

SUNBEAMS

There is a theory which states that if ever anybody discovers exactly what the universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states that this has already happened.

Douglas Adams

Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither. . . . Suddenly I awakened, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming that I am a man.

Chuang Tzu

Reality, no matter how widened and heightened our perceptions, never ceases to be anything but the effect on us of an infinite mystery.

Laurens van der Post

Imagine that you are experiencing an unpleasant night dream: You are in the ocean, swimming; you have gone out too far; you look back toward the shore and see that there is very little hope of rescue. Even though you shout your lungs out, no one can hear you. . . . You struggle and strive to reach the shore, and, of course, the harder you fight, the harder the ocean fights you. There is only one thing left for you to do — drown. Yes, drown — but wait! In your fight, you shouted and someone heard you, came over and shook you, woke you up, and behold the miracle! The drowning self disappeared; the ocean disappeared; the struggle disappeared. You awakened and found that you had never left your comfortable home. All that was necessary in order to be released from the struggle was to awaken!

Joel Goldsmith

The Buddha did not enter some new territory: he saw things the way they were. What was extinguished was only the *false view* of self. What had always been illusory was understood as such. Nothing was changed but the perspective of the observer. When asked, “What are you?” by an awestruck would-be follower, the Buddha responded only, “I am awake.”

Mark Epstein

The most common ego identifications have to do with possessions, the work you do, social status and recognition, knowledge and education, physical appearance, special abilities, relationships, personal and family history, belief systems, and often political, nationalistic, racial, religious, and other collective identifications. *None of these is you.*

Eckhart Tolle

All that a guru can tell you is “My dear sir, you are quite mis-

taken about yourself. You are not the person you take yourself to be.”

Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Yes, I do have a personal practice. . . . Sometimes I forget my practice and start doing bizarre and strange things like meditating or following my breath. But the practice that I am really committed to is living ordinary human life.

Arjuna Nick Ardagh

Enter each day with the expectation that the happenings of the day may contain a clandestine message addressed to you personally. Expect omens, epiphanies, casual blessings, and teachers who unknowingly speak to your condition.

Sam Keen

You may have expected that enlightenment would come like *zap!* Instantaneous and permanent. This is unlikely. After the first “aha” experience, it can be thought of as the thinning of a layer of clouds.

Ram Dass

Life always gives us exactly the teacher we need at every moment. This includes every mosquito, every misfortune, every red light, every traffic jam, every obnoxious supervisor (or employee), every illness, every loss, every moment of joy or depression, every addiction, every piece of garbage, every breath.

Charlotte Joko Beck

Stop reading for a moment, and imagine that you are going to die in one minute. The last things you are going to experience are reading these pages, sitting in this room, thinking and feeling what you are thinking and feeling right now. This is the end of your life. . . . You have no time to write a note or make a phone call. All you can do is experience what is, right now. This is a very simple exercise, but it is quite profound. It brings you into presence very quickly. You stop fighting, you stop needing, you stop being concerned with physical comfort, you stop wanting, you stop achieving, and you stop maintaining. Enlightenment, attainment, realization all become meaningless. You are just present.

Ken McLeod

Eternity is not something that begins after you are dead. It is going on all the time.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

When it's over, I want to say: All my life
I was a bride married to amazement.
I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.

Mary Oliver

Sunbeams are welcome and may be sent to The Sun, 107 North Roberson Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. We're sorry, but we're unable to respond personally to your suggestions.