our situation-is a minute of unconsciousness-asleep and dreaming of a life in a different place with different rules. Virtually everyone dwells in this imaginary state virtually all the time. Whatever game we play, whatever diversion we occupy ourselves with, we are comforted to think that it leads somewhere, moves us toward some desired goal, that there is meaning in it, but meaning is just a figment of the dreamstate, where everything is real, but nothing is true.

Futility. No belief is true. Life has no meaning. Nothing we do matters. All is vanity and a striving after wind. We're going to die and it will be as if we never lived. Everything we think is true is false, all our beliefs are delusions, and everything we know is a lie. Nothing we do can make any possible difference. The best and the brightest are in a dead-tie with the worst and the dimmest. No matter how fast we go or how far ahead we are, we are not going anywhere.

All you have is this window of dreamstate being which can slam shut at any moment. The question is: what are you going to do with it? Once you come to deeply appreciate this question, your life goes into a kind of cascade meltdown. Everything in your life gets dropped except your life itself. That's when you find out what it really means to think and why most people never do. That's when you begin to see what it means to be asleep and that virtually everyone is. That's when you begin to see what it means to say that people are all children and insane children at that. That's when you begin to see that all emotions are energetic attachments and that they all stem from fear. That's when you begin to see Maya and understand who and what she is and where she dwells.

The only escape possible is one person on their own, alone, slipping off by themselves into the black. You have to go into that darkness you've spent your life avoiding and denying. You have to get to the place where you'd rather go into that blackness than continue avoiding it.

We're all afloat in a boundless sea and the way we cope is by massing together in groups and pretending in unison that the situation is other than it is. We reinforce the illusion for each other. That's what society really is, a little band of humanity huddled together against the specter of a pitch black sea. Everyone is treading water to keep their heads above the surface even though they have no reason to believe that the life they're preserving is better than the alternative they're avoiding. Fear of the unknown is what keeps everyone busily treading water. All fear is fear of the unknown. If someone betrays the group lie by speaking the truth of their situation that person is called a heretic and society reserves its most awful punishments for heretics. If someone decides to stop struggling and just sink or float away every possible effort is made to stop him, not for the benefit of the individual, but for the benefit of the group. To deny at all costs the truth of the situation-that eventually, there's nothing. Infinity. Eternity. The void. The abyss. Eventually, every water-treader has to deal with the fact that it's just him, the infinite ocean and nothing in-between, and that everything else is a lie.

The body is just a rental car and this planet is just a motel. This is nobody's home. How absurd and yet how absolutely vital to the experience-as if the worst thing that can possibly happen is that you pick up and move on. Look at things in this light and you'll see the countless ways in which society encourages the externalized self and mocks, discourages and combats the very notion of turning inward-the taboo against knowing who you are. In order to break with one's false self one would have to break with everything.

I, as an enlightened person, have direct and abiding knowledge of self. You, as an unenlightened person, don't. You therefore have built an identity with which you identify. You think of you as you. That's the fundamental difference between an enlightened person and an unenlightened one-having or not having direct knowledge of self. The later being the breeding ground of ego.

The wall separating the awakened and unawakened states-is a force field empowered by the emotional energy of fear-only ego death defeats the barrier because the barrier is ego itself.

Fear is the prime emotion of the eyes-closed state. All emotions are attachments and the energy source of all attachments is fear.

For this whole dualistic universe thing to work, it's important that everyone doesn't just go wandering off; that they stay on stage and play their role. Fear is the glue that holds the whole thing together and keeps everyone in character.

To me you're a minor character in my dramatic dreamscape. A semi-coherent energetic pattern making a brief appearance on the stage of my awareness.

The difference between us isn't that I'm enlightened and you're not. The difference between us is that I know it and you don't. I possess selfless awareness and you don't.

The fundamental conflict in the spiritual quest is that ego desires spiritual enlightenment, but ego can never achieve spiritual enlightenment. Self cannot achieve no-self. The fundamental conflict can only be resolved by altering the equation. It's cheating, but everyone is okay with it. Spiritual enlightenment gets redefined as something attainable by ego. Ego gets to continue the noble quest. No one gets the grail-but no one really wanted it anyway. The quest for the grail is about the quest, not the grail.

Ask yourself "Who am I?". Five words that render all other words-superfluous-that need no explanation, no amplification, no elucidation-words that grant self-reliance and self-determination. But a complete spiritual teaching that fits on a matchbook cover is not what anyone really wants. Self-reliance is not what anyone really wants. By what mechanism does such a simple thing as self-inquiry get mangled and bloated beyond all recognition? Ego. Always ego.

Ask yourself what you want, and what you're willing to give for it. Dreams are highly flammable things. Not all fires are started by conscious intent. Sometimes they just flare up-and then you learn two things fast; fire doesn't negotiate and nothing doesn't burn.

In the search for truth, God, meaning-or whatever other spiritual tail we might chase, self is never itself subjected to critical scrutiny. We simply accept that we are as we think we are and that reality is as we think it is and go from there. Thus the primary error from which all others arise has already been committed and is safe from detection and correction. All our discernment and discrimination and intelligence is turned outward from self, not inward against it.

The sincere practice of self-inquiry would require a year or two of excruciatingly intense processing to go all the way through. It's not like a question to be answered or an epiphany to be realized or a thought to be pondered, it's more like a mountain of ignorance to be pulverized into particulate, stone by stone.

It's not a trust business, it's a self-verification business.

Waking up isn't a theoretical subject one masters through study and comprehension, it's a journey one makes-a battle one fights.

You have to know what you want. You have to have a clear desire, a strong and specific intent. If you don't know where you're going then there's no basis for judging one direction better or worse than another.

The vast majority of spiritual seekers are motivated by desire so the failure of their search is a foregone conclusion, as is amply evidenced by mankind's history of near total inability to find the one thing that can never be lost. How is it possible that something as simple as seeing what is manages to elude our most devout seekers and our greatest minds? Because no one really wants what awakening really is. The true desire that drives the process of awakening is more akin to a psychotic madness-a wickedly profound and protracted crisis.

I want to stop being a lie. I want to stop not knowing who and what and where I am. I want to stop being confused and unclear. I want to stop pretending lies are true and that I understand things when I don't. I want to stop playing make-believe and find out what's real. I want to know what's true. I will give anything to do it. I would rather be dead than continue-a life of ignorance and self-deceit.

Man, deprogram thyself.

Anyone familiar with the process of deprogramming someone who has been brainwashed by a cult will be able to appreciate what's really involved in breaking free of this kind of allegiance, but there's really only one real cult-the Cult of False Self-and everyone is a fanatically devoted member.

Nothing false can survive illumination by a steady and focused mind.

Peace of mind is the enemy. It's the worst thing in the world-it's the inmate, it's the hairless fetal thing that's still plugged into the matrix.

Awakening is the process of deprogramming. Enlightenment is the unprogrammed state.

Truth doesn't need to be sought because it isn't lost. It's not at the end of some path waiting to be discovered. It's not the result of practice or growth or learning. Truth is everywhere at all times-never absent, never distant. Truth isn't the tricky thing, it's the simplest thing there is. Truth is that which cannot be simplified further. Possessing the ability not to see truth, now that's the most amazing thing I've ever seen. I look back on my own life before enlightenment as a sleep state from which I was able to rouse myself.

I don't understand people and I don't identify with them. I don't identify with my own status as a person. I have a very distinct impression of life as a stage drama, and I find it endlessly mystifying that anyone truly identifies with their character. I watch my own life with amused detachment. I may be fulfilling my role-but I am almost always out in the seats somewhere, watching it all, as unprepared for the next thing I do as anyone else. Being a detached observer is nearer my reality and I find it belief-defying that everyone isn't the same-that they're up in their characters playing out all this life stuff like it's for real.

Truth is, non-truth isn't. The false is purely an apparition; it exists only in the eye of the beholder. There is no true self and the false self is irrelevant-a character in a dream.

People sometimes come to me-to show me something that they say is wrong and needs fixing. I do not and cannot share the view that something is wrong. No matter how terribly wrong it may appear, I am absolutely, unshakably certain it is not. I am incapable of perceiving error. I reside in a perfect universe where nothing can ever be wrong. We all do, I just happen to know it.

This is life's wake-up call; misery, suffering, loss, death. This is where people are forced to get real and where understanding can occur.

What's true is true regardless of religion, culture, planet, galaxy or dimension. It is what it is.

The break-out archetype-is a universal role in the human drama, transcending place, time and culture. It is the unknown archetype because the awakened state is the undiscovered and unsuspected country. It is the final archetype-because it breaks out of the confines within which the dramatic play of all archetypes occur. Very few people are likely to understand it conceptually, and far fewer will understand it directly by playing or having played the role.

The observer, not knowing the finiteness of his own reality-must say that the break-out archetype is interesting in theory, but of no practical value because you cannot break out of reality. Where would you go? It's about going somewhere that we don't even suspect the existence of.

I'm sitting in a theater watching a film called Humanity. I look upon civil war hospitals and Nazi death camps and children's burn wards with the same eye with which I look upon bursting gardens and star swept nights and laughing babies. They're just the opposite poles of the film's emotional spectrum. They don't make me forget my reality. Nothing is so grotesquely horrible or so heart wrenchingly beautiful that it transcends my transcendence. Nothing trumps truth.

I am an infinite pitiless void. That's my reality. I'm not a nice guy. I just play one.

A complete spiritual teaching in five words. So perfect, in fact, that anyone who actually does it will awaken. "Ask yourself, who am I?" If you do it, you will become enlightened. There is no possible alternative. The only way self-inquiry can fail to work is if you fail to do it.

Why isn't anyone going anywhere? Because they've convinced themselves that they are going somewhere. Why? Because their spiritual masters and advisors tell them they are. Why are their spiritual masters and advisors telling them they're going somewhere? To get the gig.

We pick our teachers. We get what we wish for. We want cozy, uninterrupted slumber and the dream of spiritual progress, and that's what we get.

Waking up from the dreamstate is a very straightforward business. It doesn't take decades. It doesn't look like tranquility or like a calm, peaceful mind. It doesn't look like saving others or saving the world or even saving yourself. It doesn't look like a thriving marketplace where merit is determined by popular appeal or commercial success. Waking up looks like a massive mental and emotional breakdown because that's exactly what it is, the granddaddy of all breakdowns.

The dreamstate is a big amusement park and I would never encourage anyone to try to escape. That would be as absurd as suggesting that you commit suicide for your own good.

Enlightenment is literally the biggest nothing of all time. Enlightenment is life-negative. Spiritual enlightenment is pointless and meaningless, and should only be sought by those who have absolutely no choice in the matter.

Who wants to spend the rest of their life tumbling through infinite space?

How can you want nothing? Words ascribed to the Buddha are often fraudulent, but there's one very clear exception: "Truly, I have attained nothing from total enlightenment". It's not so much that he didn't gain anything as that he did gain nothing.

It is not possible to knowledgeably choose or want spiritual enlightenment. To desire it is to misunderstand it. Ego cannot desire egolessness. One does not undergo the process of awakening out of love for the true but out of hatred for the false; a hatred so intense that it burns everything and spares nothing.

Ego doesn't need to be killed because it was never really alive. You don't have to destroy your false self because it's not real, which is really the whole point. It's just a character we play. What needs to be killed is that part of us that identifies with the character. Once that's done-really done, and it can take years-then you can wear the costume and play the character as it suits you, in the character but not of the character.

No one can say 'I am enlightened' because there is no 'I' to it. There is no such thing as an enlightened person. My personality, my ego, what appears to be me, is just an afterimage-a physical apparition based on residual energy patterns.

In the world but not of the world means that you're playing a role on the stage, but you don't confuse your role with yourself or the stage with reality. It means you know that you're playing a character. It's like lucid dreaming. You achieve normal waking consciousness within the dream so that you're in the dream but not of the dream. There's no benefit to understanding it. It's something you're familiar with because it's your reality or you're not because it isn't.

You, the reader, are at the exact center of the universe; your universe. It's all yours, it's all about you, and you are all alone in it. Anything that tells you otherwise is a belief, and no belief is true.

"Who am I?" That is the question. That's the question at our very center. Life turns on that center, and everyone who is alive has one of two relationships to that center: Toward or Away. Toward is perfectly simple. Away is infinitely complex.

Stay with the question. Don't worry about the answer, just get the question right. Examine your assumptions. Soon enough the question itself has been destroyed and, along with it, many layers of delusion.

The question itself is the obstacle to progress, not the lack of an answer. The question is the key. Once we truly understand the question, we'll have the desired answer. The desired answer is always the removal of the obstruction a correct question represents.

The answer is never the answer. It's not that I know the answers-it's that I don't know the questions. I see that the questions that haunt a mind have no reality outside of it. There's only one true answer and it lies at the exact center of the question.

You want answers, but there are no answers, just beliefs, and if you want to awaken, either within or from the dreamstate, beliefs are not your friends. They only hold you back. Demanding answers and explanations is an egoic stall tactic.

Come up with the right question. There's always only one. All other questions are fear-based ego-sparing time-killers. Forget concepts and ideas, forget past and future, forget mankind and society, forget God and love, forget truth and spirituality. Find that one question; the exact question that ego doesn't want you to ask. Put your full attention on it. That's how progress is made. Everything else is a stall tactic.

To move forward, you must figure out exactly what is obstructing you. Whatever it is, it isn't really there; it has no reality, no substance. It's your own creation, a phantom lurking in the shadows of your mind, a shadow demon. Your obstructions are your demons, and your demons are shadow dwellers. They live and thrive in the half-light of ignorance, so the way to slay a demon is by illuminating it with the full force and power of your focused attention; by looking at it, hard. Banish shadow with light and see for yourself that no obstruction exists, nor ever did. We create our demons and we feed them. To awaken we must slay them.

We are both protagonist and antagonist in this conflict, both attacker and defended. We can't win by fighting. The very thing that fights, that resists, is the thing we seek to overthrow. Only by vanquishing ego can we prevail. Only in surrender can we find victory. This is the part so few get, and fewer get beyond. If you want to say all religions and spiritual teachings share a core truth, it can only be this: Surrender is victory.

To surrender is to relinquish the illusion of control, which initiates the death part of the death/rebirth process, which is the transition from the bondage of the womb-like Segregated State to the freedom of the ever-expanding Integrated State. No faith or belief is required to accomplish this act of surrender, only clear-seeing. When one begins to understand ego and fear for what they really are, then this process becomes as easy and natural as dropping a heavy weight.

Surrender follows naturally from seeing what is.

The person who arrives at this point is not the person who goes beyond. In this process, resistance is conquered and non-resistance takes its place-acceptance, recognition, surrender. The segregated self is slain and the integrated self is born. To the onlooker it looks like one thing becomes the other, but to the participant it is quite unmistakably the end of one thing and the beginning of another. The necessary letting go-is itself a kind of death. It is the primary death/birth process, and nothing proceeds until it happens.

Ego is obstruction, surrender is flow. Surrender is the basis and precursor of growth. There is no growth possible within egoic constraints, only the illusion of growth. Once we free ourselves-we come into alignment.

Nothing else means anything. No amount of knowledge or understanding or spiritual experience could be of any value if you're still stuck in the Segregated State. You have one goal-die to the flesh and be born of the spirit.

The universe is pure intelligence; absolute, unerring, perfect. When we divest ourselves of our egoic insistence on judging actions, intentions, thoughts, and feelings as right or wrong, good or bad, positive or negative, we see that the only criteria by which anything might be judged is by whether or not it occurs. There is no right or wrong or good or evil, only is and isn't. Whatever is, is right.

My surrender to the perfect and unerring will of the universe-which I do not perceive as a thing apart from myself-is absolute.

It's not so much that someone well established in the Integrated State can have what they want, but that their wants and needs are in natural harmony with their dreamstate circumstances. Manifestation of authentic desires is a little hard to explain because the Integrated State is outside the conceptual framework of the Segregated State. Am I bending to fit the universe or is it bending to fit me? The distinction between me and not-me has no meaning.

That's where the surrender part comes in. I have one overarching preference, and that is whatever the universe prefers.

There is only one possible objective, you must die to be reborn, and to do that-begin the process of thinking clearly and freeing your thoughts from emotion-dense clouds of self-limiting beliefs.

It's all about finding and illuminating the next obstacle to our progress. It is not concerned with finding answers, but questions. There are no answers to be found, only questions that define our limitations. Understand the question, and you destroy the limitation. It is through courageous thought and clear-seeing that delusion is destroyed.

Thought, our primary method for understanding life, is really our way of walling ourselves off from it. We translate the world into our artificial language of symbols and concepts in order to avoid knowing it directly.

When the intervening layer of symbols and concepts is removed, the terrain and self are seen as one and the rules of motion and navigation become radically different. This is the true but seldom realized potential of the human being. These are the new and better senses and abilities to be mastered. We learn to accept and reject, to push and be pulled, to shape and be shaped. We learn to detect lines of flow and to follow them smoothly between and around obstructions. We learn to see patterns and merge with them. If we don't learn these things, we're out of tune with our energetic environment and can only stumble and grope.

As you sever attachments and stop squandering your emotional energy, your perspective broadens and you come to see larger and larger patterns at work, patterns within patterns, your own pattern swirling in among them, in no way separate or apart, in no way greater or lesser. Oneness and unity aren't profound feelings or spiritual beliefs or altered states of consciousness, they're just plain old consciousness-we need only cleanse our perceptual faculties, rid ourselves of all egoic befuddlement, see what is and stop seeing what's not.

All we're really talking about is unbelieving what is untrue, not seeing what is not really there, getting back to our clean uncontaminated uncorrupted state.

The same tactic employed by all people all the time in order to maintain the state of denial necessary to continue a meaningless existence in a fictional universe.

Enlightenment is comprehensive. It's an entirely different paradigm. My reality is not your reality.

Enlightenment is untruth-unrealization, and self is an untruth. Despite the apparent paradox, being enlightened means there's no one left to be enlightened.

No-self is true self.

Spiritual enlightenment is self-defeating. It is a battle we wage upon ourselves. Truth is a uniquely challenging pursuit because the very thing that wants it is the only thing in the way of it. It's a battle we-must die to win. The great enemy is the very self that wages the war. When self is destroyed, who wins?

Think for yourself and figure out what's true.

It's nothing trickier than figuring out what's left when all the layers of delusion are pulled away. It always was and always will be. Time and space come and go but what's true is true and all the rest is but a dream.

All beliefs, all concepts, all thoughts-they're all false. If you're going for the truth, you're not taking any of them with you. Nothing that says two, not one, survives.

Success in realizing one's true nature is absolutely assured because-it's one's true nature. The greatest wonder isn't that you'll make it back, it's that you made it away. Struggling to achieve truth is-as preposterous as struggling to achieve death. Neither death-nor gravity, nor tomorrow's sunrise is as certain as the fact that everyone will end up fully "enlightened", regardless of the "path" they take.

Returning is the motion of the Tao. Everything is in a constant process of returning to its true state. To really be 'off the path' would mean to be outside of consciousness. There is no such place.

From the unawakened side, the gate blocking one from enlightenment is enormous and impassable. Delusion fills one's entire field of view because it resides prior to perception. Once delusion has been destroyed, we can see it never really existed.

There is nothing to learn, nothing to know, nothing to practice, nothing to become.

Enlightenment is exactly the same for anyone, anytime, anyplace-whereas the journey to it is as unique and varied as there are people to make it-the nature of delusion, the ego, false constructs, and human nature.

There are two emotions that inform and animate the human animal; fear, and a gratitude-love-awe mix that might best be called agape. As fear goes out agape comes in. More accurately, a pure white light of consciousness hits the prism of self and splits outward to become the universe as we experience it. If the prism of self is gray and murky with ignorance, choked with fear, contaminated with ego, then so becomes the universe that radiates out from it. As the prism becomes free of such flaws then the whole universe changes with it-resolves into clarity, becomes brighter, more playful and magical. We are the lens through which it is projected; co-creators of our own universe. Spiritual enlightenment is just-the final step in purifying the prism of self: you remove it.

There is the place where all the paradoxes disappear and where no questions remain, but there's no point trying to describe this place.

Come see for yourself.

Like a child flicking a switch that turns the world off like a light. What can you say when the thing that ends isn't within a context, but context itself?

That's how it is at the end-you're just done. No more questions. There is an end to knowledge-to seeking-the only perfect knowledge.

Even if you've been told a thousand times that there's an end to knowledge-to seeking-you're stunned and perplexed when you reach it. You've spent a few years fighting battle after battle, each more grueling than the one before, and never, never, with any expectation whatsoever that you'll ever really emerge victorious in this life.

And then, one day, equally without warning, you're launched into empty space, and before too long, empty space becomes your reality.

And then, one day, there is it. Nothing.

There's nothing left to contend against and nothing left that must be done, and there will never be anything that must be done ever again.

Now she's in free fall. At the precise moment of impact, the planet will disappear, and nothing will take its place. Her free fall won't end, but it will no longer feel like falling because there will no longer be anything to reference it against. There is where dual awareness ends. From then on she will live in boundless awareness, never again able to differentiate between self and non-self. Abiding non-dual awareness.

That's where I am now. Empty space is my reality. The void. No-self. I abide in non-dual, non-relative awareness.

Adapted from Osho:

We know only this world, we don't have any comparison. This is the only reality we know. That's why when Buddha says the world is Maya, illusion, it is difficult for us to understand.

You can take from this world only that which you have brought in.

Only that which cannot be taken away by death is real. Everything else is unreal. It is made of the same stuff dreams are made of.

You cannot exist without desire-without striving. The phenomenon of the ego, of the self, is not a thing-it is a process. It is not a substance sitting there inside you; you have to create it each moment. The ego exists because we go on pedaling desire, because we go on striving to get something, because we go on jumping ahead of ourselves. That is the very phenomenon of the ego-the jump into the future-the jump into the nonexistential creates the ego-it comes out of the nonexistential-like a mirage. It consists of desire and nothing else.

You cannot stop desire, you can only understand it. In the very understanding is the stopping of it. The desire has to be understood. You can understand it, you can just see the futility of it. A direct perception is needed.

I had been working on myself-and nothing was happening. The very effort was the barrier-the very urge to seek was the obstacle. Not that one can reach without seeking-but then comes a point when seeking has to be dropped. A moment comes when you see the whole futility of effort. The day effort ceased, I also ceased-because you cannot exist without effort-without desire.

The day the desire stopped, the day I looked into it and realized it was simply futile-I felt very hopeless and helpless. No hope because no future. Nothing to hope because all hoping has proved futile, it leads nowhere. But that very moment something started happening. In your hopelessness is the only hope-in your desirelessness is your only fulfillment-in your tremendous helplessness suddenly the whole existence starts helping you. Existence is waiting.

I was selfless. That's what I mean when I say helpless. I had recognized the fact that I am not-so I cannot depend on myself, so I cannot stand on my own ground. There was no ground underneath-I was in an abyss-a bottomless abyss. But there was no fear because there was nothing to protect. There was no fear because there was nobody to be afraid.

The presence of a totally new energy, a new light-became so intense that it was almost unbearable-as if I was exploding. It was impossible to make any sense out of it-difficult to use words, language, explanations-it was a shattering experience. This was so alive. The past was disappearing as if it had never belonged to me-as if I had dreamed about it-as if it were somebody else's story I had heard. I was becoming a nonbeing. Boundaries were disappearing.

Mind was disappearing. I was simply indifferent about it all. There was no urge to remain continuous with the past. Something was imminent-maybe it was going to be my death-but there was no fear. I was ready to die; nothing more was needed-if death was coming it was welcome. Something was going to happen-something like death-either a death or a new birth.

I went to sleep. It was a very strange sleep. The body was asleep, I was awake. It was so strange-as if two dimensions were meeting-sleep and awareness were meeting-death and life were meeting-the creator and the creation meet. The body is in the deepest sleep possible and your consciousness is at its peak. The whole body is relaxed-yet a light of awareness burns within you. It was weird. It shakes your foundations. You can never be the same after that experience.

My eyes suddenly opened. I felt a great presence around me. I felt a throbbing life all around me, a great vibration. It was so tremendously real that everything else became unreal. The walls of the room became unreal-the house became unreal-my own body became unreal. Everything was unreal because now there was for the first time reality.

Since that day the world is unreal. When I say the world is unreal I don't mean that these trees are unreal-but the way you see these trees is unreal-these trees are absolutely real-they exist in absolute reality-but you never see them-you are seeing-a mirage.

There is a reality; once you come to know it, this so-called reality becomes unreal. In the dream, the dream is real. In the dream there is only one reality-everything is as unreal as everything else so there is no comparison. There is an awakening-compared to the reality of that awakening, this whole reality becomes unreal. You open your eyes and another reality is there.

You create your own dream world around you-unless you become awake you will continue to dream. The world is unreal because the world you know is the world of your dreams. When the dreams drop and you simply encounter the world that is there then the real world appears.

Man is asleep. You are not conscious about yourself. You do not know yourself. You know many things in the objective world but you do not know the subject. Your state of mind is as if you had gone to see a film. On the screen the film is running, and you have become so absorbed in it that the only thing you know is the film-whatever is appearing on the screen. Dreaming is just the film. It is the mind reflecting the world. In the mirror of the mind the world is reflected. You are so deeply involved with it, so much identified with it, that you have completely forgotten who you are. The dreamer is lost in the dreaming. This self-ignorance is the sleep. Dreaming creates a film over the consciousness. Unless dreaming ceases completely you cannot awaken unto yourself.

We are not really in the world. The world consists not of things outside us but of our dreams. Everyone lives in his own dream world. If suddenly all dreaming disappeared from the consciousness-your world would disappear because your world was your dreaming.

You can take from this world only that which you have brought in.

What you see is not the truth, it is a projected lie. Your world is created by a self-your world is a projected world. You are using the real world as a screen and projecting your own ideas on it.

Enlightenment happens in silence. How can you bring that silence into words? The moment truth is asserted it becomes false. There is no way to communicate truth.

Every enlightened person will have a deep silence-whatever happens makes no difference to his contentment-he will not have any questions left-not that he knows all answers but all questions have dissolved.

Enlightenment is nothing but awakening. For the enlightened person all our lives are just dreams. They may be good dreams, they may be bad dreams, they may be nightmares-but all the same they are dreams.

No one can make you free-you are in bondage because of your karma. You can make yourself a slave-you can liberate yourself.

Enlightenment is a very individual process. It is not a question of enlightenment-it is a question of the conditionings-and everyone has different conditions so no two person's paths are going to be the same.

Enlightenment is your very nature. The whole thing is ridiculous because we are born enlightened and to try for something that is already the case is the most absurd thing. If you already have it you cannot achieve it; only those things can be achieved which you don't have, which are not intrinsic parts of your being. It is your nature, so how can it be an attainment.

Existence cannot be forced to go according to you; it flows its own way. Mind is always afraid of the unknown. Mind consists of the known. The unknown is not part of the mind. Life is always moving into the unknown and you are afraid.

You are afraid of death because you are afraid of life. The mind wants one thing and denies the other. Life cannot exist without death. But the mind says "I want only life, I do not want death-life is good, death is bad". The mind moves into a dream world which exists nowhere, and it starts fighting with everything.

Surrender means that you surrender the ego. You surrender the separating wall. You become one. That is reality. Whatever you surrender is just a dream, a concept, a false notion. You are not surrendering reality-you are surrendering a false attitude. The moment you surrender-you become one with existence.

Fear is a feeling of no contact with existence.

Man has become incapable of love because he has become incapable of death. He cannot die to anything. He clings to life. Love is death-death of the ego.

Man is afraid of death. Surrender is death. One who is ready to lose will gain. One who clings will lose everything.

Surrender is not a method. You surrender only when every method has become futile. You have done whatever you can do and now you feel helpless. In that total helplessness surrender happens.

You cannot ask how to surrender; the very question is absurd. Can you ask how to love? Love is being totally open, vulnerable. It is dangerous. Love happens, surrender happens. Love and surrender are deeply one.

The secret of love-is surrender. Ego creates the barrier. Ego wants to control everything. You become scared of what you cannot control. You become afraid, you close the door. You cannot lose yourself, and love is losing, dispersing, dissolving, melting. With love you cannot be in control. You have to let yourself go. To move beyond yourself-surrender is the way-let go is the path.

Life is a flux. Ego can only exist when it fights. The river is not fighting with you, you are fighting with the river. You are trying to float upstream. If you just let go and start floating with the stream-then you become part of the stream-your identity is lost-you become a drop in the ocean.

Energy is just natural-the basic energy you are born through-the energy you are born with-the energy of your body. It is your energy. There is no duality; it is only an appearance. If your body and your soul are two-if you and God are two-then they cannot be put together. Be aware of the desire; do not create any fight. When you move into desire with full consciousness you transcend it. If you fight then the ego will be there. Accept the world, accept the body, accept everything. Accept death. Through acceptance you become one, not through fight.

No-fight is the central teaching.

How is it that you have not surrendered? The real problem is-your defense structure, how you have lived without love. We live with the ego-centered in the ego. Without knowing who I am-I go on announcing 'I am'. This 'I-am-ness' is false because I do not know who I am. This false 'I' is the ego. This is the defense. This protects you from surrendering.

You cannot surrender but you can become aware of this defense measure. If you have become aware of it, it dissolves. The moment you come to feel 'I am not' surrender happens.

Surrender happens when you are not, so 'you' cannot surrender. You are the hindrance. When you are not, surrender is there.

Your ego is the bondage. You can be free only when ego disappears. When there is no ego, you become one with existence, and only that oneness can be freedom. When you exist separately, this separation is false. You are not separate-you are part of existence. Your ego gives you a false feeling of separate existence. Because of that false feeling, you start fighting existence. When you fight you are in bondage. When you fight you are bound to be defeated, because the part cannot win against the whole. Because of this fight with the whole, you feel limited. The wall is nowhere in existence-it moves with your ego-a part of your separate feeling. In your struggle against existence you will be defeated; in that defeat you feel limitation.

The only way to go beyond death is to accept death. Then it disappears. The only way to be fearless is to accept fear. Then the energy is released and becomes freedom.

You are not separate. You cannot be defeated because there is no one to be defeated. You cannot die because there is no one to die. You cannot be in misery because there is no one to be in misery. The moment you surrender the ego, the whole nonsense-misery, bondage, limitation-is surrendered. You are no more. It is not that you become free. When you are not, freedom is. Freedom is not freedom of the ego-it is freedom from the ego. Surrender and freedom are the same. You become one with existence. That oneness is freedom. It is not God to whom you surrender. You are that to which you surrender.

If you can surrender everything to nature then there is no effort, then you don't do anything. You just float. You are in a deep let-go. Things happen to you, but you are not making any effort for them. Whatever happens, happens.

Life flows by, you flow in it.

If you surrender, this very moment you are out of time, and all that can happen will happen.

The body is part of the karma, it is part of the mechanical circle of cause and effect, but the consciousness can be beyond it, it can transcend it.

Witnessing-is not an interference. You go beyond; you become a watcher on the hill. Things go on-but they don't belong to you.

You are just an onlooker. It is as if they are happening in a dream, or in a film on the screen. You are not interfering. You are not within the drama-you have come out. Now you are not an actor, you have become a spectator.

You are just a witness.

If you interfere you will create more misery for yourself. Don't interfere with karmas, but go beyond, be a witness to them.

Take them as a dream, not real. Just look at them and be indifferent. Don't get involved. Your body suffers-look at the suffering. Your body is happy-look at the happiness. Don't be identified.

Simple awareness is inclusive of all. When you are non-doing then everything happens around you. Nothing disturbs you. Everything happens and you know it, you witness it.

We call Buddha the awakened one. This awakening is really the cessation of inner dreaming. When there is no dreaming you become pure space. This non-dreaming consciousness is what is known as enlightenment.

If you go on inquiring 'Who am I?' you are bound to come to the conclusion that you are not. This is an inquiry to dissolve. There is no answer. Only the question will dissolve. There will be no one to ask 'Who am I?' And then you know. When the 'I' is not, the real 'I' opens. When the ego is not, you are for the first time encountering your being. That being is void.

You fall into an abyss, and the abyss is bottomless: you go on falling. Buddha has called this nothingness-emptiness. There is no end to it. Once you know it, you also have become endless. Then you know who you are, what is your real being, what is your authentic existence.

The inner emptiness itself is the mystery. You cannot feel it and you cannot know it. You cannot observe it. If you observe it-the ego is there. When the inner space is there-you are not. When you dissolve-the inner emptiness is there.

When you are not-the mystery will be revealed. You will not be a witness to the mystery, you will be the mystery.

The day I became enlightened simply means the day I realized there is nothing to achieve, there is nowhere to go, there is nothing to be done.

That night I became empty and became full. I became nonexistential and became existence. That night I died and was reborn. The one that was reborn has nothing to do with the one that died-nothing of him has remained. That night death was total-a date with death and with God.

Only that which cannot be taken away by death is real. Everything else is unreal. It is made of the same stuff dreams are made of.

After enlightenment nothing happens. One simply is. Nothing happens in you. If you really want to know who I am, you have to be as absolutely empty as I am. Two mirrors will be facing each other-only infinite emptiness will be mirrored.

Adapted from U.G. Krishnamurti:

The end of illusion is the end of you.

I discovered for myself and by myself that there is no self to realize. Nothing. That's the discovery. So called self-realization is the discovery for yourself and by yourself that there is no self to discover. That will be a very shocking thing-you have to become completely disillusioned then the truth begins to express itself in its own way. I have discovered that it is useless to try to discover the truth. The search for truth is absurd because it is a thing which you cannot capture, contain or give expression to.

Your natural state has no relationship whatsoever with the religious states of bliss, beatitude and ecstasy; they lie within the field of experience. They are thought-induced states of being, and as they come, so do they go. They are all within the field of time. The timeless can never be experienced, can never be grasped, contained, much less given expression to, by any man.

People usually imagine that so-called enlightenment-is something ecstatic. There's no relationship at all between the image you have of that and what actually is the situation. If I could give you some glimpse of what this is all about-you wouldn't touch this with a ten foot pole-you would run away from this because this is not what you want. What you want does not exist.

There is no oasis situated yonder; you are stuck with the mirage.

Understanding is a state of being where the question isn't there any more; there is nothing there that says 'now I understand'. By understanding what I am saying you are not going to get anywhere.

Your constant utilization of thought to give continuity to your separate self is 'you'. There is nothing there inside you other than that.

The one question that this organism is interested in is "how to throw off the whole thralldom, the whole strangling influence of culture?" That is the one question that is throbbing, pulsating in every cell-trying to free itself from this stranglehold. That question finds that it has no way of finding an answer-so it explodes. That explosion is like a nuclear explosion. That breaks the continuity of thought.

It is the questioner that creates the answer; and the questioner comes into being from the answer, otherwise there is no questioner.

Man has created God out of fear. So the problem is fear and not God. We don't want to be free from fear. All that we want to do is to play games with it and talk about freeing ourselves from fear.

This consciousness which is functioning in me, in you, in the garden slug and earthworm outside, is the same. In me it has no frontiers, in you there are frontiers-you are enclosed in that. What separates you, what isolates you, is your thoughts-it creates the frontiers, it creates the boundaries. And once the boundaries are not there, it is boundless, limitless. You give reality to things-not only objects but also feelings and experiences-and think that they are real. When you don't translate them in terms of your accumulated knowledge they are not things, you really don't know what they are. I am looking at you but I really don't know anything about you-this is a dream world-there is no reality to it at all. When the experiencing structure is not manipulating consciousness then the whole of life is a great big dream from the experiential point of view.

Adapted from Eckhart Tolle:

"I cannot live with myself any longer". This was the thought that kept repeating itself in my mind. Then suddenly I became aware of what a peculiar thought it was. Am I one or two? If I cannot live with myself, there must be two of me: the 'I' and the 'self' that 'I' cannot live with. Maybe, I thought, only one of them is real.

I was so stunned by this strange realization that my mind stopped. I was fully conscious, but there were no more thoughts. Then I felt drawn into what seemed like a vortex of energy. It was a slow movement at first and then accelerated. I was gripped by an intense fear, and my body started to shake. I heard the words 'resist nothing', as if spoken inside my chest. I could feel myself being sucked into a void. It felt as if the void was inside myself rather than outside. Suddenly, there was no more fear, and I let myself fall into that void.

I knew that something profoundly significant has happened to me. I understood that the intense pressure of suffering that night must have forced my consciousness to withdraw from its identification with the unhappy and deeply fearful self, which is ultimately a fiction of the mind. This withdrawal must have been so complete that this false, suffering self immediately collapsed, just as if a plug had been pulled out of an inflatable toy. What was left was my true nature as the ever-present 'I am': consciousness in its pure state prior to identification with form. Later I also learned to go into that inner timeless and deathless realm that I had originally perceived as a void and remain fully conscious.

Adapted from Zil Chezero:

*"If your book was about realization, the title would be *You are not what you are*," says the man, grinning and still looking at me with the same friendliness as before. Unmoved kindness, I find myself thinking. I didn't know that was possible. But still his answer makes no sense to me. "I don't understand," I blurt, trying desperately to get a grip on his answers. You're not what you are? How, what...?"*

"Of course you don't understand," he replies, "because if you could, it wouldn't be about realization. But can you follow it?" Now I am totally lost, and when I hear myself answer "Yes," it feels like I have just lost my last ally—still being looked at by those unmoved friendly eyes.

For an instant there is silence: while I can hear the murmuring sounds around me, this noise seems to be drawn into a bottomless pit and I'm sucked into it too. I'm here, but I'm also gone. What is happening?

Just as this question comes to my mind, the man says: "Now you are what you are again." "Yes," I hear myself stammer. "But a moment ago, you were not," he adds—upon which the pit opens up again.

"You are capable of wavering," I hear him say. "That is the beginning of bliss and all you can ever still wish for. After this the wish might still be there, but just like a shimmer in the background. You have disappeared to nurture it."

"While you're simply here, you are not. You might be able to understand there is something like realization, but that's always looking back, even at that seeming moment. During you can only follow."

The eyes don't let go of me. "This you follow," the voice observes. "But you will never understand. Not this. You might understand all the images and conceptions clinging to it, claiming they're 'it', but not this. This is what you are."

"What are you doing?" I manage to ask. "Nothing. You did something. You followed."

The man puts down his book and again I'm caught by the friendliest placidity I've ever seen. "Enlightenment can be the effect of realization. Even more so, where realization is a fact, enlightenment by definition is the manifest effect. But the other way around, enlightenment and realization don't necessarily have anything to do with each other."

Again I am able to follow totally what he is saying, and this time I can understand him too. For some reason this in fact makes my hunger to know more win out: "Sorry for asking, but are you a guru, are you realized yourself?"

"Nobody is realized," the man says. "You may call me Zil Chezero. And I don't work as a guru."

And finally Eugen Herrigel's classic description:

He must dare to leap into the Origin so as to live by the Truth and in the Truth, like one who has become one with it. He must become a pupil again, a beginner; conquer the last and steepest stretch of the way, undergo new transformation. If he survives its perils then is his destiny fulfilled; face to face he beholds the unbroken Truth, the Truth beyond all truths, the formless Origin of origins, the Void which is the All; is absorbed into it and from it emerges reborn.