

LIVING INSIGHTS: A BRIEF SUMMARY OF EXISTENCE AS I SEE IT

By Jack Sisk
As of July 11, 2007

INTRODUCTION

The Living Insights Center honors each person's right to see Reality as he or she chooses, and honors every religious and spiritual tradition. The following pages present a brief summary of some of my personal views of Existence, and they are not the views of The Living Insights Center. I hope you'll find them beneficial, even where your own views are different. I make no claim that these views are accurate for anyone else but me, and I unequivocally honor your right to have your own views. Reality is what it is, and it exceeds human comprehension, so no one's views can capture it perfectly.

First of all, I unequivocally honor each person as a divine creation, a divine embodiment. We are all students in the same school of life, and each of us can teach things to every other person. Every individual deserves and has my respect.

In my work, I constantly find that each individual's experiences and views of reality are unique. It could hardly be otherwise, of course, given that we are individual consciousnesses experiencing different bodies, relationships and environments. There are, of course, belief systems that have many adherents. Even so, the way each individual experiences and understands reality in the context of those beliefs is and must be unique. Time and time again, I've learned that my experiences of reality have expanded in ways I never thought possible. Time and time again, I've learned that others' views have accurately described reality in ways I'd not previously recognized. Time and time again, I've been impressed by the sincerity with which

people describe experiences that do not correspond with the experiences I've had - even when in the same room. Could a "God" that created such a diversity of human beings and human experiences really have created only a single true way to interpret those experiences? I doubt it. Therefore, I bow to you and cherish your own experience. Likewise, I bow to each of you as one of my teachers.

Also, I make no claim that I am "enlightened." I only know - or think I know - what I know now. My views reflect my experiences to date, and they've changed over time and almost certainly will continue to evolve.

I am dedicated to assisting all beings in their spiritual lives, and hope that this writing will be helpful to at least some people.

I always welcome feedback and dialogue, and hope you'll share your views with me.

Love,

Jack

A SUMMARY OF EXISTENCE AS I SEE IT

As I see Existence...

The Absolute/God

There is an Ultimate Reality that infinitely is, that is within and contains everything (including every aspect of matter, energy, vibration, potential, dimension, void, time, and consciousness), that created all and continually sustains all, that experiences all, and that is beyond human understanding and description. No words can adequately describe It, and no human concepts can encompass It. Every religious or spiritual system can point people in the direction of this Ultimate Reality, but no description can fully encompass It, so no one may legitimately claim to have the only true description

of It. The Ultimate Reality is like a clear light, and our human brains are like dense prisms. When that light shines through us, it spreads into all the colors of the rainbow. Each of us is or has a color, and each color is just as much a part of the rainbow as any other color. Likewise, no single color captures the entire rainbow. All of the colors ultimately will be resolved back into the clear light. We may arbitrarily name the Ultimate Reality whatever we wish – names various people have used to describe it include God, Brahman, Allah, Jehovah, Adonai, the Creator, Great Spirit, Father Sky and Mother Earth, the Clear Light, Buddha Mind/Nature, and so forth – but only this Ultimate Reality Itself can know whether it has a name for Itself. For ease of reference, I'll sometimes call it God in this Summary.

Quantum physics and metaphysics both teach that...

This universe is 99.999... percent empty space. The distance between the nucleus and electrons in each atom of your body is proportionally greater than the distance between the sun and the earth. Quantum physics now theorizes that the "empty space" actually is full of something we don't perceive, known as "dark energy." From my perspective, the existence of dark energy makes sense.

In everything we experience as having form, what isn't empty space (or dark energy) is infinitesimal and continuously moving incredibly fast. Science isn't really sure how to describe it. It's fundamentally neither matter nor energy, although it can take either of those forms. Consciousness appears to bring it into the form we experience as matter, and physicists tell us that it's blinking in and out of existence millions of times each second – so it appears some supreme consciousness (God, by whatever name) is recreating the physical universe in every instance. Quantum physicists now also theorize that the stuff everything is made of fundamentally is, in fact, consciousness. If so, the ultimate consciousness is constantly recreating the universe out of itself.

Again, if consciousness brings the universe into form, there must be an absolute consciousness/energy that does this, bringing the universe into existence out of itself. This is what I call the Ultimate Reality.

The Ultimate Reality is a sea of energy/matter/vibration/consciousness infinite in every frequency/dimension, every direction, every aspect of time, and every other respect. It has no beginning and no end. No human measurement system could ever describe its infinitude. No human words can describe it.

As this Ultimate Reality is within (or, more accurate, actually IS) everything that exists in any form, including all aspects of matter and consciousness, it is in all of our bodies and thoughts. It passively “hears” our every thought and “witnesses” our every deed. It envelops us, fills every cell of our being, is in every breath, every thought, every instant.

Our Universe, and Why We are Here

For reasons we'll presumably never know, this Ultimate Reality manifested a particular set of Its frequencies that we experience as the material universe, including ourselves. Perhaps it's a game, or some form of (for lack of a better word) entertainment for Itself. Perhaps it's just one aspect of having a Reality that's infinite in its diversity.

This Ultimate Reality could have manifested everything to operate in accordance with causal processes that would be fully predictable and, therefore, predestined. To a large extent, the universe does work this way, through the processes we describe through the sciences and also through the process we know as karma. However, again for reasons we'll presumably never know, this Ultimate Reality also manifested us to have not only individuated consciousness – and what an

incredible and mysterious thing that is! – but also a freedom we know as Free Will, which operates to some extent outside the processes of predictability.

Science also is showing that there is a certain randomness to the apparent processes of predictability, so that even the material universe is not entirely predictable.

Free Will enables us to play the apparent game (in Sanskrit: lila) that God has placed us in. Without Free Will, there would be no game, and no entertainment, and no apparent point, as the outcome would be predestined. The consequences of our actions and thoughts are largely determined by the operation of the karmic process, but we are free to control those actions ourselves.

Some people say that anything that happens “was meant to happen” or that everything occurs according to some divine plan. This is not my perception. I believe the Ultimate Reality created a game with predictable rules (karma, gravity, and so forth), but that the outcome of the game, or any stage of the game, is not preordained and rather is partially up to us. There is a divine “plan” only in the rules of the game.

God can, of course, suspend the rules if God chooses to do so. Hence, “miracles” can happen through God’s grace. God generally remains impassive, but sometimes intervenes. At other times the intervention is by some of God’s devotees.

The objective of this game is to become in full resonance with the fundamental nature of God, which is Oneness – connecting in oneness with everything. In this writing, I call it Absolute Conscious Reunion, or Reunion. Hindus call this liberation (moksha). Tibetan Buddhists’ notion of nirvana is similar in some respects.

The most fundamental choice that God gave us is to choose between Reunion with all things, which we rather imperfectly call Love, and Separation, which I describe with the term Ego. Life is all about going

in one direction or the other – toward Reunion or into Separation. Our Free Will permits us to either move towards Reunion or move away from it. The fact that God has created both dynamics does not mean that both are equally beneficial for us. Rather, Reunion is the ultimate beneficial objective, and this requires Love rather than Ego.

When we attain Reunion, we reunite with God, and with every being and everything God has manifested, like a drop of water that's dropped into the ocean. We experience this fundamental nature of God as, most importantly, Love. Fundamentally, Love is the path to Reunion as Love is the state of God being. On a more limited level, Love is, of course, the term we use to describe the emotion which enables us to intimately connect, to sacrifice ourselves for others, to think of oneself as part of a unity with someone.

Reunion requires that we first become like God, or like God is perceived as wanting us to be. All traditions talk about this partially in terms of behavior, presenting codes of conduct (such as the Ten Commandments) that must be met in order to attain admission to God's home (whether called Heaven, paradise, enlightenment, nirvana or something else). This also includes the necessity of loving one another.

Some traditions go beyond this and speak in terms of becoming God-like in one's consciousness and being, including one's vibrational frequency. If one is to merge with the ocean, one must become a drop of water.

The fact that we initially are not God-like does not mean we are fundamentally bad ("sinners"). Would you say an infant is bad because its capabilities are limited? Our limitations are God-given and are not eternal. Each of us ultimately will overcome them through our efforts and, perhaps, with assistance through the grace of God or God's devotees.

We move away from Reunion when we operate on the basis of the perceptions that we are separate from everything, we are incomplete, we have needs that must be met even if it means others' needs are not met, and there isn't enough to go around. When we operate on the basis of these perceptions, we experience emotions like fear, attachment, greed, anger, competitiveness, and being judgmental. All of these emotions are based on placing our focus on our individuated selves - our egos. They involve interacting with Existence with the attitude and perception that we are fundamentally separate.

What we perceive as evil fundamentally is merely the product or extreme form of these fear-based, self-centered emotions and attitudes. Stated in another way, beings we perceive as evil have failed to recognize and commit themselves to the attitudes and objective of Reunion, and instead attempt to take control of everything rather than unite with it.

Humans seek relationships and experiences that give them a partial experience of Reunion, such as deep meditation, sexual relations, romantic love, spiritual congregation, and so forth. Sometimes these experiences also can be pursued to serve the Ego, but in their pure forms they are experiences moving us in the direction of Reunion.

God's Forms, God's Devotees

God fundamentally is impersonal and universal. However, many people are more comfortable perceiving God in personified forms, forms the human mind can conceive and relate to, and God accommodates this. Sometimes God takes human form (avatars). Sometimes aspects of God are personified; the Hindu pantheon consists of such forms. Further, God has the ability to make personal connections with each of us if and when God chooses to do so.

There obviously are frequencies we know exist even though we cannot directly experience them with our senses, such as radio waves

and television signals. There also are beings/consciousnesses existing in frequencies beyond our sensory perceptions.

Many of the embodied or disembodied consciousnesses are dedicated to furthering Reunion. Some of these beings are in bodily form, such as avatars and embodied bodhisattvas, but many are not and exist instead in the form of disembodied consciousnesses, such as angels, disembodied saints and bodhisattvas, power animals, and so forth. Because they are helping us fulfill the holy objective God has given us, they hear us when we pray for God's help, and they can choose to help us. God can choose to act through them, just as God can choose to act through anything, but they generally operate in individualized capacities in support of the goal of total Reunion. All of these beings are here described as Devotees. The Devotees are here to help us in our paths to Reunion. When someone prays for such help (in other words, seeking a miracle), these Devotees first ask whether the person is doing his or her own work in the path to Reunion. They are not inclined to do our work for us. Sometimes our prayers will be answered only by an acknowledgment that they've been heard.

Everything is Connected

Reunion is the complete reunification with everything there is, and thus with the Ultimate Reality. Another way to describe this is to say Reunion is the recognition that we actually are united with everything at all times. We are in, and part of, the sea of Conscious Energy (or Energized Consciousness) that God embodies and has created, sustains, contains, and experiences. Only ignorance keeps us from seeing this infinite web of interconnectedness. Tibetan Buddhists, for example, place a great emphasis on this awareness, calling it knowledge of Dependent Origination or Emptiness (which mean that everything does exist but only within this complex web of interconnectedness). It's said that when a butterfly flaps its wings on

one side of the Earth, it ultimately will affect the weather on the other side of the globe.

An important corollary to this is to never take for granted the infinite ways the infinitely diverse components of the universe support you. The practice of praying before a meal reflects this wisdom, for one has a partial Reunion experience when one acknowledges the beings (both animals and plants) that have given or are giving their lives for your nourishment, the people who have played a role in delivering or preparing the food, the molecules that will be digested to provide sustenance to you, and so forth.

Sometimes people say things like “The universe is an illusion” or “The universe is just a dream in God’s mind.” There is some truth to such statements, but only if they are properly interpreted. Unfortunately, such statements can easily be misunderstood. Some may take such statements to mean that nothing exists, and may use this as a basis to lose interest in living or in caring for others – in other words, as a basis to avoid taking responsibility for one’s life and conduct. To the contrary, the things we experience actually do exist, and they simply are not exactly what we think they are when we experience them as separate from each other, separate from ourselves, and separate from God (thus, devoid of sacredness).

We also are connected in that we are co-creators with God. We are active participants in creating the universe we inhabit – through our actions, and also through our thoughts. This is a powerful responsibility, but also an incredibly blessed opportunity.

Brothers and Sisters

Reality is infinite. Because our minds are finite, none of us can ever fully experience and understand Reality. For this reason, and because each of us is an equal embodiment of God, every person’s belief system should be cherished and honored. Even those who hold belief

systems that are destructive as they are based on Ego or fear should receive compassion and love from us.

Every person embodies/contains God in the same way. "Namaste" captures this fact, because it means "the sacred in me acknowledges and honors the sacred in you." Every person is equal before God. Every person is an embodiment of God, a creation of God. Every person's path is equally valid and should be respected. Every mystical spiritual tradition ultimately can lead to Absolute Conscious Reunion. Every person ultimately will attain that Reunion. You may have learned lessons that someone else still needs to learn, but likewise they may have learned other lessons you still need to learn. We should not pass judgment on each other. We're all in this Earthschool together, and we all will graduate sooner or later. Everyone is walking the same labyrinth. In a labyrinth, unless you turn around, every step takes you closer to the center - even when it appears you're walking away from the center.

If you love God, and if every person is an embodiment of God, then loving every person should be easy. It's just a matter of making yourself remember that every person - including anyone who harms you - is God incarnate.

Perhaps it will help to know that people who intentionally harm others do so out of their own pain. This being the case, they deserve our compassion.

Living in a Heavenly Way - Heaven on Earth

Perhaps we can make this a "Heaven on Earth" if we learn to live in a heavenly way. The key to this is to be loving, respectful, compassionate and kind towards each other - whether we call it the Golden Rule, Christ Consciousness, the Bodhisattva vow, or simply respect for others. We cannot and should not expect others to share our beliefs.

Reincarnation

We are eternal beings temporarily inhabiting our bodies and minds. Life is a school to teach us the lessons that will enable us to attain Reunion. We will be given as many lifetimes as it takes to learn and integrate all of these lessons and graduate into oneness with all there is. Life should be viewed as a blessed opportunity to advance on one's path, rather than a burden. Every challenge should be viewed as a blessed opportunity to grow and learn. Every enemy should be viewed as a teacher. Life isn't easy, but it is our path to paradise.

What continues from lifetime to lifetime - your individual soul, or "higher self" - is a disembodied energy/consciousness construct. The soul is like a flash memory chip that you take from incarnation to incarnation. It carries memories of your past lives, the lessons you've learned, the lesson plans for the lessons you still need to learn, and "programs" which, when you incarnate, connect with and start running the programs of the world around you. This brings to you the karmic consequences of your past actions and thoughts, and also the circumstances which will enable you to learn your lessons.

Did you know that many Hindus and Buddhists believe that we can be reincarnated in various "realms" and that those realms include realms that can be described as Heaven and Hell? They're realms we go only temporarily, depending on our karma, and the ultimate objective is to go off of the wheel of rebirth through Reunion. Some people also say Jesus taught that reincarnation was a reality, but I don't know whether this is accurate.

My personal experience is that reincarnation is, indeed, a reality. Your own experience certainly may differ. It seems to me that a loving God wouldn't give us only one lifetime to become perfected.

Happiness

What an incredible gift life is, and what an incredible opportunity to experience aspects of existence we otherwise couldn't experience. What a shame it is that we so often allow ourselves to forget the

wonder of it all, forget that we are eternal beings in temporary circumstances, and sink into unhappiness. It does take work to be happy, but ultimately it's a choice.

We often feel unhappy because we cannot manifest things we feel we need.

We feel the glass is half empty. Some say we should instead feel the glass is half full. Perhaps the better approach is to decide your glass is too big and realize it already contains everything you need, no matter how it appears. It's the water that's important, not the glass. You already have more than you may realize, and you really don't need some things you think you need.

Happiness comes from within, not from outside. A true Master always gets what he wants, because a Master always wants what he gets.

Learn from the past, but don't carry it around as heavy baggage that burdens you. Plan for the future, but don't allow worrying to drain the strength you need for living in the Now. Be present for your life in every instant.

It also seems that happiness can be developed best by sharing it with others. When you have it, share it! When you don't, join with others to create it. We're each on our own journey, but we're meant to travel together and care for each other.