

CASTANEDA ON SORCERY AND AWARENESS

The difficulty is to learn to perceive with your whole body, not just with your eyes and reason ... the body is an awareness ...

The reason for the existence of all sentient beings is to enhance awareness. The old seers, risking untold dangers, actually saw the Indescribable Force which is the source of all sentient beings.

Everything is made out of the Indescribable Force 's emanations. Only a small portion of those emanations is within reach of human awareness, and that small portion is still further reduced, to a minute fraction, by the constraints of our daily lives. That minute fraction of the Indescribable Force 's emanations is the known; the small portion within possible reach of human awareness is the unknown, and the incalculable rest is the unknowable.

What's incomprehensible to normal awareness is that the filaments are aware. I can't tell you what that means, because I don't know what I am saying. All I can tell you with my personal comments is that the filaments are aware of themselves, alive and vibrating, that there are so many of them that numbers have no meaning and that each of them is an eternity in itself.

Perception is a condition of alignment; the emanations inside the cocoon become aligned with those outside that fit them. Alignment is what allows awareness to be cultivated by every living creature.

I've mentioned to you that the old seers were masters of the art of handling awareness. What I can add now is that they were the masters of that art because they learned to manipulate the structure of man's cocoon. I've said to you that they unraveled the mystery of being aware. By that I meant that they saw and realized that awareness is a glow in the cocoon of living beings. They rightly called it the glow of awareness.

Everybody falls pray to the mistake that seeing is done with the eyes. Seeing is not a matter of the eyes.

Seeing is alignment and perception is alignment. The alignment of the Indescribable Force 's emanations used routinely is the perception of the day-to-day world, but the alignment of emanations that are never used ordinarily is seeing . When such an alignment occurs one sees .

Seeing, therefore, being produced by alignment out of the ordinary, cannot be something one could merely look at. So, don't succumb to the way seeing is labelled and described. When seers see, something explains everything as the new alignment takes place. It's a voice that tells them in their ear what's what. If that voice is not present, what the seer is engaged in isn't seeing.

The voice of seeing for the new seers is something quite incomprehensible; they say it's the glow of awareness playing on the Indescribable Force 's emanations as a harpist plays on a harp.

Awareness is achieved by the constant pressure that the emanations outside our cocoon, which are called emanations at large, exert on those inside our cocoon.

Awareness gives rise to perception, which happens when the emanations inside our cocoons align themselves with the corresponding emanations at large.

... perception takes place because there is in each of us an agent called the assemblage point that selects internal and external emanations for alignment. The particular alignment that we perceive as the world is the product of the specific spot where our assemblage point is located on our cocoon.

One of the most important breakthroughs for the new seers was to find that the spot where that point is located on the cocoon of all living creatures is not a permanent feature, but is established on that specific spot by habit.

A matter of great importance is the proper understanding of the truths about awareness in order to realize that that point can be moved from within.

What the new seers saw in the glow of awareness resulted in the sequence in which they arranged the old seers' truths about awareness. This is known as the mastery of awareness. From that, they developed the three sets of techniques. The first is the mastery of stalking , the second is the mastery of intent , and the third is the mastery of dreaming . I taught you these three sets from the very first day we met.

Seers describe the human form as the compelling force of alignment of the emanations lit by the glow of awareness on the precise spot on which normally man's assemblage point is fixated. It is the force that makes us into persons. Thus, to be a person is to be compelled to

affiliate with that force of alignment and consequently to be affiliated with the precise spot where it originates.

A warrior doesn't seek anything for his solace, nor can he possibly leave anything to chance. A warrior actually affects the outcome of events by the force of his awareness and his unbending intent .

As a warrior, a man of knowledge also needs to be wide-awake. A man at war has to be on the alert in order to be cognizant of most of the factors pertinent to the two mandatory aspects of awareness: (1) awareness of intent (2) awareness of the expected flux.

Awareness of intent is the act of being cognizant of the factors involved in the relationship between the specific purpose of any obligatory act and one's own specific purpose for acting. Since all the obligatory acts have a definite purpose, a man of knowledge has to be wide-awake; that is, he needs to be capable at all times of matching the definite purpose of every obligatory act with the definite reason that he has in mind for desiring to act.

A man of knowledge, by being aware of that relationship, is also capable of being cognizant of what is believed to be the expected flux. What I call the awareness of the expected flux refers to the certainty that one is capable of detecting at all times the important variables involved in the relationship between the specific purpose of every act and one's specific reason for acting. By being aware of the expected flux one is able to detect the most subtle changes. That deliberate awareness of changes accounts for the recognition and interpretation of omens and of other unordinary events.

Warrior-travellers are sorcerer who, by being warriors, travel in the dark sea of awareness. Human beings are travellers of the dark sea of awareness, and this Earth is but a station on their journey; for extraneous reasons, the travellers have interrupted their voyage. Human beings are caught in a sort of eddy, a current that goes in circles, giving them the impression of moving while they are, in essence, stationary. Sorcerers are the only opponents of whatever force keeps human beings prisoners, and by means of their discipline sorcerers brake loose from its grip and continue their journey of awareness.

Sorcery is a state of awareness. Sorcery is the ability to perceive something which ordinary perception cannot.

Sorcerers say that heightened awareness is the portal of intent . And they use it as such. Think about it. You must reach the point where you understand what intent is. And, above all, you must understand that

that knowledge cannot be turned into words. That knowledge is there for everyone. It is there to be felt, to be used, but not to be explained. One can come into it by changing levels of awareness, therefore, heightened awareness is an entrance. But even the entrance cannot be explained. One can only make use of it. The natural knowledge of intent is available to anyone, but the command of it belongs to those who probe it.

Intensity is an automatic result of the movement of the assemblage point. Intensity, being an aspect of intent, is connected naturally to the shine of the sorcerers' eyes. In order to recall those isolated islands of perception sorcerers need only intent the particular shine of their eyes associated with whichever spot they want to return to.

Intent is beckoned with the eyes. Ruthlessness makes sorcerers' eyes shine, and that shine beckons intent. Each spot to which their assemblage points move is indicated by a specific shine of their eyes. Since their eyes have their own memory, they can call up the recollection of any spot by calling up the specific shine associated with that spot. The reason sorcerers put so much emphasis on the shine of their eyes and on their gaze is because the eyes are directly connected to intent. Contradictory as it might sound, the truth is that the eyes are only superficially connected to the world of everyday life. Their deeper connection is to the abstract.

The eyes of all living beings can move someone else's assemblage point, especially if their eyes are focused on intent. Under normal conditions, however, people's eyes are focused on the world, looking for food ... looking for shelter...

For sorcerers to use the shine of their eyes to move their own or anyone else's assemblage point they have to be ruthless. That is, they have to be familiar with that specific position of the assemblage point called the place of no pity.

A man who follows the paths of sorcery is confronted with imminent annihilation every turn of the way, and unavoidably he becomes keenly aware of his death. Without the awareness of death he would be only an ordinary man involved in ordinary acts. He would lack the necessary potency, the necessary concentration that transforms one's ordinary time on earth into magical power.

Thus to be a warrior a man has to be, first of all, and rightfully so, keenly aware of his own death. But to be concerned with death would force any one of us to focus on the self and that would be debilitating. So the next thing one needs to be a warrior is detachment. The idea of imminent death, instead of becoming an obsession, becomes an indifference. Only the idea of death makes a

man sufficiently detached so he is incapable of abandoning himself to anything. Only the idea of death makes a man sufficiently detached so he can't deny himself anything.

A detached man, who knows he has no possibility of fencing off his death, has only one thing to back himself with: the power of his decisions. He has to be, so to speak, the master of his choices. He must fully understand that his choice is his responsibility and once he makes it there is no longer time for regrets or recriminations. His decisions are final, simply because his death does not permit him time to cling to anything.

... sorcerers don't necessarily make a distinction between our rational and our intuitive sides. They use both to reach the realm of awareness they call silent knowledge, which lies beyond language, beyond thought.

Freedom is free ...It cannot be bought or understood. With my books, I've tried to present an option - that awareness can be a medium for transportation or movement.

I met a scientist at a party - a well-known man. Eminent. A luminary. "Dr. X." He wanted to dis- me, heavily. He said, "I read your first book; the rest were boring. Look, I'm not interested in anecdotes. I'm interested in proof." Dr. X confronted me. He must have thought I was as important as he was. I said, "If I was to prove the law of gravity, wouldn't you need a degree of training to follow me? You'd need 'membership' - maybe even equipment. You'd need to have taken Physics 1, 2, 16, maybe even Physics 23. You'd have already made tremendous sacrifices to learn: to go to school, to study long hours. You may even have stopped dating. " I told him if he wanted proof he'd have to take Sorcery 101. But he wouldn't do that; that takes preparation. He got angry and left the room ... So: the scientist wanted proof but didn't want to prepare.

We don't want to do the work - we want to be helicoptered to awareness, without getting mud in our shoes. And if we don't like what we see, we want to be helicoptered back.

The only thing we can do is arrive at a state of increased awareness that allows us to perceive the world around us in a more inclusive manner.

What a shaman ... wants is to increase awareness, that is, to be able to perceive with all the human possibilities of perception; this implies a colossal task and an unbending purpose, which cannot be replaced by the spirituality of the Western world.

The aim of sorcerers is to reach a state of total awareness in order to experience all the possibilities of perception available to man. This state of awareness even implies an alternative way of dying.

Human awareness is like an immense haunted house. The awareness of everyday life is like being sealed in one room of that immense house for life. We enter the room through a magical opening: birth. And we exit through another such magical opening: death.

Sorcerers, however, are capable of finding still another opening and can leave that sealed room while still alive. A superb attainment. But their astounding accomplishment is that when they escape from that sealed room they choose freedom. They choose to leave that immense, haunted house entirely instead of getting lost in other parts of it.

Warriors have no life of their own. From the moment they understand the nature of awareness, they cease to be persons and the human condition is no longer part of their view. You have your duty as a warrior and nothing else is important. So do your best.

You already know that there exists in the universe a perennial force, which the sorcerers of ancient Mexico called the dark sea of awareness. While they were at the maximum of their perceiving power, they saw something that made them shake in their boots. They saw that the dark sea of awareness is responsible not only for the awareness of organisms, but also for the awareness of entities that don't have an organism.

Lots of entities from the universe at large, entities that possess awareness but not an organism, land in the field of awareness of our world, or the field of awareness of its twin world, without an average human being ever noticing them. The entities that land on our field of awareness, or the field of awareness of our twin world, belong to other worlds that exist besides our world and its twin.

An accurate definition of sorcery as a practice would be to say that sorcery is the manipulation of the assemblage point for purposes of changing its focal point of contact with the dark sea of awareness, thus making it possible to perceive other worlds.

Sorcerers are the only opponents of whatever force keeps human beings prisoners, and by means of their discipline sorcerers brake loose from its grip and continue their journey of awareness.

Forget the self and you will fear nothing, in whatever level of awareness you find yourself to be.