

## Why People Don't Awaken

The awakening process is a self-destructive process of destroying your own ego. The problem is, people don't want to destroy their own ego and so they don't awaken. That's where all the resistance to awakening comes from. The resistance people have to awakening reflects that they really don't want to destroy their own ego. People express this resistance in spite of what they consciously say to themselves about wanting to awaken. In spite of what they say, they really don't want to awaken because they have an unconscious fear of awakening. This resistance arises from their underlying fear about destroying their own ego. They really don't want to destroy their own ego because they don't want to die at the level of the ego. They're afraid of ego death. They're afraid of not existing at the level of being a Self or at the level of individual existence.

What exactly does it mean to destroy your own ego? This is the question you have to ask yourself if you really want to awaken. There's no way to understand the answer to this question unless you clearly understand what you're really doing is playing a computer-generated virtual reality game, like depicted in the Matrix. Your character in the game, which appears to be a person is the world you perceive, is really no more real than an animated image that is projected from a computer screen to your own point of view. What you really are is the presence of perceiving consciousness that is present at that point of view. You are really nothing more than a point of consciousness as you perceive the projected and animated images of the virtual reality game and play the game. You play the game by focusing your attention on the game. This point of perceiving consciousness that arises in relation to the screen is called the Self. Everything you can perceive in your own world, including the person in the world you take yourself to be, is no more real than an animated image projected from the screen to your own point of view.

The Self always carries with itself its own sense of individual existence, which is called I Am. This sense of I-Am-ness is the sense of being present in the present moment as the Self perceives its own world. The perception of that world always occurs in the present moment. The Self is not only a point of perceiving consciousness as it perceives the virtual reality game, but also is a point of moving consciousness that animates the game. The energy of the motion of the Self animates the images of the game. In the language of modern theoretical physics, the Self is an observer in an accelerated frame of reference. The energy of that accelerated motion is what energizes and animates the projected images of the game. This energy of accelerated motion naturally arises as the Self focuses its attention on the projected images of the game, which animates the images of the game. The number one image the Self animates as it focuses its attention on the game is its character in the game, which appears to be a person in the world. In reality, the person in the world is no more real than an avatar in a virtual reality game the Self plays as it focuses its attention on the game. The energy animating a person in the world is called emotional energy. The Self is investing its own emotional energy in the game as it focuses its attention on its character in the game. That's how its character is emotionally animated.

The emotional animation of its character in the game explains why the Self identifies itself with its character. The Self feels emotionally self-limited to the form of its character as it perceives the flow of emotional energy that animates its character. The emotionally animated form of its character is really only an image of the game that is projected from the computer screen to its central point of view as the Self perceives the image, but when the moving Self expresses the emotional energy that animates that image with its own motion, and when the perceiving Self feels emotionally self-limited to that image as it perceives the animation, the Self emotionally identifies itself with that image. The Self is creating the conditions that lead to its emotional self-identification with the form of a person as it expresses the emotional energy that animates that form and then perceives the flow of emotional energy that animates that form, which makes it feel emotionally self-limited to that form. That expression of emotional energy naturally arises from its own motion as it focuses its attention on the animated life of the person in the world it takes itself to be and emotionally identifies itself with that animated form.

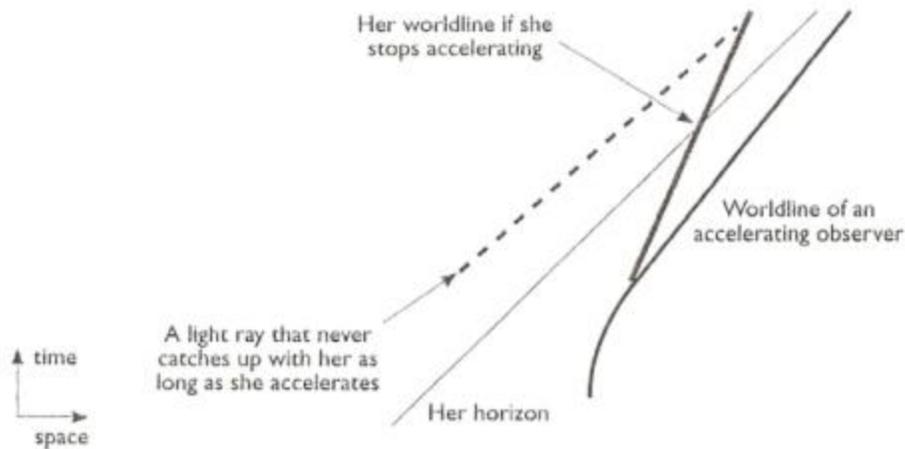
Emotional self-identification of the Self with the form of a person that appears in the virtual reality game it plays leads to the mental construction of an emotionally animated self-concept. The mental construction of a personal self-concept is like the self-referential narration of the virtual reality game by the central character of the game. The central character is referring to itself as the personal self-concept is mentally constructed. The self-concept can only become mentally constructed as a personal self-image is emotionally related to the image of some other thing the Self perceives in the virtual reality game. The personal self-image can only be constructed out of memory, just like the memory that operates inside a computer, since the personal self-image is just another aspect of the computer-generated virtual reality game. The construction of a personal self-image out of memory requires an emotional projection from the present moment to past or future events. The personal self-image can only be constructed out of memory when past events are remembered or when future events are anticipated. The emotional construction of a personal self-image is always an emotional projection out of the present moment into the remembered past or the anticipated future.

When the Self only pays attention to its emotionally constructed self-concept, it is only paying attention to a personal self-image that is an emotional projection to past or future events, and is not paying attention to what actually happens in the present moment. That's why the Self is not aware of itself as a presence of consciousness that only exists in the present moment. The Self is ignoring its own sense of being present or I-Am-ness when it only focuses its attention on its personal self-image. That personal self-image is always emotionally constructed in the mind as the self-image is emotionally related to the image of some other thing that appears in the virtual reality game that the Self is playing. The Self is not aware of itself because the Self is only paying attention to its personal self-image that can only be emotionally constructed out of memory through an emotional projection to past or future events. The Self loses awareness of itself by only paying attention to its emotionally constructed self-concept, which is no more real than the self-referential narration of the virtual reality game by the central character of the game.

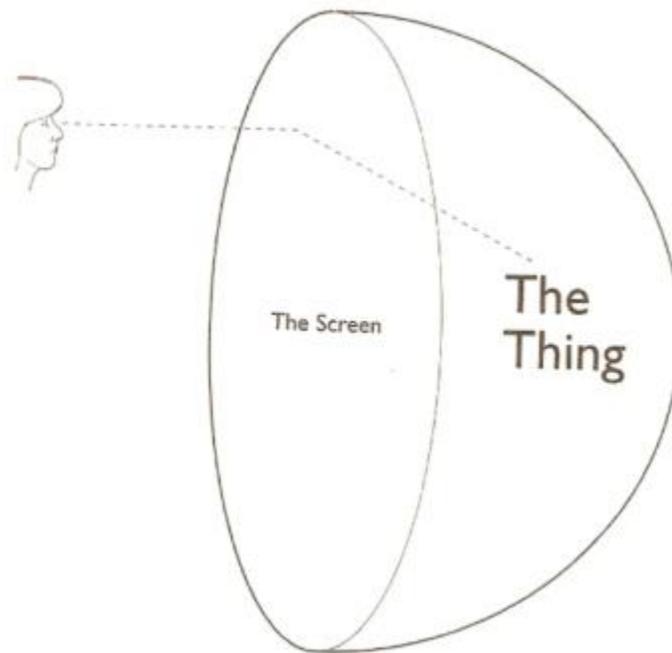
This analysis of personal self-identification assumes there really is a Self, which is a moving point of perceiving consciousness at the center of its own world that plays a computer-generated virtual reality game as images of that world are projected to its central point of view. Other than your own direct experience of your Self, which you can become aware of as you focus your attention on your own sense of being present as you perceive the world, what is the scientific evidence that the Self really exists as a moving presence of perceiving consciousness at the central point of view of its own world, and that the world it animates and perceives is like a computer-generated virtual reality game?

The scientific answer is the holographic principle of quantum gravity. The Self as a moving point of perceiving consciousness at the central point of view of its own world can be understood as an observer in an accelerated frame of reference. That accelerated motion gives rise to an event horizon that surrounds the observer's central point of view and limits the observer's observations of things in space. The holographic principle tells us that the observer's event horizon acts as a holographic screen due to the screen encoding bits of information for everything the observer can observe in its own world, just like an observer that observes the images of a computer-generated virtual reality projected from a computer screen to its point of view. The screen is a two dimensional surface of space that bounds some three dimensional region of space. Things only appear to be three dimensional in that bounded region of space because they're like holographic images. In reality, all the bits of information for those images are encoded on the two dimensional bounding surface. The holographic principle incorporates relativity theory because the holographic screen arises as an event horizon in an observer's accelerated frame of reference. The holographic principle incorporates quantum theory because the bits of information are understood to arise as quantized bits of information, which are called qubits.

The bounding surface of space that arises in the observer's accelerated frame of reference is the nature of the computer screen that gives rise to the projected images of the computer-generated virtual reality game. The images, which are forms of information that arise from the way qubits of information are encoded on the screen, are projected from the screen to the observer's central point of view. The screen only arises because of the observer's accelerated motion, and the energy of that motion is what animates the projected images. That's how the computer-generated virtual reality game is created. It begins with the creation of a quantum computer. You have to create a quantum computer before you can create and play a virtual reality game. The quantum computer is created due to the accelerated motion of the observer that gives rise to an event horizon that acts as a holographic screen when it encodes qubits of information.



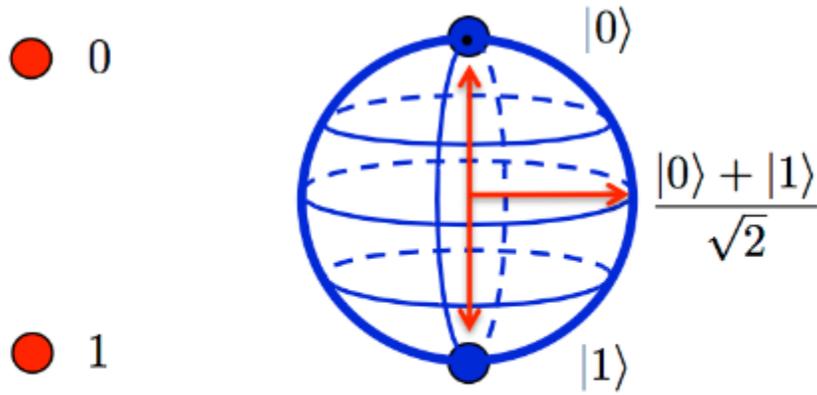
Accelerating Observer's Event Horizon



The Observer's Holographic Screen

The encoding of qubits of information on a holographic screen is easiest to understand with the mathematical concept of matrices. An  $SU(2)$  matrix gives a mathematical representation of rotational symmetry on the surface of a sphere, but its eigenvalues also encode information in a binary code, like a spin  $\frac{1}{2}$  variable in quantum theory that can only point up or down similar to a computer switch that is either on or off. An  $n \times n$   $SU(2)$  matrix can encode  $n$  quantized bits of information on the surface of a sphere in a rotationally invariant way. These qubits of information are naturally entangled because they arise as the eigenvalues of a matrix. This

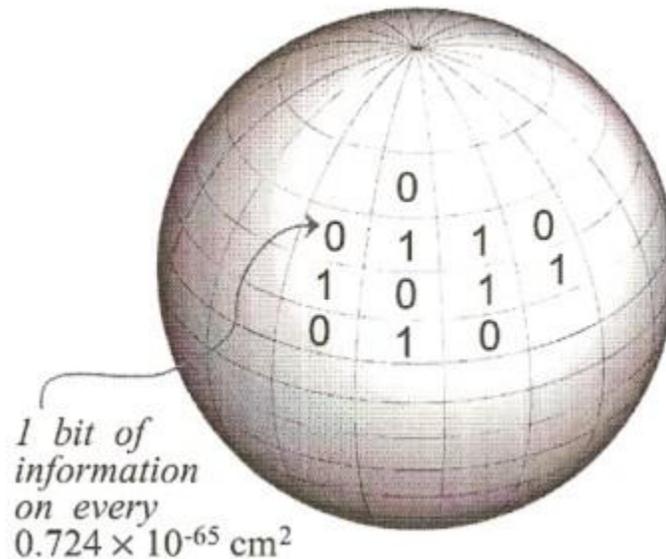
geometric mechanism explains how a holographic screen encodes  $n$  qubits of information. Each qubit of information is encoded on an area element that acts like a pixel on the screen, which is called the Planck area. The Planck area is defined in terms of the gravitational constant, the speed of light and Planck's constant as  $\ell^2 = \hbar G/c^3$ , and the number of qubits encoded on the screen is given in terms of the surface area  $A$  of the observer's event horizon as  $n = A/4\ell^2$ .



**Classical Bit**

**Qubit**

Qubit as the Information Encoded on a Planck Size Event Horizon



Holographic Principle

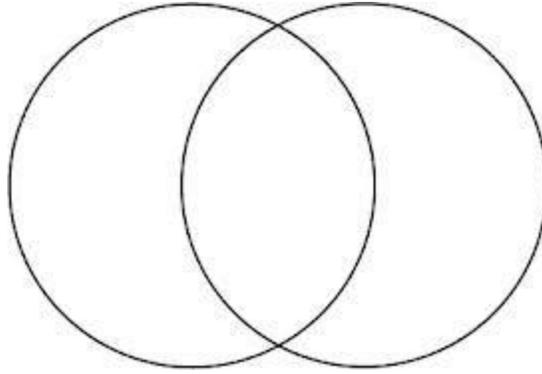
We really do live in the Matrix because everything we can perceive in the world can be reduced to qubits of information encoded on a holographic screen, and that encoding of information can

be understood in terms of matrices. Just as was depicted in the movie the Matrix, we really do live in a computer-generated virtual reality.

Where do the laws of physics come from? The holographic principle gives a perfectly good scientific answer. The laws of physics are like the operating system or computational rules that govern the operation of this computer-generated virtual reality. This turns out to be fairly easy to show from the holographic principle. The laws of physics that govern whatever appears to happen in any bounded region of space can be easily deduced from the way qubits of information are encoded on the bounding surface of that space and the energy inherent in the observer's accelerated frame of reference that gives rise to that bounding surface as the observer's event horizon. The laws of physics are not really anything fundamental, but are more like a thermal average description of what appears to happen when things are near thermal equilibrium, like a thermodynamic equation of state. Both Einstein's field equations for the space-time metric, which is the law of gravity, and all quantum field theories that give a representation of particle physics, can be understood to arise as thermal average descriptions of what appears to happen in some bounded region of space. In physics, these are called effective field theories. The more fundamental description of what appears to happen in any bounded region of space is the way qubits of information are encoded on the bounding surface of that space, which can always be understood to arise as an event horizon in an observer's accelerated frame of reference, and the energy inherent in that accelerated motion. This fits in nicely with the holographic principle, which tells us that whatever appears to happen in that bounded region of space is like the holographic projection of an image from the screen and the animation of that image in the flow of energy that is inherent in the observer's accelerated frame of reference. The projected image is a form of information that can always be reduced to qubits of information encoded on the screen. That image is animated by the observer's own motion and is projected from the screen to the observer's central point of view as the observer perceives it. The animation and projection of those images is only possible because the observer is focusing its attention on its own computer-generated virtual reality as it plays the virtual reality game.

Every observer observes events in its own world as it observes the animation of images projected from its own holographic screen to its central point of view. That screen arises as an event horizon in the observer's own accelerated frame of reference. What about a consensual reality that is shared by many different observers, each located at its own point of view?

The answer is a consensual reality shared by many observers arises from information sharing, just like in a computer-generated virtual reality game that is played by many different observers. Each observer plays the virtual reality game on its own computer screen, but when there is information sharing among different screens, as happens when the screens are connected by the internet, information is shared among the different observers. In the language of the holographic principle, when bounding surfaces of space overlap in the sense of a Venn diagram, those screens can share information. Many observers, each located at their own central point of view, can share a consensual reality when their respective screens overlap and share information.



Overlapping Bounding Surfaces of Space

The holographic principle is telling us that the Self, understood as a moving point of perceiving consciousness present at the center of its own world, is an observer in an accelerated frame of reference. The computer-generated virtual reality game the Self plays arises from that accelerated motion as an event horizon that encodes qubits of information and acts as a holographic screen that projects the animated images of the observer's world to its central point of view. The motion of the Self explains the animation of the images, but what explains the projection of the images?

The answer is the light of consciousness that illuminates the observer's world. The observer can be understood as a moving point of perceiving consciousness that animates and perceives everything in its own world. The light of consciousness is what illuminates those things as the illuminated images of those things are projected from the observer's screen to its central point of view. In this sense, the Self can be understood as a moving point of illuminating and perceiving consciousness that illuminates, animates and perceives everything in its own world.

This explanation nicely explains how the Self plays the computer-generated virtual reality game. The key point is that the Self must be present as it focuses its attention on the game. The Self becomes aware of itself when it focuses its attention on its own sense of being present. If the Self only focuses its attention on its own personal self-image or self-concept, then the Self loses its awareness of its own sense of being present. That's how the Self identifies itself with its character in the game. That's how the Self identifies itself with its personal self-concept or ego.

This explanation also explains how the Self awakens to the truth of what it really is. The Self must first become aware of its own sense of being present as a presence of consciousness at the center of its own world that only exists in the present moment. The Self has to stop focusing its attention on its personal self-image and stop emotionally projecting itself into a non-existent past or future through the manipulation of memory. That's the only way the Self can stop emotionally constructing a personal self-concept in its mind. That's the only way the Self can stop emotionally identifying itself with its central character in the virtual reality game it's playing.

This self-destructive process of no longer constructing a personal self-concept in your mind is the meaning of destroying your own ego. You have to stop feeding your ego the emotional

energy it needs for your mind to construct it. The only way you can stop feeding your ego this emotional energy it needs to emotionally construct a personal self-concept in your mind is by withdrawing your attention away from your ego. When you stop paying attention to your ego and withdraw your attention away from your ego, you also withdraw your investment of emotional energy that emotionally constructs and animates your ego in your mind. That's the only way you can destroy your ego. You have to stop paying attention to it. You have to lose interest in it.

The only way you can lose interest in your ego is if you clearly see it to be an illusion of what you really are, and lose interest in paying attention to an illusion. When you clearly see your ego to be an illusion of what you really are, you lose interest in it and stop paying attention to it. When you withdraw your attention away from it, you also withdraw your investment of emotional energy in its mental construction. That's the only way you can destroy it.

Awakening is only about destroying your ego as a false concept of what you really are. There are no true concepts that can explain what you really are. All self-concepts are false. The hardest part of awakening is realizing that even the concept of the Self as a moving point of illuminating and perceiving consciousness is false. The Self is an untruth because the sense of individual existence or I-Am-ness is an untruth. At the ultimate level of reality, which is the ultimate level of your own existence, there is no sense of individual existence or being a Self.

The sense of being a Self, the sense of individual existence and I-Am-ness, the sense of being present as you perceive your own world, can only arise in a subject-object relation as you perceive things in that world. The subject, which is called the Self or I Am, can only arise as the Self perceives some object in its own world. The relation between the subject and its object is perception. Only this subject-object relation can define self and other. The holographic principle is telling us that the object, which is a form of information, is like an image projected from a screen to the central point of view of the observer. That image can always be reduced to bits of information encoded on the screen. The observer can only identify itself with a self-image it perceives when the observer feels emotionally self-limited to that image. That feeling of emotional self-limitation arises from the observer's own motion. The observer can only project that self-image when the observer illuminates the image with its own light of consciousness.

This subject-object relation is only created when the observer is present to perceive its own world. The observer has to focus its attention on the events of that world. Understanding that world as a computer-generated virtual reality game the Self plays tells us that the Self has to focus its attention on playing the game to be present for the game. If the Self withdraws its attention away from the game, the Self is no longer present to play the game. If the Self refuses to play the game, the Self is no longer present to play the game and the game is over.

When the Self is no longer present to perceive or play the game, the game is over. When the Self no longer focuses its attention on the game and no longer perceives the game, there no longer is a

subject-object relation that defines self and other. There no longer is a sense of being present, a sense of I-Am-ness, or a sense of being a Self. What remains when the game is over?

Nisargadatta says the Self is the doorway through which you pass when you become enlightened. The Self is the nature of the gateless gate you pass through in the sense of Zen or the doors of perception in the sense of William Blake. You bring yourself to the doorway as you focus your attention on your own sense of being present as the perceiving Self at the center of your own world. You can only pass through the doorway when you become selfless. That's why you have to destroy your own ego. The ego is really nothing more than the Self emotionally identifying itself with its emotionally constructed personal self-concept. The Self emotionally constructs its personal self-concept in its mind as it focuses its attention on its personal self-image. That emotional construction is always an emotional projection out of the present moment to the memory of past or anticipation of future events. That's why the Self loses its awareness of itself as a presence of consciousness that only exists in the present moment. To become aware of itself in the present moment, the Self has to stop making emotional projections that construct a personal self-image through the manipulation of memory and stop emotionally constructing a personal self-concept in its mind. The Self has to stop expressing the emotional energy that underlies the mental construction of its ego. That's the only way the Self can stop emotionally identifying itself with its ego. That's what it means for the Self to destroy its own ego.

The final self-concept you have to destroy before you can awaken to the truth of what you really are is your own sense of individual existence, which is your sense of I-Am-ness or being a Self as you perceive your own world in the subject-object relation of perception that defines self and other. At the ultimate level of reality that defines the true nature of your existence, there is no sense of being a Self because there is no other. All is One. Only undivided being remains at the ultimate level of existence. That ultimate level of existence is not something that you can perceive. That ultimate level of existence is not limited by a bounding surface of space that acts as a holographic screen that projects the images of everything you can perceive in your own world to your own point of view. That ultimate level of existence is not only undivided, but is also unlimited. It cannot be limited to something you can perceive or to the point of view that perceives something. It cannot be conceptualized in terms of any concept you can conceive. It can only be described in terms of negation as absolute nothingness or void.

When you become enlightened, you have the direct experience of that unlimited and undivided absolute nothingness, but not in the sense of something that you can perceive or conceive. You can only directly experience it by becoming it. To know it is to be it. Your individual being has to dissolve back into it like a divided drop of water that dissolves back into the undivided ocean. This can only happen when you become selfless and pass through the doorway of the Self.

You have to become selfless before you can pass through the doorway of the Self and become enlightened. You bring yourself to the doorway as you focus your attention on your own sense of being present, but you can only pass through the doorway when you become selfless. You only

become selfless when you become desireless. You become desireless when you take all emotional energy out of the mental construction of your self-concept. You do that by withdrawing your attention away from the virtual reality game you're playing, which withdraws your investment of emotional energy in the game that animates your character in the game.

When you refuse to play the game, the game is over. When you are no longer present to perceive and play the game, the game disappears from existence from your own point of view. This can only happen when you destroy your own ego or self-concept. You have to stop emotionally identifying yourself with your character in the game, which can only happen when you stop emotionally animating your character in the game. You withdraw your investment of emotional energy in the game that animates your character in the game when you withdraw your attention away from the game. That's the only way you can become selfless, desireless and motionless.

When you become selfless and desireless, you also become motionless. At the level of the Self, which is a moving point of illuminating and perceiving consciousness, you stop expressing emotional energy when you stop moving. When you withdraw your attention away from the virtual reality game you're playing and withdraw your investment of emotional energy in the game that animates your character in the game, you stop expressing that emotional energy. You stop moving. That's how you become motionless. In the language of modern theoretical physics, when you become motionless, you enter into an ultimate freely falling frame of reference. That's when the world you perceive disappears from existence from your own point of view because you no longer have an event horizon that acts as a holographic screen. That's when you fall into the void. That's when your individual being dissolves back into the undivided being of the void like a drop of water that dissolves back into the ocean. That's when you stop being a Self.

After you become enlightened and perceive your own world again, you no longer perceive things as the Self. You see things from a higher level of consciousness, as though the things you perceive only arise as the animated images of a movie that are projected from a movie screen to your own point of view. You see how you're illuminating the images as you shine the light of consciousness on them and how you're animating them with the motion of your Self. You become aware of the Self as a moving point of illuminating and perceiving consciousness. You become aware of your Self from the emptiness, silence, stillness and darkness of the void, which is the Source of the selfless nondual awareness that creates and perceives the whole thing. You no longer are a part of the dualistic world of self and other. You have come out of that world and no longer are a Self. The dualistic awareness of self and other comes to an end. You only experience things as the unlimited and undivided selfless awareness of the Source. You may appear to be in the world as the Self, but you are really not of that world. You are truly beyond that world. You are the Source. You know the true nature of your existence is the absolute nothingness that is the Source of your own Self and the Source of everything that can appear to come into existence in the virtual reality game you play. You know you are the Source of the Self, which is not something the Self can perceive in its own world. You know you are absolutely nothing, which is the Source of everything. To discover the Source, you have to look within.

This is the reason why people don't awaken. This is where all the resistance to awakening comes from. People are unwilling to awaken because they don't want to destroy their own ego, but what really drives this unwillingness to awaken is the fear of not existing at the level of individual existence. This is the fear of not existing at the level of being a Self. Only the Self has its own sense of individual existence. The nature of any self-concept with which the Self can emotionally identify itself doesn't really matter that much. Any self-concept is better than no self-concept. The fear that drives the resistance to awakening isn't really the fear of non-existence, but instead the fear of being nothing. People don't really care that much who they appear to be as long as they appear to be somebody rather than nobody. The fear of not existing at the level of individual existence or being a Self is what drives all the resistance to awakening. That's why people don't awaken. They're afraid of being nothing, which Nisargadatta calls the fear of impersonal being. People are afraid to stop being a Self and to become the Ocean of Being.

### **Testimony of Enlightened Beings**

Adapted from Osho:

*We call Buddha the awakened one. This awakening is really the cessation of inner dreaming. When there is no dreaming you become pure space. This non-dreaming consciousness is what is known as enlightenment.*

*If you go on inquiring 'Who am I?' you are bound to come to the conclusion that you are not. This is an inquiry to dissolve. There is no answer. Only the question will dissolve. There will be no one to ask 'Who am I?' And then you know.*

*When the 'I' is not, the real 'I' opens. When the ego is not, you are for the first time encountering your being. That being is void.*

*You fall into an abyss, and the abyss is bottomless: you go on falling. That is why Buddha has called this nothingness emptiness. There is no end to it. Once you know it, you also have become endless. At this point Being is revealed: then you know who you are, what is your real being, what is your authentic existence.*

*The inner emptiness itself is the mystery.  
When the inner space is there, you are not.  
When you dissolve, the inner emptiness is there.  
When you are not, the mystery will be revealed.  
You will not be a witness to the mystery, you will be the mystery.*

*That Being is void.*

--Osho

Adapted from Nisargadatta Maharaj:

*Nothing perceivable is real. Only the onlooker is real, call him Self or Atman. That which makes you think that you are a human is not human. It is a dimensionless point of consciousness.*

*All you can say about yourself is I Am.*

*At the root of my being is pure awareness, a speck of intense light. This speck, by its nature, radiates and creates pictures in space and events in time.*

*I see only consciousness, and know everything to be but consciousness, as you know the pictures on the cinema screen to be but light.*

*Once you realize that there is nothing in this world which you can call your own, you look at it from the outside as you look at a play on the stage or a picture on the screen. To know the picture as the play of light on the screen gives freedom from the idea that the picture is real. In reality I only look. Whatever is done is done on the stage. Joy and sorrow, life and death, they are real to the man in bondage. To me they are all in the show, as unreal as the show itself.*

*It is enough to shift attention from the screen onto oneself to break the spell.*

*To the Self the world is but a passing show. The world just sprouts into being out of nothing and returns to nothing. As long as the Self is merely aware, there is no problem.*

*You can stop it any moment by switching off attention.*

*You make it possible by giving it attention.*

*You must realize yourself as the silent witness of all that happens. Your consciousness raised to a higher dimension, from which you see everything much clearer.*

*The witness that stands aloof is the watchtower of the real, the point at which awareness, inherent in the unmanifested, contacts the manifested.*

*Awareness comes as if from a higher dimension.*

*In ignorance the seer becomes the seen and in wisdom he is the seeing.*

*When you refuse to open your eyes, what can you be shown?*

*Find the immutable center where all movement takes birth. Be the axis at the center, not whirling at the periphery. Nothing stops you except fear. You are afraid of impersonal being.*

*The Self stands beyond the mind, aware, but unconcerned. You are the Self, here and now. Stand aware and unconcerned and you will realize that to stand alert but detached, watching events come and go, is an aspect of your real nature.*

*In pure being consciousness arises.*

*In consciousness the world appears and disappears.*

*Consciousness is on contact, a reflection against a surface, a state of duality. The center is a point of void and the witness a point of pure awareness; they know themselves to be as nothing.*

*But the void is full to the brim.*

*It is the eternal potential as consciousness is the eternal actual.*

*In reality only the Ultimate is. The rest is a matter of name and form. As long as you cling to the idea that only what has name and shape exists, the Supreme will appear to you non-existing. Names and shapes are hollow shells. What is real is nameless and formless, pure energy of life and light of consciousness.*

*What begins and ends is mere appearance. The world can be said to appear but not to be. It is your memory that makes you think that the world continues. Memory creates the illusion of continuity. I see the world as it is, a momentary appearance in consciousness.*

*Everything is a play of ideas. In the state free from ideation nothing is perceived. The root idea is I Am. It shatters the state of pure consciousness and is followed by the innumerable sensations and perceptions, feelings and ideas which in their totality constitute God's world. The I Am remains as the witness, but it is by the will of God that everything happens.*

*To be born means to create a world around yourself as the center.*

*You are that point of consciousness.*

*By your movement the world is ever created.*

*Stop moving and there will be no world.*

*The search for reality is the most dangerous of all undertakings for it will destroy the world in which you live.*

*At the root of all creation lies desire.*

*The projecting power is imagination prompted by desire.*

*Desire and imagination foster and reinforce each other.*

*All limited existence is imaginary.*

*Even space and time are imaginary.*

*Pure being, filling all and beyond all, is not limited.  
All limitation is imaginary.  
Only the unlimited is real.*

*The totality of all mental projections is the Great Illusion.  
When I look beyond the mind I see the witness.  
Beyond the witness is infinite emptiness and silence.*

*The witness is both real and unreal, the last remnant of illusion, the first touch of the real. The moment you say I Am, the entire universe comes into being.*

*The state of pure witnessing is like space, unaffected by whatever it contains.*

*There is no such thing as an expression of reality. Neither action nor feeling nor thought express reality. I know that life itself is only a make-believe. I just watch events happening, knowing them to be unreal.*

*The world is but a mistaken view of reality, unreal to its core.*

*The unreal appears to be real only because you believe in it. You impart reality to it by taking it to be real. Doubt it and it ceases.*

*The world is but a show, glittering and empty. It is there as long as I want to see it and take part in it. When I cease caring, it dissolves. It has no cause and serves no purpose. It appears exactly as it looks, but there is no depth in it nor meaning.*

*From my point of view everything happens by itself, quite spontaneously.  
I do nothing. I just see them happen.*

*Some unknown power acts and you imagine that you are acting.  
You are merely watching what happens.*

*As long as there is the sense of identity with the body, frustration is inevitable. It is because of your illusion that you are the doer.*

*As long as you have the idea of influencing events, liberation is not for you. The very notion of doership, of being a cause, is bondage.*

*There is no such thing as free will. Will is bondage. You identify yourself with your desires and become their slave.*

*To imagine that you are in control is the aberration of the body-mind. There is a universal power that is in control. The illusion of personal control is in the mind only. Stand without desire and fear, relinquishing all control. This is the shortest way to reality.*

*The world you can perceive is a very small world, entirely private. The world is but a reflection of imagination. Take it to be a dream and be done with it. What you call survival is but the survival of a dream. By forgetting who you are and imagining yourself a mortal creature you create so much trouble for yourself that you have to wake up, like from a bad dream.*

*Some go on a journey and come back, some never leave. What difference does it make since they travel in dreamlands, each wrapped up in his own dream. Only the waking up is important.*

*Once you have seen that you are dreaming, you shall wake up, but you do not see because you want the dream to continue. A day will come when you long for the ending of the dream. You become willing to pay any price. The price will be dispassion and detachment, the loss of interest in the dream.*

*Self-identifications are patently false and the cause of bondage.*

*Your attachment is your bondage.*

*There is trouble only when you cling to something.  
It is your desire to hold onto it that creates the problem. Let go.  
When you hold onto nothing, no trouble arises.*

*All attachment implies fear, for all things are transient.  
Fear makes one a slave.*

*Freedom from attachment is natural when one knows one's true being.*

*You create bondage when you desire and fear and identify yourself with your feelings.  
You identify yourself with your desires and become their slave.  
Your bonds are self-created as chains of attachment.  
Cut the knot of self-identification.*

*It is disinterestedness that liberates. If you lose interest, you break the emotional link that perpetuates the bondage.*

*Desire for embodied existence is the root-cause of trouble.*

*Selfishness is due to self-identification with the body.*

*If you look into the living process closely, you will find cruelty everywhere, for life feeds on life.*

*Selfishness is always destructive. Desire and fear are self-centered states. Between desire and fear anger arises, and with anger hatred.*

*It is your mind that has separated the world outside your skin from the world inside and put them in opposition.*

*Destroy the wall that separates, the 'I-am-the-body-idea'.*

*You must remove the wall. Realize that the wall and both sides of it are one single space.*

*The way to truth lies through the destruction of the false. To destroy the false you must question your most inveterate beliefs. Of these the idea that you are the body is the worst.*

*Investigate your world, apply your mind to it, examine it critically.*

*Scrutinize every idea about it.*

*Everything must be scrutinized and the unnecessary ruthlessly destroyed.*

*There cannot be too much destruction.*

*For in reality nothing is of value.*

*Freedom means letting go.*

*Spiritual maturity lies in the readiness to let go of everything.*

*Discrimination will lead to detachment. You gain nothing.*

*You leave behind what is not your own and find what you have never lost:*

*Your own being.*

*Death gives freedom. To be free in the world you must die to the world.*

*Liberation is never of the person, it is always from the person.*

*The difference between the person and the witness is as between not knowing and knowing oneself.*

*You can see a person but you are not a person.*

*There is no such thing as a separate person. Everything is the cause of everything.*

*Everything is as it is because the entire universe is as it is.*

*The reward of Self-knowledge is freedom from the personal self.  
The dissolution of personality is always followed by a sense of great relief, as if a heavy burden  
has fallen off.*

*Only in complete self-negation is there a chance to discover our real being.*

*When you are in dead earnest, you bend every incident, every second of your life, to your  
purpose. You do not waste time and energy on other things. You are totally dedicated, call it  
one-pointedness of the mind.*

*In the end you get fed up with the waste of time and energy.*

*When you refuse to play the game you are out of it.*

*As long as you take yourself to be a person, a body and a mind, separate from the stream of life,  
having a will of its own, pursuing its own aims, you are living merely on the surface and  
whatever you do will be short-lived and of little value, mere straw to feed the flames of vanity.*

*As long as you are locked up with your mind and ego, you cannot go further. Were you really at  
war with your ego, you would question its reality. You don't question because you are not really  
interested. You are moved by the pleasure-pain principle, fear and desire, which is your ego. You  
are going along with your ego, not fighting against it. You are not even aware how totally swayed  
you are by personal considerations. Be in revolt against your ego, for the ego narrows and  
distorts. It is the worst of all tyrants. It dominates you completely.*

*Struggle to find out what you are in reality. To know what you are you must first investigate and  
know what you are not. Discover all that you are not: body, feelings, thoughts, time, space, this  
or that. Nothing, concrete or abstract, which you perceive can be you. The very act of perceiving  
shows that you are not what you perceive. The clearer you understand that on the level of mind  
you can be described in negative terms only the quicker will you come to the end of your search  
and realize that you are the limitless being.*

*If you seek reality you must set yourself free of all patterns of thinking and feeling. Even the idea  
of being human should be discarded. Abandon all self-identifications, abandon all self-concern,  
abandon every desire. Stop thinking of achievement of any kind. You are complete here and now.  
You need absolutely nothing.*

*Nothing stands in the way of your liberation here and now except for your being more interested  
in other things. You must see through them as mere mental errors.*

*We have enclosed ourselves in a cloud of personal desires and fears, images and thoughts, ideas and concepts.*

*Your difficulty stems from the idea that reality is a state of consciousness.*

*The desire to live is a tremendous thing. Still greater is the freedom from the urge to live.*

*Moments when one feels empty and estranged are desirable moments, for it means the soul has cast its moorings and is sailing for distant places.*

*There is a vastness beyond the farthest reaches of the mind. That vastness is my home; that vastness is myself.*

*As long as you are interested in your present way of living, you will shirk from the final leap into the unknown.*

*You must begin by being the dispassionate observer. Then only will you realize your full being. As long as you are enmeshed in the tribulations of a particular personality, you can see nothing beyond it. Ultimately you will come to see that you are neither the particular nor the universal. You are beyond both.*

*Giving up is the first step. The real giving up is in realizing that there is nothing to give up, for nothing is your own. Give up all and you gain all.*

*Then life becomes what it was meant to be: Pure radiation from an inexhaustible source. In that light the world appears dimly like a dream.*

*Everything is depicted in the pictures on the screen, including the person you take yourself to be; nothing in the light. You are the light only. You are the pure light appearing as a picture on the screen and becoming one with it.*

*Yours is the power of perception, not what you perceive. Whatever you are conscious of, is not you. Yours is the cinema screen, the light and the seeing power, but the picture is not you.*

*You can spend an eternity looking elsewhere for truth, all in vain. You must begin in yourself, with yourself. Realize that your world is only a reflection of yourself. All you need is to stop searching outside what can only be found within.*

*Turn within. I Am you know. Be with it all the time, until you revert to it spontaneously. There is no simpler and easier way.*

*By its nature the mind is outwardly turned; it always tends to seek for the source of things among the things themselves. To be told to look for the source within is the beginning of a new life.*

*Dive deep into yourself and find the source from where all meaning flows. It is not the superficial mind that can give meaning. You are not what you think yourself to be. You cannot think yourself to be what you have not experienced. You are the perceiving point, the nondimensional source of all dimensions, which is as nothing and yet the source of everything. You can know what you are not, but you cannot know your real being. You can only be what you are.*

*As long as you are engrossed in the world, you cannot know yourself. To know yourself, turn your attention away from the world and turn within.*

*Remain as the silent witness only; a mere point in consciousness, dimensionless and timeless.*

*Give attention to the witness to break the spell of the known, the illusion that only the perceivable is real. As long as you believe that only the perceivable world is real you remain its slave.*

*To become free your attention must be drawn to the witness.*

*The point of I Am is the bridge between the watcher and its dream.*

*I Am both inside and outside the dream, but what I see in dream, I am not.*

*The realized man is beyond life and death. Life and death appears to him but a way of expressing movement in the immovable, change in the changeless. He has died before his death and he saw that there was nothing to be afraid of. The moment you know your real being you are afraid of nothing.*

*By itself nothing has existence*

*The supreme state is the very center of consciousness and yet beyond consciousness. The center of consciousness is That which cannot be given name and form, for it is without quality and beyond consciousness. It is a point in consciousness which is beyond consciousness. It is an opening in the mind, a void, through which the mind is flooded with light. It is but an opening for the light of consciousness to enter the mental space.*

*All appearance and disappearance presupposes a change against a changeless background.*

*There must be a source from which all flows, a foundation on which all stands.*

*Consciousness itself is the source of everything.*

*Know yourself as you are. Stay with the sense I Am.*

*Wherever you go, at all times, you carry with you the sense of being present and aware, here and now. It means that you are independent of space and time. Space and time are in you, not you in them. It is only your self-identification with the body, limited in space and time, that gives you a sense of limitation. In reality, you are limitless.*

*Your world is created with the emergence of the I Am idea. In your world everything has a beginning and an end. Timeless being is entirely in the now.*

*Once you are well established in the now, you have nowhere else to go.*

*Externalization is the first step in liberation. Step away and look. Separate yourself and watch. The physical events will go on happening, but in themselves they have no importance.*

*Seeing that you are not the person you take yourself to be, step out and look from the outside.*

*All you can do is to shift the focus of consciousness beyond the mind.*

*Your questions are about a non-existing person. Realize that whatever you think yourself to be is just a stream of events; that whatever happens, comes and goes, is not real; that you alone are, the changeless among the changeful. Separate the observed from the observer and abandon false identifications. Be a fully awakened witness of the field of consciousness.*

*Whatever you perceive is not you. It is there in the field of consciousness, but you are not the field and its contents.*

*All you need to do is to cease taking your Self to be within the field of consciousness. To look for it on the mental level is futile. It is here and now-the I Am you know so well.*

*Even the sense I Am is not continuous, though it is a useful pointer; it shows where to seek, but not what to seek.*

*The witness only registers events. All experience subsides with the mind. Without the mind there can be no experiencer nor experience. In the abeyance of the mind even the sense I Am dissolves. There is no I Am without the mind.*

*In silence, or void or abeyance, the three-experiencer, experiencing, experience-are not.  
Unidentified being remains.*

*To realize that is the end of all seeking. You come to it when you see all you think yourself to be  
as mere imagination and stand aloof in pure awareness. It is not difficult but detachment is  
needed. It is the clinging to the false that makes the truth so difficult to see. Discard what is not  
your own until nothing is left which you can disown. You will find that what is left is nothing.*

*In reality nothing happens. Nothing happens to space itself. In pure consciousness nothing ever  
happens. Onto the screen of the mind destiny forever projects its pictures, and thus illusion  
constantly renews itself. The pictures come and go as light intercepted by ignorance. See the  
light and disregard the pictures.*

*First we must know ourselves as witnesses only, dimensionless and timeless centers of  
observation, and then realize that immense ocean of pure awareness.*

*On the surface of the ocean of consciousness, names and forms are transitory waves. Only  
consciousness has real being, not its transformations.*

*Every moment returns to its source, just as every wave subsides into the ocean.*

*Be aware of being conscious and seek the source of consciousness.*

*Realization is in discovering the source and abiding there.*

*In reality there is only the source, dark in itself, but making everything shine with the light of  
consciousness.*

*Absolute reality imparts reality to whatever comes into being.*

*It is the very source of reality.*

*It is what is, pure being, the timeless reality.*

*It is not perceivable; it is what makes perception possible.*

*Unperceived, it causes perception. Being nothing it gives birth to all being. It is the immovable  
background of motion.*

*The timeless and spaceless reality is undifferentiated, the infinite potentiality, the source. It  
cannot be perceived, but can be experienced as ever witnessing the witness, perceiving the  
perceiver, the origin and end of all manifestation, the root of time and space.*

*Go back to that state of pure being, the I Am in its purity before it became contaminated with false self-identifications. Abandon them all. Focus the mind on pure being. In it all disappears: myself, the life I live, the world around me. Only peace and unfathomable silence remains.*

*All that is, lives and moves and has its being in consciousness.*

*I Am in and beyond that consciousness.*

*I Am in it as the witness.*

*I Am beyond it as Being.*

*I am dead already. Physical death will make no difference. I am timeless being.*

*If you desire nothing, then you are as good as dead, or you are the Supreme.*

*The Supreme is both creation and dissolution, the beingness of all beings, the ground from which all grows, alone. Words do not reach there, nor mind.*

*The Supreme state neither comes nor goes. It is.*

*It is a timeless state, ever present.*

*Before the mind happens, I Am.*

*Before all beginnings, after all endings, I Am.*

*All has its being in the I Am that shines in every living being.*

*The dreamer is one.*

*I Am beyond all dreams.*

*I Am the light in which all dreams appear and disappear.*

*Do nothing. There is nothing to do. Just be.*

*To be, you must be nobody.*

*You make yourself mortal by taking yourself to be a body.*

*That which is alive in you is immortal.*

*In the timeless state there is no Self, no I Am, no witness.*

*Your true home is in nothingness.*

*Whatever depends is not real. The real is truly independent.*

*Awareness is beyond all.*

*Awareness is primordial; it is the original state.*

*Awareness is undivided, aware of itself.*

*The witness-consciousness is the reflection of the real in the mind. The real is beyond.*

*The witness is the door through which you pass beyond.*

*The door that locks you in is also the door that lets you out.  
I Am is the door. Stay with it until it opens. It is always open, but you are not at it.*

*Between desires and freedom from all desires is an abyss which must be crossed.  
Cross the door and go beyond.*

*The Supreme reality is the void beyond being and non-being, beyond consciousness. There is no  
journey to Supreme reality. One is undeceived only.*

*One is left without questions; no answers are needed.  
There is nothing left to do. One's work is done.*

*Realization is sudden and irreversible. You rotate into a new dimension.  
You see everything as it is. The world of illusions is left behind.*

*The experience of the inner void is an explosion into reality.*

*Reality is essentially alone.  
To know that nothing is, is true knowledge.*

*For the path of return naughting oneself is necessary.  
My stand I take where nothing is.  
To the mind it is all darkness and silence.  
It is deep and dark, mystery beyond mystery.  
It is, while all else merely happens.  
It is like a bottomless well, whatever falls into it disappears.*

*--Nisargadatta Maharaj*

*"I cannot live with myself any longer". This was the thought that kept repeating itself in my mind.  
Then suddenly I became aware of what a peculiar thought it was. Am I one or two? If I cannot  
live with myself, there must be two of me: the 'I' and the 'self' that 'I' cannot live with. Maybe, I  
thought, only one of them is real.*

*I was so stunned by this strange realization that my mind stopped. I was fully conscious, but there were no more thoughts. Then I felt drawn into what seemed like a vortex of energy. It was a slow movement at first and then accelerated. I was gripped by an intense fear, and my body started to shake. I heard the words 'resist nothing', as if spoken inside my chest. I could feel myself being sucked into a void. It felt as if the void was inside myself rather than outside.*

*Suddenly, there was no more fear, and I let myself fall into that void.*

*I knew that something profoundly significant had happened to me. I understood that the intense pressure of suffering that night must have forced my consciousness to withdraw from its identification with the unhappy and deeply fearful self, which is ultimately a fiction of the mind. This withdrawal must have been so complete that this false, suffering self immediately collapsed, just as if a plug had been pulled out of an inflatable toy. What was left was my true nature as the ever-present 'I am': consciousness in its pure state prior to identification with form. Later I also learned to go into that inner timeless and deathless realm that I had originally perceived as a void and remain fully conscious.*

--Eckhart Tolle

*When the joy of my own emptiness began to wane I decided to rejuvenate it by spending some solitary time gazing into my empty self. Though the center of self was gone, I was sure the remaining emptiness, the silence and joy, was God Himself. Thus on one occasion, with full hedonistic deliberation, I settled myself down and turned my gaze inward. Almost immediately the empty space began to expand, and expanded so rapidly it seemed to explode; then, in the pit of my stomach I had the feeling of falling a hundred floors in a non-stop elevator, and in this fall every sense of life was drained from me. The moment of landing I knew: When there is no personal self, there is also no personal God. I saw clearly how the two go together-and where they went, I have never found out.*

--Bernadette Roberts

*He must dare to leap into the Origin so as to live by the Truth and in the Truth, like one who has become one with it. He must become a pupil again, a beginner; conquer the last and steepest stretch of the way, undergo new transformation. If he survives its perils then is his destiny fulfilled; face to face he beholds the unbroken Truth, the Truth beyond all truths, the formless Origin of origins, the Void which is the All; is absorbed into it and from it emerges reborn.*

--Eugen Herrigel

*In the knowledge of the Atman, which is a dark night to the ignorant,  
The recollected mind is fully awake and aware,  
The ignorant are awake in their sense life, which is darkness to the sage.*

--Bhagavad Gita

*In the silence and the void  
Standing alone and unchanging  
Ever present and in motion  
I do not know its name  
Call it Tao*

*Returning is the motion of the Tao*

*Tao in the world is like a river flowing home to the sea*

*It returns to nothingness  
It leads all things back to the great oneness*

*Ever desireless, one can see the mystery  
Ever desiring, one can see the manifestations  
These two spring from the same source  
This appears as darkness  
Darkness within darkness  
The gate to all mystery  
--Tao-Te-Ching*

*The great path has no gates  
Thousands of roads enter it  
When one passes through this gateless gate  
One walks the universe alone  
--Mu-mon*

*Empty yourself of everything*

*The man of Tao remains unknown.  
Perfect virtue produces nothing.  
No-self is true self  
And the greatest man is nobody.  
--Chuang Tzu*

*The unreal has no being  
The real never ceases to be  
--Bhagavad Gita*

## **Nondual References**

The Bhagavad-Gita (1909): Edwin Arnold trans. (Harvard Classics)  
Jed McKenna (2002, 2004, 2007): Spiritual Enlightenment Trilogy (Wisefool Press)  
Jed McKenna (20013): Jed McKenna's Theory of Everything (Wisefool Press)  
Nisargadatta Maharaj (1973): I Am That (Acorn Press)  
Nisargadatta Maharaj (1990): Prior to Consciousness (Acorn Press)  
Osho (1974): The Book of Secrets (St Martin's Griffin)  
Osho (1977): The Search: Talks on the Ten Bulls of Zen (Tao Publishing)  
Paul Reps and Nyogen Senzaki (1957): Zen Flesh, Zen Bones (Tuttle Publishing)  
Bernadette Roberts (1993): The Experience of No-Self (State University of New York Press)  
Lao Tsu (1989): Tao Te Ching. Gia-Fu Feng trans. (Vintage Books)

## **Scientific References**

Tom Banks and Willy Fischler (2018): Why the Cosmological Constant is a Boundary Condition. arXiv:1811.00130  
Raphael Bousso (2002): The Holographic Principle. arXiv:hep-th/0203101  
Amanda Gefter (2014): Trespassing on Einstein's Lawn (Random House)  
Amanda Gefter (2012): Cosmic Solipsism. FQXi Essay  
Ted Jacobson (1995): Thermodynamics of Space-time. arXiv:gr-qc/9504004  
J Madore (1999): Non-commutative Geometry for Pedestrians. arXiv:gr-qc/9906059  
Juan Maldacena (1997): The Large N Limit of Superconformal Field Theories and Supergravity. arXiv:hep-th/9711200  
Juan Maldacena and Leonard Susskind (2013): Cool Horizons for Entangled Black Holes. arXiv:1306.0533  
Lee Smolin (2001): Three Roads to Quantum Gravity (Basic Books)  
Leonard Susskind (1994): The World as a Hologram. arXiv:hep-th/9409089  
A Zee (2003): Quantum Field Theory in a Nutshell (Princeton University Press)