

# **Awakening Newsletter**

## **#25**

### **Your Life**

*The root cause of all human suffering, misery, aggression, hatred and self-betrayal everywhere is a false belief about what I am. The only solution for this problem is the truth. - John Sherman*

Many years ago, upon my return from living in India, I was asked by an old friend to explain my passion for Self-realization. I fumbled about, trying to express that for which language is vague and inaccurate and never seems to say it clearly (Lao Tzu's "The Tao that can be expressed is not the Tao"). I spoke of the desire to know why I was here, what this experience of life really was about, how it is that there is Awareness, and to know who I truly am. Her reply was, "Yes, but what about paying the rent?" What indeed?

We have rent or mortgage to pay, cars to maintain, intimate partners to find and nurture, kids to raise. Our attention can easily be drawn to focus on what is happening in our circumstances as "what life is all about." We believe that if only we could manage to have our life events lined up in the way we think they should, we would at last be at peace. It is no surprise that we often feel great stress regarding our circumstances, and are highly reactive when reality is counter to our preferences.

But what if you are not your life? If you are not defined by your circumstances? If the freedom you seek will not be found in getting your life "right"? Then what occurs in your life will be only of secondary importance. And that is tremendously freeing.

John Sherman continues,

*Ramana Maharshi has said that the purpose of your life is to find out who you are. Once you get it that all you are doing is trying to find out who you are, then the direction of your attention immediately becomes obvious: you look for your self. You look in the only direction where there is even the slightest possibility of finding your self, and that is inward, toward the*

*seer, because you are the seer. Instead of looking out there at all the ideas of who you might be or ought to be or ought not to be; instead of looking out there at all the spiritual concepts of what you are (emptiness, pure consciousness, God, etc.), you look directly inward toward the one who is looking. Toward your self.*

So if everything you are doing is an attempt to know who you are, then anything that occurs can be useful. Resistance to what is stops. Nothing is at stake, everything that occurs becomes an opportunity for the recognition of the peace and freedom that are always present, in all circumstances.

But what about my life? I have responsibilities. I need to make money. I want to provide the best for my children. Aren't these things important? Take a moment and feel how it is when you experience everything at stake in the circumstances of your life. Like you have to get it all right and do it perfectly. Imagine your life as a failure if you are not successful in your career, if your children are not perfect, if you don't have friends that love you, if you don't find your soulmate, if you don't amass large amounts of money. Does this lead you to relaxation and peace, or stress?

Now imagine that there is nothing at stake, that everything that happens is just as it should be, that you are whole and complete whatever the circumstances. Isn't that liberating?

And here's the wonderful paradox. When your self worth is not at stake, you are freer to play all out in the areas of your life that interest you - fame, money, intimacy, spirituality. Because your sense of self is not determined by favorable circumstances, you can give everything your best shot. You can go for what you desire with wild abandon, play passionately and intensely for what you want - and that is the victory, not what happens as a result. You get what you want, great. You don't get it, well, you're still here.

I played college football during the 60's when the Green Bay Packers coached by Vince Lombardi were the champions. Lombardi's coaching philosophy was widely, and erroneously quoted as "Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing." What he actually said was, "Winning isn't everything, but striving to win is." I loved the competition not because I thought winning

was ultimately important, but because playing all out to win brought out the highest abilities in me. That was the thrill. You play your life to win (whatever that means to you) because that's the most fun way to live. But, win or lose, success or failure, you are always, always here. And living from this reality is the ultimate victory.

John concludes,

*Always, you are here. Always, you are aware of yourself. Always, you are seeing yourself. The only thing that produces suffering is the continuation of the belief that you are trapped in this life and the movement of mind in alignment with that belief. If it is true that we are trapped and that we are at stake in these lives, then all of our suffering, our aggression, our hatred, and our selfishness are entirely rational and reasonable. So, the only answer is to find a way to bring into these minds the light of reality that destroys all false belief about what you are.*

The **Awakening Intensive** is a doorway to the direct experience of the truth of who you are. Come join us and find your freedom independent of all circumstances.

**John Sherman** is a teacher of Non-Duality. He will be holding free Satsang (meeting with Truth) Aug. 29 in Escondido. His message is well worth hearing. Information at [info@philosophicallibrary.org](mailto:info@philosophicallibrary.org)

## **AWAKENING**

**THE AWAKENING INTENSIVE** is the deepest transformative work you will ever do. Three intense days and you are Home, connected with who you really are, and free. The next Intensive is Sept. 26-28 – give yourself this gift if you like yourself even a little bit.

Here are some quotes from the last group...

***I came here hoping against hope for redemption. I overcame the beast in me and escaped from shame, rage, and guilt. To my amazement, I realized there is no such thing as redemption***

***because there was no such thing as sin. Now I'm free, strong, redeemed! – D., Psychiatrist***

***I'm alive! I came intending to connect with Source. I connected with it in my body. I feel aliveness in my body I haven't felt in forever. I love it here, and I am now my own compass and know how to find my way back...THAT is the best part.  
– Sonya, Power Trader***

***I now have courage and believe in myself. I make my own decisions based on what is best for me in my heart. I am free, adventurous, and loving! – Jennifer, Financial Services***

***I came in acting happy but sad inside, not awake and present. Something needed to come out. I found my self-esteem. Now I know I am good enough, whole and complete, and empowered!  
– Minda, Esthetician***

***I am grateful to be here. I'm in charge of my own happiness, I have the tools to recognize when I fall into old patterns. I found joy, relief, and release. – DeDe, Senior Business Analyst***

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