

When I was thirty-two, after a year in Western Australia, I moved to Hobart, Tasmania. I was then at the same latitude South as my birthplace was North. The presence of Antarctica taught me there can be radiant cold.

Its icy presence pierced my bones, until it seemed like they could snap. I took a plane up the coast to Cairns, North Queensland and found a free ashram in Mount Molloy - up in the table lands - run by an English couple. They gave me a garden shed to live in on the edge of their property where I could meditate without being disturbed.

I felt an overpowering need to do absolutely nothing other than be awake and aware. When taking walks out into the bush, I'd sit for long stretches. The more still I became inside, the more Nature came alive.

A couple of months passed and I settled down. One night I was reading a passage from Jiddu Krishnamurti wherein he suggested to make "*no effort.*"

I felt compelled to experience effortlessness.

By the next morning, having laid awake all night, without need of sleep, a turgid cloud of psychic matter gathered in front of my face - a few inches away. It seemed to contain all that I had withdrawn my attention from, all of what I had not been conscious of until then. It was awesome to be hallucinating my 'dis-owned' self. I'd never experienced anything like it before.

There was a mental/emotional, as well as physical desire, to turn away from 'it.' By sustaining effortless awareness - within the space of a minute or two - the cloud dissolved into the awareness I was witnessing it with. Free from what I had hidden from, who and what I knew 'my' self to be became infused with the radical presence of impersonal awakeness.

This continued throughout the day and into the night. And then suddenly, as if by magic, I lost all limitations, becoming a boundary-less Void, seemingly the source of all possibilities and potentialities, without beginning or end. Everything was made of this one consciousness. Sounds outside my body also seemed to come from inside of me. There was not one place within that did not contain everything and nothing.

The most serene bliss came over every cell in my body and heart. My mind was utterly silent. I was indistinguishable from all I was perceiving. I was not any one thing, yet I was this universe, unfolding as a spaceless timeless awakeness.

Stepping outside into the night, I decided it was as good a time as any to go look at a used car I'd seen in the paper.

The owners lived over an hour away and I had no phone to call them. I decided to do something I'd not done since I arrived. I walked to the one and only road, to hitch a ride to a phone. At eight or nine at night, standing on the side of an empty road, there were no cars. The moon and stars were high overhead, yet they felt every bit as much inside me too.

Throughout all this, there were no thoughts, only direct perceptions. I felt and saw the moon was as much in my knee as it was in my heart and hands. There was a distinct sense that the whole universe was within every part of my being - this vast formless featureless awakeness.

It was then I saw a car's headlights in the distance and I had one of my first and only thoughts. I wondered, innocently, *'Wouldn't it be nice if this person stopped their car, picked me up and took me to Atherton - an hour away.'* The car approached and its brakes engaged, bringing it - skidding on the dirt - to a sudden halt next to me. A small Japanese woman rolled down her window, seemingly disoriented. *"Where are You going?"* she asked. When I told her, she added that she lived just up the road, but she'd take me (two hours out of her way). It was uncanny, though it felt right somehow.

Once in the car, I could feel her sensing the effect of our presence.

As she started to drive, she asked: *"What are you doing?"* I answered, saying: *"I'm just noticing, I am everything I'm conscious of."* Energetically, I could feel her recognize our combined consciousness. All she said was, *"oh."* Then there was only one of us. We both clearly sensed the sound of each other's' words actually arising from within our common body.

She told me how frightened she had been of everyone, as her husband had brought her here from Japan to live and she knew no one. That her neighbor from time to time would take care of her newborn baby. She explained how she suffered terribly from thoughts of her neighbor intending harm to her child.

Asking, did I think it was true or not? I said I did not sense it was, and we entered into a deeper peace together.

We maintained a unified consciousness all the way to Atherton. Before dropping me off, we stopped and shared something to eat, while we waited for the car owner to come get me. She and I agreed to meet again in few days' time, and said good night.

The couple selling the car invited me to spend the night. It was a forty-mile roundtrip for them to come and get me.

Back at their home, they sat me down and started sharing their deepest conflicts. She said he kicked their cows. Then asked, what did I suggest they do about it. Both of them were on the edge of their seats hanging on my every word and movement. I had certainly never experienced anything like this, yet it flowed so effortlessly. I was acceptance itself. Reflecting their dilemma seemed to bring clarity and they felt remarkably resolved.

It was after 11 when they showed me to a room with a bed. When I closed my eyes, I did not sleep. It was like being the night sky - light years in every direction – but instead there was only the sparkling beauty of pure objectless consciousness. The night passed without dreams, as if time did not exist. When I opened my eyes again, the manifest universe re-appeared around me.

This quality of experience lasted for several days. I found I could move in and out of 'it' by noticing I was everything and everyone I was witnessing – or not.

A week later, I was no longer in this consciousness. I was back to being just a separate self again.

The Japanese woman was coming over to take me out to lunch. She was so tense, she felt like she was electrified with fear. To make a long story shorter, we were not able to communicate the way we had and eventually she became so scared she could not stand to be around me.

I had to hitch a ride 'home.' The insecurity of being 'unconscious together' seemed almost unbearable for her. It saddened me.

The difference between that one night and this day a week later was astounding. I was so profoundly moved by how she had picked up a total stranger - a 6'2" man nonetheless, on a lonely road at night - to drive him two hours out of her way.

The only difference was the quality of 'my' consciousness. If I'd been more awake, she'd have been able to relax.

I unmistakably realized from this experience I was wholly responsible for ending fear in relationship. That how awake I am is more important than anything else I might do or say.