



More Than

meets the



as told to me by

John Harper

More Than meets the I

The Power of Being Where You Are with Curiosity

as told to me by

John Harper

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Reality confronts Ego-self

A friend

Praises these words

And verses

Their origins,

And inspiration?

Beauty

Everywhere

Beauty

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More Than Meets the I is a story of one person's journey, on a search for what is real. It leaves me with a sense of appreciation of our life struggles, our life history, and the steadfastness required to truly arrive home. It can also be viewed as one's unique adventure in 'following the yellow brick road'. It has all the 'lions and tigers and bears, oh my!', and also the arriving at 'there's no place like home'. To find home is potential for all humans, and is available now in a teaching for our time.

The book also is useful for revealing particular paths explored along the way, such as Eckankar, the Enneagram, and other places that were investigated on the search for the path, the teaching that is meant for one. For John, it is the Diamond Path, known as the Diamond Approach, a teaching that has been arriving for a few decades, with no immediate lineage. Those who find it will find out if it's meant for them in this lifetime, as their specific route to home.

There is a particular preciousness of one's personal journey in this book; all the ups, downs, and a final settling in heading true north, on a journey of the heart. The experiences are unimaginable, which is fortunate, as we might not continue if we already knew. Not knowing is the best armament for being steadfast in meeting the 'I', and for what is really here.

Dee Morris, Former Eckankar Student, Currently Student of the Diamond Approach

FOREWARD

Reading John's manuscript, brought to mind what Ken Carey said in the Third Millennium: "To orient your life around a structure of some other human being's understanding is to worship a false god. It is to prefer the past-oriented knowledge of another to your own present-moment perception. It is to doubt both yourself and the Creator who would, if you permit it, awaken within you."

There are many well-intentioned teachers out there, but John's experience points to how attempts to organize spirituality mostly fall back on themselves, and lock us into a framework of someone else's points of view.

I loved following John's unfolding personal experience as he came to recognize that the knowledge of Divine Truth is something you must experience alone. I recently saw *Leaving Neverland*, the HBO documentary on Michael Jackson and pedophilia, and Oprah's comments that in 4 hours this film was more impactful than the over 200 hours of her TV shows dedicated to the same subject. I feel the same potential in John's sharing his own spiritual path. If you let it, it could save you a lifetime of seeking.

Like John, I feel very fortunate to have found the work of A. H. Almaas, whose Diamond Path of inquiry leads each of us in our unfoldment, to the true nature of reality revealed in our own experience. Like John said about his spiritual path before the Diamond Approach "I would have benefitted more from learning how to allow the forces of being to have their way with me".

Mayuri Onerheim - Author - Money ● Spirituality ● Consciousness

PREFACE

This book is a chronological report from the front lines, where the rubber meets the road for John Harper.

One way to hold it is as a diary of an ego-I being confronted by the realization that there is more to life than meets the eye, and its ensuing challenges with ignorance, conditioning, ego activity and revelation.

Many people come to the spiritual path or quest as a result of years of suffering, a yearning or longing, disillusionment, the list is pretty long.

Not John. He was blindsided by reality at nineteen.

Experimenting with pot and psychedelics for eighteen months expanded his worldview and set his curiosity aflame about the nature of self and reality.

John found meditation and spiritual techniques made drugs seem insignificant and more of a barrier than an asset.

Perhaps the reader can relate to one or more of these experiences and save themselves from the futility of seeking spiritual experience as a means to an end and recognizing it for what most of it is - another manifestation of ego activity.

The power of being where we are with curiosity is the key to the vast treasure of the human being and reality. To be clear: the door is our present experience, the key is curiosity.

The depth of reality is here in this moment. All is of and within consciousness. There is no need to go and get or find.

The methodology of this practice is infinitely practical and applicable for optimizing a life in and of "this world" as well as being "in this world, but not of it."

INTRODUCTION

Pointing at the Moon

The “inner” experiences shared herein can only be shared with the assistance of a reflective, comparative mind. As such, these descriptions lack the true immediacy and knowing of experience as it happens.

Any description of direct knowing is not direct knowing. Image, language, comparison (relative knowing), and metaphor are the brain/mind’s way of knowing and communicating.

Direct knowing is closer to “felt experience” and not thinking experience.

You see – pointing.

When one’s consciousness “returns” from an out-of-the-body experience, another dimension or profound “spiritual” state, the experience/knowledge it carries as vibration or pattern (form) in the soul (individual consciousness) activates the brain/mind. Images arise as the mind interprets, translates, and processes the experience into its modality of knowing.

Pointing at the moon.

The mind then reifies and conceptualizes the imagined experience which then leads to languaging it. The pointing is now removed from immediacy by several layers of filters.

These processes are automatic and happen in nanoseconds. It’s what the brain/mind does. Resistance is futile.

Two “personal” things happen during this light-speed process:

1. The experience becomes “mine”
2. It is incorporated into “my story.” My story supports the notion of me existing through time.

The experience of the me includes an abundance of inane mental commentary, chatter, white noise, the primary function of which is to perpetuate the ego-self (self-image) coherency.

As the saying goes, pointing at the moon is not the moon.

*Reality has only one need for revelation –
an observer.*

ECSTASY

Can you recall your most intense, pleasurable orgasm?

Orgasm is the best comparison for what comes next.

Remember the excitement, the body charge, the heightened sensations and affects, the power of the instinctual drive?

When we're lost in it, completely taken by it, when it rolls our eyes back in their sockets and sends the body into spasms and convulsions of discharge and pleasure – what's not to like?

Imagine that happening in every single cell in your body simultaneously. Orgasmic explosions throughout you, beyond you, down to the most fundamental you of you.

Imagine that intense experience of yours magnified a thousand times, a million times.

Can you imagine?

This is where this book begins.

CONSCIOUSNESS

(Sometime in 1987)

Knowing & Being

Co-emergence

Conscious of awareness and consciousness.

Self-aware, self-knowing without a self.

Boundless, vastness with no spatial, nor temporal extension.

Isness. Immediate here-ness.

A body of consciousness. Substantial. An experiential field of substantiality.

No self-reflective knowing. No I.

What is, is what is. Is the knowing. Knowing is knowledge, knowledge is knowing.

In-touchness.

Happening happening. The happening is the knowing, is the being.

What's happening?

An infinite wave, infinite amplitude, infinite wavelength, an immensity.

As the wave (dynamism) moves through consciousness every atom of consciousness it touches explodes in ecstatic bliss.

Trillions times trillions of explosions - not even a close approximation.

Everywhere, ecstasy!

Of course, there are no atoms, there is no wave. This is the best the mind could offer up – pointing, pointing, pointing.

Infinite ecstatic bliss.

Knowing.

Being.

How did I come to this experience?

More on this later...

First, how did I get here in the first place?

My favorite thrill is when reality overwhelms me.

1950

My body is born. It was a traumatic experience. I would encounter the significance of this much later in life. Meanwhile, it becomes a major contributor to the formation of my character structure.



This chubby, apparently happy little fellow will soon be standing up in his crib and shaking it so violently that it moves across the room until it bangs and bangs and bangs into the wall. I want out of here! This world?

1954



My central soul child. He has a gray perspective on life and the world. He is not an optimist (that birth continues to influence psychological development). He's more of a cynic. In 40 years, I'll be reintroduced to him.

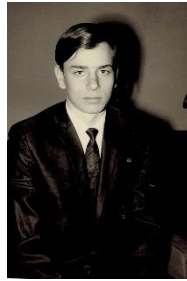
1957/8



This fellow has a very painful secret just below the surface. Thirty five years in the future it will surface.

All in all, an average childhood.

1969



A friend got me stoned and then later turned me on to LSD.

WoW!

LIFE!

What a small, confined world I lived in.

Still shaking that crib!

The cosmos.

The interstellar mind.

So much curiosity.

Intensity.

Vividness.

The mind is an ALIVENESS.

I think it's all in my head, but I will soon learn and experience that there is more than what meets the eye or is generated in the brain.

*One thing that touches me deeply
is witnessing the courage
in those who can't see it in themselves.*

COLOREDS/WHITE

I'm attending Middle Georgia College in Cochran, GA. The local theater has a separate section in the balcony for coloreds. In front of Jazzbo's, on the main street, there is a drinking fountain for "white" and another for "coloreds." Coloreds aren't welcomed in the local diner, there's a takeout window for them.

My hair is down to my shoulders. I'm one of about six "hippies" in this neck of the woods. We're a little lower on the social ladder than coloreds, but we can eat inside at the diner as we enjoy the bigotry and hatred.

(Let me just say that I am using the word coloreds here because that is what is on the signs. It's not the word in use in conversation when referring to African Americans, that's even more racist and hateful).

There was one lynching that took place in the area while I was attending college and my hippie friends and I were shot at once. Buckshot coming through the trees quickly gets your attention! The local fire chief told me there was serious talk in town that some of the upstanding, decent folks wanted to burn down the building we were renting with us in it.

I was ahead of my time in trying to open a local "head shop." Perhaps it was more a case of being ahead of their time.

The road to devastation

Takes many forms

Insignificance to one

Is another's greatest calamity

Do not judge the result

By the route

The devastated know

Total

Is

Total

ECKANKAR

A bunch of students, myself and an Episcopal priest in groups of four to six are sitting on a living room floor engaging in “rap” sessions (different meaning back in the day: talking important and profound college-kid stuff).

We know. We have answers. We can see clearly. Shut up and listen!.

My attention keeps being drawn to the group on my right, a few feet away. I turn and ask, “What are you guys talking about?”

Jim Anderson replies, “Eckankar.”

A thick substance descends into the top of my head.

WTF!

As it continues its descent, the hairs on my arms and the back of my neck stand up. I notice this thick, viscous substance is warm.

When it reaches my shoulders, I swear it speaks to me: “Welcome home.”

Peace

Comfort

The substance continues its descent.

When it reaches my chest, it’s like someone pushes a piano wire into my heart. I explode in agony and ecstasy, and something wakes up.

There is a very small moment of time with what seems like two consciousnesses before the mind grabs it all and “I” step on the spiritual path to go search for my self.

Oh, to have had a Diamond Approach teacher in that room to inquire into the immediacy of my experience, but that is twenty years into the future.

Eckankar, founded by Paul Twitchell, teaches “soul travel” as a means to access other dimensions, planes of existence (astral, causal, mental, void, soul, etc.) and spiritual states of consciousness.

Cleansing Time

Three a.m. — a downpour

*What is this that drenches
leaving no drop in the hair
nor puddle on the floor?*

*A mystery
that falls from head to toe
spiralling an ecstatic return
lifts us from this sleeping hall*

*On golden arrows whisked
across the mighty moat of heaven
where within the deep ravine
a live translucent mist*

All who enter

Know

the Name

OUT OF BODY

I'm looking down at my sleeping body lying on its side, kind of fetal position. This witnessing consciousness is up in a corner of the ceiling.

It didn't occur to me to wonder, "If 'I' am asleep, then what is this that is witnessing?" I think I just took it for granted that this is what out-of-the-body is all about. No big deal, delivered as advertised.

Oh, where is that Diamond Approach teacher when you need them?

There are a lot of splits that get supported in me by Eckankar:

- Soul/Body Mind/Body Mind/Soul
- Inner/Outer
- Higher/Lower
- Spiritual/Mundane
- Ego/Soul

Leaving the world for spiritual dimensions totally plays into my personality fixation. Why bother with this world, the ashcan of the universe, and its (my) problems when I can flee into the "spiritual?"

Alas, it will be twenty-five years out in the future before I am introduced to the enneagram and recognize this for the schizoid defense it is.

I've got a lot more suffering to experience, and collateral damage to spread before the ruin and the turn.

The problem with in-laws

Is the concern

For their family values

Not you

The self's orientation

Toward the soul

Is similar

BUZZ LIGHTYEAR

I'm standing in the dark kitchen of the single-wide mobile home two friends and myself are renting just outside Cochran GA.

They're in the lighted living room listening to and talking about music. Probably Lightnin' Hopkins or the Allman Brothers Band.

And I can see my back!

When I realize this, I'm startled and look around to see what's happening.

And I'm in the depths of space, light-years from Earth.

This is kind of spooky because I can see my friends and I can hear the conversation and music.

"Can you hear me?" I ask.

Yes

So, in spite of being light-years away, I can still see through my eyes, hear with my ears and speak with my mouth.

This is where pointing is challenging. How can I describe this phenomenon? I haven't a clue, but here are a couple of basics:

- I can see (to some degree) my back. If you come around from the sides of my body about 2 to 4 inches toward my spine, that's what I see, the body's rounded periphery and the kitchen cabinets and living room. My body is like a mask, a front presented to the world.
- What I see and hear is immediate, but sounds like it is at a great distance while still being immediate. Not ears, surround sound. Inside and out.
- When I look around from where my consciousness is located, there is simply vast luminous blackness, but at the far reaches of this blackness, the universe appears in all directions, 360-degree event horizon, a total bubble.
- I seem to be above it all, extended into it as well.

This lasts for several minutes while I explore it, then ends as I enter the living room and join my friends.

Void of night

A dead calm sea

Ubiquitous stars

Above and below

Which is the reflection?

The eyes cannot tell

Let awareness

Be like this

Holding the entirety

Equally

Inner – outer

Objective – subjective

Circles for the mind

Here

The vast infinite

Stretches you

Beyond the dual

Into everywhere

SCIENCE OF THE SOUND CURRENT

Eckankar (ECK + ankar) Eck refers to the cosmic vibration, the divine light & sound of creation. Ankar is "the way of." So, Eckankar is the way of the sound current.

The ECK is referred to in other traditions and teachings as HU, AUM, OM, the Word and such.

In Eckankar, the emphasis is on the sound aspect issuing out of the primordial ground as the great river of the Divine which creates all manifestation, all the dimensions, all the planes of existence as the vibration lowers in octaves creating vast and infinite possibilities.

Eckankar teaches that this sound current, being the nature of the soul, calls to it, beckoning it home. The soul can attune to this one-note, river of sound, and ride it back to the source.

Hearken to this reed forlorn
Breathing ever since was torn
From its rushy bed a strain
Of Impassioned love and pain
The secret of my song though near
None can see and none can hear
Oh, for a friend to know the sign
And mingle all their soul with mine
Twas the wine of love inspired me
Twas the flame of love that fired me
If thou wouldst know how lovers bleed
Hearken, hearken to the reed.

Rumi

They chant HU (secret name for God) a lot in Eckankar to invoke the remembrance in the soul and they practice presence of consciousness, though this has devolved more into personality worship (my view).

Blue is associated with consciousness and it was this manifestation of it that first arose in my experience. These days, the blue arises more as cobalt blue as it is mixed more and more with the black of the Absolute reality.

So, soul travel is the soul riding the sound current and exploring the majesty and vastness of reality.

You can find other teachings on this sound current, shabd yoga being one, and other writings, Hazarat Inyat Khan's for example, that speak to the mysticism of sound.

It's interesting to note that string theory hypothesizes that small strings of vibration mysteriously appear out of nothingness to form the basic building blocks of our universe

*How do you explain
Music being played
In nothingness?*

*Don't bother taking
Your ears there
They are as useless
As your eyes and mind*

*Only nothingness
Knows the origin
Of this tune*

DANTE'S INFERNO

I'm standing on a disk of energy, about three feet in diameter. It's descending through various realms we might refer to as levels of hell.

I haven't read about the Buddhist hell realms yet, so the only thing my mind has to compare my experience with is Dante's Inferno.

As I pass through each realm, I can hear the suffering and there is knowing about each realm, without memory or mental content. The atmosphere contains all the information one might need.

Negativity abounds: fear, hatred, rage, starvation of mind and soul, rabid toxicity, and more. Forty years later, I can still taste it as I write these words.

There is demand for my attention from the inhabitants and entities.

I am not afraid, but I am aware that remaining "centered" is necessary so I don't get "sucked in" for "fresh meat."

I'm on a mission. I know this, but there was no briefing, no orders given that I recall, simply becoming aware in mid-descent.

Some poor soul's sentence or penance is up. I'm here on an extraction mission. He, she, it is changing levels.

The disk stops, hovering, soundless. Some entity gets on and we start an ascent.

Now it gets really weird and challenging.

There are a host of small gremlin-like, really nasty entities with razor-sharp teeth gnashing at my ankles.

This is my first experience in these "inner realms" where I am aware that fear will doom me.

I don't feel fear. I'm not tense. I'm actually quite calm and centered, not even focused, just here functioning.

A bit of time passes. I look down. I'm alone.

I look up. I ascend into the light.

Experience like this feeds my grandiosity. Insight I won't have for years to come, even though it causes great suffering for me and others.

In short order, the grandiosity will bloom into fantasies of becoming a spiritual master.

Ha!

That ego, what a riot!

How does one discriminate between a dream, a lucid dream, an out-of-the-body experience (astral projection, soul travel, and etc.), imagination, hallucination and "real" experience?

I think it takes experience. Trying to point to it with concepts creates a lot of confusing and conflicting overlap, but the experiential vividness leaves no doubt. It also helps when there's a group experience for comparison, but that's a few pages ahead in your immediate future.

Today

The world is birthing you

Yesterday

Was the womb of today

Today

Is the womb of tomorrow

Today

Is the moment to birth

All that yesterday's womb

Nurtured in you

Be that majestic generosity

That spreads its wings for all

VENUSIAN BATTLESHIP COMMANDER

Tom Flamma was an interesting guy. An Italian from Philadelphia with coke-bottle-lens glasses, a bad haircut and a cheap shiny suit (it was the 70's, maybe it was sharkskin). He was a charismatic fifth initiate in Eckankar when I met him.

Eckankar is path of initiation. When I joined, 7th initiates were the highest initiates on the path. There were a few eighth initiates when I left the path as a 6th initiate.

Tom was a former psychic. He said that millennia ago he was a renowned battle fleet commander on a Venusian star cruiser. Supposedly, back then, Venus could support life, but I always got the sense that the civilization existed in a vibratory range at the high-end of our physical universe, but not quite into what would be considered the astral plane.

The other thing is that the Venusians resembled praying mantises.

As I said, Tom was an interesting guy. I could say more, but let me get to the impact he had on my life.

Man

Likes to think

He has evolved

Above the animals

With an advanced intelligence

That can choose its destiny

But the ordinary man

Is no more evolved

Than a parrot

Parrots, too,

Only repeat their conditioning

Parrots, too,

Dress wildly to attract attention

And parrots are also known

To associate with pirates

Need I say more?

FRESCOES

Jim Anderson, Allison, Jim's sister, a couple of other "Eckists," and myself drove up to Spartanburg, SC to hear Tom Flamma speak.

After the lecture, he wondered if any of us would be interested in taking a little inner-trip. We were.

So, we closed our eyes and chanted HU with him...

....and I was sitting in a room that resembled a round Greek or Roman temple made of what appeared to be marble.

In front of me was an ageless wise man. I know he was ageless because he was ancient, yet the light and vitality radiating from him was blinding.

"This traveler has blessed you by bringing you here. The great river of sound..."

He spoke for a while and then we were back in a college classroom.

Everyone started jabbering about their experience: the old guy (though descriptions varied), the room (though there were differences) and the frescoes on the walls (which were agreed upon).

The wise man's appearance was my first encounter with how reality shows up according to what makes sense to us individually.

Well, everyone had the basics, but as we talked about the frescoes, it became apparent that, indeed, we had all been taken to the same place.

You see, they weren't really paintings, but windows into other dimensions and when you looked at them, their dynamism came forth.

*In the midnight meadow
a maiden's dance
caresses hearts unseen*

*Deep in the labyrinth
a moment of peace
the minotaur sleeps*

*In the ghetto's torment
newborn babes
gurgle with pleasure*

*Deep in the jungle
timeless rhythm
cacophony ~ stillness*

*In the heart of hearts
a nameless breath
sings to the soul*

*HU is IT
that calls to you*

MEETING THE MASTER

My friend, Nick Wyatt, and I decided to hitchhike to Pittsburgh, PA for an Eckankar seminar.

Standing around visiting with people before things began, Pat Yarborough was pointed out to me. "She's the seventh initiate who's speaking," someone whispered to me.

"These higher initiates are everywhere," I thought.

The weekend was great. I fell in love with Andrea, and Nick and I hit it off with Pat, a fun and fond friendship.

Pat invited us to her home in Cleveland. She was giving a talk later in the week and thought we might like to continue our journey. So, we threw our stuff in her car and off we went to Ohio.

Pat was from Alabama. She had the complexion and hawk nose of a Native American. She was half or quarter Cherokee as I recall.

Pat is one of those interesting souls who arrives in a body carrying a strong connection to a previous life/s. She told us that she never fit in with Southern Christianity. She had a deep connection with spirit, but religion and dogma were not real enough for her.

She was drawn to meditation early in life, kind of like Elisabeth Haich, author of [Initiation](#) (a good read).

Pat told us how she came to meet Paul Twitchell and be involved in Eckankar.

She had spent most of her life looking for her master.

A friend mentioned there was a man giving a lecture in town on soul travel and thought Pat might be interested. So, they went together.

Sitting in the front row, Pat was not impressed. Here was this short man (she didn't like short men) with a slight Southern accent speaking in a soft voice and in a manner that was not connecting with her. On and on he went, occasionally glancing down at her with a penetrating gaze until...

In Pat's words: "I could see his aura. It surrounded him and lit up the whole stage. It was golden white with flecks of gold flowing around in it that I realized were the souls of his students."

"And then my past with him came pouring into me and I burst into tears."

"Paul Twitchell looked down at me with those piercing blue eyes and said, "Welcome home Pat," though he had never been introduced to me and shouldn't have known my name."

I thought this was a pretty amazing story and couldn't imagine anything like it happening to me, but 30 years later at a Diamond Approach teachers' retreat in Hawaii...

In my land

Everyone is bejeweled

Here

Riches are scarce and hoarded

There

I am a royal servant

Here

I tell stories and clean stalls

Putting my skills to good use

And why not

Service is the bridge

The Messenger uses

Crossing into this world

With news from Home

AKASHIC RECORDS

There was a time when I was interested in past lives.

I never read Edgar Cayce, but I did read all of Joan Grants books, starting with [Winged Pharaoh](#). The past life connections with Egypt attracted me (another reason I loved *Initiation*).

I had heard of the akashic records:

In theosophy and anthroposophy, the Akashic records are a compendium of all human events, thoughts, words, emotions, and intent ever to have occurred in the past, present, or future. They are believed by theosophists to be encoded in a non-physical plane of existence known as the etheric plane. - [Wikipedia](#)

I went to bed one night already feeling half out of my body. As I lay back in bed, when my head hit the pillow, I continued, falling out of my body. This became my favorite way of leaving the body.

I was falling through a deck of cards.

These cards were crystalline in nature and not even a nano-atom thick. They were totally transparent and contained colors outside the spectrum of the physical eye.

Each card contained an image and much like the frescoes mentioned earlier, when my consciousness was in that card a whole existence opened up. I use existence, because each card contained individual lives and a synthetic multiplicity that extended beyond our concept of an individual life.

They contained a wealth of knowledge.

When I come back to my body, my mind will see these images similar in nature to the face cards in a playing deck, but much more elaborate and detailed, and it would drive itself crazy for a day, or two, trying to resolve the colors.

It never could, but I can still perceive them. How is that possible, you may ask. Well, in November 2019 at the Diamond Approach teachers' retreat, I would get more insight on this.

As I continued falling through hundreds?, thousands?, millions? of these cards, I seemed to be falling through an eternity beyond time. Everything simply here, now.

Eventually my awareness was of the basic nature of this crystalline dimension. This infinite collection of cards seemed to be wafered layers of transparent crystal and the really bizarre part was that they were all immediate, yet interpenetrating each other.

All contained in a space of no-space.

As the awareness focused on one slice of this transparency, that would be my discriminated perception. Then I would be the totality of the crystalline awareness, aware of the totality of all forms, but not knowing anything until one became my immediate experience.

At a Diamond Approach summer retreat far in the future, we would study nonconceptual reality, the Nameless, and I would remember this experience as I, again, transcended time into that space of no space.

Reality

looks out/into itself

like standing between two mirrors

an infinitude

multiplicity and depth

It accomplishes this

without mirrors

Awareness

UNANIMITY

Ten years into Eckankar and I was becoming dissatisfied. I was having wild “spiritual” experiences but I was not changing.

After ten thousand people tell you you’re an asshole, you have to wonder, “Can that many people be wrong?”

The “dynamic inertia” of the personality and its ego structures engage the surface elements of transitory experience in a way that accommodates events and phenomena within a self-perpetuating paradigm of self.

We’re very adept at co-opting spiritual experience to keep from changing. I should speak only for myself. I am very adept at this. The rest of the world may not share my talent.

At that point in my life, around 30, I’m at the beginning stages of coming to see the number one insight I have into ego life, but the understanding lies in the future.

Someone has to pay for the blinders to come off!

MY ASS

*I used to have
The most obnoxious,
Worrisome, and stubborn
Ass
It was a bother and burden
I would wish on no one
So, I could not
In all good conscious
Rid my self of it
Then, a Friend
Told me of a method
To break my ass
Of all its contrariness
So, I bought a chair
And every day
I made my ass
Sit in that chair
O! what fights and struggles we had
That lazy ass so resistant to ever
Going anywhere or doing any real work
Now, could not and would not
Sit still
But, my Friend
Had warned me of this stage
So, I persisted
In putting my ass in that chair*

*Ignoring all of its
Childish braying and petulance
Slowly over time
That chair
Responded to the weight
Of my ass
Molding itself
Into the only place
My ass was ever
Really relaxed and comfortable
Now
I could not get my ass
Out of that chair
It refused to be
Anywhere else
So, I left my ass
In that chair
While I went about
My daily affairs
Until one day
My ass
Disappeared
And
Took me with it*

BLACK MAGIC MAN

I've been reading the [Shariyat-ki-Sugmad](#), the spiritual text of Eckankar.

Sugmad is a name for the Divine.

In particular, I am interested in the God-eaters.

These are beings that exist on cosmic vibrations. Their lives span thousands of years and, yes, they're embodied on this planet.

As I read, I realize that my interest is focused on the description of their eyes – deep, penetrating, black holes into the depth of mystery.

Later, I would realize that this was my first taste of the Absolute. Today, I am drawn to the magnetic power of what lies behind those eyes.

I begin meditating on those eyes, on that depth, on that space.

It's powerful. In a way that is beyond how we use that term.

It's like that place sources everything.

One night, being the grandiose person I am, I decide to lead a meditation at the local ECK center in Seattle and introduce people to this interesting aspect.

So, I lead a guided meditation focusing on those adepts (as mentioned in the Shariyat-ki-Sugmad) and those eyes, and the deep mystery and depth behind them.

And two days later, I'm accused of practicing black magic.

Pearls before swine?

I don't know, but it's becoming clear to me that my path lies elsewhere.

Where?

No clue.

Twilight

the edge of two worlds
the dark flame burns bright
a well of longing fills the soul
deep water
still water
an immensity — moves
exquisite caress
the Beloved's breath
silky luminosity
beauty's grace
a kiss on the heart
beckoning brilliant void
a teeming
pure crystalline delight
I am

Twilight

FEELINGS

I'm lying fetal on the floor in my least favorite experience in life, the blubbering ball of protoplasm.

It only took this much of a lifetime and three nuclear explosions to bring down the wall. I've been on an emotional rollercoaster for a few days that makes terrifying theme park rides pale in comparison.

When I actually got reconnected to my feelings a couple of days earlier, a very interesting thing happened.

People plumped up!

It was like I had been living in a world of two-dimensional cardboard cutouts and then someone added water.

Feelings I had been containing or defending against came rushing in flooding my nervous system. I thought, "This is what people experience? No wonder they act so crazy!"

There I lay with no strength, no power and my state of affairs totally hopeless. Years later, in studying the Diamond Approach, I learned that this is the true state of affairs for the ego-self.

It is the avoidance of this truth that keeps us spinning and chasing our elusive tails.

The Never Never

Here, in the world of the never never

I see, but am not seen

live, but am not alive

In the never never

there is no arising

no gentle rush of wonder

We, the people of the never never

speak no words to break the spell

ignore the silenced, saddened pulse

The never never sleeps

the cave of hibernation hidden

far from Spring's awakening touch

In the never never

a thousand miles, the distance

between you and me; me and myself

All day long, the sad heart sings

All night long, soul's empty longing

Through the silent life,

the wounded child whispers

Never

Never

ASHES OF THE HEART

One thing was clear to me in that place of total vulnerability, I did not want that wall to be put back in place, and I knew that regardless of my heart's wish, my personality would slowly, but surely, brick by brick, put it up again.

I found myself doing something very rare in my experience - heartfelt prayer.

As I lay there, I begged the universe to keep tearing that wall down. As I put it back together, please tear it down. This was my heart's desire.

There is someone standing at my feet.

I look up and see a spiritual traveler I had been working with for years.

In his hand is what appears to be an ash-gray clay pot of sorts. He clenches his fist and the brittle clay shatters, and ashes stream to the ground.

"Such is the human heart," he says. "We consume experience thinking this is life, but here is the result of consumption – not life, but ashes!"

More bad news for me, as I knew it was my empty, dead heart he just crushed and its ashes that spilled out.

He opened his hand, palm up, and gently blew the ashes away.

And there in the palm of his hand a single spark!

My heart leapt!

"Careful it cried," lest the spark be extinguished or lost.

He took my hand, turning my palm up, and turned his so the spark fell into my palm.

It was alive!

A delicate tingling and glitter-like in appearance.

"Your job," he said, "is to tend this until it consumes you."

*Don't worry about mending
Your broken heart
Or wearing it
On your shirt sleeve
That heart
Is only on loan
When the Owner
Wants it back
He's going to
Reclaim it
Regardless
Of the shape
It's in*

BIG BAD WOLF

Reverting back to my known world and beliefs, I figured the way to tend to this spark was through meditation and spiritual techniques based on breath. After all, in the world if you want a flame to burst forth from a spark, you fan it.

I used every charged word and mantra I knew. And I huffed and I puffed until the inner wind with which I was assaulting that spark exceeded the big, bad wolf's.

And that spark just tinkled.

That delicate tingling remained unphased.

I realized, that spark is indestructible.

I had no clue how to proceed.

So, there I was again, helpless, powerless and hopeless, but longing to be shown.

And that's when the nightmares began.

I'm in a room and the walls are closing in on me crushing the life from me, or I'm wrapped in chains and the more I struggle, the tighter and heavier they become, smothering me.

I've always been claustrophobic and once was rolled up in a rug to the delight of "friends" who so enjoyed my freaking out. You can't struggle your way out of that situation.

So, these nightmares were full of panic and I would freak out until waking up soaked in sweat.

These lucid nightmares continued for a couple of weeks.

I was a zombie in this life.

And then one night, as the chains, once again, threatened to end my existence, it occurred to me that struggling was not working, so I relaxed, curious to see what death would be like.

And as I relaxed, I shrunk and the chains were looser.

And I noticed, over the course of several nights, that as I shrunk, the spark grew larger, relative to me.

And that's when I realized that when I completely disappear, the spark will have consumed me.

*The heart has
A courage
The mind
Can't understand
Thus, she spends
Much of her life
In prison or exile
If you can move
Beyond fears and beliefs
For only a moment
To set her free
You will stand in awe
Not able to understand
How it is possible
That this radiant beauty
Bears no scars
From all her wounding*

NONDUAL

I've been walking around for a few days in the ruin of myself. I'm lost, untethered. I have no interest in cosmic consciousness, God-realization, nirvana or mysticism.

All those experiences seem hollow.

Something in me sucked the life out of them leaving them as empty husks, memories.

I'm about to cut a rose.

As yet, I have not heard the term non-dual, but as I reach out to grasp the stem and cut the rose, I realize, what I long for is to be the rose, the one cutting the rose and the cutting at the same time.

And that's when I left the path of Eckankar and went off to try and figure out how to become a real human being.

*All my life I've been seeking
Answers, insight, understanding, meaning
I've never been able to be here
I haven't been here for a second
My mind thinks about being here
So it's not, it's elsewhere*

*Poor creature, water runs downhill!
Here will fill you up
For a thousand years after
You can blabber on and on
And never empty the well*

*I tell you
My heart finally let my mind
Taste an atom of its sweetness
Where it went, I don't know
But it isn't here*

A DIME A DOZEN

I am pathless.

Thirteen years as a student of Eckankar, with hundreds of “spiritual experiences” under my belt, or notches on my ego’s measuring stick, and I’m nowhere.

I seem not to have changed a single iota, at least in human terms.

What’s the use of spiritual experience if it doesn’t change us?

If you look in the dictionary under “spiritual experiences are a dime a dozen,” you find my picture.

Spiritual experience is experience of true nature, what is fundamental to “isness.” As we move from and through the constructed self and its world, we can experience all kinds of dazzling, far out things – the lightshow.

The lightshow can be the event horizon of reality rising or it can be psychic discharge, experience of other realms, or anything that shakes up our world.

From where I am today, spiritual experiences are a dime a dozen, but that does not undermine their value, significance, power, nor necessity for spiritual growth.

Afterall, they, like all of manifestation, arise from the same divine source and speak to the sacred legacy each of us carries.

The transformational magic of spiritual experience is in our capacity to be impacted, influenced, and worked in the immediacy of experience. In other words, to be challenged by the affect and effects of reality instead of remaining in a rut of conceptual understanding as the holy grail of knowledge and wisdom – being the lab rat in our process of transformation.

God's a real

Pain in the ass

It's always pestering me

Like a worrisome fly

Buzzing around my ears and nose

I finally got so tired of my life

I started to enjoy the nagging

Now It's telling me secrets

I have no right to hear

SUFI SOUP FOR THE SOUL

I'm reading everything published by Idries Shah for my mind and poetry by Rumi, Hafez, Rabia and others to nurture this fledgling heart.

I turned to the Sufis because there is a psychological component of understanding in their teachings that I know I need – that becoming a real human being factor.

Western psychology doesn't interest me. In fact, I think it's a bunch of crap.

Looking back from my early days in the Diamond Approach, I saw that this was not only my enneagram fixation at work, but also a fundamental difference in how western psychology understands the self.

Anyway, you'll be relieved to know that my ego-self was still gobbling up everything for its continued entertainment and existence.

If that ego-self could get a good glimpse, meaning full on experience, of the suffering it is helping to maintain, well...

But that's the rub, eh?

What self really wants that?

So, now my grandiosity and arrogance are feeding on my sense of profundity and spiritual knowledge, as well as how special my heart is.

In fact, it is, and that was the saving grace of it all, as you'll see...

Walking softly

Into my mind

Slow deliberate steps

Silent as stillness

Approaching

The rift in consciousness

The Here/Now portal

To No-thingness

The one-step journey

I step out

It steps in

Turning inside out

All is open

Boundlessness

I am finer

Than rarest air

SUICIDE RIVER

I'm depressed.

Recently divorced, I'm living in a shit hole, an old house that backs up to a wooded hill on the west side of Seattle's Burien freeway. The house is a sponge for the dampness that surrounds it.

It's depressing just walking in the door.

I can't spend any significant amount of time here.

The only interesting thing is that Goldy McJohn, the keyboardist for the band Steppenwolf, lives next door. Jimi Hendrix was raised about a quarter of a mile away as the crow flies. Two items that do nothing for my depression.

I'm not a fan of depression. In fact, I come to see how I remain active and engaged to avoid it.

But for now, I'm soaking in a hot bath adding more dampness to the interior air.

I close my eyes and feel suicidal.

Well, at least this is interesting.

I feel like I'm in a river of desolation. It's flowing to the sea (the suicidal event). Gravity and the terrain ensure that this river will empty into that sea.

I can feel it. If I just relax and let go, I'm going to wind up in the sea.

I snap back as the phone rings.

My older sister, "How are you feeling?"

She's checking up on me after the divorce. My life is in the toilet, in a house that's a shit hole! It's a riot!

"I feel like if I had a gun, I'd put it in my mouth and pull the trigger."

She freaks out. "I'm on a plane tomorrow!"

"Relax." I say. "You asked how I feel, I'm just describing a feeling."

You can see how little experience I have in conversing with others about feelings.

She won't take no for an answer.

"Okay, I'll get on a plane tomorrow and come to you." I couldn't stand the thought of her seeing the dump I'm living in.

And fate has its eyes on my heart.

*Who says this love
Will set you free
When that love
Knows the beauty of jail?*

*Who says this love
Is a consuming fire
When that love
Is a river of bliss?*

*Who says this love
Is the light of God
When that love
Is dark Mystery?*

*Who says this love
The soul hungers for
When that love
Devours the false?*

*I tell you
Here is the secret
Of this and that
HU says...*

LOVE BOAT

On the plane, I'm sitting next to a drop-dead gorgeous woman. Finally, something positive!

Big wedding ring. Bummer.

We spend five hours on the way to Atlanta having a most marvelous chat.

I connect to Baltimore and visit sis.

Returning, I'm off the Baltimore flight and walk up to the departure gate for the plane to Seattle.

And who is ahead of me in line?

Drop-dead gorgeous.

She immediately thinks I'm stalking her.

No, no, pure coincidence, I assure her.

We have another five hours of fascinating conversation.

We become friends and my heart rises out of seabed muck like a submarine that has been stuck forever and a dance with the Beloved begins.

Oh, I love her, but she is but the face of the Beloved.

Two years, marriages, divorces, and relocations to distant places later we do connect, but the dance with the Beloved is beyond the beauty between us.

And a river of poetry starts overflowing from the heart.

I tell you

I can't escape this telling of my heart

I don't know if it's because

She was silenced for so long

Or because my mind is such a dunce

I tell you

This sweet blabbering is only froth

Being tossed by the Ocean

Upon the shore

Legs, mind, heart, and hope

Can't get me into that depth

I'm patiently praying for the tsunami

Annihilation is summoned by the aria of the heart

Choose words that are sweet and piquant

Make your melody a dirge of poignant lament

I tell you

To reach the Ocean's depth

Free the waters of the soul

THE ALHAMBRA

I'm in Denver, CO visiting a good friend. We're at Together Books which is now located in a grand old house instead of its previous storefront.

I'm just wandering from room to room when grace intervenes.

I look up and see a book I just have to have.

The cover is blinding.

Mesmerizing.

Beautiful.

Resistance is futile.

On the cover of this book, [Diamond Heart Book 1: Elements of the Real in Man](#), is a photo from the Alhambra.

The Alhambra has always resonated with my soul, speaking to me in a deeply profound way.

A language of the heart.

I'd buy this book for the cover alone.

"Elements of the Real in Man" speaks to the very place I find myself interested in.

I buy that book and true enough this guy, Almaas, is speaking words directly targeting my experience.

And then it's [The Elixir of Enlightenment](#), then [Essence](#), then [The Void](#), and then [The Pearl Beyond Price](#) which is where I find my way to the Diamond Path.

BTW, I'd never even heard of the Alhambra before, so how could I have the sense that it has always called to me?

For now, let's get back to that experience of consciousness I was speaking about in the beginning and how that landed me in the Diamond Approach.

Wanting

To be, to become, to know

Is torture

Sitting in the Night

Being revealed

Is the sweetest

Satisfaction

BLISS CONSCIOUSNESS

I've been reading books by A. H. Almaas for a couple of years now. Each of them a profundity, full of insight, knowledge and wisdom.

A couple of times, I've thought about writing a letter to see if there is a way to become more involved in this stream of wisdom.

I'm working my way through [The Pearl Beyond Price: Integration of Personality into Being, an Object Relations Approach.](#)

This is a fascinating, but deep read. I'm trying to read between the lines to figure out how Almaas is working with people.

Ah, this personality just won't give up!

It's still searching for the ultimate technique that will save all the work, the magic trick my personality can use to become the "talk of the town."

I come home from working the swing shift at SEA-TAC airport. I work for a major airline. I'm tired but pick up the book to read a chapter.

I don't make it through two pages.

I lay the book down and literally pass out, out of this world into another.

I'm traveling through space.

No ship, just some form of consciousness in a body of energy, maybe an astral body.

I'm heading to a planet that is dying to help some people make a rendezvous for extraction.

As I approach the planet, I see death spreading across it. Everything is dying. Even the rocks.

I "land" amongst a group of elderly and infirm people. I'm here to get them to the rendezvous spot. Off we go. Walking slowly, arduously. There is a sense of urgency as death is coming and we're moving oh, so slowly.

After what seems like a two-day mountain trek in terms of energy and effort, we are approaching the site. I'm worn out.

To my right is a field where the group is to gather. They head off into the field and I turn to the left, making a u-turn to head back.

Out of the corner of my eye, I catch a flash of blinding light.

In a nanosecond, I think, "well they're on their way..."

And then the shockwave hits and I feel my physical body get the breath knocked out of it and hear it gasp...

And - Consciousness (refer back to the beginning if you've forgotten).

The ecstasy is immeasurable, is everywhere, is an infinite fountain of sheer bliss.

A personal perspective of consciousness arises in this field of bliss consciousness.

A familiar sense of individual consciousness.

"My body must be having a wet dream," arises.

I open my eyes. I'm lying on my left side, totally relaxed, in deep restfulness, affected not a bit by the ecstasy.

Hmm...

I close my eyes...

And I'm back in the bliss.

After some indeterminable period of time(?), the thought about arousal in the body arises again.

I open my eyes...

Resting peacefully, no erection.

This I don't understand. I've never been so flooded with pleasure and this pleasure is off the charts. It is beyond imagination, a tsunami of divine eros delighting in delighting.

Back into the bliss!

Again, the thought arises...

Who cares? I stay with the ecstasy.

I awaken in the morning, get up, and write a letter to A. H. Almaas.

"How does one get involved in what you are doing?"

That week, a half a dozen letters from Seattle land on his desk.

There's a Diamond Approach teacher leading a small group in Vancouver, Canada. Almaas gives him the letters and suggests he stop by Seattle on his next trip to the Northwest.

And that's how the original Cascadia group formed - combining the existing Vancouver group with interested folks from the Seattle area.

Oh, the stories I could tell... Okay, I'll tell a few.



You tell me

How to stop

This current

It was liquid

Until I spread my arms

To hold it back

It became the wind

Whistling between my ears

I came inside

To escape its touch

It followed me in

As infinite stillness

Now that I've tasted

That Truth

There's no escape

Beware

My friend

Stillness

Will steal you

From yourself

WTF

I'm at my first official teaching of the Diamond Approach. We had a couple of introductory meetings. Now we're having a full weekend on compassion.

The teacher explains the fundamentals of the "green essence," an essential quality of being, and how the main barrier to its availability in our experience is our history with hurt.

After the hour talk, he asks if anyone wants to work.

A fellow student raises his hand, the teacher acknowledges him, at which point student's right hand shoots up to his chest and he lets out a blood-curdling scream.

WTF! Have I gotten myself into?

I have no history to be able to process or relate to what is happening.

My only option is to suspend trying to figure it all out and just observe and be with what is happening.

You see, innate intelligence at work! Finally!

For a few weekends, I took some notes, but then I decided it would be more optimal for me to just be in the field, present with my experience. So, I have no handwritten notes of 30+ years of teachings.

What revealed itself in that first weekend is that I had been so locked away from my feelings for so long, that I could not access any place in me to work from.

So, for about a year and a half, I mostly observed the work of others.

Oh, I had questions about the material, but personal work???

And little by little empathy emerged for these sweet people who were doing their work.

Until one day, I could raise my hand and say I had something to work on.

Can you imagine how precious those friends are to me?

Beyond price.

*A thousand times over
My heart gives thanks
To my friends
For this wonder of wonders
The gift of humanness
At times, I ask myself
Where are thanks due?
Is it not compassion
That opened the Heart's window?
It is so, but my friends
Are the agents of Her grace
Is it not, the Beloved's kisses
That keep the Heart wide open?
It is so, but my friends
Are Her soft and supple lips
Is it not the Absolute's great story
That is the telling of the Heart
It is so, but my friends
Are the pages in His book
A thousand times over
He has turned a phrase of thanks
In this heart
And with each turning
More and more disappears
Except these Friends*

ENNEAGRAM

After a few months in “the Work,” I heard about the enneagram, a personality typing system.

It was suggested I read Helen Palmer’s book, [The Enneagram: Understanding Yourself and Others in Your Life](#).

Well, this is interesting stuff.

Maybe there is some psychological knowledge worthwhile after all.

I had boiled my personality type down to three possibilities. Types 1, 6 (counterphobic) and 8.

I was able to cast type 1 aside pretty quickly because, although I have a strong superego, a perfectionist I’m not. In fact, I want to take most perfectionists off at the knees. You see? Honing in on my type!

Type 8 denies fear while a counterphobic 6 goes toward fear to disarm it. So, I was having some difficulty.

And then...

I read what happens to 8 under stress. Eight moves to 5, a more defended place for point 8.

There was 80% of my life, (remember me mentioning schizoid defense earlier?) get ‘bigger than’ until things are emotionally overwhelming, then retreat a million miles away behind an impenetrable wall until I figure things out, and then come back with a raging vengeance.

Oh, glory be to God!

Who would want to be anything but an 8!

Turns out there are quite a few of you in the world.

So, the enneagram provided me with some major doorways to explorations in service of dissolving who and what I was taking myself to be, continuing the work on being consumed by the spark.

I like Claudio Naranjo’s book on the enneagram, [Character and Neurosis: An Integrative View](#) the most. He makes it very clear that it’s all bad news. Many books on the enneagram approach it like it’s a self-improvement program.

The secret is in the disappearing not becoming.

Night

Came silently into my house

Illuminating dark spaces

The hidden, the forgotten, the not-known

Night

Put the mind to rest

And bedded the heart

In the still-point of rapture

Night

Kisses my face

Until I am no more

Than it

BOY SHAME

I'm in my Diamond Approach small group. It's early on in the group, probably sometime in the first 12 to 18 months.

The Diamond Approaches uses three venues for the work: private sessions, small group (10-15), and large group (could be a couple of hundred students).

I'm just beginning to contact places in my psyche and body to work with. I could have asked any friend in the group for a laundry list, but I didn't want them getting writer's cramp and we need to come to these places on our own or with a little help from our friends.

Such is this case.

Emma brings up the word shame.

I don't believe I've ever used that word!

This surprises me.

In a way, I don't even know the meaning of the word, so I ask for some explanation.

You'll remember, I said I was out of touch with feelings? You see how dire my situation was?

I leave the group curious about shame, and as was our situation in those olden days of yesteryear, made my way to a bookstore and purchased a book on shame.

Absolutely fascinating. Did you know that we're capable of experiencing such raw exposure that it feels like our skin has been peeled off and we're exposed to the harsh light of the sun?

Very horrendous that we can experience this and, even worse, play a part in inflicting this on others. Who would do such a thing?

It would have to be someone cut off from their feelings, who sees people as objects. Those would be two "must have" traits for such a person...

I'm lying in the living room on the thick lush carpet. The room is dark and I'm listening to music. The big floor speakers are only a few feet from my head.

I'm enveloped and penetrated by the music. The low notes are pulsing through me as is the beat.

What's this!??

Tears are streaming down my face.

I feel like my skin is on fire.

This anguish, I don't think I have felt before.

And then that 8-year-old boy pictured in the front of this book comes rushing into my consciousness.

And that was like pouring gasoline and salt on raw skin.

Oh, the shame and humiliation!

Why?! Who!? What???

My dad was in the Air Force and when my brother and I needed haircuts, we were taken to the barber and sheared like sheep.

I didn't want to be sheared. I wanted hair like my friends, with a part on one side. I had no say in the matter. Buzzzzzzz

I had no control over my body!

The shame and humiliation was unbearable for me at that age.

Hell, it's unbearable for my adult body to feel it!

What it was like for me at that age, brings tears to my eyes as I write this.

The stupid, terrible things we do to others. I've done more than a few.

Experiences like this have led me deep into remorse. Oh, to take it all back, to let it just be me and not others.

These are the depths where we discover the compass that points to true north.

Shame

Peels away flesh and bone

Flaying the soul

Whip of torture

Each lashing

The same exposure

Over and over

Pure fresh pain

Heart and soul

Skinned alive by

Penetrating hateful eyes

Living only to –

Expose, violate and abuse

The truth of shame –

Innocence

Is always

The intended

Victim

DISAPPEARING

I'm standing in my backyard in Park City, UT (I now commute to my Cascadia group) where I've come to live with the love of my life, drop dead gorgeous (remember her?). Our house is less than a quarter of a mile from the ski slopes.

I'm looking west, over the backyard fence toward the setting sun. The colors are amazing, captivating. What's happening is magnetic.

Beauty

My body jerks.

I realize, I was fading away like the sun.

I return to watching the sun set.

Beauty

I jerk back into myself.

This repeats several more times.

Hmm...

It seems the real will disappear me.

Don't stay indoors

When the Friend

Asks you to dance

Run outside

Where there's room

For the outrageous

Let your feet

Leave the ground

And step lively

Into the disappearing

HUMANNESS

I'm driving home from the Salt Lake City airport, returning from my Cascadia weekend.

As I round a curve heading into the canyon, I realize I'm having a distinct feeling.

No big deal for anyone other than an 8 who was locked away from his feelings for over three decades.

I'm experiencing amazement and awe over knowing what I feel. This is my feeling, and I know it!

I'm aware of the role my friends have played in helping me to get here.

Appreciation arises.

Appreciation for the human condition, the very human experience of suffering.

And I start to fade away.

Just like that amazing sunset months ago, the real disappears me.

And then, I'm back, driving a moving car up winding Interstate 80 to Park City.

Something besides me seems to know how to drive, because I was most definitely asleep at the wheel.

This real disappearing me is about to get very deep.

*The cat burglar
Is at it again
Stealing into hidden places
And leaving intimate secrets
It's a strange thief indeed
That delights in robbing
The common-man
Of mundane possessions
And leaving You behind
As hysteria and grief abate
Invisible worlds emerge
Many faces are going
To blush away into
Radiance*

BEAUTY

I'm in Kirkwood, WA attending my Diamond Approach group weekend.

I'm standing around waiting to take my seat. My teacher, is to my left.

I'm not paying her any attention as it makes me uncomfortable to scrutinize her. Probably makes them antsy as well. Still a lot of superego work to do.

My first Diamond Approach teacher told me that ten years was a good start for superego work. At that point in time, I'm about seven years into my first decade of SE work. I'm currently in my fourth decade.

There is a black flash to my left, I turn, and look at the teacher.

The beauty is overwhelming.

"I didn't know she was beautiful," was my first thought.

As I continued to look, I could see that this beauty was deeper than the surface of appearance and had a mysterious nature.

I just kept looking and my vision opened up and expanded.

It was like I could see the space between all the atoms.

And what I perceived was the luminous, black, mysterious depth of beauty.

I turned my head to the right and I could see this beauty underlying the wall.

Then the door.

And everywhere I looked there was beauty – underlying people, underlying objects, even behind and penetrating the air and room space.

Beauty Everywhere.

Good Fortune

Runs in my veins

Every heartbeat a blessing

What wonder

This journey of love and tears

In rapture and lust

I have thrown my arms

Around so much life

Relished and savored the bitter and sweet

Now, my embraces

Are much more delicate

My astonishment - soft and exquisite

Dear One

If you travel further

Than the tip of your nose

You have gone too far

To kiss what is

Truly Precious

SHOCKING RESISTANCE

I'm in Vancouver, Canada for my Diamond Approach group weekend. We're working on something connected to the "red essence." It's just easier for us Diamond Approach people to use shorthand at times.

We're not trying to be confusing or special, but red essence covers the following qualities of being: discrimination, strength, aliveness, vitality, expansiveness, glamour to name a few. You see, shorthand.

A fellow student just revealed something that blew my mind.

I think it was the combination of working on whatever it was we were working on and the mental gap created by my fellow student's revelation and... my nervous system is on fire.

My nerves are like a glowing electric coil. I can feel the energy trying to move through my system and the massive unconscious resistance being created to stop it.

It feels like life and death to stop this current.

I have no idea why.

And then the past comes rushing in.

My mother told me that when I was a toddler, around 1952, we were living at her mother's in Kansas City, MO while my dad was in Korea dropping bombs as part of that war (I mean conflict), and I stuck a bobby-pin into a wall socket. My arm turned blue, but no skin burns.

Here was the source of the tension being locked down in my body!

Long time!

I don't know what I can do about this, but I raise my hand and speak about it. My teacher works with me, with breath, and awareness, and gentleness.

Somehow, I begin to relax.

I experience a lot of compassion.

The price for God

Is our life of

Pain & suffering

Worry & agitation

Fear & emptiness

Petty thoughts & needs

The dull, drab, monotonous

No wonder

So few

Are willing

To pay

RESCUE ME

I'm on the mat working with my private teacher. He's like my very own personal Einstein, super cute. But don't let that fool you. Once, in San Francisco, at a summer retreat, I made a comment to him that brought forth his fire and strength such that my eyes popped out.

Working with him at that retreat led us to a deep, deep cynical place in my soul, but that's not this story.

I'm on the mat.

One method of inquiry and psychodynamic work the Diamond Approaches uses is a type of body and breath work called Diasomatics – "through the body."

I hear a siren.

I'm aware that my ears have filled with tears.

I didn't realize that I was crying.

"What's happening?"

"I hope they're coming for me," I respond, meaning the ambulance.

What's going on is that I am lying naked on a cold slab in a hostile environment with ghosts hovering over me.

I am very young.

"How young do you feel, "

"Just born"

And then the stories of my birth come in.

When I was born, in 1950, they gave my mother ether during the delivery.

I was born a blue baby.

So the doctors whisked me off to a side table to stabilize my oxygen - naked newborn right out of the womb not enough oxygen in the blood. I'M FREEZING - WAAHHH!

Doctors over me with masks. The ghosts.

The anesthesiologist turns around to see that my mother has vomited into her mask and is in the process of asphyxiating. We're a blue pair now!

The adrenalin spikes in the room and thus assaults my newborn, highly sensitive nervous system.

I'm carted off to a nursery and don't see my mother for hours, maybe a day.

You see, hostile environment.

A formative imprint to form an 8 personality around!

I WILL SURVIVE!

Down, Down, Down
Into the depths
Of the human condition
Down - Into the saline depths
A shower of tears
A river of tears
An ocean of tears
Into the depths
Of being human
Pain and suffering
Beyond the light
Darkness and despair
Beyond hope and the well of longing
Beyond the anguish of the soul
Stripped of its treasure
Down - Into the depths

Intimate knowledge
Of dark waters
Birthe a real human being
Blesses the soul
Frees the heart

A radiance
From the depths
Down, Down, Down
Into the world
Of man

SOUL CHILD

I'm lying in bed reading [A New Earth](#) by Eckhart Tolle.

I've been reading for a while when I notice my right hand is grasping at the flesh above my left nipple. With my attention focused there, I notice that the sense of my hand is that it is small, in fact tiny, infant size.

I lie there watching my hand move on its own volition and experience the sensations of the grasping, the size of the hand and the influence this is having on me.

After several minutes, my attention is drawn to the foot of the bed.

And there he is, my soul child. You remember the picture of the frumpy kid at the beginning of this book?

He's just standing there looking lonely. He has this gray view of the world. I think he is close to the root of my cynicism.

I get out of bed and reach down with my hand.

"You need to grow up," I say.

This is said with a lot of love, compassion and understanding. It's true, this part of me needs to mature.

I invite him to come with me. We'll go through this life together, taking our time, no rush, no demands.

He takes my hand and we crawl back in bed.

There are times when he surfaces. "Ah, here you are," I might say. "What brings you forward?"

I pay close attention to my affective state and the quality of the light when he's around.

I let him roam around in my experience, and I allow his world and concerns into the foreground.

We're having a blast!

Sometimes, not really, but we've become very close.

And, as you might have guessed, he has many stories and much knowledge to share.

*There are times
When my mind
Would like to conveniently
Avoid the knowing
In my heart
These are the moments
That determine
The fate of the soul
And the world's future
These points of choice
Often seem insignificant
But the reality
Is always life or death
The depth
Of your sincerity
Is the key
To freedom*

JANUSES

I'm at my Diamond Approach teacher-in-training retreat. This is around year six or seven of the program.

I'm in a pod (5 to 6 people) exercise. One of us takes a turn being the student, while another is the teacher and the others are observers.

I won't bore you with the details, but this whole pod turns into a crew of superegos. They're all a bunch of two-faced rotating judgmental heads on sticks.

Don't jump to the conclusion that these fine folks are verbally abusing me, it's much more subtle than that, and my superego is mercilessly flaying me alive.

Very painful.

At home (my sister's place) that night, I can't escape that vividness. The self-attacking continues and all my best efforts to disengage are to no avail.

I can't sleep.

I'm terrorized by the spinning Janus heads.

And I'm thinking of quitting the training.

Because I'm scared to death.

Can you imagine? Me scared to death.

About three in the morning, not only am I scared to death and trapped in the middle of spinning, frightening, judgmental heads, but I'm starting to regress.

This is a very challenging place. What to do? Pack up and leave?

I get in the car and head back to the retreat center in San Rafael, CA.

I'm stopped at a red light and realize I'm losing my capacity to read. I'm really regressing! My hands feel like an infant's on the steering wheel.

I figure I better get going while I can still drive a car.

So, I run the red light (streets are empty at 4:30 am) and hustle up the last few blocks.

I wake up a friend. That's the kind of guy I am, wanting to share fear and self-attacking with friends trying to sleep.

My friend listens to me off and on for an hour. There's a lot of space between words. I see that I am wanting her to go wake up the teacher (I'm scared to death) - and realize, she's not going to do that.

So, I thank her for sitting with me and go knock on the teacher's door, waking her up at just before 6 am.

"I'm scared to death," I say. "I'm so terrified, I'm thinking of dropping out and going home."

The teacher tells me to go have a seat across the hall and she'll be over in a minute.

She works with me for about an hour. The edge comes off the fear a tiny bit, but life is marching on regardless.

I'm left with, "Well this is what's happening."

What will today be like from this place?

I go have breakfast with everyone, including the still spinning heads.

I learned something very valuable working with this teacher. It had nothing to do with the fear or the self-attacking.

It had to do with how she used my body to inform her inquiry.

I'd be speaking and she'd ask, "What's that you're doing with your hands?"

I wasn't aware that my hands were gesturing.

Bringing those forms into the inquiry was intriguing and powerful.

I pay attention to every word and gesture coming out of a student. There's nothing insignificant.

God!

You should hear

Me complain!

About this lack of sleep

You'd never know

I've just awakened

From a fifty-year snooze

Every time I try to relax

A new tale from beyond

Enters my head

Going on and on

Like a broken record

Until I let it out

Or, some soft kiss

Steals into my heart

Setting it on wing

This canary's very nature

Is endless sweet song

There's no time to rest

The grave is rushing toward us

Like a runaway train

Don't be struck

Deaf, dumb and dead

Before your time

Choose your death wisely

Crack your heart-seed open

Now

Die in this moment

Singing your birth-song

And you

Into existence

Come join me

In this delicious misery

Lay your head upon

Soft feathered pillows

Awaken

In Its lap

God

Wants to hear

You complain too!

TOO SWEET!

I'm attending my Diamond Approach teacher-training program.

You have to be in the work about six years to be considered for the training. The basic training is about eight years. Then there are a few years of mentoring and possibly ordination after eleven years or so. Then there's another five years of advanced training.

Not everyone is ordained when completing the training. The material, while significant, is not as significant as the development of the soul and its capacities.

Anyway, I'm walking into the meeting hall, and I'm so sweet I can barely stand myself!

I'm halfway across the room when I, involuntarily, bend over, slap my knee and exclaim aloud, "I'm just too sweet!"

I'm pure sweetness, like pink cotton candy.

The sweetness is flooding every cell in my body.

It's flooding my mind.

My eyes are tasting and seeing sweet.

Sounds are too sweet, almost painfully so.

Everything is tasting sweet, like I'm nothing but taste buds, and the sweetness has a fine, delicate texture.

I'm telling you, just too sweet!

I'm relating this experience to point to how it's possible to experience and discriminate the characteristics of essential qualities.

This particular quality we refer to as pink love. It's delightful, but like all essential qualities, they are one hundred percent themselves, pure, no dilution.

So, at first, they can be a bit overwhelming.

*Within each soul
There is music
That only God can hear
The notes and tones she sings
Tell her unique story
Pain of separation
Deep longing
Sweet melting
Exquisite beauty
Singing her life
She moves into
A pure nakedness
Where her rhythm
Is a great stillness
Here she is
Completely transparent
To its
Loving eyes*

ALL OF ME

We're exploring nonconceptual reality at this year's summer retreat. We're in Sacramento diving into what the Diamond Approach refers to as the Nameless dimension.

Nameless refers to this dimension's appearance of discriminated, but a lack of knowing or naming. There is pure awareness without recognition.

Two experiences stand out in my memory from this retreat.

First, how awareness "illuminates" from within. Imagine an object made of glass and then imagine it being lit up from a light in its base.

Awareness is kind of like this. It illuminates (lights things up) from within, but without the light!

Imagine said glass object is in a pitch-black room. Awareness illuminates the form within every atom of the form without light, which the mind has a hard time grokking, so it usually interprets "illuminating awareness" as light, because it reveals.

So, I'm at this retreat and as we deepen our exploration, I'm experiencing awareness moving into all the nooks and crannies of my consciousness. There is no moving, but things are lighting up and the dynamism creates the appearance of movement.

Awareness is moving into dark, hidden, unconsciousness areas and lighting things up from within. It's very interesting.

One thing I find remarkable is that it does this without disturbing what's being "lit up."

Awareness isn't interested in changing things. There is no demand or impulse to alter things in any way.

As this process continues a "declaration" arises – **I will have all of me!**

This is like the landing of an immense mountain in me. Accompanying this declaration is a felt sense of awareness spreading out like a pair of infinite arms to gather in all of itself, just as it is, no agenda.

The second experience that stands out is when I was standing in the back of the room during the Questions & Comments period describing the immediacy of my experience.

If you recall from my experience while in Eckankar, in the crystal dimension everything was interpenetrating everything. At this retreat I find myself in a similar type of experience.

As I am looking into the room, toward the stage, perception seems two-dimensional, depth is being replaced with immediacy. It's like looking into a mirror. A mirror with height and width, one foot in front of my face.

Looking into the mirror you see the reflection of things behind you and there appears to be depth, but there is no real depth. Everything is within the two dimensions of the mirror.

Now, imagine that, except it's not reflection. What I'm seeing in front of me is like that, immediately in front of me with no depth. The extension of depth is created by awareness extending to the immediacy of a form.

As this two-dimensional plane develops and seems to move toward me, bringing everything perceived into more and more immediacy. It ultimately moves into my interior subjectivity until the two-dimensional plane disappears into a singularity, and the subjectivity as well "disappears."

All that remains is awareness with discriminated forms, but forms without names, meaning "no knowing," simply bare awareness.

Light loves Night

No resistance

No reflection

Pure no-thingness

Night revealing all

Known and not-known

The same

Awareness

LOVE

My best friend Carol died of ovarian cancer. I met her at my first week of Helen Palmer's enneagram training in Boston. We instantly were best friends.

Those eights, what a pair!

I introduced her to the Diamond Approach which allowed us more personal meeting time as we would meet up at retreats. She lived in Boston and I was in Utah.

Her husband has asked me to eulogize her. I have no clue about this. Their whole crew was raised Catholic. I figure that anyone of them knows more about a eulogy than me.

I think I might be of some support for Dave, the husband.

But, I'm the one who goes to pieces, and Dave winds up supporting me.

Where's that 8 stuff when you need it?

Apparently, all of this heart stuff has had profound consequences.

More and more occurrences of, "I haven't a clue who I am," are showing up

I can't believe the depth of grief and loss.

I'm cycling between bouts of love and grief/loss.

And every time I'm back in the grief and loss, it's worse than before.

"How is this possible?" I wonder.

And as I engage that with my curiosity, what I discover is that the grief and loss speak to the depth of the love. It's the opposite side of that coin!

As I continue observing this, meaning full-access experiencing, I see that the ego can stay coalesced around the pain and suffering, BUT the love will disappear it.

And that is the insight that allows my attention to seek the real beyond the pain and suffering.

Not to escape pain and suffering, but to follow the pointing to the moon.

My friend stopped dreaming today

She opened her eyes in the other world

A kaleidoscope of tears assaults and soothes my soul

Love & Rage, Joy & Sadness, Anguish & Understanding

A shower of memories – like fairy dust

Illuminates our time together

In every future moment

I will miss you – as I wonder

How is this possible?

When everywhere I look inside of me

There you are

SIMPLICITY

I like Adyashanti's writings. They're clear and simple.

He says that enlightenment is mostly a simple change of perspective.

He also says the worst thing that has happened to enlightenment is when it got connected to spirituality.

You see? Clear, simple.

His writings, like Krishnamurti's and others, help us to understand with more depth and subtlety. Great pointing at the moon!

I'm attending my Diamond Approach weekend at the Ridhwan Berkeley Center.

I don't remember what we were working on, but I'm sitting out front doing a triad exercise with two other students.

I'm looking to the southwest, and my perspective changes.

In the first nanosecond or so there is still a me observing as everything is pure brilliant radiance. Everything is pure, clear, transparent. The experience is I am what is everywhere. Vivid lucidness.

Then, there is a location of perception, still gazing southwest, but simultaneously the location of perception is the lit up everything, everywhere.

As the enlightened say, "Everything is enlightened."

The illumination is knowledge, knowledge everywhere.

Pointing. There's no way to explain it to a mode-of-knowing that is dependent on self-reflective concepts.

Like Adya says, "We can't imagine it, because it is beyond our imagination."

But, it's clear and simple like his words.

And, I managed to do a fifteen-minute monologue while being enlightenment everywhere.

There IS
A point
At the center of me
That IS
Not of this world
All moments
Within and without
Intersect here
All directions
Lead to it
It is not even
A nanosecond's width
In space-time-existence
It connects all moments
And threads of time
Reducing all time-maps
To nothingness
It is the non-function
Birthing the Golden Mean
Resolving all mathematics
Into null
It is the prior-ness
The no-place
Of the emergent bubble
It is not here nor there
But everywhere

It cannot be found or located

But is the core

Of the Everything

It is the utter calm

The completely still

To say

It is this or that

Is a deception

It does not exist

But is the ground

That gathers every

Present moment

Into nowhere

It is the Not-Now

Of timelessness

It is the ground of NOT

Gravity-mass-movement

And the soul

Longs for its

Intimate kiss

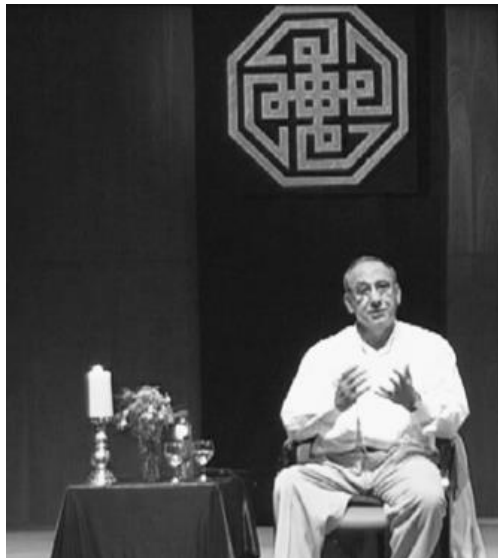
Cessation

ABSOLUTE PORTAL

I'm in Kona, HI for the teachers' retreat.

Like usual, I'm meditating, focusing on what Hameed (Almaas) is saying and sensing myself and the field.

I'm in the center of the room, on the aisle with a clear view of the stage. Behind Hameed is the usual black curtain with the gold HU symbol.



About halfway through the talk, the room seems darker and the curtain moving, rippling. It no longer seems like cloth, but more like liquid.

Hameed's aura and the HU become one golden luminosity with flecks of gold swirling within it.

I remember Pat Yarbrough's experience and wonder if the gold specks are his students' souls.

The rippling black liquid becomes a portal, like a stargate.

And then things get really interesting.

Transparent luminous globes of light start arriving in the space from different directions, from what seems like the far reaches of the universe and multiverse. There are strange beings, single occupants, in the globes.

The globes seem drawn to the portal and...

I swear this is what I witnessed.

The beings, one at a time, stepped out of their globes and disappeared into the portal.

That was a very interesting experience, but things got even wilder over the next couple of days. Everyone turned into tarot-type characters.

It was like I was seeing the archetypes of their souls that have formed over their vast journeys.

These types of experiences land in me as, "There's more going on than we see, believe or know." I don't make too much of them these days, my personality has ceased collecting them as trophies, or as support for my grandiosity.

Things remain simple, but more multi-faceted.

If you have a desire

To teach others

Get comfortable

With two things

Not knowing

AND

The wind

Between your legs

CHANGE

Here's the most significant thing I have learned over the years: We can't change.

You have to really think about it.

What is change?

Is changing your clothes or getting a haircut change? Real change?

Aren't you the same person simply wearing different clothes?

Do you remember being 16? Have YOU changed? Do you no longer recognize yourself?

Real change isn't about the externals. The shift in externals can express change, but are they change?

When we consider working on ourselves to get real or to become a true human being, who goes about that?

You see? It's a real dilemma.

The one wanting change can only imagine change within its realm of possibilities, and one thing that we want to keep before, during and after the change is us, me, I.

If that remains, has there been real change?

So, that's the bad news.

The good news is that we can be changed.

True nature is always at work, change happens, transforms us, awakens us, rises into immediate consciousness.

Each of the experiences related held potential for real change, massive change, real transformation, but many were opportunities lost or not fully realized as the self in the experience was having an experience happening to it.

It's not your experience that is important. It's the experience of your experience that is important. – A. H. Almaas

Instead of seeking "spiritual experiences," I would have benefited more from learning how to allow the forces of being to have their way with me.

More and more they are, but it may be a long row to hoe. Who knows?

Remember, the Sufis say the journey is only one step. You step out and it steps in.

You see? Pointing, always pointing.

Men

Stop howling at the moon

Now that she has your attention

And you recognize your longing

Surrender to her silver mystique

Let beauty and mystery

Work a sublime magic upon you

That shyness you feel

Is only the surface

Of a deep tenderness in the soul

On the dark side of the moon

A blood red rose

Is blooming

WHY?

Why did I write this?

I had no plan to write this.

I was sick, exhausted and preparing to leave for China.

Sitting at my computer a couple of days before leaving, I just started writing and dashed off the first 25 percent. It just flowed out.

In China, in just a few sessions the rest flowed out. I added the poems on my return to the U.S.

Reflecting on whether there's a message or intent herein, I would say, maybe it's an example of how spiritual experience holds potential for change, but it takes a lot of vulnerability and allowing for that to happen

I've spent 50 years being dragged to vulnerability by life. My heart longs for the real, but there are parts of me that still have other desires.

Above all, I have come to the point of realizing, I really don't have a clue.

No idea of what's next or what should be happening.

So, what arises, arises, and I look at the pointing and inquire experientially, and sense, and look, and listen for the moon.

Love

Let us stroll

Together

Hand-in-hand

Into the dark night

To a blackness

So complete and sublime

That what

We are touching

Is the most intimate

Mystery

CHRONOSYNCLASTIC INFUNDIBULUM

A place, or a moment, where all the different kinds of truths fit together, and where there are many different ways to be absolutely right about everything.

It's 1:30 AM after the third session of the November teaching retreat.

The retreat seems to have triggered a string of superlatives in me. Everything is the greatest ever!

And I am driven to make deep personal contact with people.

As I sit in the dark, waiting for my friend, Greg, to join me for our usual 3 AM inquiry, I experience a "pop" in my consciousness.

It's like a New Year's Eve party favor exploding. Colorful confetti is raining down in my inner world.

The confetti are multi colored, vibrant, and transparent/translucent.

The confetti morph into what appear to be pieces of candy wrapped in brilliant glossy wrappers. Candy is raining down everywhere – like someone has just broken the cosmic pinata open.

There is a sense of total generosity, like the universe is saying, "Take me, take all of me, take everything!"

I feel like the cosmic multi-level marketing plan has just been presented to me. For nothing down, you can have everything. Fill up your house and garage with the everything, and then go get five friends to do the same, and have them get five, and on, and on.

Everyone can have everything, and the well will never run dry!

I experience a tremendous goodness, a trueness to everything.

Everything is self-illuminating

I find myself standing in the middle of the cosmos facing what reminds me of a mall directory with the locations of all the shops (galaxies) laid out.

I'm both the personal witness and the universal witness (How's this possible?). I can see all the many trillions of galaxies that exist, and I'm looking through the back of my body (similar to my Cochran GA experience), and through my eyes at the mall directory which indicated, "You are Here."

What occurs to me is, "If I'm not here, here is not here." I experienced this both from the personal witness, meaning that if my personal consciousness isn't here, there would be no personal

experience, and from the universal perspective which is more like if I, as existence isn't in existence, then existence would not be.

And then a very strange thing happens. I am not only witnessing all of physical creation, but it is like I am wearing some of those weird glasses we used to be able to buy in the sixties that did strange things to our vision and I can see all of the boundless dimensions interpenetrating all of the creation I could still see.

And then, I have fly eyes, like wearing prism glasses, and I can see the multiverse.

And then, I can see all of creation, the boundless dimensions, the multiverse and I am looking through a kaleidoscope and everything starts changing which is like the logos (dynamism of reality) moving through everything, all the possibilities of changing any one factor or element and how that creates an infinite number of infinite possibilities.

And then, extension of time and space collapse, and the unilocal (where everything, everywhere, everywhen exist in every particular) is part of it all.

I sit with this over the next few days of the retreat.

What I notice is that my mind cannot resolve much of this, like the colors from years ago in the akashic records and nonconceptual awareness.

And yet all of it is still experientially observable consciousness.

So, I am attending the retreat during the day and at night I am awakened around 1:30 AM every night by this flow of experience calling to me. So, I sit in the dark, waiting for 3 AM and Greg, and experience two different modes of knowing. The direct knowing of forms in the soul and the mind's attempts of comparative knowing based on the past.

*Everywhere you surround me
Penetrate me, Permeate me, Percolate me*

*Living daylight suffuses my heart
The rainbow enters
Becoming white light
The mirror of this world reverses*

*Vulnerability moist with human tears
Concurrently ascends and descends
As this vessel becomes transparent
An effulgence from beyond*

*A pearl deep in the sacred oyster
Intimacy swimming with/in intimacy
A scintillating no-diamond
Illuminating immediacy*

*Mystery upon MYSTERY
Birthing and annihilating
Singularity and multiplicity
Dancing in the labyrinth*

*Lovers swooning
A radiant whisper sings them away
In a blush of pure innocence
To the Beloved*

POTENTIALITY

None of this happened.

Or none of this has happened.

But, from one perspective it did happen, all of it in a temporal sequence as related.

From another perspective, it's all still potential.

In fact, everything, everywhere, everywhen remains potentiality, never been birthed.

Imagine that degree of immediacy, that clear purity.

This Mystery is so mysterious. All that has happened, never happened.

What we call awareness and consciousness is without dimensionality and yet, contains all dimensionality.

It turns out that Sufi saying about the journey being one step is spot on, if you remove the step.

Everything being as it is, and such.

Pointing.

Ah Love

Love is

IS-ing me

I am loving

the taste and wonder

of the loving

In the loving

all tastes

are tastes of loving

Wonder

spins and swoons

as love rushes

into and out of

Itself.

CURIOSITY

Is life a journey?

We certainly go from here to there a lot in life.

Growing up in a military family, and then 33 years working at a major airline, I've certainly journeyed to a few places. I've been to most of the States, was graduated from high school in Germany and commercial lobster fished in the Caribbean at age twenty.

At nineteen, when I was blindsided by realty, I was like Jon Snow, I knew nothing (I know less now).

That experience put me on the spiritual path. Something awakened in my consciousness, and sought to know more, go deeper, emerge more into the foreground of my life, its life.

At that point in my life, that awakening was coopted into the "here-to-there" orientation of ego activity. No guidance was available to help me suss out the nuances of my immediate experience.

What's a spiritual path?

You'll have to answer that on your own.

For me, path seems connected to "here-to-there." I'm more curious about the here, not leaving here, but exploring it, keeping my ass in the chair.

Like drugs, Eckankar introduced me to amazing and astonishing things. It opened me up to possibilities and potentiality I could never have imagined.

But at the end of the day, soul travel and out-of-the-body experience was similar to traveling in this world, visiting a lot of places and winding up with a suitcase covered in travel-destination stickers. A lot of mileage, little real change. It was still the familiar me flitting around and returning from the cosmos.

The greatest value of Eckankar was it made me aware of the subtlety and pervasiveness of ego life and how it coopts "spiritual experience" for a sense of a "higher" self, or to simply feed its grandiosity, or cover its core of deficiency.

It served me well. Those years brought me to the undeniable fact that I was the biggest problem in my life and others'. An aching arose in me. A longing to get real, as a human being.

But Eckankar had no wisdom or methodology to offer me for that quest.

So, there I was wrestling with the whole notion of real change and transformation.

Who would have thought that "being where you are" with curiosity would turn out to be the key to the everything.

HERE is the doorway. THERE is the rejection of here, and the fuel for continued ego activity.

The conditioning of here-to-there is deep. We believe that we need goals to get there, and to accomplish this or that.

I thought a good life depended on me “figuring it out,” and using that knowledge for better, more rewarding here-to-there, this & that.

Being where we are is challenging. It’s subtle, full of nuance, history, and unconsciousness.

To really grok where we are, we need the experience of presence which gives us the clarity to discriminate ego activity from being.

When we’re present, we’re available for the loving intelligence of true nature to support the unwinding of our soul, as it reveals the depth and breadth of its (our) treasure.

The amazingly wonderful thing is that as we learn about presence, and to be where we are without messing with ourselves, the past dissolves, we emerge into the here, we wake up from the conditioning, and live a life instead of continuing attempts to get a life.

The Diamond Approach responds to that deep longing in my soul to be real, and (who would have thunk it? (shout out to Greg Brown)) is taking me deeper into the possibilities and potentiality of reality.

Journey?

Path?

I’m too engaged with the Mystery of being where I am.

Too dark the night

Too bright the sky

To lean upon

The human eye

Eye sees this world

Eye says it's so

I fool myself

And claim to know

Know subtle truths

Know what's most dear

No words I mouth

The heart can hear

Hear gentle breeze

Hear call of soul

Here the longing's

An empty hole

Hole in the body

Hole in the chest

Whole human hearts

Graced by the Guest

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Who is this guy, John Harper?

John Harper is a teacher of the [Diamond Approach](#)©. He lives in Folsom CA and offers private student sessions for those curious about the nature of reality and themselves.

Who he is at any moment in time/space changes with the flow of experience, perception and how much history is being projected onto the moment.

Who am I? is a 24/7 koan.

More fundamental is – What am I?

What are you? Do you know something more significant than history, your body, concepts, and what others have told you?

All of these are in a sense lies – veils, obscurations, and ignorance.

This is why the Sufis and others often refer to this world as “The world of lies.”

Pointing

Friends

before you is a madman

listen, not to his words

they are lies

and he, a greater lie

how arrogant his quest

these many, many years

thinking to find himself

and something greater

far beyond

thoughts and wild imaginings

he thought it brave and bold

to laugh at death

and pain and sorrow

the human condition

while chasing elusiveness

he strayed

to far beyond

listen, not to his words

they are lies

and he, a greater lie

before you

is a madman

friends

it was he who demanded

*and gave permission
to be fooled
he thought to find himself
and something greater
he said "anything - anything
take me beyond
all-beyond"
it was he who hung himself
his madness his creation
how was he to know
that beyond light's blush
and the moaning wind
lay the slayer of all sanity
while chasing elusiveness
he strayed
too far beyond
where stillness and silence
steal you from yourself
and being no where
and no thing
that Presence
soft as finest down
faint as a still breeze
touches one
so very, very gently
in a place
so very, very hidden
all hope of sanity dies*

*this touch remembers
recognizes
awakens to itself*

*listen, not to his words
they are lies
and he, a greater lie
before you
is a madman*

*friends
returning to this world
of idiots and imbeciles
they say, "relax, you're too intense
surrender, God's will be done"
is insanity
how, can one surrender
when one is not
who, can scratch an itch
that is not
where can one prepare for
what is not
can any formula mandate grace?*

*friends
I am a madman
living in insanity
where the only road back*

is to expose all the lies

and I

is the greatest lie of all

listen, not to these words

they

are all

lies.

Everywhere

Beauty