

Be Everything

The Hindu sage, Nisargadatta, said: "Wisdom tells me I am nothing, and love tells me I am everything. Between these two poles, my life flows."

Before we learn how to meditate, we usually know ourselves not as either wisdom or love but as thought. And thought says, "I am something." Thought tells us that our true nature is our bodies, our emotions, our perceptions and our thoughts.

But it hurts to know ourselves as *something*. Because our bodies, our minds, and all the objects we perceive with our senses, are impermanent. They can't give us lasting happiness.

Grasping to impermanence yields only suffering. Literally the suffering of contracting, of grabbing and grasping and never relaxing.

When we hold our hand in a fist and never relax, how does that feel? That's the very feeling of "I" that we usually carry in our bodies. It's a solid ball of contracted muscle that's very simply caused by our believing in the reality of a solid, inherent and permanent "I."

Next, when we looked very deeply into our actual experiences, we found nothing there but pure sensations, pure emotions, pure perceptions and pure thoughts. We never found a trace of the solid and permanent "I" or "me" that we spend most of our lives trying to satisfy, fulfill, protect and please. The only "I" that we found was the pain caused by continually grasping to impermanence.

In Buddhist terms, when we looked deeply into our actual experience in this way, we discovered our "emptiness," meaning "emptiness of I, me and mine."

This was "wisdom telling me I am nothing."

Continuing on, we noticed something very interesting, which is that in looking deeply at each aspect of our experience, all that we ever really experienced was experience itself—a knowing.

Our breath, when we looked closely, was only the knowing of our breath. Likewise our bodies, on close inspection, were only the knowing of our physical sensations. Our perceptions were the knowing of our perceptions, and our thoughts were the knowing of our thoughts.

In other words, the body (as sensations), the mind (as thoughts) and the world (as perceptions) were happening all the time, only in consciousness. There is no grasping present in pure awareness, because the simple activity of knowing causes no grasping. Instead, there is only a gentle continuous knowing. And we can know this directly by

simply noticing noticing.

But at the same time, we discovered that all of the experiences of our life are present in awareness. Because, of course, our consciousness is the one and only place where we experience anything at all. So when we keep our attention on our consciousness we notice everything that's happening in our life, without a single thing left out.

But in some ways best of all, we discovered in our consciousness not only the objects of the body, the mind and the world—all of them blinking on and off all the time like fireflies. But also we found the continuous presence of positive emotions like patience, honesty, kindness and compassion.

These wafted through consciousness like ocean currents, moving and passing through each other as apparently different activities of consciousness. But at the same time being the substance of the ocean itself.

These currents of love, as we could collectively call them, are like a permanent matrix of knowing in which the impermanent objects of the body, the mind and the world continually arise and pass away, like clouds of minute sea creatures blinking in the deeps.

In this way, we discovered a new way to understand ourselves. Not by identifying ourselves as our bodies, our emotions or our thoughts; but instead as the ocean of awareness that holds them all.

This is "love telling me I am everything."

So this has been our journey:

*First, thought tells me I am something.
Then, wisdom tells me I am nothing.
At last, love tells me I everything.*

Be everything—because that's the true you.

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