

Thank you, J

Awakening seems such a mind-twisting and paradoxical matter, so I guess I need to take a pause to digest or forget everything I've learned and read about it. I will still maintain my practice to feel to exist, because in some moments, it gives me some peace, especially since my personal situation is difficult at the moment.

Hi Martin

I wrote up another essay on the human condition, which you might find helpful. My basic approach is to understand things at a scientific level, which I find is the most trustworthy conceptual approach, since scientific concepts have the greatest chance of being free from personal bias. I based this essay primarily on biology, but unlike the usual biologic discussions, which are based on the too simplistic ideas of genetics and information, my approach is much more dynamic, as I base it on an understanding of emotions. The idea of Darwinian evolution is not just about genetics, but about the dynamical evolution of emotions, which is how the body is emotionally animated as the body struggles for survival in whatever environment it finds itself within. Natural selection and the survival of the fittest body are just as much about emotional evolution as they are about genetic evolution. The thing to be clear about is that this genetic/emotional evolution has taken place over millions of life-times. That is what you're up against as you try to awaken to the truth of what you really are. What you're up against is the emotional intelligence of your own ego, which really has only one purpose: its own survival. Jed McKenna says that your ego is way smarter than you are. What he means by that is that your ego has evolved over millions of life-times to defend its own survival, which it defends through the expression of self-defensive emotions. Survival is the only purpose of your ego. The only real advantage you have over your ego is the truth. McKenna says that you have to illuminate the falseness of your ego with the full force and power of your focused attention and awareness and see for yourself that your ego never has and never will exist. It is only an illusion of existence. Your ego is an illusion of your own existence. Your ego is a shadow dweller, and you have to shine the light of consciousness on it in order to clearly see it for what it really is, like a shadow projected on the wall. Your ego thrives in the half-light of ignorance. That ignorance is only about the truth of what you really are. Banish shadow with light, and see for yourself that it never really existed.

If you are to awaken to the truth of what you really are, you have to examine and see your ego for what it really is. Your ego is like a parasite that has attached itself to you for no other purpose than its survival. The trick your ego has played on you is to trick you into emotionally identifying yourself with your ego so that your attention is totally focused on defending its survival as though your existence depends on it. This trick is propagated through the expression of self-defensive emotions, which make you feel emotionally self-limited to your body as these emotions are expressed. I called this

essay **The Human Condition** because it's about how your own mind and psyche have been conditioned by Darwinian evolution and natural selection that leads to the survival of the fittest body. Body survival is defended by expressing self-defensive emotions. In the moment, there is nothing wrong with the expression of self-defensive emotions. If a mountain lion or grizzly bear jumps toward your body, it's natural in that moment to express fear and run away. If your body is starving, it's natural to search for food.

The problem of the ego is only created when these natural self-defensive emotions are exaggerated, amplified and perpetuated in a nearly continuous running monologue of self-concerned thoughts. Self-concerned thoughts are self-referential in nature, as they refer to survival of the body, and are like the self-referential narration of a movie by the central character of the movie. Whatever troubles the central character finds itself to have in the movie, the self-referential narration of the movie by the central character is all about how the central character can get out of that trouble. That's the nature of self-concerned thoughts. Self-concerned thoughts have been conditioned over millions of life-times by Darwinian evolution and natural selection, which is all about defending the survival of the body. The bodies that survive in the sense of the self-replication of their forms and the sexual reproduction of their forms are the bodies that are best able to defend the survival of their forms through the expression of self-defensive emotions. That's what the survival of the fittest body and the expression of fear and desire are all about. Body survival is really nothing more than the self-replication of the form of the body in a recognizable way over a sequence of observable events.

The ego has evolved over millions of life-times because the ego is a way of ensuring the survival of the body. The self-referential construction of the ego in the mind is always emotionally energized, as a body-based self-concept or self-image is emotionally related to the concept or image of some other thing. The other thing is in emotional relationship with the body. Since the purpose of the ego is to defend the survival of the body, these emotional expressions are self-defensive in nature. Unlike a self-defensive emotion that naturally occurs in the moment, these self-concerned thoughts are nearly continuous in nature, and create a running monologue in the back of your mind. They're often referred to as automatic thoughts that you may only be vaguely aware of. They are not unconscious, but you may only have a dim conscious awareness of them.

The other aspect of science I'm using here is what's called dynamic psychoanalysis. In the most advanced understanding of psychoanalysis, there is the idea of the observing ego and the acting ego. In the sense of modern theoretical physics and the holographic principle, the observing ego is the observer, which is the presence of consciousness at the central point of view of its own holographic world. The images of that holographic world are being displayed on a holographic screen, just like the animated images of a virtual reality movie that are being displayed on a computer screen. The acting ego is the central character of that virtual reality movie, much like an actor on a stage. In

psychoanalysis, there is the idea that progress is only made when the observing ego performs an examination of the acting ego. The behaviors of the acting ego are always emotionally animated. Those emotional actions are typically self-defensive in nature, and are fraught with emotional conflicts. The job of the observing ego is to make an examination of its acting ego, and clearly see the self-defensive nature of those actions and their inherent emotional conflicts. For this to happen, the observing ego has to stop identifying itself with its acting ego, which requires detachment. In effect, the observing ego has to step out of its own world, externalize itself, and see that world with a sense of distance and detachment. The detached observing ego sees the drama enacted by the acting ego from the outside, like a movie displayed on a screen or a play enacted on a stage. This detachment leads to a state of depersonalization as the observing ego stops identifying itself with its acting ego. This naturally happens as the observing ego clearly sees how the emotional behaviors of its acting ego are always fraught with unresolvable emotional conflicts and inconsistencies that result from the expression of self-defensive emotions. In psychoanalysis, there is the idea that this process of ego examination leads to a state of integration, which is very much like a state of surrender.

When the observing ego emotionally detaches itself from its acting ego and no longer emotionally identifies itself with its acting ego, the observing ego no longer has any vested interest in expressing the self-defensive emotions that underlie the emotional conflicts of its acting ego. Those self-defensive emotional expressions just come to an end. Like a state of surrender, the observing ego just watches from its own point of view as things tend to play out in the normal way. The observing ego loses its personal bias, and stops trying to defend itself and be in control of things. The observing ego is no longer interested in trying to direct events in the movie, but just allows events to play out in the normal way as it loses its personal bias. With integration, there is an equanimous and dispassionate acceptance of the good with the bad. In psychoanalysis, the state of integration is characterized by love and work. You do what you love and you love what you do. Unlike immature emotional attachments, like a baby emotionally attached to its mother, there is a sense of mature love, as everything and everyone becomes lovable.

The idea of integration in dynamic psychoanalysis fits right in with the idea of the denial of death. Freud thought that the most important emotional conflict to overcome in life was the Oedipal complex, which is obviously related to sexual reproduction. As a child, your desire to have sex with your mother is in conflict with your fear that your father will kill you. Otto Rank disagreed with Freud, and thought that the most important emotional conflict to overcome in life was the fear of death, which leads to the denial of death. People deny death as they try to push away their fear of death and keep it unconscious. The fear of death is denied through the desire to be in control and have power over things. If you have absolute power over things, you have nothing to fear. The desire to be in control is always self-defensive in nature, and is a denial of death. The problem is

the frustration you experience when you try to control what can't be controlled. The only resolution for this emotional conflict is to accept death, which is a surrender. You have to give up your desire to be in control. Surrender directly leads to a state of integration.

Anyway, that's my take on the human condition. In addition to biology and dynamic psychoanalysis, I also take a thermodynamic point of view, as is naturally incorporated within the holographic principle. I understand the expression of emotions as arising from the intersection of thermodynamics and Darwinian evolution. Also in terms of the holographic principle, I understand the observer to be the consciousness present at the central point of view of its own holographic world, as the images of that world are being displayed on a holographic screen, much like the animated images of a movie that are being displayed on a computer screen. If you want to get philosophical about it, this is also the basic idea that Plato tried to explain in the Allegory of the Cave. Plato was also interested in the nature of the human condition, which he understood in terms of the observer mistakenly identifying itself with its character in the movie. Plato referred to the self-identified observer as a prisoner since that personal self-identification is inherently false and creates a false state of personal self-limitation and confinement.

The Human Condition

The human condition is a direct result of the nature of Darwinian evolution, which is how the human condition is conditioned. Darwinian evolution can only proceed through the effect of natural selection, which results in the survival of the fittest body. There is always genetic diversity at the level of encoding information within a body, and the bodies that are best able to survive as they self-replicate their forms and sexually reproduce their forms are the bodies that are best able to defend the survival of their forms in a recognizable way as the body is emotionally animated over a sequence of observable events. The self-defensive nature of body survival is always expressed in terms of self-defensive emotions with the expression of fear and desire.

The expression of fear and desire are in turn driven by the pleasure-pain principle. Whatever promotes body survival, like eating, feels good, while whatever threatens body survival, like being eaten, feels bad. As a body expresses fear and desire, that body either moves toward whatever gives pleasure and promotes body survival, which is an expression of desire, or moves away from whatever gives pain and threatens body survival, which is an expression of fear. The expression of desire, which is movement toward something, is always in emotional conflict with the expression of fear, which is a movement away from something. This emotional conflict becomes unresolvable at the level of the motion of the body when the same thing gives both pleasure and pain.

At the most primitive level of the body, the expression of fear and desire are expressed in terms of the desire to eat another body and the fear of being eaten by another body.

This is an inevitable consequence of living in a body-eat-body world. The nature of a body-eat-body world is that the body must add organizing potential energy to its form in order to maintain its form in a recognizable way as the body is emotionally animated over a sequence of observable events. The addition of organizing potential energy to the body allows work to be done within the body to maintain the coherent organization of the form of the body in a recognizable way. The form of the body must hold together while the body is emotionally animated. If the body does not add organizing potential energy to its form, the body falls apart due to the disorganizing effect of the random flow of thermal energy. When the body becomes disorganized, it is no longer recognizable as a distinct form. This is the reason why the body must express the desire to add organizing potential energy to its form in order to survive and self-replicate its form in a recognizable way, which is emotionally expressed as the desire to eat another body.

The only place this organizing potential energy can be found is within other bodies, which is why the body must eat other bodies in order to survive and self-replicate its form in a recognizable way. At the same time that the body expresses the desire to eat another body, the body must also express the fear of being eaten by another body if the body is to survive. The desire to eat another body is always in emotional conflict with the fear of being eaten by another body, which is an inevitable consequence of living in a body-eat-body world. This inevitable consequence is simply a result of the energetic need the body has to add organizing potential energy to its form in order to coherently self-replicate its form in a recognizable way. That coherent organization of the body must be maintained through the addition of organizing potential energy to the body, which allows work to be done within the body. The addition of organizing potential energy to the body is the only way the disorganizing effect of the random flow of thermal energy can be counterbalanced, which allows the body to coherently self-replicate its form in a recognizable way. The body must express the desire to add this organizing potential energy to its form, which is expressed as the desire to eat another body. At the same time, if the body is to survive and self-replicate its form in a recognizable way, the body must express the fear of being eaten by another body. This emotional conflict between the expression of fear and desire is an inevitable energetic consequence of living in a body-eat-body world as the body is coherently self-replicated in form.

Darwinian evolution naturally selects those bodies for survival that are best able to eat other bodies while they also avoid being eaten by other bodies. That's the nature of the survival of the fittest body, which is driven by the pleasure-pain principle. Eating gives pleasure, which promotes body survival, while being eaten gives pain, which threatens body survival. At the level of Darwinian evolution, that's all that's really going on.

Darwinian evolution takes place over millions of life-times. Over the course of those eons of life-times, the mind becomes conditioned until it reaches the level of the human condition. The problem with the human condition is the ego. The ego arises from

self-concerned thoughts that are constructed in the mind. The purpose of the ego is to ensure body survival, and as such, is only another instrument of Darwinian evolution and natural selection. The way the ego ensures body survival is by emotionally relating a body-based self-concept or self-image to the concept or image of some other thing as self-concerned thoughts are emotionally constructed in the mind. The nature of those emotional relationships are self-defensive expressions of fear and desire, which have as their only purpose the defense of body survival. With the construction of the ego, the body-based concept of self is emotionally related to the concept of another, and the nature of those emotional relationships is inherently self-defensive. The ego is all about defending the survival of the body. Unlike a natural expression of fear or desire that may occur in the moment, with the expression of the ego, there's a nearly continuous stream of self-concerned thoughts constructed in the mind that create a nearly continuous inner running monologue. The purpose of this running monologue is to defend body survival.

This running monologue of self-concerned thoughts often occurs in the back of the mind with only dim awareness of its ongoing nature. This stream of self-concerned thought is referred to as automatic thoughts, which are not strictly unconscious in nature, but for which there is only dim awareness. The ego is constantly commenting about events that occur in the world, and whether those events are good or bad for body survival. The pleasure-pain principle tells us that the only way good and bad can be defined is in terms of body survival, since whatever promotes body survival feels good and whatever threatens body survival feels bad. There is no such thing as absolute good and bad. What is good for me might be bad for you. Good and bad are purely emotional qualities, which vary depending on your point of view. Human society may try to make them into a rigid moralistic code of conduct, but that is only the majority imposing their will on the minority. There can be no human ego without this emotional characterization into good and bad, since at its core, the ego is only defending the survival of the body through the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain as fear and desire are expressed. The ego is inherently personal in nature, and has as its only concern the survival of the personal form of the body. The way the ego expresses these personal concerns is in terms of the self-defensive expression of the emotions of fear and desire.

The problem of the ego is that these expressions of fear and desire are in emotional conflict. Desire is expressed as a movement of the body toward whatever feels good and promotes body survival, while fear is expressed as a movement of the body away from whatever feels bad and threatens body survival. The problem of emotional conflicts arises when the same thing sometimes feels good and sometimes feels bad. For example, the desire to feel close to another, which feels good, can come into emotional conflict with the fear of being controlled by another, which feels bad. Human relationships are inherently characterized by these kinds of emotional conflicts.

Humans are social animals, and not only experience the emotional conflicts of the primitive expressions of fear and desire, but also the emotional conflicts of the social emotions. This is best exemplified by the immature nature of emotional attachments. The immature body of a child cannot fend for its own survival, but must emotionally attach itself to the body of its caregiver in order to survive. The body of a baby must emotionally attach itself to the body of its mother. This kind of immature emotional attachment creates its own emotional conflicts. The baby may want to control the behavior of its mother so that its desires are satisfied, but if the mother does not want to be controlled, this desire becomes counterproductive. If the baby expresses anger out of its frustration, this anger is also counterproductive. The desire to be in control only leads to more frustration when things can't be controlled. The problem is that immature emotional attachments, like all other social emotions, are as self-defensive in nature as the expression of fear and desire, and create their own emotional conflicts.

The problem with the expression of all emotions is their self-defensive nature. All emotional expressions have been selected for in the sense of Darwinian evolution to defend the survival of the body. The body only survives because it expresses emotions. All emotional expressions defend the survival of the body. The bodies that survive in the sense of the self-replication of form and the sexual reproduction of form are the bodies that are best able to express self-defensive emotions. That self-defensive emotional expression is how the body survives. In the moment, there is nothing wrong with this kind of self-defensive emotional expression. The problem of the ego only arises when this self-defensive emotional expression is exaggerated, amplified, and perpetuated in the mind in a nearly continuous stream of self-concerned thoughts, as a body-based self-image is emotionally related to the image of some other thing. The only purpose of this nearly continuous inner running monologue of self-concerned thoughts constructed in the mind is to defend body survival, and as such, the emotional relationships are always self-defensive in nature. Defense of body survival is the only purpose of the ego.

The ego is a problem because it leads to personal self-identification. The question you have to ask yourself is: Who is identifying itself with its ego? Who is recognizing the form of the body as the body is self-replicated in form in a recognizable way over a sequence of observable events? Who is the observer of the body and the ego? Who is observing the self-concerned thoughts constructed in the mind that give rise to the appearance of an ego? The ego is only a body-based self-concept constructed in the mind. Whoever the observer is, it cannot be its ego because its ego is something that it observes. Whoever the observer is, it cannot be its body because its body is something that it observes. There is only an illusion that the observer is its body or its ego. That illusion is created when the observer emotionally identifies itself with its body due to emotional feelings of self-limitation to the body that are perceived as the body is emotionally animated. At a mental level, that illusion is created when the observer

emotionally identifies itself with its ego as its ego is emotionally constructed and animated in its mind. The problem of personal self-identification is a problem because the observer does not know who it really is. This is the perennial question: Who am I? The observer is emotionally identifying itself with its body and ego due to its perception of feelings of emotional self-limitation, but in reality, it is neither its body nor its ego.

The problem of personal self-identification is a problem because the observer is mistakenly identifying itself with its body and its ego as the observer perceives the expression of emotional energy that animates its body and ego, which creates feelings of emotional self-limitation to its body. Those feelings of emotional self-limitation arise with the expression of all self-defensive emotions. This creates a vicious cycle. The observer emotionally identifies itself with its body due to its perceived feelings of emotional self-limitation to its body that arise as self-defensive emotions are expressed, and then feels compelled to defend the survival of its body as though its existence depends on it, which leads to the expression of more self-defensive emotions, which perpetuates the vicious cycle of personal self-identification. This is a problem because the observer does not know who it really is. Who is the observer? Who am I?

At its core, this is the problem of the human condition. The human condition is created as the human mind is conditioned by Darwinian evolution, which is only about ensuring the survival of the body. The human mind is conditioned over millions of life-times as the fittest body survives. The fittest bodies are those bodies that are best able to defend their own survival through the expression of self-defensive emotions. Natural selection selects those bodies for survival that are best able to defend their forms. Expressions of self-defensive emotions are incorporated in the mind with the mental construction of self-concerned thoughts that emotionally relate a body-based self-image to the image of some other thing. That emotional relationship is always self-defensive because all emotional expressions defend the survival of the body. The human ego emerges out of the mental construction of those self-concerned thoughts as a way to ensure body survival. Defending the survival of the ego is equivalent to defending the survival of the body. The only purpose of the ego is to defend body survival, but out of that emotional expression arises the body-based personal self-concept, which is at the very heart of the human condition of personal self-identification and personal self-defense.

The problem of personal self-identification only arises when you emotionally identify yourself with your ego due to personal bias in the focus of your attention. As you focus your attention on your ego with personal bias, you express personally biased emotions that emotionally construct and animate your ego in your mind. The expression of those personally biased emotions makes you feel emotionally self-limited to your body, which underlies your personal self-identification with your body. Once you personally identify yourself with your body, you then feel compelled to express more personally biased emotions to defend the survival of your body as though your existence depends on it,

which only reinforces your personal self-identification with your body. The whole problem of your personal self-identification with your body, which is the problem of the ego, comes down to this mistaken belief that your existence depends on the survival of your body. Once you believe this false belief about yourself, you feel compelled to defend the survival of your body as though your existence depends on it, which you do through the expression of self-defensive emotions that arise from personal bias in the focus of your attention. Personal bias only arises because you believe that false belief about yourself. That false belief is the nature of your personal bias in the focus of your attention that leads to the emotional construction of your ego in your mind.

Your ego is like a parasite that has attached itself to you for no other purpose than its survival. The trick your ego has played on you is to trick you into emotionally identifying yourself with your ego so that your attention is totally focused on defending its survival as though your existence depends on it. This trick is propagated through the expression of self-defensive emotions, which make you feel emotionally self-limited to your body as the expression of these self-defensive emotions are exaggerated, amplified and perpetuated in a nearly continuous inner running monologue of self-concerned thoughts that are emotionally constructed in your mind.

To continue the analogy of your ego as a parasite, you feed your ego when you pay attention to it. When you pay attention to your ego with personal bias in the focus of your attention, you express personally biased emotions, which emotionally animate your ego as your ego is emotionally constructed in your mind. When you lose that personal bias in the focus of your attention, you stop expressing those personally biased emotions and your ego naturally dies away. When you withdraw your attention away from your ego, you also withdraw your investment of emotional energy in its mental construction that emotionally animates it. You feed your ego as you pay attention to it with personal bias in the focus of your attention, and you slay your ego when you lose that personal bias and stop paying attention to it, which only occurs through a process of surrendering and severing emotional attachments. You naturally lose that personal bias in the focus of your attention and stop paying attention to your ego when you see it as an illusion of what you really are and lose interest in paying attention to that illusion.

If you want to awaken to the truth of what you really are, you have to lose that personal bias in the focus of your attention and slay your own ego. You slay your ego when you stop paying attention to it. That's when you can withdraw your attention away from your ego and refocus your attention on your own sense of being present as the perceiver of your own world, which is the only true thing you can ever know about yourself as you perceive your own world from the central point of view of that world. That's where you have to stabilize the focus of your attention to awaken to the truth of what you really are.