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Wayne: What is your name?

Mark.

Wayne: Have we met before Mark?

Never.

Wayne: So tell me Mark, how it is that you find yourself here tonight?

I have heard about you from two friends of mine, and I'm visiting other friends in Southern California, passing through. So I'm taking this opportunity.

Wayne: Where are you from?

Auburn, California. Northern California.

Wayne: So what did you hear about me?

Two friends over the years have told me about you.

Wayne: Have you read anything that I have written?

I never have. So I'm a newbie.

Wayne: I see. Okay, fair enough. Do you have some sense of what I talk about?

I think so.

Wayne: Would you consider yourself then a spiritual seeker?

I'd say so.

Wayne: And how has that spiritual seeking unfolded for you?

I enjoy coming together in a community and fellowship. And every now and then I'll have a mini awakening or insight. I don't know what to say.

Wayne: When you say come together in a fellowship, what kinds of gatherings.

Satsangs. I was out a couple of days ago in Santa Barbara.

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Wayne: What kind of *satsang*?

A fellow named Krishna.

Wayne: Was is it like a *bhakti* thing or a nonduality thing?

No, not a bhakti. I would say Papaji lineage. Yeah, I've done a number of those.

Wayne: Aha.

[silence]

Wayne: Can you tell me what it is about this teaching and these *satsangs* that are appealing to you?

I for one, get outside of my own dramas and dilemmas, and come back to the source teaching that there is really isn't anybody here, no matter how hard I try to make that untrue. It doesn't mean that I don't have a body to take care of or needs while I am circling the dream on this planet. But there are many times when I forget that and I get caught up in all the everyday dramas. And this gives me an opportunity to come back.

Wayne: Now that's actually quite a provocative statement, that there is nobody here. Obviously there is a body, and often we talk about the absence or the illegitimacy of the me, and I'm curious what you make of that?

It sort of depends on my frame of mind. There's somebody here when I am stuck in whatever emotions are running. When I buy into that, there is definitely somebody here, all right. And when I'm not, I realize that – even as I say that, the language is tricky, when I say I, what does that mean? There's somebody here when I say that. I am not one that talks in the third person, I can't use language in that way. And there is – we're here, we're conversing, we're talking, we're exchanging, we're listening, it's getting all filtered through our history, our past, and whatever is going on for us five seconds ago – so there is definitely somebody here. And there are times when that is not as important as we make it to be; and that is what my seeking is about is, to lessen that importance that I put upon things.

Wayne: Well perhaps what is here can be useful for you. I have a way of talking about this that you may not have run across before, and it starts with what we were just talking about. And what you were pointing out is that clearly there is a discourse happening, and it's happening between two people. We can philosophize around what the nature of all that is quite endlessly, but in terms of direct experience, there is the experience of a self doing something that's distinguishable from her [points at someone else in

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the room] doing something. So the fact that you are discoursing on it is clearly different from when she is. And the fact that you go home to your house and she goes home to her house has some (for me) grounding value to it, in terms of a place to start that is solid. It has the quality of experiential solidity to it, which is different from the esoteric, philosophical, spiritual kind of idea that gets passed around quite freely. So for me, I am interested in starting at that point, and looking at what it is that talks, what is it that lives, and what is it that was born with a particular name and particular form that has evolved and changed and shifted over time. That to me is a rich vein to mine.

And the way I talk about it is twofold. One of the metaphors I use quite often is that of the ocean and wave. And so non-dualistically speaking what we say is that everything is the ocean, all there is is ocean, there is no thing else. When the ocean goes into movement what you have are the waves. And each wave has properties. Each wave has duration, a point where it starts and how long it exists, and then it ends. It has properties we can talk about that are unique from other waves. So we can have all of these different objects including ourselves as waves, without destroying the integrity and the unity of the ocean. No matter how many billions of waves there are, there is still only one ocean. And what those waves are, all billions and billions of them, is ocean. So regardless of their properties, regardless of what happens through them, regardless of what they think they are or think they're not, it is all still and ever will be ocean. So starting from that perspective we can have both unity and multiplicity. That is to me important for understanding not only ourselves but the universe at large.

Now the other concept I'll introduce you to, and you may not have heard it in quite this way before, is the concept that I call the false sense of authorship. And this is what develops in a human being at the age of two-and-a-half to three. It is a universal property of human beings, that part of the structure of being human that seems to come this sense at the age of two-and-a-half that, "I am an independent authoring entity." Meaning, I am independent of the ocean, yes I'm a wave, I can see that I'm a wave, but there is this quality that claims all this doing that is happening through the wave. Maybe not all the things, but some of the things that the wave does, there is the claim that I, this false sense of authorship, is responsible. I'm controlling it, I'm making it happen, independent of the ocean. So this is what people often are pointing to very crudely as 'the me'. So they are getting the structure of the wave and the false sense of authorship mixed up together in one thing called 'the me'. This is my attempt to separate out those two elements, to show what is clearly functional and that which is not

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necessary for the functioning of the universe. For the universe to function there has to be waves, otherwise there is no manifestation; the ocean is at rest which is featureless, meaning there is nothing happening, no time, no space, no existence, nothing manifests. The manifestation is the movement, so those things are integral to manifest existence, for life as we can know it and experience it. This false sense of authorship however, while it is clearly integral to being human because it exists and is quite prevalent, it isn't essential in order for the human organism to function. And when this false sense of authorship is seen through as the lie that it is, what then comes is peace. This is often called enlightenment when the false sense of authorship is no longer present. When you say you have glimpses, you have moments of insight, often what this is is when this false claim of being a separate authoring entity recedes into the background what results is an expansive unitive feeling, in which there isn't this me in chopping things up, disconnecting myself from the wholeness.

In that space there is still a subtle identity, because there is still someone experiencing unity. There is clearly this experience of unity happening here, as opposed to over there, but it isn't claimed by the false sense of authorship, and that is what this teaching is constantly pointing back to. This very specific aspect of 'the me' that is ultimately responsible, not as the cause, but ultimately responsible as the mechanism for human suffering, because the false sense of authorship in fact does nothing, it doesn't even create suffering because it has no power. The only thing it does it claim. All the doing, everything that happens, even the involvement by the false sense of authorship, is a function of the ocean. Because the ocean is all there is, it has to be, it does everything.

That's what I talk about.

Sounds like you are.

[silence]

Wayne: [reading from the chatroom] So Larry McGee says, "Lately, rather than feeling that I'm not here, I've been feeling that I'm *really* here. It's so curious, it's a powerful mystery that I even exist. I used to think of the functional me as kind of a blah entity. Now I'm amazed at it. Did you feel something like this at some point?"

I did, and this is part of the elation of coming to the teaching. Coming out of this period of blahness that people often describe, where I'm just a

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functional entity, I'm not actually doing anything, it's all just happening, and there is a certain grayness that is associated with that. Coming out of that, often the experience of people is as Larry was describing, a realization, kind of a flipping to the other side, which is, that there is profound existence here. That I am this incredible wave. The fact that I am ocean as this wave. It isn't so much that I am this wave, it is that I am the ocean as this wave. I am literally the universe in motion as this. And that's spectacular, that's extraordinary, to really begin to experience that, to feel it. And it's particularly dramatic when it comes on the heels of all that blah grey stuff. So it can be quite powerful and dramatic.

[13 minute silence]

Wayne: [reading from the chatroom] Monique says, "I'm reading, among others, one of Wei Wu Wei's books. And after the intro it says that if you have understood what you have just read there is no need to read further. Even though I understand, there is the feeling that I just can't get enough. There is this need for more. I guess I don't understand then?"

He is clearly not talking about an intellectual understanding of what you have just read.

[silence]

Plus even though, as you have pointed out, there may not be a need to read more, but there may be a compulsion to read more. And what I find interesting is, what's behind that compulsion? See, the interesting thing about compulsions is that they're without the veneer of our control. You see, I'm compelled to do it, means I can't control it. There are other actions and other desires we have, which we seemingly are controlling. Which means that the false sense of authorship is attaching to the control of a particular desire or impulse. So when that impulse is restrained, then the false sense of authorship comes in and says, "I restrained it, I am in control here." But with a compulsion, compulsion is something that we acknowledge I can't control. I am compelled to do it, that's what it means. I can't control it, I have to do it. Even though I'm not allowed to do it, it's a bad idea to do it, I shouldn't do it, but I am doing it anyway, I am compelled to do it.

In understanding compulsion, in seeing really what is behind compulsion, if you can see it, it quickly extrapolates into all other behavior. That which compels you to do something, is the same force that compels you to do everything.

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What you are describing right now, sometimes is described by some as intuition. So that's kind of the intuition right? That compulsion, that intuition that guides you, doesn't have to have any reason, you just follow that.

Wayne: Right. You see, intuition is the same kind of behavior except on the other side, what we generally think of as the positive side. Compulsion we generally think of on the negative side. What is in intuition is being quote led to see something, led to do something, that we intuitively know to do it without a claim of authorship. Once again it comes back to the claim of authorship. When we intuitively know, the way we talk about it is, we're led. We're led by God, we're led by spirit, we're led by nature or openness, truth.

How I feel it as you're saying it, is the intuition there is a knowing-ness that compulsion there's the blindness but I gotta do it. But in intuition there just this knowing-ness, the longing and peace that comes from inside out. And compulsion feels a little bit like the outside is sucking me in. Kind of like the internet, being online too much sucks me in, almost an addictiveness.

Wayne: Either one, looking into it, can be an opportunity to see what's driving your behavior. Now as you say, compulsion is generally thought, is seen in terms of negative behavior. I'm on the Internet too much, I shouldn't be doing this so much, I should be... Fill in the blank with whatever it is you should be doing rather than doing that. If you felt your life was being enhanced and that you were making money, that you were getting insight and peace and love and joy being on the internet, you wouldn't feel that this drive to be on the internet was a problem. You would say I am being intuitively lead to be on the internet where I am being fulfilled as a human being. So the pointer in all of this is: What is it that is driving the behavior? Whether it's the intuitive knowing kind of space, or it's this reactive compulsive kind of space. What is it that lies right behind it?

Lately what I have been finding, and it is not the first time I have had this period of time, but it just seems more present, is I used to have an aversion towards concepts because I go there so much that my practice especially for the last fifteen years, I have become more, I don't want to call it sensual, but it is within the senses. It's more earth bound, in a sense of appreciation of moments. As you're speaking of waves, I see myself sometimes riding them, sometimes being on them, and I remember my first type of meditation was literally floating in the water. The only thing that I seem to connect to or desire is the actual quality of the water itself, the ocean, the quality of the ocean. Not the concept of it, not the movement, not become the wave, or the undercurrent, or whatever, it's just the feeling of that wave. That's the only thing that seems to be my little, I don't want to call it longing but it's not, my connectivity to the rhythm of things right now. I'm just wondering if you felt that, as the question prior to that was? That sense of just being in the quality of water-ness, or water-ness, that's what I want to call it. The water-ness of life.

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Wayne: That's not my experience in the way that you are describing it. Because what you are describing is the relative quality of the seeker, that moves between a state of separation and longing, to a state of connection and fulfillment. So that movement back and forth is the movement of the seeking. And naturally the positive swing where you are feeling connected and fulfilled is much preferable. You want it all the time.

But it's fine as I'm seeker right?

Wayne: So that's a no brainer, everybody who is a seeker understands and desires that. The final movement, the final understanding is transcendent of that movement. So when this flipping back and forth stops, it doesn't stop on one side.

There is no more sides.

Wayne: There is no more sides. There is the wholeness of the water, so you are the water. But you don't experience the water as you are not separate from the water...

Yes I grok that, I grok that. Thank you, thank you very much.

Wayne: You're welcome.

[silence]

Wayne: [addressing the first speaker, Mark] So what you're hearing, what we're talking about, is that pretty much in alignment with what you have...?

Absolutely.

Wayne: [Reading from the chatroom] Monique says "Since I first felt this powerful resonance from reading I Am That [by Nisargadatta Maharaj], something I have never felt before, there is this drive or compulsion to get more. Can you speak about this resonance which is so powerful?"

I don't know what more you need to know about it, other than what you are already experiencing of it. It is this powerful powerful connection, in which often when it wanes, when it diminishes, it sets up a craving to have more. The resonance itself when it is present is complete.

[8 minute silence]

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Wayne: [reading from the chatroom] Ken says, "Thank you Wayne, for providing this space for me to sit with you."

And I would say that the thanks is not to me, the thanks really would go to all the people who make this possible, all the people who donate to the Fellowship and enable the equipment to be purchased, and the bandwidth to be purchased, and the distribution systems to be put into place, and the people who contribute their time to operate the camera and the website and all the rest of it. These are the ones who make it possible for us to sit here together.

[8 minute silence]

The Advaita Press and the Fellowship are kind of a curious miracle to me, and I'm also grateful that they're there, that people give money and enough money to keep this operation going that I love. You know it means so much to me. Sometimes when I look at it idly like oh it's a business, it just appears to defy every rule of business that I've ever seem. And other times it doesn't feel like a business at all to me, and it doesn't bother me. Sometimes I think it would be nice if there was more, that it could take better care of you. And it may not be that it even bothers you the way it is, it maybe just... These are my thoughts and feelings from time to time. But when I look at it selfishly I'm just tickled that Oprah's people aren't calling, taking you away to be on TV, and be away. [laughter]

I'm so lucky to be able to sit here with you. It's curious because it's kind of like you couldn't give it away to somebody else, you know, invite somebody and say, "Oh you know there's this great thing at Wayne's house." But it's still an amazing gift and I appreciate it.

Wayne: You've tried that a couple of times over the years.

You know, and usually with some reluctance. It's a funny kind of conversation to have with somebody. I have a friend who has expressed an interest, oh half dozen times. I've never encouraged or discouraged, I'm very careful about what I say about it. You never know what'll happen.

Wayne: You never know, you never know.

I'm not holding my breath.

Wayne: That's probably wise.

[silence]

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Wayne, isn't the presence of the ego overall like an organ that doesn't function properly, like a constipation?

Wayne: When you say the ego, are you talking about the false sense of authorship?

Yes.

Wayne: Okay, the false sense of authorship works perfectly.

To sustain itself?

Wayne: No, to create suffering, to create separation. It works perfectly, it is not a mistake. It is not *your* mistake, it isn't the *universe's* mistake. To me, it is a very important distinction to recognize that the presence of this function – which we call the false sense of authorship, or the ego, or the thinking mind, whatever you want to term it – this quality is the product of the same creative force that enables your heart to pump, that enables your lungs to breathe.

[silence]

Since the animating aspect can't be seen, and when there's final understanding, there's the understanding that I am not the source of these things, there is not a thing but there's animation present in everything, is that an intuitive feeling? Since I couldn't say if I did this [he pulls on his own pants leg] that's what made the pants go that way. So what is it when there is the understanding, the final understanding that gives us the recognition that I am not animating things, that I'm not the source? Is it just there's an inner conviction that just comes and becomes present?

Wayne: No, I understand what you mean. No, and that's why, I try and point to this by saying it isn't a presence of something, even an intuitive knowledge or recognition or awareness that is present. It is not the presence of something, it is simply the absence of the false belief, the false claim.

So it is the falling away of, the cessation of the false claim.

Wayne: The cessation is an event.

Right, and then after the cessation there's whatever there is.

Wayne: Yes. But the cessation of a false claim doesn't change anything. The way it was, still is. But there simply is no false claim on top of it, that's all.

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So when there's a period of time during the day when I'm noticing that there isn't the false claimer there, there is just doing, and let's say that is a large part of the day; and then all of a sudden it comes in and is loud and disruptive and causes chaos and then it falls away again and then there is that doing... So when it falls away, things are peaceful and it's easier. And so I'm not thinking like, "Oh it's fallen away." It's just the day is happening and things are occurring and there's a flow. And then sometimes there is this thought like, "Oh yeah, involvement's not there, this is really nice, this is really nice." And then at some point again the involvement comes back in. I guess I'm just describing the experience.

Wayne: Yes, yes.

I also know there is a sense, when the false sense ceases and whatever happens after that, that's something different than when the false sense isn't present during the day at some point.

Wayne: That's right.

It's different.

Wayne: It is different.

It's different. And the mind seems to want to understand it by hearing the concepts that you and Ramesh talk about, and try to imagine what that would be like. And then there's the sense like it can't be known, but there is still a curiosity of wanting to know it. It's just interesting how the curiosity is still there. Not all day, but I notice it when it shows up and it seems like a mosquito sometimes. It's irritating you know, oh the false sense of authorship, you know, like the spotlight is on it. [ironically] Oh yeah, exalted state. It's just it's interesting to see the tapestry of it all.

Wayne: I think it's very interesting to see.

[silence]