

The Iago trance

In Shakespeare's play Othello, the protagonist and his young wife Desdemona are deeply in love. Othello is a noble and simple hearted soldier who trust those around him. It is Iago, Othello's advisor and apparent friend, who plays one character against another, *creating an atmosphere of separation and distrust*. He whisper doubts into Othello's ear, inciting in him a violent jealousy that ultimately leads to senseless tragedy.

We are all Othellos at heart –open, trusting, wanting to see the beauty in each other –and we are all seduced and driven to insane by our own invisible Iagos. Our insidious Iago is a *state of mind*; he can't be seen, he lives in the shadows. Yet his influence can be found everywhere. Iago whisper to us both from within and through other people as the voice of *collective conditioning*.

The basis of Iago trance

The very basis of the Iago trance is a *pervasive and undefined sense that something is missing, a sense of lack*. It is also characterized in the core by a *sense of separation*, a preoccupation with I, me, mine. We focus our lives in a me-oriented reality, reinforcing separation.

This sense of lack and separation drive us to seek external ways to fill this void, we are gripped by a nonspecific *fear*. Then we worship many modern deities. We worship the deity called security, and then security becomes your life. We worship the deity called dollar, and then the dollar becomes your life. We trust no one completely and we carefully plan for the worst eventuality, living in a sense of *anxiety and worry*.

During the Iago trance, we are all motivated by a *basic assumption, that there is a problem to be solved*.

Translucent

Translucent is define as "letting light pass through, but not transparent." A transparent object, like a clean sheet of glass, is almost invisible. An opaque object, on the other hand, blocks light completely. A crystal is translucent. If the sun were to shine on it from behind, you would see the light passing through the sculpture, and it would appear to be glowing from the inside.

Translucent people

Translucent people also appear to glow from the inside. They have access to their deepest nature as peaceful, limitless, free, unchanging, and at the same time they remain fully involved in the events of their personal lives.

They dwell in the present moment, learning to *feel free to transform the models and maps* that we have inherited. They embrace many teachers or experience all of life as a teacher.

Rather than renouncing to the world, they are involved, active and participating. Rather than aspiring to celibacy, they delight in sex more than ever. Rather than conforming to the ways that have been handed down through patriarchy, they embody a radical feminization of the spiritual life. And rather than being holy or "spiritual" in any external way, their most easily distinguishable quality is a wild sense of humor about themselves and their lives. They are simple, honest, deep, and at the same time remarkably human and humble about their weaknesses.

These people are *more interested in the present moment than any future state*.

Their spirituality is more grounded in *direct experience* than in imitation or belief.

I call them "translucents." They have been affected so deeply by a moment of radical awakening that *their relationship to who they are and what this life is about has been permanently transformed*.

The word *translucent* refers to the *degree of embodiment of a realization*, not to what has been realized. *One can always become more translucent*. The process is evolutionary and endless rather than aimed at a fixed point of result.

Present moment and imaginary activity

*Is anything real that can be found outside the present moment?
If you don't go into thought, is anything real that exists beyond
the present moment?*

We deal with daily challenges that are absolutely real, and that requires action. The car has a flat tire; it needs changing. You find a lump under your armpit; it needs a doctor diagnosis; the workers need materials and the kitchen needs shopping. Real problems exist.

But we also preoccupy ourselves every day with imaginary problems: *What if I run out of money? What if my lover leaves me? What if I get late for work... What then?* These thoughts do not require action, they require the snap of a finger to awaken us from the *dream they create*.

Before we can deal with anything that disturbs our peace of mind, we must first know if our troubles are real or imaginary. We struggle incessantly with nonexistent problems. Most of the fears that drive us again and again into the battlefield of doing or changing have no basis in reality.

Like Othello, we listen to our inner Iago's whispered taunts that have never occurred in the first place. We panic about our finances, fearing a tax audit that has not been scheduled. We wage and re-wage arguments with our parents or our boss in our heads, alone at night. We expend enormous amounts of energy playing out many potentially harmful scenarios that *do not exist*. We live preoccupied with hallucinations.

If you are asleep, dreaming of a confrontation with an armed intruder, you might consider fighting, pleading, running away, phoning the police, or hiding. But perhaps you would not think of the only solution that would work: to wake up and find yourself safe in bed.

Knowing when to act and when to snap out of a dream defines human maturity. Real problems require real action; imaginary ones call us to wake up from our delusions.

The present moment realization

"Only the present moment is real, there is nothing else."

*We create a problem-oriented universe with our need to protect the thought of "me". In a moment of radical awakening we see there is no problem in this moment now, and that *there never has been.**

*We discover that there is no such thing as past or future; we need thought to create them. You have no childhood unless you think of it. Next Christmas does not exist, except in thought. *All that can really be known for real, without thinking, is this moment.**

This is how children live, with an open, playful, total involvement in life, free of concepts, glued to the present moment.

"I don't really have a past. I'd need to think a lot to create one." –
Sarah

No need to Attain - Arjuna Ardagh

*What happens to us when we
maintain a longing and a
commitment to awakening but
abandon the idea of a final state of
arrival?*

The default setting of human consciousness is that *something has to be done* since there is an underlying sensation of *something missing, something demanding a solution*. (Things are not going in the direction we want.) We become fascinated with change.

After a radical awakening we can feel that just here, just now, there are no problems and never have been. Disorienting and confusing as it may be, this realization brings a sense of peace, wonder, tremendous energy, and a feeling of love with no specific object.

After a radical awakening we embrace spiritual practice not as a means to achieving a future goal but as a way to a more fully lived present moment, with open heart, open mind, and open body.

We choose to live *making every moment an ongoing spiritual practice, with no prescribed goal*. Translucent people choose to step off the hamster wheel of *needing to attain anything at all*. Spirituality instead of being a journey or path to a goal becomes about this present moment. A journey without a goal. It represents a shift from mind to presence.

Letting go - Rasha

Trust that this process, in which you are, by now, deeply invested, is unfolding as it meant to. And that everything is indeed, in "Divine order." The process will unfold at its own pace, regardless of steps we might be encouraged to take to accelerate that momentum.

The key to maximizing the pace of your process lies in the degree to which you are able to let go and cease directing the scenarios of your drama. Allow life to unfold for you. And recognize the potential in the synchronicity that presents itself.

As you become more comfortable with the process, you will begin to notice how easily the opportunities flow and how effortlessly you are able to manifest results that serve you at the highest level.

You stand at the threshold of a grand adventure. And the extent to which you are able to experience the fulness of that journey is determined by the extent to which you are able to let go of the scenarios that no longer serve you. You have noticed, with rare exception, that the circumstances of your life are unraveling at an unprecedented pace. You have begun to question what is happening, as the structure of life as you know it, begins to crumble.

The momentum is carrying you in a direction that is new, yet feels comfortable and familiar. You will come to embrace the peace of knowing that the struggle is, at last, coming to an end. And you will experience a sense of detachment from what was and an openness to what is yet to be.

Know that the key to all you could become lies in your willingness to let go, and to allow the metamorphosis, in which you are deeply enmeshed, to proceed. Once the initial resistance is overcome, there comes a total shift in focus to heart-centeredness.

The rise and fall of the breath of life determines the pace at which one can travel on one's journey. There is a quickening that occurs quite naturally when you allow the breath to guide you into the depths of your very being. Relaxing the physical senses, relinquishing the sense of conscious direction, being willing to simply be in the moment with *All That Is*: these are the parameters of the process that will guide the way, if you permit the process itself to be in control. One *becomes* the rise and fall of the breath. And in that rhythm, one begins the process of expansion that opens the door.

Initially, the expanded state is experienced in the moment and surrenders to the moment. Ultimately, one becomes that moment and becomes One with the expanded sense of self. The higher understandings and heightened perceptions of the expanded self become integrated into one's conscious awareness.

Through the vehicle of breath, one is able to embody the higher state of beingness, while retaining physical form. This is the experience you would refer as ascension.

Looking beyond enlightenment

Is enlightenment a direction or a destination?

Is enlightenment a final state of realization that can be attained?

Is enlightenment a fixed end point to be achieved?

First clearly acknowledge the difference between direction and destination. "Enlightenment" used to represent a final end point of what human potential could be. Today my sense of that potential is more of a finger pointing (snake sutra), a direction, with no final product. It is more an endless exploration, evolution.

Translucents speak of life as a process without end, like an endless unfolding of discovery and delight. Translucence is more a direction than a destination. Like heading East, the process doesn't imply a specific point of arrival. It is a way of living life with art and humor, returning continuously to here, and here, and here, always steeped in the vastness of the view and blessing each moment with a gift of creative presence.

We have realized the ultimate truth in snapshots, *that all is perfect as it is*. Hopefully, we also have the humility to see that we all have habits of thought that are in constant rebellion with this lucent reality, this living in the now.

"Let yourself feel deeply the possibility of really resting in the center of your own being without the idea that there is anything more to get, to do, or to become."

Endless Evolution

As we deepen in translucence, we discover another dimension of our relationship to identity. It begins with the *absolute acceptance of things as they are*. Once we recognize everything to be fine as it is, we can relax even more deeply. Life is not a static event. It is a river of endless evolution.

As human beings, we are predisposed to become exclusively focused on "my" life. It is all that most of us will ever think about. Even when we have developed a higher degree of translucence,

there still often remains a natural and inevitable interest in “my” liberation, “my” enlightenment, “my” spiritual experience. This is natural and good; without that predisposition, no one would ever have the interest to mature and evolve.

However profound our awakening, however deeply lived our translucence, it is highly likely that in a few hundred years no one will remember how enlightened or unenlightened any of us was, or if we even existed at all. Our personal lives, our spiritual journey, is the micro-motive, while the evolution of life is the meta-motive. Each human story is like a tiny grain of sand in a hourglass, irrelevant and dispensable in itself, but an essential part of the bigger picture of evolution. Everything living is carried in this evolutionary current, and everything is, to some degree or other, causing this evolution to occur.

As soon as we realize the bigger context of collective evolution, our attention shifts from “me” to the process itself, and our realization of the timeless and formless deepens.

In the urge to become, there is a directionality toward higher and higher levels of integration. We see that simply by pursuing this awareness of the collective evolutionary process, people realize that the way they live is actually very significant; it is evolution in action, here and here, and here. There is no evolutionary process happening outside of how you and I live every moment. When you truly, deeply, profoundly recognize that your human experience is not really a personal journey, and it’s not a personal drama, your relationship to it change in a way that’s very profound.

With this awareness, we return to paying attention to how we live, to how we relate, to the things we say and the choices we make. We pay attention to these things not to improve ourselves, nor to fix a problem or achieve a goal, but because the larger current of collective evolution demands it.

No need to define ourselves

Defining ourselves and bringing polarities

As preverbal babies, we experience ourselves as limitlessness. As one with what we see and feel, we have no need to define ourselves. We are both nothing and everything. Then *Iago imposes a sense of limitation, of something missing*, which we can never quite put a finger on. We can spend an entire lifetime trying to find a satisfactory ending to the statement "I am ..."

When we are fully motivated by Iago's whisper, we become completely identified with this personality. We defend its beliefs and habits and feel offended if it is criticized. So *our personality becomes who we are*.

We take on labels and defend them. We resist their opposites. Assigning these labels allows us to function in the world of separate beings. Every label we adopt creates a polarity. As soon as we identify with being intelligent, we live in a universe that also contains stupidity. Being wealthy is a resistance to poverty, and power creates weakness.

So a personality is not only a bundle of qualities with which we identify, it is equally a unique set of resisted traits. In creating a "spiritual" identity our *personality become fragmented rather than whole*.

Personality and separation

Our best solution when Iago is the only game in town is to increase the qualities we find desirable –usually the ones for which we get the most external approval- and reject the opposites. To the degree we are successful at this, we feel we are becoming a better person, and we call this raising our self-esteem. But it never really works. Sometimes we may feel useless, sometimes like a great person, but either way, as long as we feel essentially separate, as long as we ignore any lingering knowledge of our deeper nature, ultimately we feel like a fraud. Forgotten echoes of our innocent natural vision tell us we could, and should, feel connected with everything, relaxed, expansive, at home.

Translucent identity

After an awakening experience there is a transformed sense of identity at the very core of the shift. *This shift in who you take yourself to be changes everything else in your life.*

Feeling vast, at peace, and *connected with everything* and everyone give us totally different way of doing things. It changes the way we drive to work, the way we parent, the way we make love, and the way we treat the earth we walk on. Living from fullness rather than desire transforms our life from a struggle to a blessing.

Translucents share a sense of humor about their personality, *a distance from it*. They can allow it to be as it is. Translucents display a willingness to be wrong, to let go and move on.

Translucents have shifted their dominant sense of self from content to context. They know that who they *really are is what remains when they relax any attempt to define themselves*. It is like being the sky instead of a cloud, being the ocean instead of a wave.

By remaining internally undefined, you become nothing, but at the same time potentially everything.

Translucents take on what is real in that moment and die to the rest.

In this awareness of being undefined and beyond the personality, a luminous presence is liberated that has no content or opinion, that is still and silent and empty. This presence uses the personality, as the best raw material available, to play in this world.

As translucents continuously relax into being less defined internally, they become more vivid and unique externally. This differs radically from the personality contractions created by Iago's anxiety. Life chooses to express itself though you in a way that is quite effortless, spontaneous, and original –as natural character.

Nothing to defend and dropping the past

Because translucents internally experience themselves as undefined, they can let natural character do its things. *With less identification, there is no motivation to change anything.*

With the willingness to be less defined comes a loosening of our grip on the past. The past is of little use when you have no case to defend. Translucent have a natural interest in forgiving and moving on. Forgiveness is no longer a moral virtue, or something we need to practice, but the effortless by-product of no longer needing to protect an identity with a story attached to it. The past is not healed; *it simply ceased to be useful.*

When we disidentify with the story, there's no need to hold onto it with regret. We forgive as an act of adherence to the present moment; it becomes choiceless.

"As you start to let go, you let go of your desire to change what has already happened. What's already happened is complete. That's a big step, because any time we want to change what has already happened, we re-create it over and over again in order to change it. So when that drops away, a lot of patterns drop too, because you no longer want to fix what's already happened." – Hale Dwaskin.

As we grow in translucence, we discover a thirst for death and rebirth while still alive. Many of us have *experience several different lives all in one lifetime*. Translucents welcome this death of identity with a sense of play and adventure.

Translucent enjoy creating and letting go of identities as much as Iago resist change.

Belief differs from simple reality

“Everyone wants to find a way to happiness. And the way to happiness is waking up to what really is true. Until we question what we believe, we’re blind to it.”

- Byron Katie -

We may believe in past lives, but we don’t need to believe in yesterday or in our ability to brush our teeth. In other words, *we hold beliefs about things that we don’t know about from direct experience.* Only the human mind in the grip of Iago comes to conclusions, independent of direct experience.

Animals, small children, and translucent people do not need to believe anything, because they are loyal to what is. Sometimes people ask, “Do you believe in God?” But what difference does a mental conclusion make? Either we feel God all around us and within us, and our heart is open to the Great Spirit creating and connecting all things –or we don’t. Believing in what we don’t feel creates a plastic, mental world with no nourishment or depth to it.

Human beings come into the world with a sense of wholeness, a sense of oneness, of nonseparation. Small children don’t have any beliefs about anything. Is your two-years-old a Christian or a Buddhist or a Hare Krishna? Many different mechanisms cause us to adopt positions. We may imitate the beliefs of our family or culture, or we develop a belief system as a reaction against them.

So we develop our deepest points of view about ourselves and about life in general by resisting specific aspects of our experience. As soon as we have to say no to something, we develop a point of view. As soon as we say ‘black’ but not ‘white’, ‘intelligent’ and not ‘stupid’, ‘good’ and not ‘evil’, or ‘harmonious’ and not ‘angry’, we’ve split our otherwise undivided universe into this and not that and chosen one over the other. Instead of recognizing that things are whole, we cut off part of our original integrity by preferring one thing to another. Like cutting a melon in two, we choose to keep one half and push the other half away.

Do you really need that thought?

We hold many of our beliefs to be sacred simply as compensation for this kind of fragmentation. "I am a kind of tolerant person." Why would one need that thought? Many people are good, benevolent, and kind without ever needing to define themselves that way. *We hold a strong belief when we struggle to keep its opposite hidden from ourselves as well as from other people.* Who needs to repeat the thought, "Money is flowing easily into my life?" Who needs to tell people, "I am very open and loving and friendly?" Who needs to say, "You can trust me?" *Belief differs from simple reality. Every belief has an opposite, with which it is in constant struggle. Reality has no opposite. It just is.*

As we will discover, the way to dissolve a belief is *to stop resisting both sides of the polarity.* When the internal fighting stops, there is no longer any need to believe.

We are reacting instead of responding; and that reaction is not even to what is here, but something from the past. *Having developed a complex system of beliefs, we become more interested in defending them than in knowing what is true.*

Fundamentalism: very mental and not much fun

Fundamentalism, of any sort, is the most solidified expression of Iago-based living. There is no room for doubt in the fundamentalist mind. Yet no fundamentalism can ever truly succeed, not because it is better or worse than a different position, but because it is limited.

Every rigid belief system is destined for such a crash landing, *because it is in conflict with reality.* While historically we have respected leaders who demonstrated an unbending will and a consistent set of beliefs (masculine model), this model is becoming *increasingly obsolete.* The translucent alternative to fundamentalism is an *effortless capacity to surrender to the deeper current connecting all life.*

Questioning the mind

In the moment of an awakening experience, for the first time you know yourself to be something other than just the mind. You experience the activities of thought as events at which you are a spectator, a witness of the stream of thoughts. *In Iago's trance, we often mistake our thoughts for reality.*

When we are living translucently, we still have thoughts, and we are also aware of their being thoughts. But for the first time, we *can question belief without it threatening our identity.*

As soon as we are able to recognize thought as a passing event, we become unglued from it. We can then question its reliability. *Translucents still take action, but as pure response to each moment, free from indecision, beliefs or agenda.* In a highly translucent moment, we know nothing with the mind but are able to act without hesitation, in inspired certainty. This certainty come from an open and innocent capacity to respond to life, moment to moment.

"All day long, people come to me needing decisions to be made. I don't make those decisions from thinking; I can't. There is no way for me to have access to all the factors involved. *I have to relax and wait for the right response to come.* And almost invariably, it is the right thing." – Satyam Nadeen.

When we can see the world without the filter of belief, it becomes perfectly obvious what to do in each moment. Since we are not resisting anything, life itself keeps asking us to play, to dance beyond our habits. To resist this playful invitation would itself be to cling to a point of view.

As translucents live more in the fullness of natural presence, they report that things happen with more spontaneity and natural ease than ever before.

We know what to do, not from evaluating pros and cons, or making lists or asking people, but from an open clarity, where there is no belief for or against anything. There is just quietness and a capacity to respond spontaneously to the present moment. Life is doing itself through you, and there is no need to interfere.

When the mental processes of indecision have subside, there is room for a real sense of integrity. Lynne Twist calls this process *taking a stand rather than a position:*

"A position is usually for or against something; it calls up opposition and creates a dialogue that is adversarial. If you take a stand, like Martin

Luther King, or Gandhi, or Mother Teresa, that's a different domain of life. I take a stand. And I know from standing in this place of possibility and power I can navigate with more successfully and more gracefully through the world we live in."

Abandon beliefs as unnecessary

To increase the translucence of our thoughts and actions, we do not change our beliefs, but we recognize and abandon them as unnecessary. When we are still caught in Iago's web, the best we can do is exchange one belief for another. The problem with changing our beliefs in this way is that they all exist as polarities. The more we try to believe, "I am in perfect health," the more we deepen our resistance to sickness and solidify it as a part of our universe. The more we say, "Everything will be right," the harder we push against impending disaster, and the harder it pushes back at us, not as an event, but as a threat. *The way to be free of Iago's tyranny is not by changing your mind, but by relaxing into inspired certainty.* Translucent nudging means first recognize a belief for what it is: *an unnecessary mental overlay on top of simple reality.* It is the ability to *welcome not knowing as a more mature state than living in opinions,* and to return again and again to what is real in this moment.

Translucent tools to dissolve beliefs

Hale Dwoskin speaks on behalf of a growing plethora of translucent tools, which do not aim to change out thoughts and beliefs but to dissolve them, allowing us to respond to reality fresh in each moment.

Get in the habit of challenging your beliefs by asking, Is this true? Some of our beliefs can melt when we simply and honestly ask ourselves if they are true.

"Do you absolutely know that's true?"

"Do you know for sure that she found you boring?" "No."

If it is possible to disagree with this thought, then it is a belief and not reality.

"Would everyone agree with this thought?" I mean everyone in the planet.

"Would everyone agree that it is too soon after your divorce to meet another woman?"

"You mean everyone? Everyone who knows me?"

"Every one in the world."

"Well, no, not everyone would agree."

It is also easy to let go some of our positions, once we simply discover that we had that choice. Not to change them but abandon them.

"When you think the thought 'I might grow old and die alone.' could you, just could you, let go of that thought?"

A sigh. "Yes". Gone.

Self Inquire

Awakening can also be provoked through intelligently questioning the assumptions of the mind. Self inquiry is simple. It does not require you to do anything, change anything, think anything, or understand anything. It only ask you to *pay careful attention to what is true and real.*

Relax in not knowing

"...but Greg knew what to do. It was not a decision made with his head, but more a 'knowing' from his belly, as if a decision has already been made and he simply had to be sensitive enough to get it."

Translucents have a fewer beliefs to protect; they are *comfortable enough with not knowing what to do until they really know*. They have less need to think and dramatically less need to be right. When we are acting translucently, our actions come from a different place within us. *Instead of reflecting a system of belief, they are direct response to the situation as it is.*

In the Iago trance, we think and talk and take actions based on preexisting sets of belief and we almost always meet the present moment based in our past. Caught between conflicting beliefs, we have an inward experience of indecision, we feel inadequate and ashamed of not knowing what to do.

The key to accessing a deeper source of thought and action is the willingness to relax and wait. In Iago's trance, "I don't know" is to be avoided at all costs. *Translucent action requires the wisdom of "I don't know" as its firm foundation.* Through practice, we come to recognize that the thought machine is unreliable. Based in a distorted view of the past, resisting all kind of unmet contractions in the body, and out of touch with the immediate environment, thought is never able to deliver the goods in a way that will satisfy all the factors involved. Knowing this, as the core of translucent practice, *we learn to relax the first impulse to react. We relax, and we wait. We relax into not knowing.* We soften into the acceptance of the unreliable nature of the mind, and we *surrender*.

Indecision is not a problem if we can rest at its center. Give yourself permission to not know; feel the inevitable reality that you actually don't yet know what to do or say. Stay with all that and wait, then see what happens.

Many translucents speak of realizing there is no individual doer. Life is in a dance with itself, responding to itself continuously through me, through you, through everything. Freedom from the mind is the only way to act with real responsibility, the ability to respond to

life as it is, unclouded by a mind carrying its past on its shoulders. Translucents respond to each situation as it is: fresh and new, unencumbered by conclusions reached in the mind.

You surrender your position, give up needing to know, relax into not knowing, and allow action to happen spontaneously from there. Trust fuels even deeper surrender in the next situation that arises, and surrender increases trust in the wisdom of not knowing.

We dissolve the stuckness around belief so we can embrace contradiction. Translucent living means living in paradox, while remaining at ease. Translucents know that real integrity means the capacity to *embrace* all the different dimensions of a situation.

Giving up our agenda

Generally, translucent practice is not a means to get what you thought you wanted. Letting go may bring as many deflations as victories. *Translucent discover that they must give up their agenda to be really blessed.*

At the beginning we may fear what will happen if we give up control. It takes time and practice. We let go our agenda just a little bit, and life surprise us, as though someone were watching out for us. We trust a little more, let go a little more, and the blessing increase.

Intuition

Once we notice the magic a few times, that a whole of delight awaits us beyond the small plans of me and my dreams, we look forward to letting go of our positions. We fall into a completely different way of taking action, bypassing the complex task of balancing opposite points of view. *We intuitively know what to do.*

Translucents find out what they need to do by doing it. *Thought and understanding come after the event, not as the cause.* Many other translucents report that they find themselves taking action not knowing why. The “why” is provided after the event.

Coming from a quiet mind

The Iago worldview often dismisses intuition as unreliable and irrational. Terrified of making mistakes, we consequently feel decisions derived from carefully thought-out positions are more reliable, while we see intuitive choices to as flaky and unscientific. Ironically, as long as our urgent need to fix a problem remains

intact, intuition is indeed unreliable. Intuition is completely reliable, but only when it comes from a *quiet mind*, a mind well weeded of unconscious points of view.

Wait until the mind has settled, *wait until the silence spoke instead of the "me."* When we wait like this, speaking and action come from our intuition, a deeper place than cognitive thought, a dimension of us that is connected to everything else.

Whether we are leading a seminar, running a business, raising children, creating art, or cutting hair, wherever we are most translucent *we will know the magic of acting now and understanding later.*

How can we know the difference between action guided by intuition and action driven by belief? Iago is sneaky and love to imitate translucence. Contractions and intuition arise from the same source, and subjectively and intuitive action and a reactive one will feel the same to us. The only way to know the difference is to *let go*. When we let go of a belief arising from a contraction, we will return to the natural state, and the need from action will be gone. Whatever we were concerned about will seem absurd. When we try to let go of an intuitive response, any contraction around it will dissolve, but the impulse to speak or take action will be even stronger and clearer. Every time we let go in this way, we become more and more intuitive and less and less reactive.

Awakening experience

An awakening experience can happen gradually as a fruit of daily practice such as meditation, reading and contemplating the awakening process and by a direct experience with a sacred plant like Ayahuasca or Wachuma (San Pedro).

An awakening experience often releases a wave of creativity and generosity of spirit, a natural impulse to serve and contribute. In this moments, we know that love is who we are, not something we sometimes feel.

A spontaneous generosity of spirit, an impulse to serve, and a willingness to transform living into art gradually replace the normal relationship to life marked by fear and acquisition.

All over the world, people report that the trance of separation being broken. Now is evident the manifestation of synchronicity while we co-create reality. For the majority this radical awakening has occurred within the last fifteen years, due to meditation, self inquiry, the use of psychotropics in a sacred ceremonial context or by some radical event that brakes the veil.

As more people awaken, it affects the collective, and as the collective shifts, even more wake up, in a growing snowball of realization. The veil is getting thinner all the time. *The awakening initiates a gradual metamorphosis, which is both evolutionary and endless.* We call this endless process of evolution and transformation "translucence."

Translucent community

Although we could had a deeply realization of Oneness, of finding ourselves to be limitless and beyond birth and death, our habits are still loyal to separation. The simplicity of our realization is sabotage by our day to day life and habits.

After an awakening experience, triggered by a teacher plant as Ayahuasca, we feel a longing to fully embody our realizations. To deeply feel what is around us with gratitude. Now begins the much more difficult work of living and embodying our own realization.

You may think that because not every moment of your life is marked by awakening that you are not embodying translucence. Our life can be very translucent in one area and still opaque in another. Some areas of our life may already be infused with generosity of spirit, humor, and creativity. Others may still be opaque.

This is the point of a translucent life. *We are no longer willing to separate spiritual experience from the fabric of our day-to-day existence.* Our most mundane circumstances are the very context in which realization lives and breaths.

Satsang - Sacred circle

(We honor the sacred circle in ceremony and we honor the sacred circle outside of ceremony when we recognize the whole community representing and holding the sacred circle.)

The traditional setting of one Enlightened One sitting on a raised podium, answering questions from deferential devotees, is being replaced by the sacred circle, where wisdom is everywhere in the room at the same time, where the meeting is eye to eye, heart to heart. Realizing the deepest truth of who we are may occur on the meditation cushion, in a satsang or in a ceremony.

Satsang is to sit in association with the truth, in association with the heart, sharing the common arena, the common ground of our own vulnerability, our common space of dwelling and embracing the not knowing, facing the mystery with maturity and humbleness.

Satsang is to sit in association with that which the heart can understand but the mind cannot remember.

Oneness

*"Who is experiencing this moment?"
Who is the one trying to become free?*

When you close your eyes and try to find yourself, here in this moment, who or what do you discover yourself to be? What do you find when you look for the real thing, what you have called "me"? That which knows but doesn't have a name or form.

Don't try to find the answer in the mind. Dwell in the mystery of the question, and feel it. Return awareness back to its true nature, to now. Who is the one trying to become free?

When we inquire in this way, we find that what is really meeting this moment, hearing sounds, seeing movement, and feeling currents of sensation is formless empty space, awareness experimenting form, pregnant with infinite possibility. I am awareness experiencing form.

There is a mysterious presence, indefinable, with the capacity to embrace everything, just exactly as it is, but which in itself is nothing, just pure context, with no content. This presence contains the body but still exists, with or without the body. We feel a relaxed and open experience of fullness and presence. Flowering of the heart, loose the sense of separateness, experience reality as it is, Oneness.

Many people have reported this dimension of awakening. You relax back into yourself, and there is only space, only presence. Everything is meeting everything.

The waves - Thich Nhat Hanh

Imagine waves on the sea. If the waves had consciousness they might look at themselves and compare themselves with other waves, saying: "I am more (or less) beautiful than that wave", or, "I am higher (or lower) than that other wave," and develop a sense of importance or of low self-esteem.

As the waves approach the shore the self-important wave might see the waves ahead dashing themselves against the shore and become filled with fear. This is because it considers itself to have a separate existence. It does not realize that *it is only a manifestation of the water and in a process of continual metamorphosis or transformation*. Once it realizes this, liberation occurs and it is freed from fear, particularly the fear of death. It has realized that its ultimate nature is water.

When we look deeply at a wave we see the water, and we see the possibility of waves. We see that we are not separate from the universe in which we find ourselves. We are deeply and intrinsically connected throughout space and time. Our liberation is dependent simply on realizing our interbeing-nature.

If we continue to see ourselves as separate, we are not awake. Peace will elude us.

Once we perceive the interconnected nature of our existence we rest in the heart, the heart of understanding.