



Wisdom Exercise #1

It appears that nature has strived from the beginning to become more aware. Humans have an apparently unquenchable hunger to become more aware.

Carl Jung gives a marvelous insight into this deep feature of human nature, and how awareness makes the difference between existence and not existing:

From a low hill in the Athi plains of East Africa I once watched the vast herds of wild animals grazing in soundless stillness, as they had done from time immemorial, touched only by the breath of a primeval world. I felt then as if I were the first man, the first creature, to know that all this *is*. The entire world around me was still in a primeval state; it did not know that it *was*. And then, in that one moment in which I came to know, the world sprang into being; without that moment it would never have been. All nature seeks this goal and finds it fulfilled in man.¹

How often we get caught up in the events of the moment and live no differently than one of the vast herds. Wisdom is always urging us to wake up and see. And when we do, we are no longer trapped eternally in a single dimension, or a single moment of time. What a momentous experience for Jung. By articulating it, he makes it possible for all of us to experience the same remarkable realization. It may take a while for you and me to feel it; but this is one of the paradigmatic understandings, the *prajñā*, that every wise person has.

Let's put our mirror neurons to work here, using this example. Go to the place within where you 'get it', where you arrive at the perspective Jung felt: a world void of self-consciousness, which springs into being when a mind realizes, "How remarkable. How

¹ Carl G. Jung, 1968. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed. Volume 9, pt. 1 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Trans. by R. F. C. Hull. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. pp. 95f., ¶177.

strange!” An entirely new dimension of experience then opens that did not exist the moment before.

This is not an insight that is likely to get lost in the rush of things that have to be done, or in getting caught up in the activity of the moment, forgetting how astonishing it is to be here.