



## **Awareness and Thought: The distinction that makes potential humans actual humans**

Awareness comes first, before the material world we believe we live in. Thought is a way of narrowing awareness, channeling it into a specific form. There seems to be a physical trigger in the brain that changes awareness into thought. It is an extremely sensitive trigger to which infant organisms cannot resist responding any more than they can resist other physiological impulses. And so, a quasi-physiological habit of “thought” is formed from earliest infancy, whose results are never questioned, any more than the liver’s production of bile is questioned, or the heart’s pumping.

It is necessary to perceive the moment when awareness is translated into thought. An important distinction to be made, perhaps the most important one, is that in a sense, thought is something we make up, while awareness appears to us. Awareness comes to us. This distinction should be understood clearly. At the end of the path, thought has been entirely stopped for as long as you are playing the game.

At that point you are able to *feel* and to perceive the tiny urges emanating from awareness that we

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have learned to respond to and turn into thought. It is very hard *not* to respond to them. It requires serious training even to become aware of the primary awarenesses and their tiny triggers. They have become second nature and almost as difficult to identify as the feeling of being alive.

It will probably seem unbelievable that a trigger that changes awareness into thought even exists. But this is simply evidence of how ignorant humans are of the workings of their own minds. Completely developed humans will of course be aware of this phenomenon. After all, it is our mental ability that makes us human. And awareness of this little trigger, this physical impulse that takes us from primary mental perception to the entire world of thought and the world thought has created, is the key to freedom from intrusive thought.

Jem had just awoken from a full night’s sleep – the first in five days. As she stood over the washstand prior to beginning the day’s zoning, she had a perception that had never occurred to her before. The state of being able to hold the mind free of thought appeared visibly in front of her. She saw it as – quite vaguely, and not actually as physical objects – a row of about six brownish-gray three inch diameter disks. That was it.

What is the big deal about that? She felt it represented the state in which one naturally and easily keeps the mind-body from responding to the formerly irresistible impulse to fall into thought. She had encompassed the ability. She was able to see it all from a larger perspective. Always in her life, she, like all humans, had been within the box of thought, at best trying to get out of it, to have a quiet mind, for a moment. Now she could see the entire realm of thought from a larger perspective.

She had only been able to perceive this image because the mind had become adequately uncluttered from the endless distracting presence of thought in some form or another. It takes forms other than inner speech.

Complete human development requires escaping imprisonment within thought and learning to perceive the world without transforming awareness into thought. Thought builds on awareness. Awareness, free at last from the restraints of thought, free from being channeled into the particular significations that thought gives it, is now able to use thought more effectively, understanding its nature – and at the same time perceiving an entirely different mode of existence, free of concepts and thought-terms.

The irresistible impulse to turn awareness into thought seems to be the original premature cognitive commitment, a tendency that has plagued humans throughout their existence. The error here is to believe that this particular commitment is the single correct form in which the collapse into thought takes.

First, it is necessary to learn to overcome submitting to the irresistible impulse to turn awareness into thought or a mental image. To resist taking that unconscious step. When we become aware that we make such a step, and that by making it we begin the process of creating what we assume to be reality – the material world and its physical laws – we are free. We can continue to use thought, but there is also an entire universe that does not follow the thought-patterns on which our material universe has been built up.

This is “the longest stride of soul that humans ever took” that Christopher Fry alluded to. This is what The Flourishing Earth will bring to a suffering planet that clever humans have brought to the brink of destruction at a level comparable only to cosmic disaster – sorcerer’s apprentices who at this time still have no clue as to how to prevent that disaster.

The future of the Earth now stands on the edge of destruction that is not supposed to happen. The message must be clear. Humans must realize that awareness, not thought, is reality. To understand the things that appear to awareness, we must give them the time, and mental space, to reveal themselves.

From open awareness thought narrows down and specifies a particular interpretation. Then through habitual repetition and transmission it spreads this interpretation until it appears self-evident truth. The reality we have created is causing destruction that must not happen.

Here is a clear, complete, and simple method for perceiving first-hand the moment when awareness is turned into thought – which provides an option, where before there was simply “reality.”

*What one has done, all will do.*

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*Richard Hawley Trowbridge*

*From Living in the Zone: Jem’s Voyage to the Land Beyond Thought*