

The Experience

In 1988, at the age of twenty-eight, I had an extraordinary and enlightening experience that informed and affirmed the truth of the Natural State to me and prompted a deep desire and challenge to effectively express the information I am now, finally, presenting in this work.

The nature of the experience was mystical, although what we might be moved to call mystical or extraordinary is simply something that is not common or normal. What I am saying is that although the experience was truly beautiful, eye-opening, and enlightening—and of an intensity I had never experienced before, or since—it was simply a glimpse of something more essential and real. Looking back now, I can see that the events preceding the experience were a succession of specific exercises that helped 'open me up' to its possibility. I was not looking for, or wanting, a mystical experience, but I was looking for the truth.

My intense pursuit of truth began around mid-1988, after my world finally collapsed on me when I was on holiday visiting a former lover. This was towards the end of a period in my life when everything I was trying to do, and be, failed in rapid succession, as if some major conspiracy was in force against me. I hit rock bottom in no time at all, but what rescued me came from the same source that was the catalyst for my collapse. I have since realised that this kind of thing is strangely often the case—contained within the cause of a problem is a hint of the solution.

In this instance, it was the actions of my former lover that dealt me the final blow, but it was also her who offered me the way out of my suffering. I remember the last thing she said to me as I boarded a plane to go home, nursing a torment the likes of which I had never experienced before: 'Be good to yourself'. Well, that might not sound like the most profound wisdom ever delivered, and yet it turned out to be so. Often, words of this nature are said or received as meaningless clichés these days, but what does it really mean to be 'good' to yourself? It means to do things that you enjoy. That's what it meant to me, anyway. En-joy means to cause or have joy, so to be good to myself meant to consciously bring joy to myself—somehow.

So, the first port of call for me was to arrange a relaxing, healing massage. I researched, discovered and was drawn to an establishment in Balmain, Sydney—a healing centre that at the time also had the largest number of floatation tanks that promised all kinds of benefits, available for one-hour sessions.

A floatation tank, or chamber, is a sensory deprivation environment: a dark, sound-proof, sealed container filled with a highly-saturated Epsom salts solution warmed to body temperature. The idea behind it is that you lie in the chamber and very soon lose any sense of your body, due to the equal temperature of water and air and the effortless 'anti-gravity' feeling of floating, courtesy of the salt solution. Coupled with that, you can't see or hear anything, so most of your sensory

functions are suspended, and you can effortlessly and delightfully lose touch with your body and where you are.

I became very interested in floating and used floatation tanks quite a lot over a short period of time. I saw that unlike anything else, these tanks allowed an opportunity to explore the reality of what might remain of 'me' when sensory inputs were removed. The practice was like an instant, easy, yet very deep meditation, and pretty much the rule of thumb was that if you managed to stay in the tank for the hour, the work was done.

Floatation tanks are very powerful tools, and to this day, I am surprised that they have not become more popular than they are. They were of great benefit to me in my quest to understand myself and my life.

I was hungry for the truth. That was my mantra. I read anything and everything on the subject, attended all kinds of meetings about life and how to make it work, but nothing caught my attention more than a spiritual teacher I met at the time who boldly claimed that he knew and spoke only the truth. He became the most influential person in my life.

This particular teacher was by no means popular. His no-nonsense approach focused primarily on freeing the individual from unhappiness. He held that the cause of most unhappiness on Earth is that man and woman have forgotten how to make physical love, and that this is the greatest tragedy of all time. He taught that not until a person could 'get their life straight' could this love be restored. Only then could the experience of living for the individual return to the original, Divine state of joyous being.

Many people struggled with his directness and challenges to the sexual status quo—especially men—and they saw him as being controversial, outspoken, intolerant of people's emotional states, and possibly a bit mad as well. I, however, saw none of that. I had no trouble accepting that he was only a mirror to me—an idea that was, and still is, very strong; namely, that everything I see in the world is a reflection of an aspect of my own inner state, rather than something universally true about the outside world. The ego, harshness, and madness that many people saw in him was merely a reflection of their own insecure and unhappy state.

After 'being' with this teacher intensely for several months, listening to his talks, reading his books and also a brief personal encounter, I learned to take responsibility for everything that happened in my life. If anything disturbed me about his teachings, I simply accepted it, took responsibility for it, and ultimately saw the profound wisdom in what he was saying and endeavouring to teach.

After listening to a talk one evening towards the end of 1988, I experienced an awakening that burst through and informed me with the essence of the Origin model. To describe the nature and feeling of this experience would be to say that it was in the realm of orgasmic. My body lit up and became ecstasy. So, the sensation

alone was to die for, and in fact, that is exactly what had occurred to me at the time—I had gone beyond the physical body while still alive.

From an experiential point of view, I was immediately and perfectly present like never before. Time stood still. The moment seemed full, rich, eternal. I had come across references to this kind of thing in my reading and had experienced glimpses of such a state here and there through meditation. But to experience it as an enduring state now, was so extraordinary and magnificent that it is difficult to capture in words. I had arrived in a place where I was not just in the moment, I *was* the moment.

I felt completely connected with absolutely everything, and there was no distance or fundamental difference between myself and other. I was exquisitely fulfilled. There was no wanting for anything, because I saw that as any and every desire arose in me, so too it was manifest (sensed or witnessed) simultaneously—there was no time involved in getting or having it.

Due to the strong sense and knowing that what I was, was the moment, I also realised that I could communicate with everything in that moment. I could make people turn and smile, for example, because it was essentially a case of me smiling at myself. This might sound unusual, but the way it happened was that I felt the reality of what I wanted, then immediately witnessed it with my eyes. Looking back, I can see that this may have been the case, or it may have been that I was psychically 'picking up' on another's intention to turn and smile. But either way, the experience was that I knew what was going to happen.

From an informational point of view, it was clear that I was being shown something. My body was being moved and directed to gather specific information or learn valuable lessons. From within I became aware of things I had never been aware of before, and yet at the same time they seemed strangely familiar to me. This was the beginning, in effect, of a whole new way of living I was about to embrace. There was a great power present and operating through me, and my responsibility now was to work with it by always being present in life's circumstances as best I could. I discovered that to the degree I could do this, my life would unfold brilliantly, surprisingly, delightfully. One could even say 'magically'. It was then that a first draft of this work spewed out of me; raw, unexamined, and not very well expressed, but unavoidably so, as the energy moved my body powerfully, step by step.

I tell you this story now because that experience was proof for me of the universality of what, in truth, I am, or 'I' is. It is the natural state to which I am referring—a reality behind existence that is common to all of us; the place where everything arises, is experienced, then disappears. However, it is not possible for me to prove this to you, and neither would I attempt to. The truth and reality of what we are deep within cannot ever be proved to another in any way. It can only be proved to oneself, and for it to be discovered and lived is the primary purpose of any authentic religious or spiritual pursuit and, similarly, it is the best outcome for any personal growth work a person could ever undertake.

Your natural state is *the* natural state. It is not something that is unique and specific to you as a reality different to another, but rather it is universal in nature. It is the place from where all things come to be experienced, or in other words, the place from where all events are initiated, and creation begins.